

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, January 4, 2024 ~ 6:00 P.M.
Suffolk City Hall, 442 W. Washington Street, Suffolk, VA 23434

Board Members Present:

Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck
Phyllis Byrum
Heather Howell
Karen Jenkins
Tyron Riddick
Kimberly Slingluff

Administrative Staff Present:

Dr. John B. Gordon III, *Superintendent*
Wendell M. Waller, *School Board Attorney*
Tarshia L. Gardner, *Clerk*
Keesha Johnson, *Deputy Clerk*

OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING/WORK SESSION

➤ Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Dr. John B. Gordon III, Division Superintendent.

➤ Pledge of Allegiance:

Dr. Gordon led all in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The moment of silence and recital of the SPS mission were not observed at the organizational meeting.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, CLERK AND DEPUTY CLERK

➤ Nominations for Chairperson:

Board Member Dr. Brittingham nominated Board Member Howell.
Board Member Byrum nominated Board Member Jenkins.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was:

Heather Howell: three (3) votes (Dr. Brittingham/Howell/Slingluff)

Karen Jenkins: three (3) votes (Dr. Brooks-Buck/Byrum/Jenkins)

Abstain: 1 (Riddick).

The vote was tied, 3 to 3 to 1.

Dr. Gordon recessed the meeting at 6:04 p.m. for five (5) minutes.

Dr. Gordon called the meeting back to order at 6:09 p.m., opening with a discussion session for Board Members. Board Members shared reasons for their support of Board Members Howell and Jenkins for the position of Chairperson.

There being no further discussion, Dr. Gordon asked for nominations for School Board Chair.

Board Member Dr. Brittingham nominated Board Member Howell.
Board Member Byrum nominated Board Member Jenkins.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was:

Board Member Heather Howell: two (2) votes (Dr. Brittingham/Slingluff)

Board Member Jenkins: four (4) votes (Dr. Brooks-Buck/Byrum/Howell/Jenkins)

Abstain: 1 (Riddick).

The vote was 4 to 2 to 1.

Dr. Gordon introduced Mrs. Jenkins as the new Board Chair for the 2024 calendar year. After a shift in seating, Board Chair Jenkins received the gavel and proceeded to preside over the remainder of the meeting.

➤ Nominations for Vice-Chairperson:

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck nominated Board Member Howell.

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to close nominations and approve the nomination of Board Member Heather Howell for Vice-Chairperson.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The vote was 7 to 0.

Chair Jenkins named Board Member Heather Howell as Vice-Chair.

➤ Appointment of Clerk and Deputy Clerk through December 31, 2024

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to appoint Tarshia Gardner as Board Clerk and Keesha Johnson as Deputy Clerk through December 31, 2024.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

SETTING OF SALARIES

➤ Setting of School Board Members and Chair Salaries:

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Members Riddick and Byrum seconded the motion to approve the salary of \$10,000 for Board Members and \$11,400 for the School Board Chair. These salaries are to remain the same as in the previous year.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

SETTING OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

➤ Setting of School Board Meetings for the 2024 Calendar Year:

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Slingluff seconded the motion to keep board meetings on the 2nd Thursday of each month at Suffolk City Council Chamber with the Public Meeting (work session and closed meeting) beginning at 5 p.m. and the re-opening of the Public Meeting at 7 p.m.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

- Approval of Board Member Appointments to Standing Committees and Foundation Boards:
Board Member Riddick moved to keep all committee appointments as is for the remainder of the year. Mr. Riddick further clarified the committees he referenced to include:

- ACCESS College Foundation Board of Directors
- Governor's School for the Arts
- SECEP Board
- Suffolk Education Foundation
- WHRO/HRETA Educational Advisory Board

Board Chair Jenkins recessed the meeting for 10 minutes to collaborate with Vice-Chair Howell to review the committees and make appointments.

Board Chair Jenkins called the meeting back to order and proceeded to make appointments to the following committees:

- Finance Committee
Karen Jenkins, Kimberly Slingluff – Members
Heather Howell – Alternate
- School Board Policy Review Committee
Heather Howell, Phyllis Byrum, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck – Members
Kimberly Slingluff – Alternate
- Legislative Committee
Tyron Riddick, Dr. Dawn Brittingham, Kimberly Slingluff – Members
Karen Jenkins – Alternate
- Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) Voting Delegate and Alternate
Karen Jenkins – Delegate
Heather Howell – Alternate

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion to approve the Committees appointments as indicated by Board Chair Jenkins.

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

Attorney Waller provided clarification regarding the initial motion made by Board Member Riddick to keep the committee appointments the same, which was not seconded.

Board Member Riddick moved and Board Member Dr. Brittingham seconded the motion to approve the Foundation Boards appointments to remain the same for the school year:

- ACCESS College Foundation Board of Directors
Kimberly Slingluff – Member
Karen Jenkins – Alternate
- Governor's School for the Arts
Tyron Riddick – Member
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck – Alternate
- SECEP Board
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck – Member

- Dr. Dawn Brittingham – Alternate
- Suffolk Education Foundation
 - Karen Jenkins – Member
 - Heather Howell – Alternate
- WHRO/HRETA Educational Advisory Board
 - Kimberly Slingsluff – Member
 - Tyron Riddick – Alternate

Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S DESIGNEES

- Superintendent's Designees to Execute Documents/Appear at Meetings in Absence of the Superintendent:

Board Member Dr. Brooks-Buck moved and Board Member Riddick seconded the motion to appoint Dr. Okema Branch, Chief Academic Officer and Dr. Rodney Brown, Chief of Administrative Services as the Superintendent's Designees as recommended by the School Superintendent.

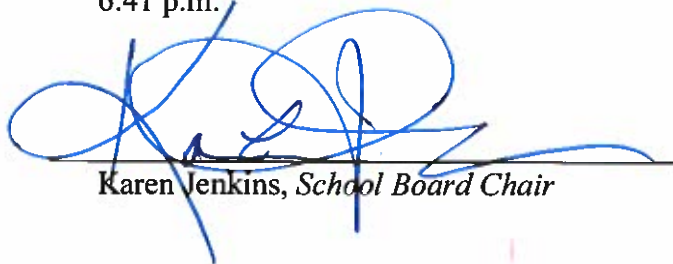
Upon roll-call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 / Nay: 0 / Abstain: 0. The motion passed by vote of 7 to 0.

Chair Jenkins stated that she looked forward to continuing the accomplishments of former Chair Riddick and hoped for the continued support of Suffolk Public Schools from the community to ensure that students will remain first, along with faculty and staff. She also vowed to work to continue making strides so that Suffolk Public Schools will remain the division that others look up to as they work to implement SPS practices in their division. She wished everyone well and adjourned the meeting.

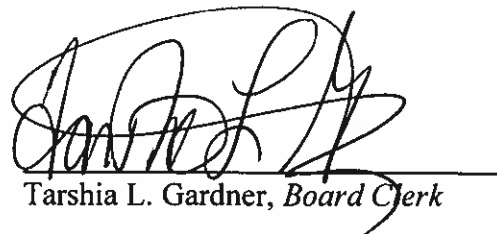
ADJOURNMENT

- Adjournment of Meeting:

Board Chair Jenkins adjourned the January 4, 2024 School Board Organizational Meeting at 6:41 p.m.



Karen Jenkins, *School Board Chair*



Tarshia L. Gardner, *Board Clerk*