

**Prince William County
Public Schools**

**Superintendent's Advisory
Council on Instruction**

Annual Report

2020-21 Academic Year

Adopted by the
Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction
April 8, 2021

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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 (previously the Office of Instruction, Office of Student Learning and Accountability) and parent representatives from each of the schools in the Division. The Council provides advice/recommendations from parents and members of the community on curriculum and instructional program planning to the Division Superintendent. The Council is the only Division-wide parent advisory body whose membership includes a representative from each school.

Council membership is comprised of Individual School Representatives:

- Parent or guardian representatives from each Prince William County Public School who are also members of their respective school advisory councils.
- Individual School Representatives must have at least one student enrolled in the school the parent represents.
- Individual School Representatives include both "primary" and "alternate" members.
- Throughout the report, the term "parent(s)" shall be construed to mean parent(s) and/or guardian(s).

Council membership may also include At-Large Representatives:

- Representatives from business, civic, citizen groups or organizations or other stakeholders of Prince William County as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.
- At-large members may or may not have students enrolled in Prince William County Public Schools.

All members of the Council are appointed by and serve at the discretion of the Superintendent.

For the 2020-21 Academic Year, the Council was comprised solely of Individual School Representatives from each of the schools in the Division, with 82 of 99 schools being represented at Council meetings. See Appendix I for a complete membership list.

The Executive Committee is elected by the Council membership. The Council Chair is elected by the general membership and is assisted by five Vice Chairs, (3 from Elementary School, 1 from Middle School, and 1 from High School). The Vice Chairs are elected by the school representatives from their respective levels. The Executive Committee also includes a Secretary

elected from the general membership. The Associate Superintendent for Student and Professional Learning 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 and Professional Learning, the Council's facilitator, and the Council Chair developed a schedule of meetings for the 2020-21 Academic Year. See Appendix II for the 2020-21 Yearly Agenda.

The Council's bylaws, yearly agenda, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes for the year, as well as presentations from speakers appear on the Council's webpage on the pwcs.edu website.

Functions of the Council

The primary function of the Council is that of an advisory body but may also include that of an advocacy group for curriculum and instructional programs and initiatives. To fulfill these 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 the Office of Student Learning and its proposed implementation.
- Reviewing the School Division budget.
- Reviewing the current curriculum and instructional priorities to aid in the determination of Division-wide initiatives.
- Evaluating Division-wide needs and priorities.
- Reviewing strategies for meeting Division-wide 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 2020-21 Academic Year

As representatives from various schools gathered virtually to develop this report, they reflected on the many presentations and conversations that took place during the year. Members of the Council took into consideration the views, priorities, and needs of the individual schools and advisory councils represented. With the unique situation presented to the Council this year, members electronically submitted recommendations and held virtual discussions for each of the topics covered during the 2020-21 Academic Year including: mental health, technology, communication, grading practices, and the budget. The Writing Committee reviewed the submitted information, grouped similar items, and collaborated to create a report that reflected the accolades, concerns, and/or suggestions from the majority of participating Council members.

Commendations

The Council wishes to commend the amazing teachers, staff, and administration of our Division for their leadership in providing an outstanding education for our Prince William County students during this unprecedented school year. There have been numerous challenges during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Division adapted and employed innovative approaches to meet these challenges. The Council wishes to recognize these efforts and express our appreciation for the dedication of so many throughout the Division.

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 to support such efforts.

The Council would like to highlight:

- Improved communication throughout the Division using The Hub, School Messenger, weekly emails/texts from the schools, effective dissemination of information in crisis situations, and the Division-wide newsletter (The Scoop).
- Flexibility and adaptability of administrators, teachers, and staff to the ever-changing challenges of this school year.
- Focus on the student-first approach to education this year.
- Technology improvements throughout the Division including working towards the implementation of a 1:1 program for devices for all students, the distribution of hot spots to families in need of internet access, increased bandwidth capabilities, and the use of QR codes to help monitor movements in the schools.
- The increased focus on mental health and additional staffing and funding to support such efforts.

- Providing flexibility and the choice of in person or virtual learning opportunities to families.
- Live instruction for virtual students.
- The availability of Specialty Programs with express busing.
- Excellence in School Food and Nutrition Programs and the meal distribution program implemented this year which benefited all Prince William County students.
- SPARK- The Education Foundation for Prince William County Schools and the support it provides to the Division including tutoring provided to high schoolers enrolled in certain math classes.

Best Practices Conference for Parents 2021

Each year, the Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction (SACI) hosts parents representing Principal's Advisory Councils (PACs) and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs, as well as PTAs and PTSOs) to share successful practices used within their own communities. This year the Best Practices Conference for Parents will take place in May, after the adoption of this report. An addendum summarizing the highlights of the conference will be added to this report as Appendix III at the conclusion of the conference.

Mental Health

Representatives from Student Services provided the Council with an overview of the services provided by their office. Information was presented on the Comprehensive Plan to address student health during the current school year including how students were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The Council recommends:
 - Supporting teachers and staff with additional mental health resources.
 - Providing additional support for students as they return to in-person instruction with improved proactive outreach to students and additional 1:1 check in opportunities.
 - Providing support for students who lost loved ones due to COVID-19.
 - Increasing focus on diversity and inclusion including: supports for students facing racial trauma; increased lessons on diversity and anti-racist curriculum; and increased access to literature celebrating diversity and inclusion.
 - Cross-pollination of age-appropriate mental health best practices amongst schools.
 - Increasing the utilization of "Care Reports" that all stakeholders (teachers, staff, students, parents) can utilize to report concerns about an individual within the school. These reports would be addressed by representatives from Prince William County Schools.

Technology and Communication

The Director of Student Learning provided an update from the Associate Superintendent for Communication and Technology on the status of communication and technology improvements within the Division.

- The Council recommends:
 - Connecting Canvas and the HUB.

- Ensuring consistency in communication across schools.
- Supporting the management and replacement of laptops and other devices.
- Providing additional Instructional Technology Coaches (ITCs) in all schools.
- Including a virtual instruction coordinator in each school.
- Encouraging teachers to utilize a standard format for Canvas courses to allow families to easily locate tools and materials within the course.
- Aligning the use of software within grade levels within a school.
- Focusing and streamlining the use of software in order to reduce the number of software tools required for students.
- Continuing virtual options for families including options for short term virtual learning when students are absent due to illness.
- Providing additional technological support for families including additional training and support in the evenings when students are completing homework.
- Ensuring courses that employ YouTube use ad-free clips and provide access that does not require students to have YouTube accounts.

Grading

The Director of Student Learning provided clarification of revisions to the grading regulation (Regulation 661). This discussion included the difference between formative and summative assessments, reassessment practices, and transparency in grade calculations.

- The Council recommends:
 - Providing regular feedback to students about their work with timely reporting and posting of grades.
 - Encouraging consistency and transparency on grading practices across all schools, departments, and classes in relation to open testing windows, time allotments for assignments, due dates, unlocking assignments, and reassessment opportunities.
 - Encouraging consistency within departments with the use of rubrics and formative and summative assessments.
 - Evaluating the retake policy to ensure it is preparing students for college assessment practices.
 - Providing greater communication to the general public on these grading practices.

Budget

The Associate Superintendent for Finance and Risk Management provided an overview of the budget timeline and process for the adoption of the FY2022 Prince William County Public Schools budget. This presentation included information on the Superintendent's Budget Priorities. The Council also received an update on the Capital Improvement Plan by the Supervisor of Planning and Financial Services and the Supervisor of Land Acquisition and CIP.

- The Council recommends:
 - Continuing support from Central budget for the distribution, upkeep, and replacement of devices to ensure equity among all schools and students.
 - Providing additional information to the Council on the cost per pupil spending between jurisdictions and the impact on student support and success.

“Quick Fix” Suggestions

The Council identified suggestions for low to no cost solutions to simple challenges, or “Quick Fixes.” These are suggestions that would improve the experiences of parents in interacting with the Division.

- Placing mental health resources as its own heading on the Division homepage rather than listing it under another topic.
- Updating the search function on the PWCS website to exclusively search PWCS.EDU.
- Improving labeling of questionnaires and surveys to eliminate confusion for parents (ex. Return to Learn Survey vs the Return to Learn Packet).
- Encouraging 1-page guides for each school on points of contact for major concerns (ex. Laptop support).

Topics of Interest for the 2021-22 Academic Year

During the report-writing process, Council members identified possible topics to be discussed during the 2021-22 Academic Year.

- Pandemic update including information on the impact of the pandemic on academic outcomes, lost learning recovery efforts, and the transition back to in-person instruction.
- Virtual learning opportunities and support including updates on offering a Virtual Academy.
- Substitute teachers and bus drivers including recruitment and training.
- Equity and anti-racist instructional pedagogies.
- Testing practices including testing changes and SOLs.
- Mental health.
- Site-based management.
- Gifted services and special education.

Appendix I: 2020-21 Council Membership

Elected Officers

Karen Martin <i>Chairman</i>	
Vanessa Olson <i>Secretary (Leesylvania ES)</i>	Candice Johnson <i>Elementary School Vice Chair- Mr. Provencio (Mary Williams ES)</i>
Tracy Blake <i>Elementary School Vice Chair- Mr. Erickson (Minnieville ES)</i>	Tim Kirkpatrick <i>Elementary School Vice Chair- Ms. Hart (Haymarket ES)</i>
Rana Kahl <i>Middle School Vice Chair- Mr. Bixby (Benton MS)</i>	Doresa Pickett <i>High School Vice Chair- Mr. Mulgrew (Osborn Park HS)</i>

School Representatives and Alternates

Elementary Schools

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Alvey Elementary	Krysta Ardigo	Aleah Forrest
Antietam Elementary	Elizabeth Hernandez	Jessica York
Ashland Elementary	Aline Mays	
Bel Air Elementary	Darianella Baret	Erin Simpson
Belmont Elementary		
Bennett Elementary		
Bristow Run Elementary	Sarah Matthews	Tory Brixius
Buckland Mills Elementary	Catherin Hart	Heather Dempsey
Cedar Point Elementary		
Chris Yung Elementary	Edie Rutz	Amanda Whitfield
Coles Elementary	Kathryn Forgas	Jenn Testerman
Covington-Harper	Kathryn Edmond	
Dale City Elementary		
Dumfries Elementary	Dayana Rodriguez	
Ellis Elementary	Tabatha Carlson	Siomara Lopez
Enterprise Elementary	Gayle Stengl	

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Featherstone Elementary	Nuslys Gomez	Yeri Santizo
Fitzgerald Elementary	Zenia Anthony	
Glenkirk Elementary	Victoria Peacock	Tracey Hladky
Gravelly Elementary	Tulip Saad	
Haymarket Elementary	Tim Kirkpatrick	Kim Lee
Henderson Elementary	Leyla Hopkins	
Jenkins Elementary	Candace Miles	Angela Savage; Candice Miles
Kerrydale Elementary		
Kilby Elementary	Edis Valenti	Kimberly Moore
Kyle Wilson Elementary	Sabrina Romero	Lynne Mason
Lake Ridge Elementary	Carrie Glaeser	
Leesylvania Elementary	Vanessa Olson	Lindsay Kelsey
Loch Lomond Elementary		
Marshall Elementary	Katherine Pierret	
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary	Gracie Pendleton	Paula Johnson
Marumsco Hills Elementary		
Mary Williams Elementary	Candice Johnson	Earl Johnson
McAuliffe Elementary		
Minnieville Elementary	Tracy Blake	Brian Rust
Montclair Elementary	Katie Phillips	
Mountain View Elementary	Tiffany Brown	
Mullen Elementary	Kesia Miller	Tracy Scoresby
Neabsco Elementary	Hela Bejaoui	Samira Rahi
Occoquan Elementary	Tamarra Youngblood	Meera Komitsky
Old Bridge Elementary	Aurora Hurtado	Jenilyn Hatch
Pattie Elementary	Trish Helchinger	
Penn Elementary	Ramanjit Raini	
Piney Branch Elementary	Tracy Houchens	

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Potomac View Elementary		
River Oaks Elementary	William Nau	Vanhanda Harris
Rockledge Elementary	Nadra Boussouar	Diana Lewis-Chun
Rosa Parks Elementary	Marianna Lyulchenko	Raina Nettles
Signal Hill Elementary	Holly Beemer	Madeline Charboneau
Sinclair Elementary	Hubert Naydroh	Emil El-Ayazra
Springwoods Elementary		
Sudley Elementary	Caleb Strickland	
Swans Creek Elementary	Poornima Kumar	Sharon Hall
T. Clay Wood Elementary	Sarah Shaalan	Cheryl Strzemieniski
Triangle Elementary	Rebecca Emminizer	Kelly Boehm
Tyler Elementary	Tyler Harris	Charles Proffitt
Vaughan Elementary	Elsy Ventura	Blanca Sorto
Victory Elementary		
West Gate Elementary	Brigette Ring	Ana Rivera
Westridge Elementary		
Yorkshire Elementary	Elvanely Munoz	
Woodbine PreSchool		

Middle Schools

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Benton Middle	Rana Kahl	
Beville Middle	Makda Hints	Almyrtle Brown
Bull Run Middle	Kimberly Mushlak	Julie Batchos
Fred Lynn Middle		
Gainesville Middle	Tracy Houchens	Nancy Dahdouh
Graham Park Middle	Sasha Simmons	
Hampton Middle		
Lake Ridge Middle	Janet Matsuda	Stephanie Sealock

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Marsteller Middle	Nicole Stewart	
Mary G. Porter Traditional School	Erin Thomas	Rebecca Arraya
Parkside Middle	Adrianna Berk	Lisa Hunt
Pennington Traditional	Emily Baisch	Michele Oehlbert
Potomac Middle		
Reagan Middle	Pamela Walker	Michael Kier
Rippon Middle	Angela McKelvey	
Saunders Middle	Sarah Maynard	Anne Dean
The Nokesville School	Naureen Ghani	Sabrina Kinyon
Unity Braxton	Emil El-Ayazra	Adam Garrity
Woodbridge Middle	Valerie Tolan	Maria Rodriguez

High Schools

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Battlefield High	Wendi Gruninger	Montrece Bell
Brentsville District High		
Charles Colgan Sr. High	Rana Kahl	Gabrielle Goggin
Forest Park High	Vanessa Olson	
Freedom High	Alexis Major	Angela Piscitelli
Gar-Field High	Giselle Feliciano	Michael Petruzzi
Hylton High	Tara Houston	
Osborn Park High	Doresa Pickett	Adrianna Berk
Patriot High	Linda Ashpole	
Potomac High	Lynette Simmons	Tiffany Taylor
Unity Reed High	Carey Shenal	Katy McMahon
Woodbridge High	Stephanie Martin	
Governors School at Innovation Park		

School	Primary Representative	Alternate Representative
Independence Non Traditional	Judyvette Acevedo	
PACE West	Carey Brown	Alison Swanson

At-Large Representatives—None.

Appendix II: 2020-21 Yearly Agenda

SUPERINTENDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTION

2020-21 Yearly Agenda

All meetings held virtually via Zoom

October 15, 2020	Welcome Address to the Council Dr. Steven L. Walts, Superintendent of Schools
November 12, 2020	Presentation: Mental Health Dr. Deborah Ransom, Supervisor of Elementary Counseling and Related Services Ms. Betsy Young, Supervisor of School Social Workers Ms. Teresa Polk, Supervisor of School Health Services Ms. Gina Bellamy, Administrative Coordinator, School Health Services Council Orientation Work Session 1: Grading
December 10, 2020	Presentation: Grading Mr. Ken Bassett, Director of Student Learning Work Session 2: Communication and Technology
January 14, 2021	Presentation: Communication and Technology Mr. Ken Bassett, Director of Student Learning Mrs. Rita Goss, Associate Superintendent for Student and Professional Learning Work Session 3: Budget
February 11, 2021	Presentation: Budget Mr. John Wallingford, Associate Superintendent for Finance and Risk Management Presentation: CIP Mr. David Beavers, Supervisor of Planning and Financial Services Ms. Maureen Hannan, Supervisor of Land Acquisition and CIP Bylaws Hot Topics
March 11, 2021	Approval of Bylaws Topic Selection for Annual Report (by submission and virtual discussion)
April 8, 2021	Report Adoption Elections End of Year Survey
May 13, 2021	Best Practices Conference for Parents (virtual)

Appendix III: Highlights from the Best Practices Conference for Parents 2021

Appendix III will be updated at the conclusion of the Conference in May 2021.