

**Prince William County  
Public Schools**

**Superintendent's Advisory  
Council on Instruction**

# Annual Report

***2018-2019 Academic Year***

Adopted by the  
Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction  
May 16, 2019

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## Introduction

Each year, the Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction (the Council) submits an annual report to the Superintendent of Schools. This report:

- Documents the Council's activities during the school year
- Provides the Council's recommendations and views on issues for consideration
- Serves as a source of information for local School Advisory Councils, parent organizations, community groups, and local school administrators.

The annual report is part of the Council's on-going communication strategy to share Council activities, ideas, and recommendations with the Superintendent, administrators, individual School Advisory Councils, and the community at large.

### *Organization of the Council*

The Council was established in the Fall of 1996 to promote communication between the Office of Student Learning and Accountability (previously the Office of Instruction) and parent representatives from each of the schools in the Division. The Council provides advice from parents and members of the community on curriculum and instructional program planning to the Division Superintendent. The Council is the only Divisionwide parent advisory body whose membership includes a representative from each school.

Council membership is comprised of:

- A parent or guardian representative from each Prince William County Public School who currently has at least one student enrolled in the school the parent or guardian represents. Throughout the report, the term "parent(s)" shall be construed to mean parent(s) and/or guardian(s).

Council membership **may** also include:

- A representative from each of the other concurrent Prince William County School instructional advisory councils and committees such as Gifted Education, Special Education, and Vocational Education
- Representatives from business, civic, or other citizen groups of Prince William County. At-large members may or may not have students enrolled in Prince William County Public Schools.

For the 2018-2019 Academic Year, the Council was comprised solely of parent representatives from each of the schools in the Division, with 93 of 98 schools being represented at Council meetings. See Appendix I for a complete membership list.

Council officers are elected by the Council membership. The Council Chair is assisted by three Vice Chairs representing each Level (Elementary, Middle, and High School) and elected by the school representatives from that Level. The Executive Committee also includes a Secretary elected from the general membership. The Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability serves as the Council's chief advisor and appoints a member of his/her staff to serve as the Council's facilitator.

The Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability, the Council's facilitator, and the Council Chair developed a schedule of meetings for the 2018-2019 Academic Year. See Appendix II for the 2018-2019 Yearly Agenda.

The Council's bylaws, yearly agenda, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes for the year were provided to each Council member and are posted on the Council's webpage on the pwcs.edu website.

### ***Functions of the Council***

The Council has three functions: advisory, oversight, and advocacy. To fulfill these three functions, the Council has the following responsibilities:

- Review the curriculum, instructional programs, and instructional priorities of the Division
- Provide guidance for improving, expanding, and implementing curriculum and instructional initiatives
- Communicate information on current programs, new initiatives, and implementation strategies to parents, guardians, students, and organizations within the school community.

The Council accomplishes these responsibilities through the following actions:

- Reviewing the instructional plan of Student Learning and Accountability and its proposed implementation
- Reviewing the School Division budget
- Reviewing the current curriculum and instructional priorities to aid in the determination of Divisionwide initiatives
- Evaluating Divisionwide needs and priorities
- Reviewing strategies for meeting Divisionwide needs and implementing new programs
- Providing information, as needed, on current priorities, new initiatives, and implementation strategies to parents, guardians, students, and other members of organizations within the school community, as well as other advisory groups
- Fulfilling other responsibilities as requested by the Division Superintendent.

### ***Guiding Principles***

Since its inception in 1996, the Council has adhered to seven guiding principles:

1. The School Division should maintain high academic standards, continuity in applying those standards within every school and to every student, and consistency in implementing standards and initiatives throughout the School Division from kindergarten through grade twelve.
2. For any new curriculum or instructional initiative, there must be a corresponding professional development component.
3. The use of technology should be appropriately incorporated into instruction.
4. Each new curriculum or instructional initiative must include an evaluation component; and, once the initiative has been implemented, there must be a comprehensive, on-going evaluation of its effectiveness.
5. Communication must include listening and responding to achieve a well-informed and involved school community.
6. The School Division should incorporate a streamlined process to collect, store, and exchange information and best practices.
7. The education of all students—regardless of economic condition, disabilities, learning requirements, English proficiency, or cultural and ethnic background—is the duty of all

members of the School Division: administrators, faculty, and staff have a joint responsibility to help all students succeed.

## **Topics of the Council for the 2018-2019 Academic Year**

As representatives from various schools gathered to develop this report, they reflected on the many presentations and conversations that took place during the year as members of the Council, as well as the views, priorities, and needs of the individual schools and advisory councils represented. Each month the Council conducted a work session to articulate commendations, questions, and concerns relating to a specific topic identified in the 2017-2018 Annual Report. At the next month's meeting, these ideas were addressed by the administrative staff. During the report-writing meeting, these topics were reviewed to determine the areas of commendation to spotlight and to identify any lingering questions or concerns related to the topic.

### ***Commendations***

The Council recognizes that the Division has many programs and policies in place that provide our students with an outstanding education. The Council is grateful to the dedicated teachers and staff within the Division. Many go above and beyond each day to serve the students in their care. Their effort, energy, and enthusiasm are reflected in the students and the schools that they serve. The Council would like to acknowledge specific areas of Division excellence in relation to the topics addressed by the Council this year. The Council urges the continuation of the cited programs and/or policies by the Division, as well as the requisite funding necessary to support such efforts.

The Council would like to highlight:

- Improved communication including effective dissemination of information in crisis situations, Divisionwide newsletter, and Dr. Walts' presence on Twitter
- Flexibility of the transportation department to increase efficiency of bus routes
- Offering of activity buses
- Technology improvements including increased bandwidth
- The Division's respect of diversity in the schools and its focus on increasing diversity at the administrative level
- Increased focus on mental health including additional staffing and funding
- Expanded access to recess
- Specialty programs
- Opportunities for career and technical training
- STEAM in the schools
- Multiple formats for parental input and engagement in the school Division. This includes Advisory Councils and the efforts to standardize them, Parent Information Camps, the Watch D.O.G.S. program, and the Best Practices Conference for Parents
- Site-based management
- Improving infrastructure
- Increasing pay for faculty
- Putting safety first when inclement weather arises
- Programs to refurbish old computers and give them to elementary schools
- Programs, clubs, and activities offered throughout the Division
- Business partnerships

- Safety improvements including the hiring of retired police officers to assist with school security.

### ***Best Practices Conference for Parents***

On February 14, 2019, the Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction (SACI) hosted parents representing Principal's Advisory Councils (PACs) and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs, as well as PTAs and PTSOs) at Forest Park High School to share practices that individual schools were excelling at within their own communities. Highlights from this conference are presented in Appendix III.

### ***Mental Health***

The Council was presented with an overview of mental health supports in PWCS including information on some of the programs and workshops offered to school employees and students. Information was also shared on the proposed budget which would provide additional funding and staffing to support mental health efforts within the Division.

- The Council requests further information on:
  - The mental health curriculum provided to students
- The Council recommends:
  - Increased dissemination of information on mental health resources at all levels, including the elementary schools

### ***Substitute Teachers***

The Council was provided information on PWCS requisites for substitute teachers including expectations for written and oral English proficiency. Discussions included the fees charged for optional substitute teacher training and the possibility of permanent assignment of substitutes to specific schools.

- The Council requests additional information on:
  - The steps being taken to build up and improve the substitute teacher pool
  - The criteria for long term substitute teachers
  - Expectations for sub plans created by teachers. Is there a Divisionwide policy or is it site-based? Are teachers expected to provide information about students with disabilities or special needs to the substitutes?
  - Additional information on the hiring process and requirements, including written and oral English proficiency
- The Council recommends:
  - Improved standardized screening of potential substitute teachers, including a brief interview prior to being offered employment
  - Improved standardized training of substitute teachers
  - Eliminating fees for substitute training

### ***Expanded Access to Recess and Movement Opportunities***

The Council received an update on Virginia HB1419/SB273 which expanded recess in elementary schools and its resulting impact on recess in PWCS. Three options that schools could choose for the implementation of the additional recess time were shared with the Council.

- The Council recommends:
  - Expanding recess/mental breaks to **all** school levels

### ***Communication***

The Council was informed of technological updates taking place within the Division, as well as information on plans for the next 5 years. The Council was also apprised of the various methods of communication utilized throughout the Division, including the website, the MYPWCS app, PWCS TV, social media accounts, and Positively PWCS announcements.

- The Council requests additional information on:
  - The transition to and the benefits of the “Hub” (Student Information System)
- The Council recommends:
  - Improving consistency in communication flow both from teachers to parents and from the Division level to the site level

### ***Advisory Councils***

The Council was presented with the updated School Advisory Council Regulation (230.01-1).

- The Council requests additional information on:
  - Improving parental engagement
  - Providing information and receiving support from the community
  - The look and function of a School Advisory Council
  - Training provided to School Advisory Councils

### **Topics of Interest for the 2019-2020 Academic Year**

During the report-writing Council session held during our April meeting, members identified additional areas that provided the best opportunities for meaningful improvement to the Division at all levels.

- **Use of Electronic Devices and Online Safety-** The primary topic of interest of the overall Council is the use of electronic devices by students within the school as well as curricula addressing online safety to include social media and cyberbullying.
- **Curriculum changes-** The top area of interest raised by the elementary school representatives is providing further information on the process by which curriculum changes occur and how these changes are communicated to the school community.
- **Communications-** The top area of interest raised by the middle school representatives is communication and the consistency of both information flow between schools and families and the use of available tools.
- **Grading-** The top area of interest raised by the high school representatives is the impact of the new standards-based grading policy.

## Appendix I: 2018-2019 Council Membership

### *Elected Officers*

Ms. Karen Martin <i>Chairman</i>	
Ms. Vanessa Olson <i>Recording Secretary (Leesylvania ES)</i>	Ms. Elizabeth Hernandez <i>Elementary School Vice Chair (Rockledge ES)</i>
Angela Roth <i>Middle School Vice Chair (Saunders MS)</i>	Sally Buie <i>High School Vice Chair (Colgan HS)</i>

### *School Representatives and Alternates*

#### **Elementary Schools**

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Alvey Elementary	Ms Alison Mkes	Ms. Jen Roach
Antietam Elementary	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
Ashland Elementary	Ms. Lynda Hewitt	Ms. Melinda East
Bel Air Elementary	Ms. Margareth Alvarado	Ms. Lucille Cahill
Belmont Elementary	Ms. Nicole Chamblin	Ms. Brenda Paniagua
Bennett Elementary	Ms. Tania Thamm	<i>None</i>
Bristow Run Elementary	Ms. Stephanie Aspinwall	<i>None</i>
Buckland Mills Elementary	Ms. Holly Murray	Ms. Lori Simber
Cedar Point Elementary	Ms. Jessica Alvarez	<i>None</i>
Chris Yung Elementary	Ms. Kathryn Ter Weele	Mr. Tim Mahoney
Covington-Harper	Mr. Scott Peters	<i>None</i>
Coles Elementary	Ms. Sharene Melvin	<i>None</i>
Dale City Elementary	Ms. Adrienne Lacaniale	<i>None</i>
Dumfries Elementary	Mrs. Marjorie Thomas	<i>None</i>
Ellis Elementary	Ms. Tabatha Carlson	<i>None</i>
Enterprise Elementary	Ms. Judy Sands	<i>None</i>
Featherstone Elementary	Ms. Nuslys Gomez	<i>None</i>
Fitzgerald Elementary	Ms. Tyesha Shaw	<i>None</i>
Glenkirk Elementary	Ms. Tracy Hladky	<i>None</i>
Gravelly Elementary	Ms. Tulip Saad	<i>None</i>



School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Haymarket Elementary	Mr. Jason Thorpe	Ms. Renee Roush
Henderson Elementary	Ms. Jen Carter	None
Kerrydale Elementary	Ms. Shanelle Ferringer	None
Kilby Elementary	Ms. Nikenge DeJesus	Ms. Kimmy Moore
King Elementary	Ms. Amy Butler	Ms. Valerie Tolan
Kyle Wilson Elementary	Ms. Letitia Marsh	Mr. Aabram Marsh
Lake Ridge Elementary	Ms. Lindsay Roye	Mr. David Larrimore
Leesylvania Elementary	Ms. Vanessa Olson	Ms. Christina Jenkins
Loch Lomond Elementary	Ms. Leigh Ellen Baca	None
Marshall Elementary	Ms. Katherine Pierret	None
Marumsc Hills Elementary	Ms. Magdalena Buleje	Mr. Kevin Stewart
Mary Williams Elementary	M Hassan Conteh	Ms. Candice Johnson
McAuliffe Elementary	Ms. Michelle Dawson	None
Minnieville Elementary	Mr. Tracy Blake	None
Montclair Elementary	Ms. Paula Voith	None
Mountain View Elementary	Ms. Katie Giusti	None
Mullen Elementary	Ms. Yvette Brown	Ms. Ciara Maxwell
Neabsco Elementary	Ms. Antonia Ingersoll	None
The Nokesville School	Ms. Terri Snoots	Ms. Sonya Jacob
Occoquan Elementary	Ms. Ann Marie White	None
Old Bridge Elementary	Mr. Jeff Borek	Ms. Shanna Mead
Pattie Elementary	Ms. Gerta Bledsoe	Ms. Trisha Helchinger
Penn Elementary	Ms. Megan McCourt	None
Piney Branch Elementary	Ms. Tracy Houchens	Ms. Tabrina Thomas
Potomac View Elementary	Ms. Edythe Joppy	None
River Oaks Elementary	Mr. Bill Nau	Ms. Vanhanda Harris
Rockledge Elementary	Ms. Elizabeth Hernandez	None
Rosa Parks Elementary	Mr. Michael Dugger	None

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Signal Hill Elementary	Ms. Staci King	Ms. Stephanie Thomas
Sinclair Elementary	Mr. Jim Stein	None
Springwoods Elementary	Ms. Shiloh Dorgan	Ms. Anastasia Prado
Sudley Elementary	Ms. Mercedes Pocasangre	Mr. Carlos Ayala
Swans Creek Elementary	Ms. Lisa Darcy	Ms. Sharon Hall
T. Clay Wood Elementary	Mr. Chad Booher	None
Triangle Elementary	Ms. Krystal Thurston	None
Tyler Elementary	Ms. Lisa Kobyra	Mr. Charles Proffitt
Vaughan Elementary	M Xochitl Lopez Gascon	None
Victory Elementary	Ms. Christina Devers	None
West Gate Elementary	Ms. Brigitte Ring	Ms. Ana Rivera
Westridge Elementary	Ms. Alyson Hall	None
Woodbine PreSchool	Ms. Michelle Hogan	None
Yorkshire Elementary	Ms. Jennifer Ravis	None

**Middle Schools**

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Benton Middle	Ms. Rana Kahl	Dr. Tara Lateef
Beville Middle	Ms. Jennifer Dith	Ms. Antoinette Arnoe
Bull Run Middle	Mr. Don Thornburg	Ms. Stephanie Villataro
Fred Lynn Middle	Ms. Susan Pettus	Ms. Selonia Miles
Gainesville Middle	Ms. Rebecca Sledge	Ms. Tracy Houchens
Graham Park Middle	Ms. Kerry Garber	None
Hampton Middle	Ms. Edith Johnson	None
Lake Ridge Middle	Ms. Andrea Eales	Ms. Christi Campbell
Marsteller Middle	Ms. Jennifer Marsh	None
New Dominion School	None	None
Parkside Middle	Ms. Adrianna Berk	Ms. Sheri Washington Settle
Pennington Traditional	Ms. Carol McCleary	Ms. Emily Baisch

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Porter Traditional	Ms. Tracy Stohlman	Mr. John Kribbs
Potomac Middle	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
Reagan Middle	Mr. Edward Del Rio	Mr. Michael Kier
Rippon Middle	Ms. Doreen Vargo	<i>None</i>
Saunders Middle	Ms. Deborah Sturgill	<i>None</i>
Stonewall Middle	Ms. Kaseya Harris	<i>None</i>
Woodbridge Middle	Ms. Clara Towns	Ms. Kim Kenney

**High Schools**

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Battlefield High	Ms. Fiona Barshow	<i>None</i>
Brentsville District High	Mr. Keith Sampson	<i>None</i>
Charles Colgan Sr. High	Ms. Sally Buie	Ms. Rana Kahl
Forest Park High	Ms. Reyna Caragena	Ms. Carrie Webb
Freedom High	Ms. Pauline Dickey	<i>None</i>
Gar-Field High	Ms. Evelyn Adu-Gamfi	<i>None</i>
Governor's School at Innovation Park	Ms. Chandrima Datta	Ms. Marie Maxson
Hylton High	Ms. Toni Arnoe	<i>None</i>
Independent Hill/SE/PACE EAST SE	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
New Directions	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
Osborn Park High	Mrs. Doresa Pickett	Ms. Lisa Sylvester
PACE WEST SE	Ms. Alison Swanson	<i>None</i>
Patriot High	Ms. Angela Ingram-Jones	Ms. Felicia Huweart
Potomac High	Ms. Dianne Mack	<i>None</i>
Stonewall Jackson High	Ms. Katy McMahon	Ms. Katherine Bradley-Black
Woodbridge High	Ms. Stephanie Martin	Ms. Marilyn Rahe

***Representatives from Other Advisory Councils—None.***

***At-Large Representatives—None.***

## Appendix II: 2018-2019 Yearly Agenda

### SUPERINTENDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTION

2018-2019 Yearly Agenda

Kelly Leadership Center, Room 1101

<b>October 11, 2018</b>	<b>Welcome Address to the Council</b> Dr. Steven L. Walts, Superintendent of Schools <b>Advisory Council Training</b>
<b>November 8, 2018</b>	<b>Update 1: Recess and Movement</b> Emily Utter, Supervisor of Health, Physical, and Drivers Education <b>Update 2: IT Improvements</b> Mathew Guilfoyle, Associate Superintendent for Communication and Technology Services A.J. Phillips, Director of Information Technology <b>Presentation: Communication</b> Diana Gulotta, Director of Communication Services <b>Work Session 1: Budget and Overcrowding</b>
<b>January 10, 2019</b>	<b>Presentation: Budget and Proposed CIP</b> <b>Update 3: Slippage</b> Maureen Hannan, Supervisor, Land Acquisition and CIP John Wallingford, Director of Financial Services <b>Update 4: School Advisory Councils</b> Ken Bassett, Director of Student Learning <b>Work Session 2: Mental Health and Risk Assessment</b>
<b>February 14, 2019</b>	<b>Best Practices Conference for Parents</b> Forest Park High School
<b>March 14, 2019</b>	<b>Update 5 &amp; 6: Credit Opportunities</b> <b>Update 7: Substitute Teachers</b> <b>Presentation: Mental Health</b> Ken Bassett, Director of Student Learning <b>Proposed Revisions to the Bylaws</b>
<b>April 11, 2019</b>	<b>Discussion and Topic Selection for Annual Report</b> <b>Approval of Revised Bylaws</b>
<b>May 16, 2019</b>	<b>Report Ratification, Elections, and End of Year Survey</b>

## Appendix III: Highlights from the Best Practices Conference for Parents 2019

On February 14, 2019, parent representatives met at Forest Park High School to discuss programs and practices throughout the Division that were deemed Best Practices. The Conference consisted of two breakout sessions and a gallery walk/networking session. The breakout sessions consisted of short presentations followed by discussions. The topics for these sessions included: Advisory Councils, bringing new programs to a school, developing a school culture, growth mindset, and mental health. The gallery walk consisted of posters on the topics of fundraisers, successful school events, increasing parental involvement, and communication strategies.

### Advisory Councils:

- Students represented on Advisory Councils at the HS level
- Bring in outside experts from the Division
- Find people who are already providing feedback to the school,
- Ask volunteers directly
- Recruitment from the PTO/PTA, open house, sports
- Give your council a purpose
- Relationships are important- in order for members to feel buy-in, they must feel their opinion matters
- Select and complete one task each year to focus on--- results
- May take up to 3 years to see change happen.

### Bringing Programs to a school

- Discussed bringing in a science program at Benton MS
  - Questions to ask: Are there resources? Is administration receptive? Is there interest? Who else is already doing this? How can I learn from the experience of others? Where will it fit in the year? Is there support from central office?
  - Leverage SACI
  - Develop a plan, not just an idea
  - Get Feedback from stakeholders
  - Consider financial needs
  - Use existing resources and materials
- Also discussed bringing Odyssey of the Mind
  - Search the internet for information
  - Make Connections with experts
  - Talk to others who have implemented it
  - Consider time commitment
  - Admin buy-in (support)
  - Volunteers are the hardest part- build in perks- if you coach your kids get in automatically.

### Developing a School Culture

- Discussed Tribes at Occoquan ES (Based on the British System). Students/teachers/ staff are assigned to a tribe. They are family. Points are awarded for good behaviors. PTO covers the cost of the first shirt. Points are used to name a winner. Points are never taken away, just earned. Gear can be sold as fundraiser. Each tribe has their own space
- Minnieville ES has a Nest system that is similar to the Tribes

- No Place for Hate- Counselor led initiative that is run by the Anti-Defamation League. It helps schools create a positive school climate.
- Stonewall Middle has 4 colleges
- Woodbridge Middle- start with just color shirt
- Roll out in phases
- PBIS- Positive Behavior Intervention Support Schools
- Kindness Club
- Spartan Pride
- Positive Principal Referrals
- Positive reinforcement
- Student of the Week.

### **Growth Mindset**

- At Leesylvania Elementary school they needed something to address the social emotional needs of the students
- Brought in the Growth Mindset approach based on the work of Carol Dweck.
- Growth mindset focuses on the fact that growth is always possible and the power of YET. If you have not mastered something it isn't because you can't do it, it is because you are not there YET
- In order to adopt this approach, the school began following the Growth Mindset Coach and the Growth Mindset Playbook. These books break down activities month to month for a school year to introduce this mindset to the students.
- Students learn the basic functions of the brain and that mistakes are an opportunity for growth
- Examples given of students internalizing the concept of Growth mindset
- Blended in with the work that the teachers were already doing so it did not overwhelm.
- Have seen improvements in behavior and test scores.

### **Mental Health**

- Representatives from Parkside Middle School discussed mental health efforts taking place at their school.
  - Movement in Class
  - Outside instruction when possible
  - Alternating school schedules. Rotate when each period (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> etc.) meets during the day to help kids who struggle at different points
  - No cell phones- reduced behavior issues by 75% at Parkside Middle School. Also reduced bullying
  - Same gender advisors may help
  - Restorative practices
  - Supervised walk- 10 min a day
  - Staff trained in mindfulness practices
  - Wellness committee
  - House system- provides for togetherness reduces bullying. Competitions based on grades and behavior. They sit together at lunch.
- Two mental health professionals provided these tips
  - Talk in the car
  - Ask questions
  - Awkward questions still need answers.
  - ACE Score- adverse childhood experiences
  - Parent input is essential. Talk to your principal.