



## CHESTERFIELD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Marcus J. Newsome, Ed.D., Superintendent

### SCHOOL BOARD

Marshall W. Trammell, Jr.  
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David S. Wyman  
Dale  
U. Omarh Rajah  
Matoaca  
Patricia M. Carpenter  
Midlothian

June 3, 2009

The Honorable Arthur S. Warren, Chair  
Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors

Dear Mr. Warren:

I would like to thank you for your support of the School Board and our efforts to provide an outstanding school system for the citizens of Chesterfield County. During our May Joint Board meeting, we agreed that the School Board would appoint two members to serve on the Budget and Audit Committee. I have appointed David Wyman, Vice Chair of the School Board, and Patty Carpenter as our representatives.

In yesterday's Liaison Committee meeting, David and I renewed the School Board's commitment to improve communications between Chesterfield County's two governing bodies. It is the intent of the School Board to focus its resources and efforts on more regular joint School Board-Board of Supervisors meetings. As we discussed at the last joint meeting, we all believe meetings of the full boards provide opportunities for more direct discussions on critical issues. We certainly support having the full boards meet two or three times each year. In addition, as mentioned above, we are committed to providing improved communication on critical operating budget and capital planning issues with an updated planning process, and through regular communications via the Budget and Audit Committee. Because we believe that both of these efforts will enhance our efforts, the School Board would propose suspending activities of the Liaison Committee.

During the most recent joint session, the Board of Supervisors and the School Board shared information concerning areas of common concern. Many of these areas – technology, safety, CIP, budget, and the Comprehensive Plan – are part of the current charter of the Liaison Committee. The recent joint meeting was a more productive session on these topics. The information presented, the level of discussion exhibited, and the subsequent follow-up actions associated with the meeting, were far superior to the efforts to date of the Liaison Committee.

With two relatively "new" Boards, direct exchanges amongst all Board members create a more open communications environment. Frankly, over the past year, it has been difficult to address Board of Supervisors' issues effectively with multiple communication platforms. Individual opinions and concerns have been gleaned from comments in the media, rather than through direct discussion. By channeling action items through open joint meetings, staff members can respond more effectively and efficiently to Board questions and concerns. Perhaps more importantly, the County's residents and the local media will get a more consistent picture of the issues and challenges facing both governing bodies.

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Though the school system provided substantial amounts of information to the public and endeavored to keep the Board of Supervisors informed during the ever-changing budget process this past year, the School Board recognizes that there needs to be improvements to communications up front in the budgeting process. As such, the School Board will be proposing a new, more inclusive budgeting process with the new biennium. In addition, the School Board is committed to providing timely inputs to specific Board of Supervisor inquiries related to the budget. The School Board would like to address remaining questions from this last budget over the summer months so that both Boards can "hit the ground running" in September.

In order to facilitate these changes and provide ample time to inform the next budget process, the School Board would propose meeting with the Board of Supervisors in the late August/early September time frame. This would be an opportune time to discuss the process for the operating budget and the CIP, in addition to discussing other items of mutual interest. The School Board looks forward to working with the Superintendent and the County Administrator to establish a date and venue for this next meeting.

Again, we thank you for your support and believe the actions described above will enable both Boards to effectively move forward. We remain committed to working with you to keep Chesterfield County a "first choice" community.

Sincerely,



Marshall W. Trammell, Jr.  
Chairman, School Board

MWT/s

Cc: The Honorable Members of the School Board  
The Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Marcus J. Newsome, Superintendent  
James J. L. Stegmaier, County Administrator

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## Chesterfield County, Virginia

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June 8, 2009

The Honorable Marshall W. Trammell, Jr.  
Chairman, Chesterfield County School Board  
P. O. Box 10  
Chesterfield, VA 23832

Dear Marshall:

Thank you for your letter of June 3, 2009 regarding the coordination of future meetings of the School Board and Board of Supervisors. The current committee structure, including Budget and Audit and the Liaison Committee, continues to be a great opportunity to share information and foster cooperation between the boards. I trust that we will all work to take full advantage of this opportunity to enhance cooperation in the future.

Regarding a future joint meeting of the boards, I have asked our county administrator to coordinate with board members on possible dates for such a meeting.

I look forward to continuing to build on our successes.

With best regards,

Arthur S. Warren, Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

Cc: The Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors  
The Honorable Members of the School Board  
Jay Stegmaier, County Administrator  
Marcus J. Newsome, Superintendent