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Dear Colleagues:

At this evening's work session, I was appointed by our School Board to succeed Pam as our division's Superintendent, effective July 1 of next year.

It was quite a humbling experience. Pam is an incredible leader, and more than that, she is one of the most influential voices in our nation on the subject of public education. I could not ask for a better role model and mentor in school division leadership. Her passion for student learning is inexhaustible, and I know from personal experience the magnetism of that passion. I also know that the impact she has had on student learning will not end on July 1, 2018.

So many of us have a "Pam story," and that has taught me that the most important quality of leadership is the ability to connect personally with everyone you meet. It's why so many more people call her Pam rather than Dr. Moran. It is a function of her belief that all of us are capable of being important in an organization or on a team because of the quality of our ideas coupled with a leader's desire to see them brought to life.

I have been asked by our School Board about my most immediate priorities as Superintendent, beginning in July. One of my first will be to implement an entry plan that will enable me to hear from stakeholders around our county, to listen and learn from new and different perspectives. It will be valuable for me to see our school division through new eyes, and I will devote my first few months as Superintendent to doing just that with your help.

Our Board also asked what I consider to be my greatest strength. My strength is my joy in seeing others succeed, building teams to accomplish great things for young people, and sharing leadership opportunities with others to help them to grow. One of my favorite questions to ask in my own personal and professional development is, "How might we do what we do better and not use the same process year after year?"



While the Board appointed me tonight, July 1 is nine months away. We have important work to do before then in support of objectives that Pam and our School Board have established for us if we are to meet our commitment of “All Means All” to our students. Programs such as our Equity & Access Initiative and High School 2022 will have substantial and lasting impact, and so will a new teacher compensation model and an evaluation of compensation, benefits, incentives and credentialing for all staff.

Earlier this week, the state released the on-time graduation rate for all Virginia school divisions. Once again, the performance of our students far exceeded state and national benchmarks. The same was true in our state for the percentage of students who earned Advanced Studies Diplomas. To me, these are the ultimate measures of the value of a school division and its professionals. For students, it reflects the impact that our team, especially teachers and staff who work directly with students, has had throughout each student’s academic career with us.

These latest statistics reaffirm what I long have believed: We have the right team, which includes every one of our employees, to do the important business of education and to do it well. I am forever indebted to Pam and our Board for having confidence in me and giving me the opportunity to work with each of you in this new role.

Matt

Matthew S. Haas, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent