

Virginia Board of Education

Public Hearing

JP King Middle School

Franklin, VA

May 14, 2014

Person Speaking	Summary of comments
<p>Howie Soucek Resident Former teacher</p>	<p>July 2012 asked board to visit schools to meet and talk with teachers, but recommendation was not followed through on. Citizens have asked for Book Buddies and other tutoring/mentoring programs, asked leadership to visit other successful schools, asked for an interim superintendent, but citizen concerns are not heard by school division leadership. There are no creative initiatives or true collaboration with teachers in the corrective action plan. What is needed - culture change with an emphasis on team work, an “R and D” approach, and strong community with a paradigm shift.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Chuck Lilley Resident Volunteers at middle and high schools</p>	<p>3 specific questions need to be addressed: How can your Board help us? What are the Board limits in this turnaround? What is the Franklin County willing to do? Suggestions for Corrective Action Plan - need a more user friendly format; uses more familiar words and explain abbreviations; organizational chart and reporting structures are needed.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted with additional suggestions</i></p>
<p>Justin Oliver Paul Camp Community College, mathematics professor</p>	<p>Believes that staff is capable. Corrective action plan – staff development is needed. Teachers need to know how to teach these students (different culture) and their supplemental duties need to be considered. There needs to be a level of accountability for parents and students, not just teachers. Students need to be more college and career ready. The culture of learning in this city must change – we cannot just strive for “good enough”. The middle group of students is often left out. Community college will support however possible.</p>
<p>Derrick Robinson Teacher, Franklin High Schools</p>	<p>More important to look ahead rather than behind. Communication is important. FCPS has been charged to write a comprehensive communications plan. The timeline is too late. It should start early. How do you</p>

	measure 4.4 – parental engagement? What does success look like?
Michelle Barlow Teacher, Franklin City High	Many great teachers have left for other divisions or other fields. Often there is the “blame game”. We gather data to the point of factory workers. The pressure is too much. More mandates, more tests, more data. Maybe we need to take a step back? Less is best. No one from VDOE has asked teachers what we need or what we would do. Is there data to prove that a school with state intervention has improved? Why are teachers fearful rather than excited when the state comes in?
Jennell Riddick First Baptist Church “Walk In It” (mentor program)	Franklin has the necessary components to make this work. Support for our administration, students, and parents is needed. Much of what is happening in schools is related to what is or not happening at home. More support is needed for challenging home-lives. There needs to be an element of motivation – we need incentives for doing better. Exposure is key. Tangible evidence of success is needed.
Armirah Stephens Student	Suggestions for improving education in Franklin: Have more college fairs. Start foreign language early. Peer tutoring between middle and high school students. New technology is needed (only one cart at the high school). Upward Bound program (dual enrollment options) is a great program but more exposure is needed for other programs. Bring in successful role models. Lean Microsoft Office early. More CTE classes for hands on training.
Teri Zurfluh Parent	Lives in the county but pays for 2 students to attend Franklin City schools. Franklin makes it its mission to meet every child’s needs. Some of the most talented teachers in the state are in Franklin. Franklin serves all students, not just the ones who are struggling. Focus must be on both the struggling and the non-struggling students. Corrective action plan cannot sacrifice the high performing students for the lowest achieving students. Problems lie in the central office not in the buildings. Concern that the responsibility of the corrective action plan is left in the hands of the very people who put us in this place. Recruiting the top teachers and improving partnerships are all good plans. We can’t settle for “good enough.” Please help with parental involvement. <i>Written comments submitted</i>
Brianna Karmilovich	Did not attend

Student	
<p>Andrea Hall Leonard Resident, parent of six Speech language pathologist</p>	<p>Commended the principal and assistant principal for embracing engineering program for minorities and other STEM related programs (Cooperating Hampton Roads Organizations for Minorities in Engineering, Inc). Discussed partnerships with organizations and ATLAS STEM Academy. Evaluate plans in place and decide how to improve current programs in place. Need to empower parents. <i>Written comments submitted with additional suggestions</i></p>
<p>Tom Jones Resident</p>	<p>Corrective Action Plan is missing two key elements - Timelines for completion and measureable outcomes. Needs to be much more specific, definable and measureable. Establish dates. Examples: 2.4 and 3.3 – when developed? When implemented? 1.4 – what does increase and improve look like? 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5 are good timelines and measures It is critical for the leadership to proactively recruit volunteers on an ongoing basis. <i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Rev. Edmund Pickup Jr. Commissioner of Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board</p>	<p>Thank you for coming. Franklin has wonderful teachers and principals. Regarding division leadership, neither the superintendent nor the chair took responsibility. The leadership has to want to change, need to respond proactively, not place blame or denial. The corrective action plan misses precision and focus about how these things will happen. Desired outcomes are vague - how much, in what way? Assigns the responsibility to a handful of people, who are already responsible for some of the trouble in Franklin. There is no desire to change at leadership level and participation is not encouraged from the community. <i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Joseph Stutts Resident</p>	<p>Advice: listen to everybody, then weigh what is heard, and adapt and adopt. Communication is lacking between schools and governing bodies/leadership. Board needs to provide leadership.</p>
<p>Erica Smith-Ingram Teacher</p>	<p>Left early – did not speak</p>
<p>Faith Atkinson Resident Retired teacher</p>	<p>Community adult volunteerism is needed. 12 years ago the successful Book Buddies program was put into place and was thriving. This year the school leadership ended the program and children needing help with language</p>

	<p>skills are left without needed services. Gave up hours and hours of volunteers. For a system that says it welcomes volunteers, it doesn't. The second grade program continues.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>James Rainey Attorney</p>	<p>Ask the local Franklin board to look at Virginia Board of Education as a model and ally, not an enemy.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted regarding hiring of interim superintendent</i></p>
<p>Benny Burgess Member, City Council</p>	<p>What I hear is that people are interested in helping the schools. We are working on truancy and volunteers. The community has not given up, we stand ready to assist. But the system needs to have integrity. Feels misled by school division, especially regarding highly qualified teachers. To get community support, integrity is imperative. Also need more details about why some information is needed – for instance, MOU asks for names and credentials of superintendent candidates, but it is not clear what is done with the information. Need to clarify the level of oversight.</p>
<p>Barry Cheatham Vice mayor</p>	<p>Franklin is 5th highest LEA for money spent per student; 1st for small cities. We don't mind paying, but we need to get what we pay for. Current school board is not giving information in a timely manner. Requested information is not provided. Also there is strong public support, but volunteers are often stonewalled. Hope the Board will be a partner with Franklin.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Amanda Jarrett President and CEO, Franklin Southampton Economic Development Inc.</p>	<p>Franklin cannot survive without quality education and qualified workers. Link between schools and business is imperative. Our children need to be prepared for the workforce. Need a transformational corrective action plan. The school system must have strong collaboration with other school divisions and the community college. The business community must be given a seat at the table – need real committees and meetings, not just for show or on short notice. Business community needs a clear process for engaging.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Bobby Cutchins President, Franklin Southampton Area Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Current status of the schools keeps people and business from moving to Franklin. Students are not college and career ready. Competent workforce is needed. Skills and trades are a must for students to become gainfully</p>

	<p>employed. CTE programs are critical to Franklin’s success. Want to stand together as a community to improve. We want to team and assist. Business concerns must be addressed and taken seriously.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Danny Dillon Associate Pastor Basketball Coach</p>	<p>Franklin teachers and administrators are working hard. Our students don’t often have help at home, and many families still struggle after the flood and closing of IP, but the people here are dedicated to helping students. Need to bring payers back in school and les emphasis on SOL tests.</p>
<p>Raystine Johnson-Ashburn Mayor</p>	<p>This is a great community. City Council will continue to support FCPS. We appreciate the service of our board members. Regarding the process to nominate persons for the school board, we have added steps to the process. We had held several public hearings and submitted articles to recruit people to serve on the board. We will hold interviews based on the nominations. We will focus on schools at the fall retreat.</p>
<p>Josette Sthole-Hayes PTA President</p>	<p>Parents are not always involved, and the lack of parental involvement is hard on teachers. How can the school division get more parents involved? Corrective Action Plans needs to be parent friendly – put into simple language. The school board and administration does try to involve parents or volunteers. Teachers at Franklin are the best around, but their hands are tired by top administration.</p>
<p>Dan Howe Executive Director, Downtown Franklin Association</p>	<p>The vitality of the community is dependent on the schools. It is difficult to recruit businesses to Franklin when there are not high quality educational options for their children. Mentorship programs are helpful and needed. Business community is ready and willing partner. Teachers are strong but need oversight and tools. Not confident about the process to select new superintendent.</p> <p><i>Written comments submitted</i></p>
<p>Teresa Rose McQuay Parent</p>	<p>We can’t focus on what is wrong; we need to show what is right. Franklin school system has supported her son and has ensured that her son will graduate. Teachers here show compassion and love, and need the Board’s support and appreciation. The school board struggles but they are doing the best they can. Some things may not happen right away, but let us focus on the positive.</p>

<p>Chris Novakoski Teacher, Suffolk City Coach Resident</p>	<p>Point 2.0 is the biggest concern – understands that some positions are harder to recruit, but what is school division doing to recruit those positions? Can't wait for teachers to fall in our lap, need to be proactive and take initiative. Point 2.6 - all salaries need to align with other surrounding schools, not just certain positions. The perception about Franklin is that it is a stepping stone for teachers to work in another division. Need to change that and have more continuity in staff. Point 2.10 plan encourages collaborations with community college, but what about the library? Schools are not taking advantage of the partnerships.</p>
<p>Cherie Karmilovich Parent</p>	<p>Something is going well in our schools because some kids are doing well. But some kids just don't care and what can you really do to change that? There are lots of great teachers in Franklin. At PTA events there are many teachers, but very few parents. Need more parental involvement.</p>
<p>Arwen Council Parent ESL tutor</p>	<p>Prevailing attitude is teachers have too much paperwork. They don't have time to actually teach. Regarding the corrective action plan, it needs to be specific. What are you actually going to do? When? Leadership has to inspire our teachers and be responsive.</p>
<p>Colin Byrd</p>	<p>Left before called – <i>submitted written comments</i></p>