



MINUTES
CHARLOTTEVILLE CITY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, April 16, 2026 (5:00 PM)
Booker T. Reaves Media Center, Charlottesville High School
[Video Link](#)

1.1 Call to Order: The School Board Chair called the public meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2.1 Moment of Silence: Ms. Lisa Torres, Board Chair, asked all those present to observe a moment of silence.

3.1 Pledge of Allegiance: The Board began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

4.1 Roll Call of Board Members: Roll call was conducted to confirm attendance.

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

Board Members Absent: None

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Present: Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr. (Superintendent), Ms. Kim Powell (Chief Operations Officer), Ms. Maria Lewis (Director of Human Resources), Ms. Renee Hoover (Director of Finance), Mr. Pat Cuomo (Director of Technology), Ms. Rachel Rasnake (Director of Student Services), Ms. Carolyn Swift (Director of Assessment and Accountability), Dr. T. Denise Johnson (Supervisor of Strategic Initiatives), Ms. Beth Cheuk (Community Relations Supervisor), and Ms. Leslie Thacker (Board Clerk).

Executive Leadership Team & Staff Absent: Dr. Anna Isley (Chief Academic Officer) and Ms. Julia Green (Board Deputy Clerk)

5.1 Approval of Proposed Agenda: Ms. Burns made a motion, seconded by Ms. Richardson, to approve the proposed agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion passed with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye. 7 ayes, 0 nays. The motion carried.

6.1 Comments from Students:

- CJ (Charlottesville High School Student) opposed having police officers in schools because they carried guns, which felt unsafe. Recommended improving and provide more training for the Care Safety Assistant (CSA) program instead.
- Bashar Teko (Student) opposed having police officers in schools, stating that they carried guns and made the environment feel unsafe for students.
- Harper Ullrich (Senior at CHS & Student School Board Representative) summarized a survey of 186 students and conversations with hundreds more. Noted that police already responded to the school frequently (226 times in 2024–2025); because of this reality, 61.3% of students surveyed were either indifferent to or would have felt safer with a clearly defined, community-minded SRO rather than rotating patrol officers. Emphasized that student concerns focused on guns, and that the specific officer's personality, background, race, and gender mattered deeply to the student body.

- Solomon Schwarzman (Junior at CHS & Student School Board Representative) outlined the two primary competing student arguments. The pro-SRO argument was that a carefully selected officer could build positive relationships and regulate the police presence already occurring in the building. The anti-SRO argument was that introducing visible guns shifted the school's energy and destroyed the feeling of safety and community. Noted that indifference was the most common stance and urged the board to find a compromise.

6.2 Comments from Members of the Community:

- Tina Vasquez (CHS Teacher of 21 years & Parent) strongly advocated for expanding restorative justice practices and building on the current partnership with Central Virginia Community Justice (CVCJ). Highlighted Virginia's new law (HB298) requiring restorative practices before suspension/expulsion. Urged the board to fund preventive schoolwide restorative models and enhance the CSA program rather than bringing back SROs.
- Sam Heath (Commonwealth Justice Coalition Representative) spoke in favor of expanding evidence-based restorative practices and focusing on safety as "the presence of well-being" rather than just the absence of violence. Offered to partner with the board to deepen these practices while maintaining necessary emergency response protocols.
- Hank Boswick (Organizer/Community Member) argued that the superintendent's data justifying the return of SROs was flawed and misleading, noting that previous surveys showed a majority of students and administrators were completely unaware of the SRO conversations. Pointed out that Virginia law did not require SROs to be inside buildings or to carry guns, and asked the board to amend the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to prohibit guns if SROs returned.
- Natalie Aviles (Social Scientist & Community Organizer) asserted that the board was ignoring a "mountain" of peer-reviewed scientific data showing SROs negatively impacted academic and disciplinary outcomes for Black, Brown, immigrant, and neurodivergent students. Critiqued the board's use of straw polls and Reddit comments as data, warning that SROs led to the criminalization and imprisonment of children.
- Shannon Gillikin (President of Charlottesville Education Association & Parent) urged the school board to take accountability for their decision instead of blaming requirements from the Police Chief. Noted that 12 community organizations had united against the return of SROs and called for a re-vote with the newly formatted board.
- Terry Tyree (Founder of Charlottesville Community Resilience Center & Parent/Organizer) opposed armed officers, noting they inflicted fear and pressure on Black, disabled, and traumatized families. Recounted an 8-year-old girl being too scared to speak to police. Advocated for investing in mental health, neighbors, parents, and the CVCJ instead of policing trauma.
- Alex Heintzman (Parent of two CCS students) asserted that the Board was ignoring a "mountain" of peer-reviewed scientific data and utilizing a misleading survey and Reddit to pull a "surprise vote." Noted that a powerful coalition of parents, teachers, and professionals had formed to oppose this, which successfully elected two equity-minded board candidates in November. Called for a re-vote.
- Sophia Marrero (Public Housing Association of Residents Organizer) shared personal experience graduating high school in Florida near Parkland, stating that her school's SRO was ineffective and that adding guns to schools increased student terror. Called for counselors, social workers, and de-escalation strategies, arguing SROs silenced and harmed Black, Brown, and Latino communities.
- Rosia Parker (Grandparent) urged the board to slow down and prioritize trust and authentic community engagement before finalizing decisions. Proposed a compromise: a small-scale pilot program in just one school with clear metrics, community oversight, and honest evaluations.
- Nick Steiner (Parent) pointed out that the Charlottesville Police Department failed to honor a previous 2021 agreement, questioning why they should be trusted now. Noted that the district already had a two-tiered system where minority and special-needs students scored below state averages, and warned that armed police would worsen these systemic disparities.

- Lena Seville (Parent) expressed disappointment that the board made the decision to bring back SROs before conducting community engagement, which fractured public trust. Requested the board to reverse the vote and start over with genuine community input.
- Syleethia Carr (Parent & Community Organizer), speaking as a Black mother, stated that Black and Brown children were treated like suspects rather than students when police were introduced. Demanded a re-vote, a rejection of armed officers, and an end to decisions made behind closed doors.
- Mimi Fitzpatrick (Parent & Former Elementary Educator) critiqued the board's metrics for "community engagement," pointing out that reaching out to six already-active people or hiding work session topics in complex email links did not count as true outreach. Asked the board to look at national data trends rather than local echo chambers.
- Abigail Johnson (First-Grade Teacher at Jackson-Via) expressed shock that the board would make a major decision regarding guns with fewer data points than she was required to collect for daily reading lessons. Noted that she completely distrusted the local police institution after witnessing them use pepper spray and rubber bullets on peaceful UVA student protestors in May 2024.
- Michael Salvatierra (Teacher at Trailblazer) challenged the board to present any concrete evidence showing that schools became more dangerous after SROs were removed. Asked the board to display true leadership by admitting the initial vote was a mistake, listening to the community feedback, and holding a re-vote.
- Becca Cole (Parent of two CCS students) argued that needing to hand-pick specific officers because the community didn't trust the police force as a whole proved that police did not belong in schools. Shared a personal story regarding her autistic daughter's threat assessment, emphasizing that guns were inherently terrifying and should be entirely banned from school campuses.
- Ian Mullins (CCS Parent & UVA Politics Professor) stated that the board's retroactive justifications and reliance on unreliable Reddit forums were a degradation of the democratic process. Argued that public engagement had to happen before a decision was finalized to be valid, and demanded a legitimate re-vote.
- Arthur Allen (Volunteer with CCRC / Formerly Incarcerated Community Member) shared his perspective having served over 15 years in prison. Noted that grown men in prison were intimidated by correctional officers who only carried flashlights; bringing officers with guns around children would inherently terrify them. Warned that giving officers power in schools would inevitably lead to the mistreatment of students.
- Gareth Gaston (Parent - via Zoom) agreed with previous speakers and urged a re-vote. Expressed concern over chronic absenteeism and the achievement gap, noting that placing police officers in buildings would make vulnerable kids feel unwelcome and drive school attendance down further.

Action Items

7.1 Action - FY 2026 Bonus Payment: On March 31, 2026, Director of Finance Renee Hoover presented a proposal to the School Board regarding a state-authorized \$1,500 bonus for SOQ-funded instructional and support staff under Chapter 7 of the 2026 Acts of Assembly. The total cost to provide this bonus to all 880.61 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees at Charlottesville City Schools is \$1,421,965, requiring a local match of \$1,249,125 to supplement the state's \$172,840 share. Ms. Hoover proposed utilizing the division's fund balance to cover the local portion, noting that the one-time nature of the state initiative is consistent with the fund's intended purpose. The \$1,500 payments will be prorated based on FTE status and issued on June 18, 2026, to eligible employees hired by March 27, 2026, who complete the current school year and return for the 2026-2027 contract year. To secure the state funding, the division must submit certification to the Virginia Department of Education by May 1, 2026.

Ms. Dooley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Burns, to approve the use of \$1,421,965 from state revenue, fund balance, and fiscal year-end funding to provide a prorated bonus of up to \$1,500 based on employees' FTE to all eligible employees. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion passed with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye. Mr. Meyer voted nay. 6 ayes, 1 nays. The motion carried.

Questions/Discussion:

- Mr. Meyer sought clarification on the school division's fund balance, to which Ms. Hoover confirmed it was \$10 million as of June 30, 2025. Ms. Hoover estimated that the fund balance would be roughly \$9 million after the allocation for the bonus. Mr. Meyer concluded from these figures that 10% of the fund balance was being spent on the bonus.

Items for Discussion

8.1 School Resource Officers (SROs) Discussion: Kim Powell, Chief Operations Officer, along with a collaborative panel of district leaders and community experts, presented a comprehensive overview of the division's proactive School Safety Model. This team included Bianca Johnson, Coordinator of Restorative Justice and Family Engagement; Amanda Korman Simalchik, Supervisor of Community Relations; Rachel Rasnake, Director of Student Services; Jodie Murphy, Mental Wellness Coordinator; Lieutenant Wade, Charlottesville Police Department Liaison; an Acting Director from the Police Civilian Oversight Board; Dr. Dewey Cornell, Professor with the UVA Youth Violence Project; and Dr. Francis Maeng, Academic Expert with the UVA Youth Violence Project. The presentation evaluated the existing, multi-tiered safety framework across five key areas—prevention, intervention, security, response, and recovery—while tracking data metrics related to mental wellness supports, student behavior responses, threat assessments, and emergency calls for service. A major focus of the session was outlining the timeline, extensive stakeholder feedback, and subsequent revisions made to the newly developed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Charlottesville Police Department. This revised agreement establishes stricter guardrails, clarifies distinct responsibilities between school staff and law enforcement, and introduces a modified, two-officer School Resource Officer (SRO) program slated to begin in August 2026.

Information presented included:

Mission, Vision, and Core Values

- Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) aims to be a community of hope and growth where barriers are eliminated and possibilities are limitless.
- The mission focuses on being an equity-focused school community providing skills for lifelong learning, engaged citizenship, and personal fulfillment.
- Core values include building authentic relationships, fostering a growth environment, promoting the joy of learning, and prioritizing well-being.
- The division operates using a Social Discipline Window that prioritizes restorative practices (doing things "WITH" students) over punitive ("TO"), permissive ("FOR"), or neglectful ("NOT") approaches.

The Comprehensive Safety Model Framework

- The model is a proactive framework designed to ensure physical, social, and emotional well-being.
- Prevention: Includes Social Emotional Learning, restorative language, mental health professional support, threat assessments, and family safety partnerships.
- Intervention: Involves screenings, multi-tiered counseling supports, and restorative conferencing to repair harm.
- Security: Focuses on physical infrastructure such as access control systems, expanded camera networks, and weapons detection for large public events.
- Response: Administration determines discipline, mental health, medical, or emergency responses (including calling 911 or police liaisons).
- Recovery: Involves trauma-informed support, individual/group counseling, and re-entry meetings.

School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Details

- The SRO Triad: In Virginia, SROs serve three interrelated roles: Law Enforcement Officer, Law-Related Educator, and Role Model/Informal Mentor.

- Operational Rules: Unless there is an imminent threat, SROs act only at the request of school administrators and do not enforce school codes of conduct.
- Firearms: Sworn officers are required by national practice and department policy to carry a gun, which will be secured in a safety harness.
- Criminal Charges: The MOU requires SROs to defer to school disciplinary procedures over criminal charges whenever practical.
- Projected Start: The program is scheduled to begin in August 2026 with up to two SROs.

Data and Staffing Metrics

- Mental Health Support: Elementary schools are staffed with counselors and social workers, while CHS has six counselors and three social workers.
- Care and Safety Assistants (CSAs): The number of CSAs increased from 8 in FY2022 to 14 in FY2026.
- Threat Assessments: For the period of August 13 to October 13, 2025, there were 159 total cases, with the majority being lower-priority cases (Priority 4 or 5).
- Calls for Service: From 2020 to 2026, CHS recorded 415 calls for service, while Summit ES recorded 207.

Community Feedback and MOU Evolution

- Divergent Views: Feedback since 2020 has ranged from total disagreement to total agreement regarding SROs.
- Pros Identified: Improved response times, coordination via police radio, and relationship building with a dedicated officer trained in adolescent development.
- Cons Identified: Unbudgeted costs, potential for a surveillance atmosphere impacting students of color, and the risk of having firearms on campus.
- MOU Changes (Version 2): Based on community input, the MOU was revised to reduce the number of SROs from four to two, utilize NYCLU model language, and prohibit cooperation with immigration enforcement.

Final Recommendations

- The Superintendent recommends that the Board maintain the current MOU signed in December 2025.

Jennifer L. Maeng, Ph.D., and Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., from the University of Virginia School of Education and Human Development, presented observations regarding School Resource Officers (SROs) to the School Board.

Overview of the SRO Role

- Safety vs. Harm: The presenters acknowledged the fundamental goal of school safety while addressing concerns about whether law enforcement presence is helpful or harmful.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): It was noted that the current MOU strictly limits SROs to addressing criminal acts rather than school disciplinary issues. The agreement emphasizes a supportive school climate and the use of support services over punishment.
- Training and Oversight: The MOU includes multiple strategies for training officers to contribute positively to school culture, alongside mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing their actions.

Addressing Common Concerns

- Criminalization of Behavior: While correlational studies show increased arrests in schools with SROs, the presenters clarified that no studies prove these are overreactions rather than legitimate responses to crimes like drug sales or assault.
- Causation vs. Correlation: A comparison was made to the correlation between firefighters and fires to illustrate that the presence of an officer does not necessarily cause the incidents they respond to.
- Student Trauma: For students with past traumatic experiences with law enforcement, the presenters suggested that positive exposure to friendly, helpful officers—supported by school counselors—is a leading treatment for trauma.

Benefits and Research Findings

- Perceptions of Safety: Studies, including several conducted in Virginia, indicated that students and teachers across all racial groups generally feel safer with an SRO present.
- Unique Capabilities: SROs provide specialized training and community knowledge regarding external criminal activity that often spills over into schools.

- Effectiveness: Officers were noted as being helpful for managing physical fights, weapon searches, and discouraging aggressive acts. They also serve as a resource for students to report threats of violence.
- Restorative Practices: The presenters noted that while restorative practices are popular, rigorous research has frequently yielded disappointing results regarding their impact on school discipline.

Dr. Cornell and Dr. Maeng concluded that the MOU effectively specifies the appropriate use of SROs while maintaining safeguards against potential problems.

Questions/Discussion:

- Bianca Johnson, Coordinator of Restorative Justice and Family Engagement, framed the discussion as heavy but necessary, asking participants to center on children, safety, and education regardless of personal feelings. She emphasized that real safety is a relational commitment built on mutual trust rather than surveillance. Referencing the social discipline window, she advocated for the "with" box—doing things with people rather than to or for them—and described safety as a three-dimensional commitment encompassing physical, social, and emotional well-being. She concluded by stating that while the evening's focus was on interactions with law enforcement, the overall safety model would be revisited during the presentation.
- Ms. Bryant expressed a desire for the work session to feature genuine discussion among board members, rather than being limited to a presentation and Q&A format. Dr. Gurley agreed, clarifying that the session belongs to the board and is for their dialogue. He noted that staff provided the requested iteration data to facilitate this and encouraged board members to use the data slides as an opportunity to discuss community feedback and questions with one another.
- Ms. Bryant requested that the timeline be updated to explicitly state that the March 2025 vote was not originally on the meeting agenda. She emphasized the importance of this procedural detail for accurate level-setting, noting that the vote required a deliberate motion and second rather than just spontaneously happening. Dr. Gurley agreed that this was an important point for mutual accountability among board members and supported including it on the record.
- Ms. Richardson requested a refresher on why School Resource Officers (SROs) were removed in 2020. She also noted a procedural point regarding 2025, stating that the vote was deliberately brought forward rather than just appearing on the agenda. Amanda Korman Simalchik, Supervisor of Community Relations, provided a chronological overview of the school resource officer (SRO) timeline. She noted that the division began equity conversations in 2017, which ultimately led to the Charlottesville School Board and the City jointly ending the SRO program in May 2020 following the murder of George Floyd. By spring 2021, the current model utilizing Care Safety Assistants (CSAs) and mental health staffing was implemented. Following four school lockdowns triggered by hoax calls in 2022, the division proposed a Youth Resource Officer (YRO) model in 2024, which the board voted to delay until March 2025. Finally, on March 27, 2025, the board voted to implement an SRO program, which is scheduled to begin in August 2026.
- Ms. Richardson inquired about the 2020 process for removing School Resource Officers (SROs), asking former board members how that decision unfolded and whether a mutual agreement to dissolve the program had been reached before the actual school board meeting due to the cultural climate.
- Ms. Torres recalled that the decision to dissolve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was made directly between the superintendent and police chief at the time. While she agreed that the social climate—specifically following the murder of George Floyd and the Unite the Right rally—had shifted public attitude and comfort levels regarding police, she clarified that the school board had not made a formal decision with the police department beforehand.
- Ms. Burns provided further context from the June 11, 2020, agenda, noting that the topic was originally listed strictly as a discussion item. She explained that Dr. Atkins presented commentary at that meeting regarding delayed MOU conversations due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The original intent of the June meeting was to look at alternative models and gather stakeholder perspectives; however, during the course of the meeting, the discussion item was changed to an action item.

- Ms. Bryant questioned what has changed to make the division or individual board members more comfortable with police presence in 2026, especially given that the national climate regarding police interactions with Black communities remains tense, unarmed killings have continued since George Floyd, and ICE is now also a factor. She asked how the division can justify increased comfort when Black students still face these same lived experiences.
- Ms. Torres clarified whether Ms. Bryant was asking for her personal opinion or her opinion on behalf of the division. Upon Ms. Bryant requesting both, Ms. Torres responded that she does not feel more comfortable with them.
- Ms. Cooper inquired about the historical tracking of SROs prior to their removal, asking if there was a feedback process or data regarding reported incidents, student-police escalations, or complaints filed against officers. Dr. Gurley responded that from an administrative standpoint, no specific local incidents or data were cited during the June 11, 2020 meeting when SROs were voted out; the superintendent's recommendation focused on alternative models, driven heavily by national context and the climate surrounding the murder of George Floyd.
- Ms. Bryant criticized the lack of local analysis, arguing that the division continues to juggle national research and local issues without balancing macro and micro perspectives. She asked whether the division had ever conducted a deep dive into the Charlottesville Police Department's specific relationship with local Black youth. She noted that important details were missing from the timeline, such as the turnover of police chiefs, highlighting that former Chief Brackney publicly opposed bringing SROs back and explicitly asked, "What are we solving for?"
- Ms. Bryant shared that a teacher characterized the push to return SROs as being fueled by "hysteria" and media exaggeration surrounding Charlottesville High School. She asserted that many issues cannot be solved by SROs and have already been improved through recent administrative changes. Furthermore, she noted that during an April 2nd conversation, seven Care Safety Assistants (CSAs)—the very staff hired to replace SROs—stated they do not want SROs back in schools. She questioned whether the division had allowed enough time to properly evaluate and collect internal data on the CSA model, concluding that there are still significant unresolved questions regarding the division's research, data collection, and procedures.
- Dr. Gurley expressed 100% agreement with Ms. Bryant regarding the community's frustration, tracing the current friction back to the lack of baseline data from the initial 2020 removal process. He acknowledged that the community feels unsettled because the division is trying to align national and local data without a clear point of comparison, noting that Ms. Bryant's points regarding local context were well taken.
- Rachel Rasnake, Director of Student Services for Charlottesville City Schools, stated that a superintendent advisory committee was formed on September 3, 2020, to evaluate school safety following the elimination of school resource officers (SROs). The explicit purpose of the committee was to provide a model and resource recommendation to effectively address an identified gap in security and response for students and staff. She noted that the presentation would outline the responsibilities of current division employees across five key components of the safety model: prevention, intervention, security, response, and recovery.
- Jodie Murphy, Mental Wellness Coordinator, detailed the prevention component of the division's comprehensive school safety model, emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach designed to foster positive climates, cultivate trust, and proactively teach pro-social behaviors. She outlined the specific responsibilities of school staff, noting that administrators and teachers lead social-emotional learning (SEL) and restorative circles, while counselors guide the SEL curriculum and provide staff coaching. Social workers and social-emotional support counselors focus on proactive relationship-building to mitigate harm, and Care and Safety Assistants (CSAs) utilize their student relationships to monitor communal areas and de-escalate critical situations. Ms. Murphy also highlighted families as vital safety partners who communicate concerns, reinforce behavioral expectations, and ensure the secure storage of firearms and medications using division-provided locks and boxes. Within this prevention framework, she stated that a School Resource Officer (SRO) would serve as a mentor, role model, and law-related educator, while also assisting with school safety audits.

- Ms. Murphy detailed the division's threat assessment process, which follows the October 2025 updated Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) guidelines. She emphasized that the process is systematic, individualized, and non-linear, beginning with an initial triage and screening by a subset of the threat assessment team. If a threat is deemed imminent, law enforcement is immediately notified; otherwise, administrators and mental health professionals gather information from records, interviews, and caregivers to determine the risk level and decide if police involvement is necessary.
- In response to a request from Ms. Burns for specific examples of the threat priority levels, Ms. Murphy used the statement "I'm going to kill you" to illustrate the five-tier system. Priority 5 and 4 cases are both closed because they lack intent, a plan, or weapon access. The key difference is that a Priority 5 student simply has a fleeting moment of frustration that is resolved with family notification and a restorative conversation, whereas a Priority 4 student identifies underlying struggles with emotional regulation, prompting the team to close the safety threat but issue recommendations for proactive behavioral interventions.
- Ms. Murphy explained that threats escalate to Priorities 3, 2, and 1 when there is a deliberate intent to intimidate or cause fear, which requires evaluators to look for weapon access and "pathways to violence." These pathways include behavior like researching plans, discussing execution, an obsession with violent content, or severe behavioral shifts like intense isolation or hopelessness. A Priority 1 designation indicates a critical, active risk requiring immediate, ongoing safety plans and continuous monitoring for both the student making the threat and the target.
- Ms. Richardson asked how parents are involved in this process. Ms. Murphy clarified that while Virginia code does not require parental notification before contacting law enforcement in an imminent situation, the division considers early outreach best practice and is actively working to improve it. She explained that during the actual assessment, a parent's presence can sometimes deter a student from being forthcoming, so if parents are present, they are instructed not to answer on behalf of their child. Ms. Murphy concluded by noting that, regardless of the priority level assigned, families are always notified after the assessment is complete to share the final safety plan and gather additional context, recognizing that parents know their children best.
- Ms. Torres initiated a discussion regarding police involvement in threat assessments, questioning the consistency of officer responses. Ms. Murphy explained that she coordinates with a CPD liaison to ensure trained officers respond, noting that eight different officers have conducted 25 assessments this year, a practice that would continue or be supplemented by a trained SRO.
- Ms. Cooper raised concerns about data collection, specifically whether the police track personal student information from these assessments. Lt. Wade clarified that officers file police reports for follow-up purposes, which may include student data, and that these are housed in the department's records management system. Dr. Gurley emphasized the confidentiality of the school-side threat assessment process, noting it is distinct from disciplinary procedures. Ms. Cooper expressed broader concerns regarding the "school-to-prison pipeline" and the potential for this data to impact students in future court proceedings, to which Dr. Gurley responded that the process is mandated by state code.
- Ms. Bryant asked whether the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) would have authority to review complaints regarding the potential misuse of data collected during student threat assessments.
- Mr. Walker clarified that the PCOB oversight is limited to officer conduct and department policy violations, such as the unauthorized release of sensitive information.
- Mr. Walker noted that any complaints involving potential criminal activity are referred to Internal Affairs and the Commonwealth Attorney, placing those investigations outside the PCOB's jurisdiction.
- Mr. Walker added that the PCOB does not intervene at the judicial level, though pending changes to state law may eventually expand the board's scope regarding juvenile-related matters.
- Ms. Bryant asked if the current working relationship between the PCOB and the police department was sufficient to ensure accountability if SROs were introduced.
- Mr. Walker explained that while the current relationship provides necessary access, the PCOB is seeking to amend the city ordinance to codify their mandate to receive information on complaints and misconduct, moving beyond reliance on a standard operating procedure agreement.

- Mr. Walker noted that the ordinance amendment is in the discussion phase with the City Council, with a work session scheduled for May 18th to further address the proposal.
- Ms. Bryant raised a concern regarding a discrepancy between a public talking point and community feedback, noting a common theme from public comment that law enforcement officers appear to be in schools every day. She requested clarification on why this perception does not align with official statements.
- Ms. Murphy clarified that from a threat assessment perspective, which she coordinates, officers are not present in schools daily. She explained that while officers are called when necessary, significant improvements have been made over the last 18 months to reduce their involvement. For lower-level concerns (Priorities 4 and 5), Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) staff handle the subsets of threat assessments internally. However, to remain compliant with state code mandates, law enforcement officers must be present for higher-severity situations (Priorities 1, 2, and potentially 3).
- Ms. Bryant acknowledged the update but pointed out that a gap remains between the total number of general police calls and the specific threat assessment data provided. She questioned whether the high volume of calls could be attributed to non-safety issues, such as routine traffic incidents or minor matters that do not directly impact student safety, and asked for those data points to be connected. Ms. Powell requested to defer the detailed explanation, noting that a subsequent slide in the presentation would explicitly break down the other regular categories and reasons for law enforcement calls.
- Ms. Powell presented a slide detailing the specific categories that prompt a law enforcement response, utilizing baseline categories identified in 2020. She emphasized that police involvement depends strictly on severity, noting the distinction between handling minor infractions internally and situations requiring law enforcement. Mandatory response categories include severe weapons or drugs (distinguishing a gun from a pocketknife, or distribution quantities from small amounts of marijuana), and significant physical assaults rather than mutual student conflict. Additionally, officers are called for event security, traffic control, executing arrest warrants or protective orders, neighborhood pursuit lockdowns, and community incident coordination. Ms. Powell noted that student wellness checks are coordinated with police but do not appear in school data because they are tied to residential community addresses rather than school properties.
- Ms. Bryant acknowledged the explanation but reiterated the need for the data to be clearly separated and itemized by category. She stated that without disaggregated data breaking down the exact number of calls for traffic versus specific safety incidents, the high volume of reported police calls could appear artificially inflated. Ms. Bryant concluded that having this specific data breakdown is necessary for the Board to make an informed decision regarding the potential return of School Resource Officers (SROs).
- Mr. Meyer inquired about the level of parent and student cooperation during high-level threat assessments (Priorities 1, 2, and 3), asking if families are generally cooperative. Ms. Murphy responded that the vast majority of families and students are cooperative, though she acknowledged that the process is difficult and can cause hesitation, worry, or fear—particularly regarding the presence of a law enforcement officer. She explained that staff work diligently to accommodate families by offering flexible timing, addressing concerns, and establishing boundaries. While threat assessment interviews are ideally initiated with the student alone, staff will establish clear parameters to include parents if they insist on being present, always aiming to balance family support with ensuring school safety.
- Mr. Meyer then asked if a weapon identified in a student's household during a threat assessment can be removed. Ms. Murphy stated that Charlottesville City Schools works closely with the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) when a household weapon is identified. She explained that school staff rely on CPD expertise to either verify that the weapon is safely secured or to coordinate with the family to voluntarily turn it over to the police.
- In response to Mr. Meyer's clarification on whether a law mandates weapon removal during high-level assessments, Ms. Murphy confirmed there is no such automatic legal requirement. Lieutenant Wade then outlined available legal mechanisms that law enforcement can employ if necessary, specifically highlighting Virginia's Emergency Substantial Risk Order (ESRO)—the state's "red flag" law—which allows police to petition a magistrate if there is an articulable threat to self or others involving a weapon. He also noted that protective orders can prevent individuals from possessing firearms. Lieutenant Wade

concluded by stating that, to his recollection, law enforcement has not yet needed to utilize these legal mechanisms during a school threat assessment.

- Ms. Burns asked if any threat assessment data or investigations had ultimately resulted in student arrests. Lieutenant Wade responded that law enforcement was not aware of any incidents where a school-based threat assessment led to an arrest.
- Ms. Richardson requested clarification on the current calls for service process, specifically asking whether school staff are able to request either a male or female officer when law enforcement is needed.
- Ms. Murphy explained that she coordinates directly with Lieutenant Wade when requesting a Charlottesville Police Department officer. She noted that because officers must be specifically trained in threat assessment protocols to respond, the available pool of personnel is limited. However, depending on the sensitive nature of a given situation, Ms. Murphy stated that she does occasionally request specific officer characteristics—such as a female officer, a male officer, or an officer of a particular cultural or racial background—to best support the student and manage the circumstances.
- Mr. Meyer inquired about the specific number of police officers currently trained in educational threat assessments. Lieutenant Wade responded that the Charlottesville Police Department has between 12 and 15 qualified officers distributed across the Patrol Bureau and the Investigations Division. He noted that on any given day, a percentage of those specific officers are on active shift and available to respond to school calls as needed.
- Ms. Bryant asked about the demographic diversity of those trained officers. Lieutenant Wade replied that the group represents a diverse cross-section of the department, including both men and women from various backgrounds, though he did not have the exact demographic statistics on hand. Ms. Bryant requested that those specific demographic figures be provided moving forward, noting that understanding the makeup of the available officer pool is important given the diverse makeup of the student body.
- Ms. Torres initiated a discussion regarding how school staff training has evolved over the past few years, asking for clarification on whether threat assessment training is currently optional during Professional Development (PD) days. She also inquired about the training timeline for Care Safety Assistants (CSAs) and how ongoing staff turnover impacts their enrollment in these programs, noting strong board and community support for these initiatives.
- Ms. Bianca Johnson responded that the majority of current CSAs have completed the training, though it remains a work in progress for newer hires. She explained that upcoming legal mandates will require deeper implementation of the school safety model, which will establish a formal expectation that all CSAs be trained in at least Tier 1 fundamentals.
- Ms. Torres acknowledged that while existing state legislation limits the number of mandatory training hours that can be imposed on school staff, she believes this specific safety training should be heavily prioritized. She advocated for strong institutional encouragement to ensure high staff attendance whenever these training sessions are offered.
- Ms. Burns inquired about the limitations of restorative justice, asking what specific student incidents or infractions cannot be handled through a restorative practices framework.
- Ms. Johnson responded that most incidents can and should be processed or supported through restorative practices, noting that the primary variable is the timing of the intervention rather than the infraction itself. For standard suspensions or physical fights, she advocated for laying the groundwork and initiating restorative conversations while the student is still at home, rather than waiting for their first day back, so they are better prepared to reintegrate. Addressing more severe incidents—such as gun violence or infractions resulting in full expulsion—Ms. Johnson countered the common perception that restorative practices are inappropriate for these scenarios. She clarified that upon a student's eventual return to the school community, restorative practices should be utilized as a crucial Tier 3 re-entry intervention to ensure the returning student feels safe, welcomed, and a sense of belonging.
- Ms. Burns asked if the Board could direct Dr. Gurley to retroactively apply restorative practices to students who are currently out on expulsion or long-term suspension, ensuring that work has been initiated for their eventual return.
- Ms. Johnson expressed full support for the directive, stating she would welcome the opportunity to engage with those students. Dr. Gurley clarified that while the Board directly controls the disciplinary

policy aspect, Charlottesville City Schools is already actively embedding these restorative components into the process. She noted that Dr. Trotter and Ms. Johnson work very closely to ensure these elements are integrated into ongoing student cases.

At 7:23 p.m., Ms. Bryant made a motion to observe a five-minute recess. Ms. Torres offered a friendly amendment to extend the recess to seven minutes (7:30 p.m.), which Ms. Bryant accepted. Ms. Richardson then seconded the motion. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously with 7 ayes and 0 nays, with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye.

At 7:38 p.m., Ms. Burns made a motion to amend the agenda to add a public comment period at the end of the meeting (Item 9.1) to allow public feedback. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously with 7 ayes and 0 nays, with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Torres voting aye.

- Ms. Richardson asked why the division is not currently utilizing metal detectors for daily student arrival.
- Ms. Powell explained that implementing weapon detection screening for morning arrival involves extensive logistical challenges that exceed current staffing capacities, even if all Care Safety Assistants (CSAs) and administrators were present. Drawing comparisons to models in neighboring school divisions like Louisa and Albemarle, she noted that running these gates requires significant personnel. Furthermore, Ms. Powell emphasized that standard practice dictates a law enforcement presence when operating weapon detection systems, noting that even at public events—such as those at John Paul Jones Arena (JPJ)—security personnel are backed by police. She added that the current policy of only using metal detectors at ticketed events was the result of a previous Board process that defined their specific scope.
- Dr. Gurley provided historical context, noting that while there has been a recent uptick in emails from the public requesting metal detectors, the Board previously faced a room filled with community members who strongly opposed installing weapons detection systems in schools.
- Ms. Powell added that daily screening would significantly alter arrival dynamics, impacting bus transportation schedules and creating an adaptation period with long queue lines for students entering the building, though she noted these operational challenges could be worked through if the Board chose to pursue it. Ms. Cooper asked for clarification on the timeline, inquiring if this data and the logistical challenges had been presented to the Board before the start of the current School Resource Officer (SRO) discussions. Dr. Gurley confirmed that this information had been presented a couple of meetings prior.
- Ms. Cooper questioned why the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) is currently unable to consistently provide traffic support at Summit Elementary, given that these specific traffic and security duties are being proposed as a primary role for School Resource Officers (SROs).
- Ms. Powell and Lieutenant Wade clarified that while CPD currently provides traffic assistance whenever resources allow, standard patrol constraints limit their consistency. They explained that under the proposed model, SROs would be under the daily operational direction of school administration, turning traffic support into a prioritized, dedicated resource that is built into the school's daily routine.
- Lieutenant Wade elaborated on Ms. Powell's comments regarding the operational differences between standard Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) responses and the utilization of a dedicated School Resource Officer (SRO). He explained that a standard patrol officer is bound by geographic sector responsibilities; while they are requested to assist at a school, they must remain available to divert to higher-priority emergencies in the surrounding community.
- Conversely, an SRO functions as a dedicated resource working directly for the school division. To illustrate, Lieutenant Wade noted that if Charlottesville High School (CHS) experienced traffic congestion during morning arrival, Dr. Malone could directly instruct the SRO to assist outside and ensure safe entry into the parking lot. This ability for school administration to immediately direct a dedicated security resource, without the risk of the officer being pulled away by external community calls, is what fundamentally differentiates an SRO from a standard CPD patrol officer.
- Ms. Bryant requested specific data from the current school year regarding the serious incidents outlined in the previous presentation slide, such as weapons or drug infractions, to evaluate the necessity of

reinstating School Resource Officers (SROs). Ms. Powell stated that an upcoming first-quarter report from the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) crime analyst would feature further data disaggregation based on prior Board feedback. She noted that service calls are central to the discussion and stated that upcoming reports would show clearer data distinctions than previous iterations.

- Ms. Bryant noted that because the SRO discussion has been ongoing for two years, she expected these specific data points to be available for the evening's meeting. She stated that a stationed SRO at Charlottesville High School (CHS) would not impact routine traffic or parking violations and requested information on how an SRO would correlate to a decrease in calls for service regarding violent or serious threats.
- Ms. Powell clarified that current data does not indicate an upward trend in calls for service, noting that the initial spike in student mental health needs and police calls seen immediately following the return to full-time, in-person learning had stabilized. She reiterated the division's commitment to data disaggregation regardless of which safety model moves forward. Ms. Bryant maintained that evaluating the necessity of a dedicated SRO requires an exact breakdown of these various incidents. Ms. Powell concluded by stating she would address further questions during the presentation, emphasizing the operational responsibilities and scenarios school administrators navigate when law enforcement must be contacted.
- Ms. Bryant inquired about the expectations regarding relationship-building for a single School Resource Officer (SRO) assigned to a school with over 1,100 students, asking what specific outcomes the division hoped to achieve.
- Ms. Powell stated the goal is to establish positive relationships and familiarity with the school community. To illustrate, she shared an example from a previous incident involving a firearm at the New Pathways program. She explained that during the response, an on-duty patrol officer who was a former SRO was able to immediately identify and coordinate with a school staff member amidst the crisis because the two had a pre-existing working relationship from their time in the building together. Ms. Bryant clarified if the primary expectation was familiarity with staff rather than students. Ms. Powell responded that building positive relationships with students is also considered a critical component.
- Ms. Bryant referenced recent public feedback, noting comments from three students at a community rally and her own discussions with 17 Black students who expressed opposition to the return of SROs. She requested specific numbers regarding student sentiment to better evaluate the overall consensus.
- Ms. Powell responded that historical survey data collected by the division since 2020 consistently indicate that a majority of surveyed students and staff have expressed support for, or interest in, an SRO model. During this response, Ms. Burns raised a point of order. Ms. Bryant clarified that her request was specifically regarding the exact phrasing of the questions posed to participants in those surveys. Ms. Powell noted that the wording varied depending on the specific survey, as multiple assessments had been conducted over the years. Ms. Bryant requested that a full breakdown of the historical survey data and the exact questions asked be provided to the Board moving forward.
- Ms. Bryant inquired about the methodology used for recording feedback during the community listening sessions, noting that detailed notes were not actively being taken at two of the sessions she attended. She asked how data was recorded across the various sessions and whether quantitative numbers accompanied the qualitative data.
- Ms. Simalchik responded that a data breakdown would be presented in the subsequent slides. She acknowledged that a recording error occurred at one session where note-taking was briefly omitted, but stated that the oversight was corrected once identified. She confirmed that substantial information was successfully gathered across the sessions. Ms. Bryant specified that one of the sessions lacking documentation occurred in the West Haven neighborhood, noting that comprehensive notes from that specific community would have been valuable. She expressed the expectation that a synopsis of the feedback shared during the West Haven session would still be provided. Ms. Simalchik confirmed that a summary of that session's feedback was available.
- Ms. Bryant raised a question regarding a potential skew in the student survey data, pointing out that 72% of surveyed students responded "no" to being aware of the ongoing conversation to bring SROs back to

Charlottesville High School (CHS). She questioned whether a lack of direct information about the policy discussions impacted the validity of their subsequent responses, agreeing or disagreeing with the model.

- Dr. Gurley provided context from the feedback sessions, stating that when some students expressed a lack of awareness, they indicated it was due to a lack of personal interest rather than a lack of available information, noting that the division had pushed out information across the school community following the initial Board vote. Ms. Bryant noted she was strictly referencing the data points displayed on the slide and shared anecdotal context from a recent meeting she and Ms. Burns had with student representatives, where a Black student representative expressed a lack of clarity on why the SRO reinstatement was being considered.
- Dr. Johnson clarified the timeline and scope of the survey, explaining that the questions were administered in May, shortly after the initial Board vote. She explained that while 72% of students were unaware of the specific board proceedings and votes, follow-up discussions revealed they fully understood the functional concept of an SRO or having law enforcement in the building due to past exposure or classroom discussions. Ms. Bryant reiterated her point, asking for agreement that if a large majority of students were unaware of the active proposal, their votes on whether they agreed or disagreed with bringing officers back could be skewed. Dr. Johnson acknowledged the point, confirming that students voted based on their general knowledge of law enforcement rather than the specific operational model being proposed by the administration.
- Ms. Burns noted that the data highlighted an opportunity for the division, suggesting that a lack of student awareness provides a clear direction for where targeted education and outreach regarding the SRO model are needed. Ms. Bryant concluded by noting that student engagement should not have been limited to the period after the vote, stating that because the SRO conversation had been ongoing for two years, there had been ample time to gather student feedback before the fall of 2025.
- Ms. Bryant asked for clarification regarding Care Safety Assistant (CSA) attendance at safety planning meetings. Ms. Bryant noted that a CSA reported her participation was limited because the meetings occurred during contract work hours and no coverage arrangements had been made with her building principal. Ms. Powell acknowledged that CSA representation had been inconsistent, averaging 50% to 60% of invited participants due to the daily operational demands of the school day, and noted that this specific scheduling conflict was the first time it had been brought to her attention.
- In response to Ms. Bryant's question regarding alternative methods used to incorporate CSA input, Ms. Powell outlined several initiatives. These included focus groups led by Dr. Gurley and Dr. Johnson, a full-day working session in August with the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) to discuss how CSAs and School Resource Officers (SROs) would operate within the same space, and dedicated feedback time during multiple Professional Learning (PL) days.
- Ms. Bryant shared feedback from an April 2 meeting she held with seven CSAs, noting that all seven indicated opposition to the return of SROs, with one requesting more information to better understand the proposed model. The CSAs also expressed a desire for more division outreach to include them in the policy conversation.
- Following an inquiry from Ms. Dooley regarding whether the CSAs expressed support for daily metal detectors, Ms. Bryant clarified that the feedback she received focused primarily on staffing logistics at school events. The CSAs noted that non-CSA personnel frequently volunteered to operate weapon detection systems at ticketed events and expressed a desire for formal training so they could assume those responsibilities. Additionally, Ms. Bryant noted that the CSAs shared accounts of past physical altercations at athletic games where present law enforcement officers did not intervene, leading them to question the operational purpose of adding SROs.
- Finally, Ms. Bryant reported that the CSAs expressed frustration over a perception that their roles are understood merely as "hall monitors," noting that they perform extensive student relationship-building and feel their operational value is diminished during the SRO reinstatement discussions. Ms. Dooley contested that takeaway, stating that the Board's past deliberations have not characterized the CSA role in that manner.
- Dr. Johnson concurred with the importance of maintaining an active dialogue, stating that feedback cannot rely solely on one-time focus groups. He emphasized the necessity of establishing ongoing, open

communication across the entire school community—including CSAs, educators, and building staff—regarding the development and implementation of the safety model.

- Dr. Johnson noted that previous focus groups revealed a strong interest in understanding the exact operational parameters of the SRO role, and a collective desire for further professional development. He concluded by informing the Board that, based on specific student and staff input, a comprehensive schedule of ongoing training and community conversations has been established for the summer to systematically address these outstanding questions and operational concerns.
- Ms. Bryant asked the research consultants to clarify the student demographics and backgrounds involved in their studies regarding the effectiveness of School Resource Officers (SROs), noting that peer-reviewed literature presents differing conclusions on the topic.
- Dr. Cornell stated that empirical research indicates SROs are generally well-regarded by a majority of students and school staff. He highlighted his recent study, published by the American Psychological Association, which analyzed threat assessment data from approximately 2,300 demographically and economically diverse schools across Florida. The study found that when SROs were involved in mandatory threat assessments, the resulting student arrest rate was below 1%, and no racial, socioeconomic, or disability-based disparities were detected in law enforcement actions such as arrests, court charges, or incarcerations.
- Ms. Bryant redirected the inquiry to Virginia-specific data, questioning how the data accounts for Black youth and students in economically disadvantaged or underserved urban areas that have a documented history of community-level law enforcement tension.
- Dr. Cornell drew a distinction between community-level law enforcement data and school-level data, noting that school interactions are far fewer in number and occur on a smaller scale. He explained that his Virginia data stems from more than a decade of statewide school climate surveys conducted alternately in roughly 500 middle schools and 320 high schools. Across all analyzed regions and demographics, the patterns remained consistent, showing that between 60% and 75% of students across all racial groups supported SROs, while over 90% of school staff expressed support regardless of race.
- Dr. Maeng added that this upward trend has remained consistent since 2017, specifically tracking high student and staff agreement with the survey prompts, "I feel safer in the school with an SRO" and "I feel like the SRO makes a positive contribution to this school."
- Ms. Bryant inquired if the data could be broken down further to show how perceptions change based on the racial composition of the student body or whether the race of the assigned SRO matches the demographics of a predominantly Black school. Dr. Maeng noted that the surveys do not collect the race of individual SROs to compare against student respondents. Dr. Cornell concluded by stating that when comparing predominantly white schools to predominantly non-white schools, the data still yields a similar breakdown, demonstrating that a majority of students across racial groups support the presence of an SRO.
- Ms. Bryant requested clarification regarding whether the Code of Virginia requires a School Resource Officer (SRO) to be physically present in a school building every academic day, or if the statutory requirement is simply met by providing a dedicated workspace for when their presence is needed. Lieutenant Wade responded that the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) model allocates two SROs primarily responsible for the high school and middle school, with the understanding that they would also respond to needs at other district schools. He stated that while the MOU requires them to have a dedicated area to conduct their work, it does not mandate that they remain continuously inside that specific office space on a day-to-day basis.
- Ms. Bryant referenced a previous information session where a community member suggested a "proximity model"—such as stationing an officer nearby at the baseball field rather than inside the building. She noted that the administration's past response stated the Code of Virginia legally prohibited this, but she was now gathering that a proximity-based model is technically permissible under state law if a workspace is provided. Lieutenant Wade clarified that the Code of Virginia outlines specific structural requirements for the workspace, including a secure area for recovered evidence and a private space for sensitive student consultations. He explained that the spirit of the state code is to integrate the officer as a member of the school community, though operational demands will frequently require them to leave

their assigned building to assist with matters like traffic concerns or school events at other district properties.

- Ms. Bryant concluded from the explanation that the Code of Virginia does not technically mandate daily, stationary building placement to execute a legal MOU. She then asked Dr. Gurley to clarify previous statements, indicating that the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) was entirely unwilling to negotiate an MOU that did not station SROs directly inside the school buildings. Dr. Gurley confirmed that Chief Kochis had previously stated that if SROs were not stationed in the schools, an MOU would be unnecessary because the document itself is structurally designed around the SRO role. However, he noted that the specific model being presented was developed by an internal Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) cross-functional workgroup rather than Chief Kochis.
- Ms. Powell provided additional legal context from the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). She explained that under Virginia Code Section 9.1-114.1, all compulsory minimum training standards for SROs are fundamentally designed around the premise that the officers are based inside a school building rather than operating from a patrol vehicle or an exterior parking lot, creating an operational challenge if the division attempts to utilize them outside of a school-based model.
- Lieutenant Wade then transitioned to reviewing a list of frequently asked questions regarding the SRO model. Addressing the requirement of firearms, he stated that as sworn law enforcement officers under both state policy and CPD definitions, SROs are required to carry a firearm, noting that they utilize specialized multi-step retention holsters to ensure weapon security.
- Lieutenant Wade addressed student discipline, stating unequivocally that SROs will not enforce the school code of conduct or student rights and responsibilities, as student discipline remains the exclusive responsibility of school administration. Regarding physical altercations, he noted that managing daily student interactions is the job of school staff, but SROs may intervene if there is an imminent threat to personal safety or upon the direct request of school administrators. Lieutenant Wade concluded by addressing whether SRO presence leads to an increase in student criminal charges, stating that the proposed MOU explicitly directs officers to defer to school disciplinary procedures over criminal charges whenever practical, even if the student behavior technically meets the legal elements of a criminal offense.
- Mr. Meyer expressed appreciation for the comprehensive safety and security update presentation, stating that the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was a purpose-built model tailored to the school division's specific needs and should move forward.
- Ms. Bryant introduced a motion to rescind the Board's March 27, 2025, vote that authorized the return of School Resource Officers (SROs) to schools. In support of the motion, she cited student feedback regarding the presence of armed personnel, a lack of clarity regarding the data linking safety outcomes to the SRO model, and outstanding data requests. Ms. Richardson seconded the motion.
- Ms. Torres requested clarification on the specific mechanism of the motion, confirming that the action was a formal move to rescind and reverse the Board's prior March 27, 2025, approval. Ms. Bryant clarified the voting parameters for the record, stating that an "aye" or "yes" vote represented a vote to rescind the policy and eliminate the SRO model moving forward, while a "no" vote represented a vote to maintain the prior March 2025 decision to implement SROs. Ms. Richardson added that a revote was appropriate to allow full participation, noting that Ms. Cooper was absent during the initial vote and that the Board's composition had since changed.

Ms. Bryant introduced a motion to rescind the action taken by the Board at its March 27, 2025 meeting, which had authorized the implementation of the School Resource Officer (SRO) model. Ms. Richardson seconded the motion. Following clarification of the voting parameters, Chair Torres called for a roll-call vote, and the motion failed on a 3-3-1 tie vote, with Ms. Bryant, Ms. Cooper, and Ms. Richardson voting aye (yes); Ms. Burns, Ms. Dooley, and Mr. Meyer voting nay (no); and Ms. Torres abstained.

- Following the roll-call vote, Ms. Torres clarified for the record that rescinding a previous Board action without prior notice requires a two-thirds majority, meaning five affirmative votes would have been necessary to pass the motion. Ms. Bryant then inquired about introducing a subsequent motion to place the SRO discussion on the agenda for the upcoming May board meeting, suggesting that a delay would

afford the Board additional time to digest the evening's data and feedback. Ms. Torres noted that the topic was already actively being discussed by the present body, but stated that future placement remains at the will of the Board. Ms. Torres expressed personal conflict regarding the evening's abrupt procedural actions, stating that while the original March 2025 vote felt rushed and disorganized, the current motion to rescind similarly restricted the Board's opportunity for structured, comprehensive deliberation. Ms. Richardson expressed support for revisiting the SRO topic in May to allow for further discussion or a potential future revote, requesting that Ms. Torres clarify her current stance on the policy.

- Ms. Torres stated that her foundational stance and comfort level had remained unchanged since the previous year, but noted that her active, intentional participation in the cross-functional working committee had significantly shaped her perspective. She expressed gratitude for public input—specifically citing a community list of safety concerns and a community-drafted MOU—and noted that the committee had openly integrated those items into their deliberations. Ms. Torres explained that while she does not consider herself strictly "pro-SRO," she views the proposed framework as a uniquely tailored "Charlottesville model" built with strict operational guardrails. She clarified that the model closely mirrors the proximity concepts previously requested by the community; rather than having officers constantly patrolling hallways or classrooms, the single assigned officer would primarily remain in a stationary workspace, frequently shifting out of the building to support other district properties. Furthermore, Ms. Torres highlighted built-in accountability measures established by the committee, including mandatory data collection on student-officer interaction demographics, quarterly administrative report-outs to the Board, and a provision granting building administrators the authority to immediately remove an officer from the building if an interaction fails to meet division standards.
- Ms. Bryant asked Ms. Torres to clarify if she was weighing the institutional labor of the working group more heavily than the concerns and feedback voiced by community members. Ms. Dooley interjected, stating that the roll-call vote had already been finalized and that Ms. Torres should not be put in a defensive position. Ms. Bryant maintained that she was simply seeking clarification on the comments introduced during the discussion, and Ms. Torres responded that she does not weigh one consideration over the other. Ms. Bryant concluded by asking if Ms. Torres still maintained her previously recorded stance that the available data did not support reintroducing SROs, or if the evening's presentation had changed her view. Ms. Torres concluded the exchange by stating she was not prepared to answer that question at that time.
- Ms. Burns requested structural clarification from the Board regarding Ms. Bryant's proposal, asking if it was the collective will of the body to officially place the SRO policy on the May meeting agenda as a formal discussion item. Ms. Bryant confirmed her request, noting that a future agenda placement would also provide Ms. Torres with a broader opportunity to share any further deliberate thoughts on the matter. Dr. Gurley provided a point of parliamentary clarification under Robert's Rules of Order, advising the Board that while the SRO topic can freely be placed on the next agenda as an exploratory discussion item, any subsequent action or formal re-vote on the matter would legally require the introduction of new information or a change in circumstances.
- Ms. Bryant introduced a motion to add the SRO policy to the next meeting agenda as a discussion item. Ms. Burns corrected the procedural mechanism, noting that placing a topic on a future agenda as a discussion item is determined by establishing the general "will of the board" rather than through a formal floor motion. Ms. Richardson inquired whether new information had been introduced during the prior March 2025 meeting when the initial SRO deployment vote occurred. Ms. Burns responded that a vote on the SRO model had not been listed on that evening's published agenda, noting that the board had altered the planned order of business to vote on the item. Ms. Richardson noted that, per Dr. Gurley's earlier parliamentary clarification, the Board would be unable to hold a binding vote at the next meeting unless new evidence or data were presented.
- Ms. Bryant then called for an informal poll to gauge if it was the will of the board to advance the topic as a May discussion item. Ms. Dooley expressed opposition, while Ms. Richardson expressed support. Ms. Cooper requested clarity regarding the exact scope and objective of a subsequent discussion. Ms. Bryant stated that the session would allow members to address remaining follow-up items and afford individuals adequate time to record their complete perspectives before the issue was finalized, noting

Ms. Torres's earlier comment about wanting an opportunity to speak. Ms. Torres clarified that she had successfully covered her major highlights during the evening's meeting.

- Ms. Cooper stated that she did not believe further discussion would alter Ms. Torres's position, referencing her recent abstention on the vote to rescind. Mr. Meyer noted that the Board had already discussed the SRO policy extensively, and Ms. Torres recorded that the consensus of the body was to decline adding the topic as a future discussion item. Ms. Bryant concluded by asking a final clarifying question regarding whether the required threshold would have changed if her initial motion had been framed as a "revote" rather than a "motion to rescind." Ms. Torres confirmed that the voting threshold would remain unaffected because any action that reverses a previously adopted policy is legally classified as rescinding a prior action under parliamentary law.

9.1 Comments from Members of the Community:

- Nikuyah Walker (Former Charlottesville Mayor & Community Member) addressed the Board in opposition to the SRO model, citing a lack of institutional memory and adult accountability. Referencing the book *Cultivating Genius*, Ms. Walker stated that the division was scapegoating students for a lack of administrative innovation. Ms. Walker clarified that the 2020 removal of officers was not just a response to national events, but followed a local incident where a Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) officer physically used force against a student inside a classroom. She also highlighted a 2012 regional gang task force assessment (the GRACE initiative), stating it had improperly used school data to criminalize local families. Characterizing CPD as a historically racist institution, Ms. Walker concluded that returning stationed officers to a city law enforcement views as a high-crime environment would inevitably lead to a resurgence of school-based student arrests.
- Tanesha Hudson (Community Member) addressed the Board, critiquing the provided emergency metrics for lacking specific breakdowns on medical calls, drug infractions, suspension lengths, or injury rates from school fights. While supporting SRO placement at the high school level, Ms. Hudson stated that law enforcement does not belong in every building, citing a past elementary school incident where an officer used physical force on a five-year-old student. She recommended implementing proactive drug prevention programs over a standard police presence. In closing, Ms. Hudson expressed dissatisfaction with the meeting's tone, criticizing several veteran Board members for a perceived dismissive attitude toward questions raised by student representatives and newer colleagues.
- Shannon Gillikin (President, Charlottesville Education Association) addressed the Board, thanking Ms. Richardson, Ms. Cooper, and Ms. Bryant for their data analysis and accountability. She expressed frustration that the division failed to provide definitive answers requested by staff for two years, contrasting it with the extensive metrics classroom teachers must maintain on individual young students.
- Ms. Gillikin criticized the procedural barriers that triggered a two-thirds threshold for the evening's motion to rescind, asserting that the lack of prior notice resulted from leadership's refusal to place the SRO policy on the published agenda. In closing, she challenged Board members to actively utilize their governance power to represent the public interest rather than abdicating or abstaining during critical debates.
- Harper Ullrich (CHS Student & Former Student Representative) addressed the Board, thanking the community, administration, and Board members for their dedication to the student body. Acknowledging the heightened emotions in the room, Ms. Ullrich emphasized that widespread disagreement over a policy indicates that the decision carries genuine meaning and importance to the community. In closing, Ms. Ullrich stated that regardless of the specific policy outcome, the division must move forward as a unified community to ensure the long-term safety and success of every student in Charlottesville.
- Sena Magill (Community Member) requested clarification regarding the Board's parliamentary voting thresholds. She questioned if the motion to rescind required a two-thirds majority (five votes) solely because it was introduced during a work session without prior public agenda notice, and asked if placing a formal action item or vote explicitly on a future published agenda would lower the requirement back to a standard simple majority. Chair Torres responded that no Board member had submitted a request to

add an action item or a formal vote to the evening's published agenda, prompting Ms. Magill to verbally petition the Board to place the vote on an upcoming agenda.

10.1 Board Member Comments:

- Ms. Bryant concluded the discussion by addressing the Board regarding the procedural history of the meeting and the division's data gaps. She clarified that a formal request had been submitted to the Chair and Vice Chair the previous month to place the SRO policy on the regular voting agenda, which would have permitted a standard simple majority vote. However, she was informed that leadership declined to use their administrative discretion to add the item, requiring instead a full "will of the board" consensus, which ultimately led to the creation of the current work session. Ms. Bryant stated that she believed the work session structure was utilized to stall legislative action and allow staff extra time to compile metrics, making the high number of unanswered data requests during the meeting highly concerning. She challenged the institutional talking points that the division had been preparing this model for two years, noting that a total absence of concrete numbers regarding student/officer interactions and local community engagement was unacceptable a full year after the initial policy vote.
- Ms. Bryant emphasized that while she could pragmatically collaborate on other division matters under an active SRO model, she would not compromise her governance values by endorsing a major safety expansion that lacked complete, empirical data. She highlighted severe racial disparities within the division's preliminary student feedback data, noting that a recent student survey sample included roughly 50 white respondents compared to only six Black respondents, rendering any broad claims of student comfort demographically skewed and incomplete. Echoing earlier public comment from local educators, Ms. Bryant questioned why individual classroom teachers are held to rigorous data compliance standards for daily instruction while the central administration failed to demonstrate a matching level of professional competence on a division-wide safety policy. In closing, she requested that Dr. Gurley establish strict administrative accountability to follow up on the missing data points, urging her colleagues to stand firmly by their stated equity goals and exercise their elected governing authority rather than abdicating it.
- Ms. Burns concluded the board comments by acknowledging the importance of reintroducing the SRO discussion, welcoming the lived experiences and distinct perspectives that Ms. Bryant brought as a newly elected member. While recognizing that the initial March 2025 vote to return SROs to schools felt abrupt to many stakeholders, Ms. Burns asserted that the decision provided a definitive path forward, allowing the division to be highly intentional in developing an MOU centered on community input, clear transparency, and robust operational guardrails. She emphasized her ongoing commitment to a balanced, comprehensive safety model that prioritizes inclusion, student well-being, and a positive school climate, expressing hope that ideological disagreements over this specific policy would not overshadow the Board's strong, ongoing alignment on the vast majority of division issues.
- Addressing the outstanding data concerns, Ms. Burns confirmed that she had formally requested the administration to transmit the complete student survey results to the full Board as soon as they were compiled. She recalled a recent collaborative meeting with Ms. Bryant and current student representatives where they proactively identified that responses from Black, brown, and immigrant students were severely underrepresented in the preliminary data pool. Ms. Burns noted that they had successfully brainstormed targeted outreach strategies with the student leaders—such as pushing survey access directly into walk periods, AVID programs, English language learner classes, and fine arts seminars—to ensure the feedback reflected a demographically diverse cross-section of the student body rather than an isolated cohort of peers. In closing, Ms. Burns thanked the student representatives for their ongoing leadership and extended a public invitation to community critics, noting that if individuals believed they could govern the division more effectively, they should consider running for the school board in the next election cycle.
- Ms. Cooper thanked staff for their work on the presentation but requested that future safety data be explicitly broken down by specific call-for-service types—such as fire alarms or drug infractions—to allow the Board to accurately assess true operational patterns. Ms. Cooper stated that public comments from

the evening had successfully jogged her memory regarding the specific local factors that precipitated the 2020 removal of SROs. She recalled a historical community incident during her time living on South First Street where a group of African American students who wore matching graffiti-styled shirts to school were systematically targeted as a gang, which subsequently led to them being tracked by law enforcement within their own neighborhoods.

- Ms. Cooper emphasized that while structurally privileged families may never witness or experience this type of systemic profiling, the realities of law enforcement tracking and data gathering through institutional threat assessments remain a very real, valid concern for students living in low-income or subsidized housing. She concluded by stating that while she acknowledges the current MOU framework is in place, she remains deeply skeptical of the model, confirming that her foundational position has always been opposed to the return of SROs and that she did not plan on altering her stance.
- Ms. Richardson thanked the panelists and presenters for their work, acknowledging the heightened emotional nature of the evening's discussions and public comments. She noted that the reinstatement of SROs had been a central focus for Ms. Burns since her election campaign, expressing hope that the incoming officers would successfully achieve the positive student impacts that proponents had promised. However, Ms. Richardson stated that because she had never personally witnessed or heard of an SRO positively changing a student's life trajectory, she remained skeptical of the model and characterized past anecdotal assertions from Ms. Burns and Ms. Powell as hearsay due to a lack of verifiable tracking metrics.
- Reconfirming her foundational opposition to returning law enforcement to schools, Ms. Richardson emphasized that while her policy stance remained unchanged, she would pragmatically move forward to support the student body alongside her colleagues. She stated that both she and the broader Charlottesville community would maintain strict oversight of the program's rollout. In closing, Ms. Richardson stressed that the Board must be directly included in the interview and selection panels for incoming personnel, demanding that the division conduct exhaustive, intensive background screenings on any officer assigned to school buildings.
- Ms. Dooley reaffirmed her ongoing support for the SRO model, stating that her vote to maintain the policy was accompanied by serious reservations and a strict commitment to rigorous MOU enforcement, oversight, and operational accountability. She expressed appreciation for Ms. Bryant's consistent emphasis on empirical metrics, promising to collaborate directly with her to expect and demand complete data reporting as the Board oversees the upcoming programmatic rollout and long-term operation of the law enforcement partnership.
- Chair Torres concluded the Board's comments by acknowledging the difficult nature of the evening's proceedings and reaffirming her commitment to maintaining strict oversight of the SRO program's implementation. She noted that the inclusion of strict accountability measures was a personal prerequisite for her continued service on the working committee, stating she would remain actively involved in monitoring the framework from start to finish. In closing, Chair Torres expressed gratitude to Dr. Gurley and the administrative team for compiling the materials and coordinating the evening's work session.

11.1 Work Session Wrap-Up: There were no requests from the Board.

12.1 Upcoming Meetings: Ms. Torres read the list of upcoming meetings.

13.1 Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 10:23 pm.