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Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, June 13, 2024

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[00:00:01] Chair Lee is absent. Chair Acuff? Yes. So moved.

[00:00:09] Yes.

[00:00:43] Ms. Spillman? Yes. Mr. Grampage? Yes. Dr. Berlin? Yes. Chair Acuff? Yes. Motion passes. Do we have any other motions coming out of closed meeting?

[00:01:02] Yes, I do, Chair. I move to affirm the superintendent-designee's decision on employee A. Do we have a second? Second. All those in favor? Aye. Okay.

[00:01:17] Why don't we do a roll call vote? Sorry. Dr. Berlin? Yes. Mr. Chuck Pace? Yes. Ms. Spillman? Yes. Mr. Graham Page?

[00:01:35] Yes. Chair Acuff? Yes. So moved. Now why don't we do the roll call for everyone up on the dais, starting with Dr. Kaiser. Claire Kaiser, Assistant Superintendent.

[00:01:52] Daphne Kaiser, Assistant Superintendent. Good evening. Patrick McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent. Chuck Pace, Ryo District. Graham Page, Miller District. Kate Acuff, Jack Jewett District. Rebecca Berlin, Whitehall District. Allison Spillman, At-Large Representative.

[00:02:09] Chandra Hayes, Assistant Superintendent. Matthew Hawes, Superintendent. Josiah Black, School Division Counsel. Alphi Lilly, Admiral K&PD. Helen Dunn, Public Affairs and Strategic

Communications Officer.

[00:02:27] Rosalind Schmidt, Chief Operating Officer. Christine Thompson, Clerk of the Board. Thank you. Now let us stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:02:46] We'll now pose for a moment of silence. Thank you.

[00:03:21] Do we have a motion to approve tonight's agenda? I move to approve tonight's agenda. Second. All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? Motion passes.

[00:03:37] Next, we have approval of the consent agenda. I move to approve the consent agenda. Do we have a second? I second. Before we take a vote, I have a question on item 4-4, optimization to sign, and I think it lists Dr. Daphne Kaza's name, but I think her name was left off of the document.

[00:04:04] I didn't see her name in the list. Pending review of that, do we, and if we need to make that amendment, does this, are we still okay to pass this? Yes.

[00:04:20] As amended by Mr. Page. Thank you. With announcements, we have two proclamations tonight. Mr. Page, do you want to go first?

[00:04:36] I can. All right. Proclaiming or recognizing Juneteenth. Whereas Albemarle County Schools, in keeping with the core principles of our great United States of America, believe that all persons are created equal and possess unenailable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

[00:04:55] And whereas on June 19, 1865, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed to free all enslaved people, enslaved Americans in Galveston, Texas, were finally told that they were free from the bondage of slavery and were for the first time recognized as citizens of our nation.

[00:05:13] And whereas black Americans came to commemorate this day as Juneteenth for celebrations across the country, building new lives and a new tradition that we honor today, and whereas the Albemarle County Schools recognize the enduring cultural and historical significance of emancipation, acknowledges the universally cherished values of liberty and justice and emphasizes our common humanity.

[00:05:38] And whereas Albemarle County schools encourage all persons in Albemarle County to recommit to our shared work to ensure racial justice and equity and to commemorate the centers of struggle and progress led by educators, civil rights advocates, abolitionists, activists, lawyers, trade unions, religious leaders, public officials, and everyday Albemarle County residents who have brought us closer to fulfilling this promise.

[00:06:04] Now, therefore, be it proclaimed that we Albemarle County schools do hereby recognize June 19, 2024, as Juneteenth, and celebrate the joy of black people finally being free. Thank you, Mr. Page.

[00:06:20] And I also have an announcement sort of in collaboration, I guess, with that. The 100 black men of Central Virginia whose purpose is to improve the quality of life within the community and advocate eliminating the achievement gap of African-American male students through mentoring by its members.

[00:06:38] The organization will host 40 scholars from the Elmah County Schools and Charlottesville City Schools for the upcoming 2024 N-Cubed Summer Academy from Monday, June 17th through Friday, June 28th, from 8.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. at Journey Middle School.

[00:06:55] The N-Cubed Summer Academy is an ultra-readiness program that supports the group's mission to eliminate the achievement gap of African-American males in grades K through 10. 12. The 100 Black Men of Central Virginia invite the board members and their families to visit our scholars and their families for the annual Juneteenth Freedom Day and N-Cube Community Cookout on Wednesday, June 19th from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Darton Tower Park.

[00:07:27] In addition, we would be honored to have the board members attend the culminating celebration of Achievement Ceremony on Friday, June 28th from 1230 to 330 p.m. at the Doubletree Hotel on Hilton Heights Road. Thank you, Mr. Page.

[00:07:45] Can you send an email about the end of that to the board? That would be helpful. Chair Acuff? Yes? A couple of points of order. We need to go back and vote on the consent agenda as amended.

[00:08:02] And also, do we want to take a vote on this proclamation to make it an official part of the record? Let us do both. Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Since we've just read this proclamation, why don't we do that one first? All those in favor of accepting this proclamation as part of the public record of this school board, say aye.

[00:08:23] Aye. Opposed? It is adopted. And back to approval of the consent agenda. With the amendment to check the signature for Dr. Kaiser on item 4.4, do we have a consensus in terms of adopting the consent agenda?

[00:08:50] All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? Thank you, Ms. Thompson. And we have another proclamation. To be read by Ms. Spillman. As the proud parent of a transgender child, I am really honored to read ACPS's proclamation celebrating LGBTQ plus pride month.

[00:09:15] Whereas lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender pride month, LGBTQ plus pride month is celebrated annually in June to commemorate the catalyst event of the 1969 Stonewall riots and works to achieve equal justice and equal opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning LGBTQ plus Americans, and whereas on April 11, 2020, the Virginia Values Act was signed into law, making Virginia the first state in the South to protect LGBTQ plus people from discrimination in their daily lives, including discrimination in housing, public and private employment, public accommodations,

[00:09:54] and access to credit, and whereas Albemarle County's stated mission is to enhance the well-being, and quality of life for all citizens through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds. Albemarle County Schools' mission is working together as a team. We will end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for our children's success through high quality teaching and learning for all. We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure every student succeeds.

[00:10:26] We will know every student. ACPS values are centered around equity, excellence, family and community, and wellness. And whereas Albemarle County Schools is committed to supporting through their actions and their partnerships the promotion of an equitable and inclusive Albemarle County that allows all members of our community to grow and thrive. And whereas LGBTQ plus individuals have shaped, advanced, and enriched the fabric of Albemarle County and our nation by making immense contributions to all areas of life, including government, business, arts and sciences, medicine, law enforcement, technology, and the military. Now, therefore, be it proclaimed that

[00:11:05] we, the Albemarle County Schools, continue to affirm our commitment to our stated mission to enhance the well-being and quality of life of all students and members of our community, and recognize with pride the rich cultural diversity and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning LGBTQ plus resident to the vibrancy of Albemarle County, signed this 13th day of June 2024. A similar proclamation was presented during the June 5th Albemarle County Board of Supervisors meeting. Supervisor Ned Galloway requested that this proclamation be shared with the school administrators, students, and families. He also

[00:11:43] stated that the current national environment is not accepting of all students, particularly transgender students. Supervisor Galloway wants Albemarle County students and families to know that they have the Board of Supervisors' support. In addition, he would like students to know that if they feel like they don't have a person to talk to or a place to go, they can visit the website of [trevorproject.org](https://www.trevorproject.org), a national suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ plus youth, for information on how to connect, to chat, text, or call for support.

[00:12:16] Thank you, Ms. Spillman. Do we have a motion to accept this proclamation as part of the official record? Excuse me. I move to accept this proclamation as part of our official record. I second. All those in favor?

[00:12:33] Aye. Aye. Opposed? It is passed. With this, we are now on Section 6.2 of our agenda, Spotlight on Education, in terms of the Virginia Education Exemplar Schools.

[00:12:52] Yes, Dr. Acuff. Before we do that, I just wanted to get a quick preliminary results update from Dr. McLaughlin. Yeah, thanks, Dr. Haas. And good evening, board members. As Dr. Haas said, I'd like to provide you with a very brief update of some of the initial trends we're seeing in student achievement as we end the school year.

[00:13:11] And I'll start by saying that all of this information is preliminary and can change prior to our final results being released by the State Department of Education. but recently we completed our spring SOL testing with nearly 22,000 SOL tests administered to our students.

[00:13:28] The state has provided us with a new tool this year to see their preliminary calculations as they come in instead of waiting for the fall release. And currently those results indicate that we will have more schools meeting state accreditation targets than we had last year, that we are seeing gains for our students in our growth-adjusted pass rates across nearly all membership groups in reading and math, and that we're seeing slight increases in our unadjusted pass rates, which don't account for student growth in reading, math, and science.

[00:13:57] Additionally, we're projecting about a 4.5% reduction in our chronic absenteeism rates, and we will continue to monitor the VDOE updates as more results are returned this summer and provide a more comprehensive update to the board when results become official in the fall.

[00:14:14] - Thank you, Dr. McLaughlin. I did that just kind of to lay the groundwork for this next announcement. I am delighted to announce, and that's 23-24 data, this next part is based on 22-23, but it's for the 23-24 school year.

[00:14:33] I am delighted to announce that three of our 24 public schools in Atomalt County have been recognized by the Virginia Board of Education for their outstanding achievements as part of the 2023-24 Exemplar Performance School Recognition Program.

[00:14:51] This prestigious program acknowledges schools that either exceed established Virginia performance standards. To provide some context, Virginia has more than 2,000 public schools. Out of these, only 37 schools were recognized with the Board of Education Highest Achievement Award.

[00:15:13] I'm proud to share that three of these exemplary schools are right here in Alma County. These schools have demonstrated exceptional success across all school quality indicators, including making significant strides in narrowing achievement gaps. The recognized schools are Murray Elementary School, who at that time was under the leadership of Sita DeLaurier, who's now principal at Woodbrook Elementary School, and now is led by Wendy Eckerley.

[00:15:45] Ivy Elementary School, which is led by Principal Jennifer Underwood, and I noticed she also has her assistant, Laura Morris, here with her tonight. Community Lab School, which is led by Principal Chad Ratliff. This recognition is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and tireless efforts of our educators, staff, students, families, and the entire community.

[00:16:08] Achieving such high standards requires a collective commitment to excellence and a relentless pursuit of academic success. I'd like to inform the board that we have actively promoted these schools' achievements through the press and through television releases, as well as on social media.

[00:16:27] In addition, we visited all three schools to serve a light breakfast to the school staff and personally shared their framed letter from the Virginia School Board last week. This accomplishment really tells us that our parents, our families, they're the students' first teachers, are collaborating with school staff, and they really have a rock-solid commitment and played a crucial role in their remarkable success.

[00:16:51] so in a minute i'm gonna have our the three schools represented come down to the front we have a plaque that they can commemorate this success back at their school and so i'm going to call them to come down now and dr dunn will get a photo and i'm going to ask dr hayes to help me out with it as our assistant suit for instruction and i'm going to ask them to also come around shake hands with the board so please join me in congratulating the staff and

[00:17:26] their students and families for their outstanding accomplishments tell me what

[00:18:56] year it was not it'll come back to me thank you all this is a spotlight so it's an opportunity for the board if you have any questions for staff explain a little bit what what are the criteria for getting the exemplar awards or is that to dr. Haas if I wanted to I could also ask dr. McLaughlin but the the essence of it is they have to out they have to show significant progress in closing

[00:19:32] achievement gaps on all the SOL assessments there they also have several other quality indicators including chronic absenteeism and other measurements that they have to far exceed all the other schools in Virginia And so really just all across the board, they have to be at the top to win these awards.

[00:19:56] I would point out that particularly with the high schools, there were just three schools in Virginia with graduating classes that were recognized for this award. And they're the same ones that, you know, the other two are the same you always hear about.

[00:20:14] thomas jefferson high school in fairfax and which is highly selective and green run collegiate which is a highly selective charter school in virginia beach and as you know the lab school students put in

their application by simply saying i would like to attend the school and then it's a random selection of students so it's really a cross-section of our whole community at the school and so for the school to be able to compete at that high level with these these other schools that select their students really says something about the type of teaching and learning that goes on at the school. But they have to exceed in all the categories that you look at for accreditation.

[00:20:54] They have to be far and above to win this award. There's a second tier called continuous improvement schools where they are making progress. We didn't have any schools in that tier. We'd like to see all of our schools getting into the second and first tier as we move forward. Dr. McLaughlin, did you have anything to add? No, I think you nailed it. Okay, thanks. I'd love for you to share kind of the most important strategy each of you used in closing the achievement gap. What you feel

[00:21:26] was the most important in your school that year? So I will just say for us at Ivy, it's really about working together as a team. Laura is an amazing assistant principal. We work really cohesively together, but what's really important is that we collaborate with all of the teams at our school. We meet, you know, periodically with our resource team, so we really try to focus and hone in on special education. We're looking at our, like, meeting with our TDRT and trying to

[00:22:00] use her expertise, and really just looking from a strengths asset lens for students, but also for staff. So again, I'll add to that a little bit. It really is the collaboration in the direct and indirect collaboration of everybody in our school system that really impacts.

[00:22:22] It comes from our families, our students, our bus drivers, the cafeteria, everybody who plays a role and a part. And one of the biggest impacts for us is during our PLC work that we do, really looking at learning intentions and success criteria and responding to students' needs and wants with an asset-best lens and just really putting our effort forth to make a difference for them socially, emotionally, and academically. Thank you. All of the

[00:22:58] above. And I think the, you know, we really try to focus on the student experience, you know, beyond traditional academic measures and metrics and just think about what it means to be a learner in a community and really try to to design school and learning experience around those and then focus on the same thing for at the teacher level too. What makes the teaching experience pleasurable and creative and that's

[00:23:26] that sort of thing. So yeah. Thank you, Chad. Congratulations again. Thank you. Next we have public comment and I'll hand the gavel to you, Dr. Berlin. Thank you, Chair. We welcome public input at school board meetings. To sign up to speak during the public comment period, you can do it in several ways. Online, sign up is available from 9 a.m. on Monday of the meeting

[00:24:04] week until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. By phone, call the school board clerk's office at 434-972-4055 to sign up until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. And in person, that is what the clerk just handed me. Sign-up meeting is available from 6 p.m. until the public comment period for in-person meetings only. Please note that the public comment is not received at a special board meeting unless specified by the agenda. Each speaker will have three minutes to speak. I'm

[00:24:38] just doing quick notes. So we have, so we have 15 speakers today. I'm going to pause for, yep, so two minutes. I'm just, I am just checking to make sure we are all, so generally we give three minutes, but

because with the addition of what the clerk just handed me, we have 15 speakers, eight who signed up online, and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, who signed up right away.

[00:25:15] We will only have two minutes, and I'm just going to make sure all my board is, we're all, so we is in agreement with that okay we will need we will be resetting the timer those who do not have the opportunity to speak at a particular meeting may sign up to speak at subsequent meetings and or may submit written comments for the school board's consideration speakers should state their name address or voting district address comments to the full school board limit

[00:25:51] comments to school board governance or school division operations provide written statements and supporting material to the clerk. The school board will use a timer to track each speaker's time. The speakers are asked to wrap up their comments by the end of the two-minute mark, and the mic will turn off at the end of those two minutes.

[00:26:10] To maintain respect, please refrain from clapping or other audible forms of support. You may raise your hand instead. Debate with the school board is not allowed. The projection system is for staff presentations only. Chairman, on the other side, it says you don't drop it to two minutes until you have 19 people.

[00:26:34] Could you please check that? On our sign-up, where you sign up to speak, it's 14. I just saw it this morning. Thank you. I'm going to... So let's readjust the timer again, Ms. Thompson. I'm going to pause just to confirm with our lawyer, so we're all in agreement.

[00:27:00] That's okay. Thank you for bringing that up. Thank you for your patience.

[00:27:22] I believe Dr. Berlin is confirming the names, or not duplicated.

[00:28:32] There is a duplicate. And a couple of people said they signed up online and then didn't have their name. Okay. But you signed up in person here. Okay. I'm going to read the names real quick of who signed up. And if your name is not on there and you wanted to speak, we're just going to let you add it just because there was...

[00:28:51] Ms. Spillman, everyone who signed up online is on the sheet. Yeah. So we have a duplicate. So, Chair Acuff, as you know, the board recently amended the rules and operating procedures for public comment. Under the new procedures, when there are 14 or more commenters, the time for each commenter is two minutes.

[00:29:15] Okay, that's what's also on the hard copy of the sign-up sheet? Correct. And I just double-checked the website as well to make sure. So, actually, we're 13. You haven't changed it on your website. I just checked the website sir and it says 14. actually i'm gonna so i have just rechecked all of the names there are three names that signed up online and also signed up on this piece of paper so with that we are under 14. every speaker will have three minutes those who have already signed

[00:29:53] up. And Ms. Thompson, can you please readjust the clock for three minutes? And I would ask that if people have comments, they raise their hand and not just shout at the school board, please. I'm going to read the names so you are ready. Barbara Fitzgerald, Paul Kale, Dr. Randy Fitzgerald,

[00:30:22] Leslie Rattan, that's a J.B. Hurt, Steph Davis, Christy Taylor, Kate Nemeth, Lori Begura, Joel Hamilton, Bruce Woodsell, then there are three duplicates, Christy Taylor, Leslie Rattan, Steph Davis, I'm crossing those out, and then Adam Nemet. I will call the first three. You will have

[00:30:59] three minutes. The mic will end when the three minutes are up. Barbara Fitzgerald, Paul Kael, [00:31:06] Dr. Randy Fitzgerald, please approach. Good evening. Pull the mic up closer to you. In a civilized

[00:31:44] society, one assumes that when mistakes are made, mistakes are corrected. One assumes that amid hundreds of school renamings across this nation, mistakes are being made, and sure enough, mistakes have been made here in Albemarle County, including the one I'm here to talk to you about, the removal of Ben Hurt's name from Agner Hurt Elementary. There are people here tonight who care a lot about the name of that school. I don't care one bit about the name of Agner Hurt. I care about Mr.

[00:32:14] Hurt's good name. And if he was honored by the naming, then he has been dishonored by your renaming. All of us who knew and appreciated Mr. Hurt for who and what he was want you to know you are wrong. An apology is in order. My husband and I, along with 127 members of an alumni group, were told when we first got onto this a month and a half ago that you were intransigent and wouldn't want to hear the truth. Nevertheless, we have done all the research your renaming committee failed to do. You accused Mr. Hurt implicitly of racism based on five photos and two yearbooks

[00:32:50] published during his three decades as principal. So we brought before this board the yearbook advisor for 22 of those years who testified Mr. Hurt had never seen one of those yearbooks before publication. You said, well, he had oversight and he failed to oversee. But we found his oversight was very limited. We found that freedom of the press and speech do extend to high school publications, and we found that Ms. Hurt was following standard procedure in allowing his senior editors to do the editing. You said Ben Hurt was a member of the Lions Club that sponsored minstrel shows, so he was guilty by association. Then guilty too were his associates, Presidents

[00:33:28] Carter, Bush, Reagan, and Ford, all Lions Club members. You said he approved minstrel shows in the school auditorium after hours, but we found an old employee from the school board office downtown who said it was the school board that had to approve use of the auditorium for outside groups, not Ben Hurt. You said he allowed a picture of a student with a swastika armband, but Mr. Hurt was a proud vet of World War II who spent as much time in the war as our country did.

[00:33:54] 1941 through 45, from Africa to Anzio, he rose to sergeant major the highest rank an enlisted army man could reach. Ben Hurt did not see those yearbooks. He did not put on blackface. He did not lease the auditorium for minstrel shows. We don't know if he ever even went to a minstrel show.

[00:34:10] Your decision is based on destructive speculation. With a modest amount of research, Dr. Randy Fitzgerald found 20 efforts Mr. Hurt made to achieve a smooth and peaceful integration in 1963 at Albemarle High School. This at a time when white parents were clamoring for his hide for enforcing the national law.

[00:34:29] When his black students were beyond upset at having their school barely shut down. when Ms. Hurt was getting grief in all directions and doing a fantastic job in pioneering integration in the process. Final word? Your time for public comment is over. To quote a famous quote, have you no shame. Please vacate the podium for the next speaker or the meeting so the meeting

[00:34:53] may proceed. Thank you. Thank you. Paul Kale. Apologize, sir. My name is Paul Kale. My sister Suzanne would be here. We were here five and a half years ago, but she can't travel from Florida for three minutes. I believe the purpose of changing the names of schools is basically a political action fraught with

limited knowledge of the past and an uneducated mindset concerning the whole picture. It undermines the value of the decision makers of the past. It undermines

[00:35:32] the hard work and accomplishments of yesteryear's leaders. It does absolutely nothing to improve the quality of the educational process of the children of Albemarle County. Mr. Benjamin Hurt, principal of Albemarle High School for 30 years, touched the lives and made an extraordinary difference in the educational success of more students than any of us in this room can imagine. The multitudes that he encouraged and the academic avenues he opened for students needing help by helping hand and little guidance is incomprehensible. Yes, he knew each Albemarle High School student's name, which is extraordinary, but he continued to remember and follow each one as they grew up

[00:36:10] and became adults, had children and grandchildren of their own. He truly cared. He did not see color. He did see potential. He saw a child's struggle and hardships he understood, and he offered the help. He used every ounce of his energy to encourage and open doors for each child he had contact with, and his efforts of personally reaching out to others continued for his entire life.

[00:36:36] His exemplary life could well be a model for all of us here, but I doubt that few of us would find it possible to achieve. I know about the character and achievements of Mr. Hurt because I had the privilege of being not just his student, not just an acquaintance, not just a casual observer.

[00:36:56] Our families were friends. We went to the same church. We ate meals together in his home and ours. We vacationed together. We fished together. My sister Suzanne and my parents went to his wedding. He was the boss when I returned to Albemarle High School for five years as a teacher and a counselor.

[00:37:14] He followed with interest the twists and turns of my life, just as he did everyone's. Mr. Ben Hurt was truly a remarkable, genuine human being. You have just chosen to besmirch and take down the name of this amazing educator and four-year veteran of the World War II.

[00:37:35] I believe this gentleman accomplished more for the children of Albemarle County than any of you on the school board or any of us in this room combined. God help us all. And I just have one question, final question. Some of you I remember from five years ago.

[00:37:53] And I just wonder, how do you sleep at night? Thank you. Dr. Randy Fitzgerald. Good evening.

[00:38:12] The comments earlier about Mr. Hurt being a racist and patently ridiculous, I knew him for 50 years. He encouraged me at all times in my teaching career, which included a couple of historically black universities.

[00:38:35] And when he knew that I was retiring, he asked me, what will you do now to help Virginia Union? they did so much for you and I thought well I haven't been doing much of anything but he said you need to do that and you need to keep in touch with your former students and I did that. I did a little research you guys didn't do any to see what actually happened in those times of desegregation Mr. Hurt and Mr. Kale, Paul Kale's father, were pioneers. While schools were closing all around

[00:39:12] them, they managed to keep Albemarle open. In fact, they worked to get racist members of the board off so that they could proceed with the plan to integrate. They integrated two years well before other schools were doing it. At a time when schools were closing down, they stayed open.

[00:39:37] Some of the things he did before the students even came, he went over to Burley. He talked to the principal. He talked to students. He went to an assembly. When he got back to Albemarle, he had his

own assembly, which he told the students what things would be like and how they should not be anything but warm and welcoming. And they were. In the yearbook that your investigator turned up pictures that were unbecoming to you, there's also a picture of

[00:40:14] three young men, two black kids and a white kid in the middle with their arms around one another. He failed to mention that particular picture. The yearbook itself praised Mr. Hurt for what he had done to safely integrate the school. When the students got there, he added positions on the student government, positions on the cheerleading squad, which he filled with black students.

[00:40:48] Mr. Hurt and Mr. Cale were pioneers. They're some ones to be looked up to, not someone to suggest that they were racist. They were anything but racist. In fact, the phrase DEI, they were doing that long before this board.

[00:41:06] You thought you invented the term. The two of them did what was right back then before there even was a term. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Fitzgerald. Your time has expired. The next three, Leslie Rattan, J.B. Hurt, Steph Davis.

[00:41:29] Good evening. Could we get those numbers larger and more ominous, please? I understand that this meeting might be a final determination for bus driver Lori Berga in determining whether she gets to keep her job.

[00:41:49] I can't speak to any details regarding the incident that led to her current situation. I can only speak to what I do know about Lori, and that's what I came to talk to you about today. Lori Berga is the most dedicated bus driver I've ever known. To say that she takes her job seriously is a massive understatement.

[00:42:07] Lori, who loves the children who ride her bus like family, knows the profound impact that someone like her can choose to have on a child. When I was a student, I had non-relationships with several of my bus drivers, not knowing their names or anything about them and vice versa.

[00:42:23] But Lori chooses to learn their names and talk to them. She offers hugs and conversation. She plays music for them. brings treats, and celebrates milestones with her kids. Dozens of children start their day in a happier, brighter place after being delivered to school by her.

[00:42:40] She also shows a warmth to parents that I'm unaccustomed to receiving from my child's bus driver. She shows grace, and she never casts judgment on a parent who may be a minute late to the bus stop, making sure they know how to contact her in case there is never an issue in the future. And she loves her kids.

[00:42:57] The day after Maggie Kaufman died, a group of us neighbors mourned quietly outside the Kaufman's house. Lori showed up and almost collapsed out of her vehicle from sorrow. She had also suffered a major loss, one of her very favorite students.

[00:43:13] She grieved with us and the other children on Heron Lane that day, greeting Maggie's grandparents as they arrived. I follow job openings within ACPS with some regularity, and I have noticed with satisfaction that starting wages for bus drivers have increased dramatically over the past couple of years, and I think this is terrific.

[00:43:34] School bus drivers are unsung heroes. They carry our most precious cargo. I myself have considered if I have it in me to drive a school bus, but today's weegis, much more generous than they have

ever been, are still not enough to attract me to this job. In other words, I don't know how much you'd have to pay me to drive a school bus, but no current offering is enough.

[00:43:56] We have a critical bus driver shortage right now, and we also have Lori Berga, a compassionate, kind, professional driver who wants to do the job. Please let Lori do the job. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:44:15] J.B. Hurt. Oh, was I wrong? Apologies. Hi, my name is J.B. Hurt.

[00:44:31] I'm in the Whitehall District of Atomal County. When Matt Haas and Karen Waters initially met with me to inform me that they'd already made their decision to recommend taking my dad's name off Agnor Hurt Elementary School, I asked Karen about the Meriwether Lewis renaming process.

[00:44:49] Actually, Dr. Kaiser was at that meeting with us as well. I'd read some things about them ignoring the public comment, ignoring the results of the committee that had been formed. And so I actually wanted to hear Karen's side of the story.

[00:45:05] What she told me was at least one member of that committee said that they would have voted differently if they'd known the new information that she'd provided them based on her research after their vote. That's the case here as well. I hope you all had the chance to read the research conducted by Barb and Dr. Randy Fitzgerald that they've reviewed some tonight that not only refutes her findings, Karen's findings, but also provides additional instances and examples of my dad and Mr. Cale helping to advance peaceful integration in Albemarle County.

[00:45:37] The work done by the Fitzgeralds, in addition to the multitude of testimonials you've heard in the past few months, have shown that the research that went into Karen and Matt's recommendation was subpar and woefully incomplete. everyone who knew my father, Ben F. Hurt, was already aware of that. Now you all are aware of it too. But here's the thing. It's okay to change your mind on an issue. That's what reasonable people do. That's what rational people do. Any one of you can make a motion tonight to change course on this. Matt and Karen, you can certainly change your recommendations. What kind of example

[00:46:12] are we setting for the youth? Who are the focus of what we should be about? You made a decision based on initial information that has been shown to be inaccurate at best, libelous at worst. You now have more comprehensive information on this.

[00:46:28] You should reconsider your decision. That's the example you can set for the students, being able to change your mind now that you have a more complete picture of who my father was and his legacy at Albemarle High School. And what a legacy. What an impact. I had a bit of an epiphany some time ago.

[00:46:45] What an impact my parents had on so many people. You guys have heard this over the last few months. Teachers, students, parents, the values that he modeled has shaped generations in Albemarle County. realize how blessed I am to have been raised by my parents. The folks who knew him are aware of that. I honestly feel bad for the people that didn't know him. I feel sorry for you guys.

[00:47:07] We will know every student. It's part of your mission. Keep striving for that standard. My dad did it for 30 years at Albemarle, and really until his passing. I hope you guys are able to live up to the standard that he modeled for those 30 years, and thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hurt.

[00:47:26] Steph Davis. Hi there. I'm Steph Davis and a resident of Albemarle County. I have two children that are thriving in Albemarle County Public Schools and I thank you for all that you're doing to make that

possible. I'm here today to speak on the character of Miss Lori Barga, a beloved member of our community. My children had the privilege of briefly riding on her bus

[00:47:59] during the chaoticness of the pandemic and she loved them like she loves the children that she has been taking back and forth to school every day for years not only did she love them she loved us her bus went by my house every day even after my kids weren't on it with a friendly smile and a wave and she goes way above and beyond the call of a bus driver to support and encourage our children. She attends their talent shows and brings them a wonderful flower as they finish

[00:48:34] their performances. She is just a really remarkable human. And I know that you all are very reasonable people. And the burdensome bus driver shortage, I know, we get the messages. It's a big deal.

[00:48:53] And it just makes sense that someone who loves her job as much as Ms. Lori does, who the children love as much as they love Ms. Lori, it just makes good sense that she would be back at her post, going by my house with a load of wonderful children.

[00:49:14] It just makes sense that she should be back on our ACPS buses. Thank you. Thank you. The next three speakers, Christy Taylor, Kate Nembitt, Lori Berga.

[00:49:36] Christy Taylor. I'm a parent of four children, products of Albemarle County Public Schools. All four have attended Burry Elementary at some point, and my oldest just graduated from community lab school.

[00:49:54] Great school. I credit them with her receiving a full academic scholarship to the prestigious Accelerated Master's in Engineering program at RIT. Education is very important to our family. I'm also an adoptive parent, so one of my children is white, two are black, and one is biracial.

[00:50:16] And we have a very different experience based on our complexion in this county. This year has been notably challenging at Murray. It's been a fantastic place for my family up until then. And I actually moved from a house on one street to a house two streets down just to stay in this district in that school system and to stay on Ms. Lori's bus.

[00:50:41] Folks here are going to speak to Ms. Lori's character. I'm not going to focus as much of my time on that because I think it speaks for itself. My concern is relating more to due process and root cause as someone with a unique lens on this situation. In the context of five recent complaints involving parents at Murray Elementary School for events that have happened this year, with three of those being race-based, I think that her termination has to be reconsidered in the lens of unconscious bias and structural racism.

[00:51:17] Ms. Laurie was set up for failure, similarly to how my seven-year-old daughter was when she was threatened with suspension for playing with a Rubik's Cube. Meanwhile, a child who strangled another child in her classroom, who is notably white, did not receive significant discipline at all.

[00:51:39] Just along these lines, I think Ms. Laurie has been set up for failure. There were other adults present on the bus that day. It is notable that they are white and have not gone through the same process that she has.

[00:51:55] So, regardless of her character, I hope that this board will reconsider what has happened under a lens of this information and really question, are we treating our kids and are we treating our adults of color fairly, or do we let implicit, unconscious, and covert biases affect the decisions we're making?

[00:52:21] Thank you. Thank you. Kate Nemet. Hi, good evening. My name is Kaitlyn Nemet. I'm going to cede my time to my husband, Adam Nemet, because I'm in the process of losing my voice.

[00:52:37] So he speaks on behalf of me and my two children, who are Murray Elementary School children. Hi, my name is Adam Nemet, Samuel Miller District, and I'm the father of two ACPS students at VL Murray Elementary. Jack, a rising fifth grader, Rose, a rising second grader.

[00:52:55] I'm here to offer my full support to bus driver Lori Baerga, who's been the primary driver on our Peacock Hill bus route 23 since my kids started at Murray. My second-hand understanding is that she's currently on suspension for an event related to a trip where kids were misbehaving and acting dangerously.

[00:53:15] She pulled over to address the situation. I can't speak to the specifics. I wasn't there. But I have full and complete faith that whatever Ms. Laurie did was appropriate for the situation. Perhaps there's a learning experience in here somewhere, but she's only ever impressed us with her conduct, safety, compassion, and care for our kids.

[00:53:33] and I would implore the board to reinstate her as soon as humanly possible. While the profession of school bus driver never gets as much credit or respect as it should, we marvel at what Ms. Laurie manages on a daily basis and how she does it all with a smile on her face and a hug for every student.

[00:53:50] She's also much more than a bus driver. To all the parents and students in our neighborhood, she's an integral member of the community. She regularly hosts a back-to-school party for the kids at our neighborhood playground. Nobody asks her to do this. She simply loves the kids, and it's a way for her to connect and meet the new elementary school students who are maybe nervous about riding the bus for the first time.

[00:54:10] She also regularly attends our kids' extracurriculars and after-school events. She comes to the Murray Talent Show and gives every child a rose. She just came to my kids' lemonade stand two weekends ago. She is an ACPS adult that my kids unequivocally love, trust, and respect, and that's not something I say lightly.

[00:54:30] Since the recent and unexpected death of my daughter's first grade friend and our neighbor, Maggie Kaufman, who also rode our bus, I believe that Ms. Lurie has been deeply impacted by Maggie's death. We've all been reeling from this news and how to guide our children through it and how to support her parents through this devastating time.

[00:54:48] Ms. Lurie is a vital touchstone for our kids and neighbors, and we as parents and our kids desperately miss seeing her every morning and afternoon. It's yet another abnormal reminder that something major has changed.

[00:55:04] And it's especially poor timing that Ms. Lurie's suspension occurred at this moment when we kind of need her most. I'm happy to provide whatever other support for her. I know it's been a challenge to hire bus drivers. I just got a text inviting me to an ACPS bus driver job fair.

[00:55:19] I have a great candidate for you in Ms. Lurie Baerga. She's not only good, she is the best. It would be devastating to lose her, both from the county roster and from our kids' daily lives. Thank you. Thank you. Lori Baerga? And if I am mispronouncing your name, please correct me when you step to the podium.

[00:55:39] Thank you. I'm used to that. It's Baerga. What you can do with it is fine. It's my wish that the board meet with me one-on-one because I would like to shed some light on this situation that I truly believe you don't have, the details.

[00:55:59] This is so much bigger than the paperwork in front of you, and I'd like the opportunity, if you'll grant it to me, to speak with you one-on-one. Thank you. Thank you. The next three speakers, Joel Hamilton and Bruce Woodsell.

[00:56:18] And actually, it's just two. I'm just going to confirm. Christy Taylor was a duplicate. Leslie Rattan was a duplicate. Steph Davis was a duplicate. And then Adam Nemet, you had signed up, but it sounds like you were speaking for your wife. So you don't require... Okay, thank you. Just wanted to clarify that.

[00:56:36] Joel Hamilton. This is in regard to Mr. Hurt. First off, this is my first school board meeting.

[00:56:52] I've been in this town for 60 years now and never been to one of these. And I'd like to thank you all for the service you do. The national news has lots of school board troubles that clearly are difficult, and I presume you have troubles.

[00:57:09] There's a reason why Germany has laws against putting up statues or public memorials to Hitler. And racism, it was our Hitler. And I have supported getting rid of the names of U.S. military bases being given to traitors to the United States who served in the Confederate Army.

[00:57:39] And so I'm generally in support of the notion that we need to remove the traces as much as possible of racism in our country. And since I am 81 years old, I've seen a lot of casual and also specifically focused racism.

[00:58:00] Racism when I was young was just absolutely everywhere in white society. In regard to Mr. Hurt, as we work to eliminate some of the errors and mistakes of the past and begin to remove known racists, it's necessary to understand that while we're correcting mistakes, we need to correct our own mistakes.

[00:58:28] And I think from what I hear, I didn't know Mr. Hurt. Family members and people I know say he was not a racist. He was a very wonderful person. But I think it's necessary to point out that correcting the mistakes of the past brings with it a necessity to begin thinking about correcting our own mistakes.

[00:58:52] And it sounds like this is a mistake of taking Mr. Hurt's name off. And I would just like to advocate for thinking about that. So I hope this is helpful for you today. Thank you. Our last speaker tonight is Bruce Woodzell.

[00:59:10] Good evening. Thank you for allowing me to speak. Bruce Woodzell, I live in the Rio District. I was born and raised in this community. Born in Charlottesville, raised in Albemarle. I went to Meriwether Lewis School.

[00:59:26] Breaks my heart to know that name is no longer honorable. And I went to Albemarle High School, entering that school in 1964. During our moment of silence, my thoughts turned to Ben Hurt. I've never met a more honorable man in my life.

[00:59:46] And you can see from the audiences here tonight, that is, I think, the general consensus of this community. I thought your comments were very appropriate. Let all students come. Let all students take advantage. That's what Mr. Hurt did.

[01:00:05] We had students come when Burley closed. You will never, ever be able to go back and judge him based on what he did. But that school was 100% able to cover that difficult ground without any violence, without any uproar.

[01:00:27] It was a welcome community. I brought some proof tonight. I know there's photos in this book that in today's judgment may appear to be inappropriate.

[01:00:48] I can agree, but I was one of the students in this book. You won't see my picture in some of the photos that today could be interpreted as inappropriate. but you've already heard tonight, there's a photo right there of a white student between two black students. Guess who that is? That's me. That's how well this integration of Almar Husker went,

[01:01:20] and how did that happen? Again, it came from Mr. Hurt's guidance. If I had the ability to have one wish, I wish Mr. Hurt was able to be sitting here tonight and defend himself. I think it's very inappropriate in our USA today to go back 30, 40, 50 years and try to judge someone based on what occurred in that period without a full knowledge of being there and seeing and judging from that point of view. I don't know if anyone here knew Mr. Hurt. If you didn't, I think it's a very much

[01:02:00] a grievance to charge him as a racist. I think that's offensive to this young man right here and you are saying that word without evidence i hope that you will study this and make the right decision i knew mr agner thank you sir your time has expired thank you to everyone who shared

[01:02:22] their viewpoints with us today i'm going to return the gavel to chair acoff yes i i know i'm sorry

[01:02:40] you did not we don't public comment is over approach the podium please press the podium We will set the clock at three minutes.

[01:03:07] Just identify yourself and where you're from. Roy Thomas. For the better part of 35 years, I lived in Albemarle County. I'm a native of Charlottesville. I now live in Waynesboro. After Brown v. Board of Education declared segregated schools unconstitutional in 1954,

[01:03:40] a racist majority on the Albemarle County School Board altered admission policies and used local ordinances, Virginia massive resistance legislation, and lawsuits to prevent the integration of county schools.

[01:03:59] When their last legal appeal failed and a date for integration was established, the school board then banned all clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities that fostered social interaction between black and white students.

[01:04:18] Ben Hurd and Superintendent Paul Kale influenced the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors to fire the racists on the school board before the start of the new school year. The day after the supervisors fired the four segregationists, the July 6, 1963 Daily Progress reported, quote, Board of Supervisors Chairman John W. Billy Williams declared that he had checked with the superintendent of county schools, Paul Kale, and the principal of Albemarle

[01:04:57] High School, Ben Hurt, and had full assurances that in their opinion, athletics and some extracurricular activities should continue, close quote. Albemarle County began integrating public schools for the first time in the fall of 1963. The newly formed school board rescinded the ban on sports and clubs. The firing of the races school board members was a pivotal event culminating in

[01:05:26] the full integration of Albemarle County public schools in the fall of 1967. Tonight, I celebrate the crucial contribution Ben Hurt made to the racial integration of Albemarle County Public Schools. Thank you. Thank you, sir. That concludes our public comment for tonight.

[01:05:58] Next on our agenda is a 10-minute break, so why don't we come back. I can't even see the clock

[01:06:05] in 10 minutes. We'll come back at 746. Thank you. We're back in session now. Next item on our

[01:16:35] agenda is presentation on employee engagement. Good evening school board members Dr. Haas and members of the community. My name is Dan. Can the people who are talking, we're back in session now,

[01:16:57] we can't hear the speaker. Thank you. Excuse me, we are back in session, so can the audience who are chatting go out into the lobby? Thank you. Good evening school board members and Dr. Haas members of the Albemarle community. My name is Dan Redding. I'm with Human Resources and this

[01:17:32] evening we're here to talk about employee engagement, specifically the results of our 2024 Gallup Employee Engagement Survey. And we're going to tie into that work Human Resources has been doing related to stay interviews with employees as well as exit surveys and exit interviews. In our agenda this evening, we'll go over how this work aligns to the strategic plan.

[01:18:00] We'll define employee engagement. We'll do an overview of our Gallup results for this year, and then we'll talk about our process and some of the information we've gleaned from our stay interview process. We'll talk about exit data trends, and then discuss some of the recommendations and next steps we have based on the information we've received.

[01:18:27] So first up, how does all of this relate to the strategic plan? Of course, within our strategic plan, human resources work is deeply embedded in goal three around equitable and transformative resources. As we're moving out there to support, recruit, and retain employees, that is the basis of the team that's working to achieve the vision and the mission.

[01:18:53] All of that is embedded in equitable and transformative resources as we work to attract, develop, and retain our high-quality staff. And with that, I'm going to turn our presentation over to two amazing members of the HR team.

[01:19:12] Dr. Jason Sears, who's our Director of Talent, and Ms. Shea Carter-Shiflett, who is our Program Manager for Retention and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Thank you, Dan. Before I start, I just want to mention also some of the great work that one of our colleagues, Dr. Sarah Lynn, has been working on closely with Gallup, and she unfortunately wasn't able to join us here today, but I wanted to recognize her work as well.

[01:19:44] Gallup uses a nationally normed survey of 12 questions to measure engagement. We add to engagement information through exit and stay interview data, which is mostly qualitative and provides the stories of our employees to help explain the quantitative measures, excuse me, the quantitative measurements of Gallup. By looking at data informed, excuse me, by looking at data informed recommendations from Gallup, human resources data, and the Bellwether

[01:20:14] report, we hope to show a clear path forward to improve ACPS employee engagement. Gallup helps us to see that engagement is everyone's responsibility. Everyone's throughout responsibility throughout the entire division, beginning right here with the board, through the central office leadership,

into schools and departments. We all have roles and responsibilities. Each of us as an individual also plays a vital role in staying individually engaged and accountable to all of our teams.

[01:20:52] So we'll talk a little bit about the Gallup Q12 engagement data now. Gallup provides a variety of data points and comparisons. Our grand mean score for 2024 is 3.83. This is an increase of 0.07 from 2023 and an additional increase of 0.02 from 2022, showing a larger change in the past year

[01:21:27] than in the prior year. Gallup defines a meaningful change at 0.1. Gallup also maintains other K-12 organizations that use engagement survey as a tool. Compared to the other Gallup K-12 organizations, we are in the 36th percentile overall, which is an increase from the 29th

[01:21:57] percentile in 2023. Gallup also provides an engagement index showing the relationships among engaged, not engaged or neutral, and actively disengaged employees. Currently, our ratio is 2.92 engaged employees to every one actively disengaged employee, which is up from

[01:22:29] 2.36 to one last year. Gallup's research includes a ratio, excuse me, Gallup's research indicates a ratio of four to one provides a positive power to draw individuals out of the actively disengaged category. Last year, most of our movement occurred from not engaged to engaged, which is positive.

[01:22:55] This is a natural progression, and with continued focus, we will see greater movement of our staff out of the actively disengaged category. These are the 12 Gallup questions set in the Gallup hierarchy. Notice from the bottom up, we work with individual basic needs, the individual's contribution to the organization, how teamwork is completed, and finally at the top, how to grow

[01:23:30] the individual. It is important to develop and maintain a strong base and work towards individual growth. Notice the column to the far right. This is Gallup's interpretation of what employees need in order to offer higher scores on each question. This chart displays ACPS's 2024 Q12 Gallup

[01:24:02] engagement scores along with the change from 2023. The four questions with changes in bold and upward pointed triangles shows meaningful positive change. There are a few additional interesting points to mention. While most of our meaningful change is at the top of the pyramid, we feel like we need to continue our efforts to meet the basic needs of employee engagement.

[01:24:31] Our recognition scores have increased, and we still have continued to work to do in all of these areas. A deeper dive into this score shows a deep division between those who regularly receive recognition and those who do not receive that recognition on a regular basis.

[01:24:54] The division's overall satisfaction increased 0.12. This is an increase of, excuse me, this isn't one of the 12 indicators, but it is very important. Gallup reminds us that overall satisfaction for individuals includes how employees perceive their entire work experience.

[01:25:13] So this includes considerations like their commute, their compensation, the actual work they're doing on a regular basis, and even their work-life balance. The Gallup Data Analysis Team that supports Albemarle County Public Schools noted that we have employees that are falling in what they call the danger zone, and that is employees that are between three and five years of service.

[01:25:42] This is a danger zone for all organizations, and it's also a critical time period for educators. You can see that our brand new employees have the highest engagement, and it's slightly above our overall grand mean. Now, there's a downward trend, especially between those employees that are in that three- to five-year service, and then it rebounds for those employees remaining after their fifth year.

[01:26:17] Gallup provides us with four recommendations. First, they recommend we need to learn from the best. We have pockets of schools and divisions with highly engaged employees, and it's our job to identify and share those strategies. Secondly, invest in leadership development.

[01:26:35] We need to continue to teach our leaders to also be coaches and incorporate best practice around employee engagement. Next, we should create a culture of idea sharing where principals and leaders intentionally seek each other's ideas and opinions and the ideas and opinions of our staff.

[01:26:57] Finally, we need to watch out for that vulnerable population of employees in that three to five year period during the organization. Right now, I'd like to introduce Ms. Shea Carter-Shiflett to talk about stay interviews and the exit interview process.

[01:27:19] Good evening. I'm going to share a little bit about the history of stay interviews first. This is a process that's taken from industry with a goal of improving employee retention via feedback about what's working and identifying challenges.

[01:27:39] ACPS is modeling this practice for other school divisions in Virginia. I want to note that Dr. Sarah Lynn and I had the opportunity to share about our process in Albemarle County in March of 2024 at the VASPA, Virginia Association of School Personnel Conference, where there is only one other school division that we know of who is trying to get started with this process.

[01:28:02] Research on best practices for stay interview have told us that they should be conducted within three and eight months of a new hire and closer to the start of the new school year. ACPS begins our process in October.

[01:28:20] It is 100% voluntary and confidential. The process for stay interviews include planning and scheduling interview sessions, conducting 30-minute confidential interviews one-on-one, which is a shift from the previous year where we offered it to focus groups.

[01:28:43] Then the data is coded using 42 themes, and while protecting the anonymity of all of the participants, we are able to summarize the data for the development of reports and presentations. The product of stay interviews is qualitative. Over the past two years, ACPS received large amounts of quantitative data such as Gallup, exit surveys, PEC data in the form of numbers, percents, and quartiles.

[01:29:17] This feedback information can help tell the story of these numeric findings. As you can see, in 2023, there were 137 participants. In 2024, there were 125 participants. Over the course of two years, we maintained the process and did not change anything.

[01:29:37] We used the same nine questions in both years, and we coded all of the frequencies mentioned using the same 42 categories. In 2023, we had 1,220 statements collected.

[01:29:54] In 2024, we had 919. And that reduction was expected with the slight decrease of participants. But overall, we had about 5% of our division, give or take, participate, and stay interviews.

[01:30:12] So as I mentioned, there are 42 categories, and this is just a small sample of the two years. This data is coded by the number of times a theme is mentioned. This data tells us that there are a lot of positives. It's not just negative data.

[01:30:30] And we can see the number of positive comments have remained high. In addition, this data can also help us focus on areas to grow when we look at some of our themes that have remained higher. And so if you remember from the previous bar graph I just showed you with those themes that's coded, I

wanted to share some words directly from the participants to help you see how multiple themes can be in a comment.

[01:31:00] First, I really have enjoyed working here. I've made lifelong friends here at ACPS. My experiences made me have impact at a national level. I would have never thought my capacity would have grown as much. But ACPS needs to commit to the retention of their black teachers.

[01:31:19] Kids who have never seen a black educator are asking if I'm someone's parent. Never experiencing having a black educator, K-12. That was a participant from 2023. So many positive things about working here. We have a lot of resources and really do a lot to try to support staff.

[01:31:37] Sometimes I wish we could do more efficient. At times, I've felt frustrated with open positions on the team, but at the same time, I feel supported by district and supervisors. And it's really hard to get staff and meet everyone's need. We need more concrete training for TAs that teaches how to do the instruction and support the children.

[01:31:57] Also a participant from 2023. So as you can see, as an example of these comments, they can be coded for multiple themes because they touch on so many facets of our work. Now, I want to share a little bit about exit data trends.

[01:32:18] The off-boarding process is conducted immediately upon a person's decision to lead the division. Surveys and interviews are offered, but they are not always taken by employees. Within 48 hours, staff receive an off-boarding email, which contains information around benefits and applicable continuation rights, as well as the ACPS exit survey link and the ability to schedule a 30-minute confidential one-on-one exit interview with me.

[01:32:49] Prior to this new process, ACPS collected and sent a batch of surveys in June, roughly July, to all staff members that left for that year. The survey only went to licensed staff and collected minimum data, such as gender, race, and it allowed them the option to choose three reasons for leaving.

[01:33:16] This data could be skewed based off of their choices. The choices listed are in the box around reasons listed for leaving. This year, the process has expanded.

[01:33:35] This survey now goes to all staff. And yes, we do collect optional demographic information, such as gender, race, and ethnicity. But we are also now monitoring staff exiting by departments and roles. When survey participants choose a reason for leaving, that choice branches out to a subset of questions which allow us to get more details around their reason for leaving.

[01:34:00] So if they select dissatisfaction with policies and practices, five separate choices will branch out and allow them to choose the category that best helps us understand and get a little more details. This gets us better data, and what's also most important about the new process is it allows for the space for us to collect anecdotal feedback from them.

[01:34:26] So it is not just multiple choice. This year, we also worked really hard to design the ACPS exit survey to mirror elements of the Gallup engagement survey. Over time, trends should be able to help us start to predict exits.

[01:34:47] As you can see on the chart, the blue dot represents the average rating, one being strongly disagree and five strongly agree, answered by staff in the ACPS exit survey. The yellow dot represents the average rating answered by staff in the Gallup survey.

[01:35:05] The longer the line distance between the two dots tells us there is more difference between the exit and the Gallup responses. You can see two questions with significant differences between the average of the exit survey and Gallup, the ACPS mission and recognition.

[01:35:26] However, the green dot represents where the average rating for both the ACPS exit survey and Gallup survey are the same. Interestingly, despite the difference in averages for most of the questions, satisfaction with ACPS is the exact same for the exit and Gallup survey.

[01:35:44] Additional questions on the ACPS exit survey, again, align thematically with Gallup's recommendations. This data represents the average of rating scores 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree for each of the questions.

[01:36:05] So, for example, when we look at communication, it is at the top of the chart because it is listed as our lowest rating at 2.9. On the bottom side of this chart, staff do feel that they are able to embrace their true identity, with that bar being our highest rating at 4.13.

[01:36:25] When we think about overall satisfaction and employee willingness to return to ACPS, the yellow rectangle, for example, tells us that staff are genuinely satisfied. And while 3.71 is closer to the top of the rating scale and at the bottom of the chart, it is not our highest rating.

[01:36:48] Therefore, there is room to grow. In conclusion, the ACPS stay and exit survey data along with Gallup survey results suggest that if we focus our efforts around improving communication, developing leadership, and offering recognition, we can improve employee engagement.

[01:37:05] Thank you. Thank you, Shay. I just wanted to also give you some recommendations from human resources.

[01:37:22] Based on the engagement data we are seeing in stay interviews and exit interviews, human resources recommendations would focus on four general areas. Those four areas are aligned with both some of our Gallup and Bellwether report recommendations as well.

[01:37:37] First recommendation is communication should be integrated throughout all levels, all departments and all schools. This consistent two-way communication, the planning of and execution of that communication promotes transparency, value, and trust throughout the district.

[01:37:56] The second recommendation we would have is we should continue to support our leaders to ensure they can support all of our employees. Our principals and department leaders play an important role in the development of all of our staff.

[01:38:12] We should continue to develop the skills of our leaders to ensure they support the professional growth of the teams they lead. Our third recommendation is, while the Department of Instruction oversees the development of adult learning, Human Resources recommends the expansion of our workforce development programming.

[01:38:33] Expanding workforce development allows us to expand the professional capacities of all of our staff, further ensuring our mission for high-quality learning for all students. Finally, as the board and Dr. Haas have supported over several years, we recommend the continued focus of recruiting and retaining a diverse staff.

[01:38:54] Human resources work around affinity groups, apprenticeships, and the TOPS program increases our ability to attract and develop and retain the highest quality staff while continuing to promote

diversity.

[01:39:11] Thank you so much. Do any of my colleagues have questions? I can go first. I do have a couple of questions. First of all, thank you for this. First, with regards to the exit interviews, you gave some statistics. I'm curious, you talked about the new process for exit interviews. How does that compare to years past as far as are we seeing an increase in the number of surveys or interviews completed from prior years with the new process?

[01:39:50] So I'll just go back. This was the prior year process. It was a survey that was sent out. We also did a survey monkey that was sent out. And as you can see, just thinking about last year, which is, I know we just ended a school year, but the year before that, there were 236 classified teachers that includes administrators and classroom teachers that received the survey.

[01:40:24] 120 participants filled that out. However, when I came on board in November, I've enhanced the process and created a survey that is included in their off-boarding term. From January until Monday, there were 272 classified staff. So that number has already increased for just six months compared to the number of classroom teachers that left last year.

[01:40:59] I'm also tracking when I send them who opens their emails. 78 staff members that left open them, which means about 29% of them are at least giving us the time of reading it. The exit survey is a link that's embedded in the off-boarding package that they get.

[01:41:21] 58 participants since January have filled that out, And actually, I wrote that down because I had some other terms since Monday. We're actually at about 29%. But as of the time I created this, 21% of our staff that exited had completed the exit survey.

[01:41:40] And then the number of exit interviews is at 12, which actually it's 15 because I did some others. So at that time, it was at 4%. And so I would say from last year to this year, the process not only increased the way that the detail and information that we collect, it expanded to all of the employees within our district.

[01:42:05] It is more disaggregated by department, and it allows both the survey and the interview allows them to have a voice in the process to really give us some feedback around our working environment.

[01:42:22] And if I could just jump in, and I just want to thank Shea for the work that she and the others are doing around this. Gathering information around exit interviews is something that has been a challenge at best over the years, and that was actually one of the pieces that was the impetus for starting the stay interviews as well, because we know by the time they exit, they've already made that decision.

[01:42:44] And so really getting the opportunity to hear why people stay can really help us with retention by looking at themes and doing something about what it is that we're seeing. I do think that, I think about the stay interviews, the one-on-one pieces, the trust that is built through those, and I think that over time, more and more people may be more open and willing to do an exit interview because of the framework and the foundation that's been set through the stay interviews.

[01:43:18] I guess that leads to my next question, then using the data and the anecdotal evidence that you're getting from stay and exit interviews, what specific things have we changed based on that information? I want to make sure that we're actually using the data that we're getting and the feedback that we're getting through this process.

[01:43:39] I was just going to point out that I spoke about the 42 different categories that we coded. We really celebrated a change based off of feedback we got on the use of Kronos. We saw that the number of frequencies mentioned for Kronos went down to zero.

[01:44:00] The number of frequencies mentioned around our subs and what they were experiencing or teachers who were needing subs were experiencing also decreased dramatically. And so we're using that information, generating reports that gives that feedback to the necessary departments or roles.

[01:44:19] And then sometimes the feedback, in the feedback, they tell us how we can improve the working environment. Yeah, just to add to that, Kronos, our HRIS team put together in-person trainings and they also had some kind of just availability.

[01:44:43] So if folks had questions around Kronos or timekeeping, They were just available for our timekeepers and folks like that. So that was really something that they wanted to do, but it was based on some of this information that we saw. We said, all right, well, we definitely need to start doing something differently.

[01:45:01] So that's kind of just one of the opportunities we've had to reflect on that data and then put something in place. Yeah, definitely. And I guess that my last question kind of sort of relates to that. It has more to do with the information from the beginning of the presentation.

[01:45:17] How are you digging into the findings more, let's say, on employee recognition? Like if we see that, you know, that's low or that, you know, they value that but they don't feel like they're being recognized. How are we, like, going back and talking to the staff, talking to the employees?

[01:45:35] Are we asking them, like, what is it that, you know, how would you feel recognized? What is it that you see value, you know, taking that information a step further, I guess? I'm going to give it a shot, but Dan will also. So I really see that as this balance between having the information from Gallup and then taking that information, the stories behind that information, from stay interviews.

[01:45:59] We've made some, I believe, some strong strides at specifically recognition. But for me, it is, are we listening to our staff members when they tell us, I am not recognized? So it's, how are we recognizing folks?

[01:46:15] Are we recognizing them in a way that is impactful to them? So we've put together additional, we've had goals for our department around recognition. So continuing to see those places where we need growth and being impactful and mindful to talk to our principals and our department leaders about doing something different, taking the time and being intentional around that work.

[01:46:41] So when we see some of those scores we want to focus on, it's then making that focus, putting that plan in place, and then kind of hope, not hoping, but working toward doing better and hoping that we'll see those changes in the next administration of that Gallup data.

[01:47:04] What Jason said, but also I think in a lot of our work with Gallup, we are highlighting schools and departments where major changes, positive changes have occurred. A great example is one school that saw significant growth, especially on the recognition indicator. The principal shared what she had done over the course of the year. What shift had she made?

[01:47:30] She made a shift of actually asking staff on the back-to-school questionnaire, how do you like to be recognized? Some people love being called up in front of the school board and get given a plaque. Some

people thrive on that. Some people hate that.

[01:47:46] They would much rather have a Post-it note left on their desk that they find at the end of the day. They smile and they keep it, and that lets them know, I did something really great and important. It's going to be the sharing of those strategies that really moved the needle in individual schools and departments that I think really moves the division as a whole.

[01:48:07] And if I could just do a little anecdotal piece as well. I'm thinking of a principal who last year when we saw the scores was devastated around the recognition one because in their school, she felt that that was where they had really put a lot of efforts and that type of thing. And what they did is they unpacked this at the beginning of the school year and they really start, and throughout the year, it's not just a one and done type of thing, but really try to focus on, so what does recognition mean? So it was a step further than how do I like recognition? And by having that conversation, this was a school also in this area

[01:48:44] in particular where we saw some significant gains this year as well. Well, I think it comes back to the slide that talks about communication and that being a shortcoming. It's following through on the back end of stuff too. So this was great. Thank you so much. I'm going to add one more additional anecdotal piece for our leader, Dan. We started at the beginning of each of our departmental meetings, you know, when we start talking about being intentional about things like recognition, he has marked off some time. And we know it's coming. So now I start thinking

[01:49:21] about, all right, now who can I recognize? So it's just opportunities for us to thank our co-workers. It doesn't have to be just the folks on our team, but anyone in our department. So So, you know, there are times when I'm like, oh, gosh, I got to remember that for, you know, for the department meeting. And that means a lot.

[01:49:37] And, you know, actually, I got recognized today. But it's just so cool. The things that you normally do, you don't think about, but then think about how impactful it is. Yeah, definitely. Thank you.

[01:49:54] Yeah. I know you guys have all spent a ton of time on this data. So I'm going to kind of usually ask three questions, right? what excited you most, and you can do this collectively, however you want to do it, or what concerned you the most and what surprised you the most.

[01:50:11] So what excited you the most, what concerned you the most, and what surprised you the most. I'll jump in about the excitement. And for me, it's really the work that we're doing around stay interviews.

[01:50:31] One of the things that I initially thought would occur is that we would just hear some of those negative things. I'm angry about this. I'm upset about this. But, you know, I wish everybody could hear those, the stay interviews because they are, they're very powerful and they also are very positive.

[01:50:53] And sometimes when we are listening to folks that are telling us, first of all, we're giving them the opportunity to talk to us about why it is they enjoy working here, why it is they are staying here. And no place is perfect. And our staff have answers. You know, they come with some things that are challenges to them. And it's exciting to hear not only their challenges, but they've thought about those, the challenges, and they're coming with answers. So we're having the opportunity to really focus on what we can do to, again, replicate those things that are great. And the things that

[01:51:27] we don't, we're not necessarily right next to, those folks are coming to us that now that we're giving them this platform, they're coming to us with answers that oftentimes we haven't even thought about that. So I'm excited every time I get to hear from Sarah and Shay about things that they've heard about their stay interviews. I'm going to go with excited as well. I guess what

[01:51:57] really excited me was, I had it then I lost it, what excited me most was the process for, I did not expect to have such vulnerable moments with people and I also did not expect to have such powerful feedback and their trust in us to take that feedback and think about next steps

[01:52:28] was really impactful for me and pretty much like led a charge for me. Well and I just want to say thank you for being one of those it takes both sides and that trust that they feel that is so important. Thank you. Yes, I would agree with what they've shared. I think what excites me the most is, sorry, I'm going to go very fast through these slides, but all three of these data sources,

[01:53:02] our Gallup surveys, our stay and exit interview process, and our bellwether report, all that data is aligning in terms of what it's telling us and the directions it's pointing us in. And that's nice, because sometimes we do this work, and we get this information, and it's pointing us in different directions, but all of this is saying the same things. Communication, how we're working as leaders, the learning for the adults that work here, and our areas of focus, that those things

[01:53:35] will move us forward. That's very exciting to me. I'm going to add just one concern, and it's not really a concern. It's more of a hope. What we're seeing from Gallup, I think, is very powerful.

[01:53:52] We're adding that to the new exit interview process and being able to kind of align some of that data. I know the work with Gallup is, I'll just say it, I think it's expensive, but I truly believe that it is, they are funds that can really make real difference in the work that we're doing with our staff. And I know it's an expense, and I know there are always tough budget years, but I'm concerned that if we don't continue getting this information,

[01:54:27] we would lose some of the progress that I think we really are making. I mean, I am all for a lot of the work that Gallup does, and I know that we will continue that. And I'm just concerned that you know when we start looking at budgetary things that it may be something that um may be tough to continue to do so i am i am hopeful uh that we'll continue to use that information yeah yes of course sorry i was surprised that there were not a lot of schools conducting stay interviews but i'm honored that outmark county was able to represent in a conference that shared

[01:55:06] that process with other schools and to be able to continue to partner with them and network and just being at the forefront with Dr. Sarah Lynn, I wish she was here because she's so passionate about this work that it radiates into me. Being able to stand next to her and represent Falmar County when it comes to us leading the work in this industry process that's now permeating into education so. Yeah, and they totally worked that room. They did a phenomenal job. Yeah, could you go back to

[01:55:38] to the slide that was showing the summary of exits? Exits? Yeah. Are those things that's listed, are they in order? In other words, was it dissatisfaction with the quality? The highest ranked thing? No, I'm sorry. They are not in order. They are just listed so that you can see the category of choices that our staff members can choose. Okay. Those also branch out to a subset of questions to get us more details okay well with that first one that's listed um did any

[01:56:16] type of picture emerge in other words did maybe um i cannot put this did maybe any one supervisor or anything start to appear you know did any problems appear to occur in a certain area um i actually wrote down an example just in case you asked me but i did not use that one um Right, I love all of our leaders.

[01:56:44] But so, for example, if they selected the satisfaction of policies and practices, the subset of questions will ask them to explain by choosing, is it policies were inconsistently implemented, policies focused on students, irregardless of the impact on adults, policies often started from a place of good intention, however their implementation had unintended negative consequences, or policies, practices conflict with my beliefs.

[01:57:11] And so then I'm able to disaggregate that. Like, is it a personal conflict? Is it a dissonance between how it's being implemented? Is it not being consistently implemented across the division? And then that leads us to, like, recommendations around support in our leadership to make sure it's consistent.

[01:57:33] Thanks. Mr. Pitts? Thank you so much for all this work. My only comment is I found myself sitting here wondering if we ever consider the generation that the individual who we might be surveying or doing exit interviews or stay interviews, do we take that information into account?

[01:58:06] Because I feel like my generation, Graham's generation, we would have a different outlook on a lot of things than, say, the kids that are coming to us straight out of college.

[01:58:24] We didn't pull that information, but Gallup also disaggregates the data based off of generations. So it does give us the data based off of how millennials answered, baby boomers, Generation X.

[01:58:39] So it's a wonderful tool that disaggregates the data in many ways. I think more and more we're going to have to cater to the younger folks, and I want to make sure that what was good for us might not necessarily be good for those folks.

[01:59:01] Do you have a strategy for getting a higher number of people participating in the state data than targeting different teachers, new teachers, whatever? I do. I believe in allowing the data to talk to you, and it'll tell you where to go. And I think this data has told us which departments to really be explicitly targeting next year and offering. Again, they're voluntary, one-on-one, confidential interviews.

[01:59:32] This year, I did go to certain departments in person that I just assumed may have been a little, needed a little help with technology. And so to do the stay interview in person on site where they would be comfortable was helpful.

[01:59:49] Of course, stay interviews go from October to December, end of October to December. So the number of participants I got was within that time frame. we have considered not just being explicitly targeting certain departments, opening it to everyone, but looking at Gallup data and different data points that can tell us where we really need to make sure voices are being heard. And I think also just relationships and me honoring their anonymity and creating reports and feedback for you all to be able to have that information while

[02:00:26] protecting their identity really helps with the credibility of the process. Do you provide participants with feedback in terms of the overall results? In a way, yes. When we update them about changes that have been made because we've heard your voice in stay interviews, that is our way of acknowledging what we've heard every opportunity we get. We're also sharing that data with other

departments. So, for example, our benefits department, being able to share that data with benefits and human resources. And when they implement a change, they may explain why, but

[02:01:05] they also acknowledge that they heard their voices in stay interviews. I think that's a great point. And having the opportunity, you all have given us the opportunity to talk to you about the stay interviews. I think what it does is it gives those folks that have already conducted stay interviews, it validates the work that they've done. But what we also hope is that when we do this next year, folks will begin to see that, oh, they are listening to us, they are making changes,

[02:01:40] and it kind of builds that groundswell. So the opportunity to present this data to you, we hope builds trust for from our staff that they'll continue to um want to do that work and we'll have more every year just one more question for me um communication was at the to do top of the to-do list that's a big topic i mean who's communicating what to whom and when and how is it stickies on your desk is it understanding school board policy i mean it's it's a grab bag that

[02:02:18] includes everything. It is, and Gallup advises, of course, that communication is an issue in just about every organization they work with. That is one thing they hear from employees, so it's not surprising we see it there. We see it on the stay interview data, and we see it on our exit data.

[02:02:37] But without more definition, it doesn't have any meaning to me. Right. So when you asked, somebody asked earlier about actions that had been taken. One of our teacher advisory committee meetings we brought communication because it arose as a major issue from stay interviews as a topic to talk with teachers what what do you not get communication about that you need communication about what mode do you want to get it in so we gathered a lot of feedback about it that was provided to the communications team at that time and I know they've digested that and done some

[02:03:15] things with that. Yeah, it's still sort of an open box for me. I mean, is it information? Is it policy? Is it support? Is it tools? Is it recognition? Yes. I think it's probably all of those things. And that's the piece right now that we need to unpack. Helen and I were talking about justice the other day, that it is really how do we look at communication, both at the division strategic level but also department to department school to school and so um this is a

[02:03:49] huge thing that i think we will really work to unpack and and and just like uh dr kaiser said because we because we know that we struggle with that same uh with that same question uh we're taking the information that we the quantitative uh quantitative information we're getting from Gallup that's talking about communication, the qualitative data that we're getting from stay interviews and exit interviews and pulling that together so we can more readily define that.

[02:04:21] Dr. Kaizen and I were just talking to some employees and the same thing came up. We're like, oh yeah, it's communication. But each employee had a kind of a different concern. So every time we hear that we can uh we can begin to narrow and begin to make some some really solid changes around what we're hearing based on uh both anecdotal and on our stay interviewing information i mean even you can hear the bias and how i even framed the question it was like what do these people need to know what do our staff rather than probably communication was a lot of your

[02:04:55] was part of your exit interviews i mean that may be more meaningful to individuals um yes that is one of the things that occur but what I would really go to is the stay interviews with that being a

theme that a trend one of the the categories for frequencies of mention but I think that to everyone else's point they define communication for us at what level and what they need in order to

[02:05:27] feel acknowledged and heard with changes that they suggest and so while it's a high theme it still includes positives and feedback to carry forward. I was just going to add on to when you were talking about getting more participants in stay interviews I'm hopeful that collective bargaining and working with the AEA we can really improve that and using them as a partner in getting more participants in both of those i think that is a really great opportunity that's presenting to

[02:06:07] us next year and hopefully we see those numbers up as well thank you mr redding can i just mention something i learned tonight that i thought was really powerful one of the things that's really impressing me about the hr department is your responsiveness and not just using the interviews to collect data and then kind of roll it into a department improvement plan and let it get dragged out into the next year it i'm really impressed with the way uh you'll hear something you know mentioning things about our timekeeping system and then just go fix it um i mean that's it sounds

[02:06:40] like sounds simple but i think one of the things we um as a large organization with a lot of moving parts it'd be like almost like a work order well we heard i heard in this interview that um there's an issue around timekeeping with Kronos. Okay, well, let's put that in the process and sometime next year we'll address it. I just think it's amazing to employees when you hear something, you go fix it, they go into it the next day and it's fixed. Or you've got an answer from them why it can't be fixed or where it came from. I've just seen a real cultural shift in our HR

[02:07:15] department over the last couple of years of just, it's a problem, let's fix it. Let's not wait till tomorrow because we could lose an employee or they could become disengaged and stay and it ultimately finds its way to the kids so i i hadn't thought a lot about that until i heard what you were talking about tonight and i just wanted to acknowledge it thank you thank you thank you all thank you next on our agenda is office of community engagement equity education update

[02:07:53] good evening chair acuff and school board members thank you for the opportunity to provide the

[02:09:33] Office for Community Engagement annual update. Tonight, our agenda includes a brief introduction to discuss how the current culturally responsive teaching or CRT program has evolved over the past two years with alterations to the program that has emerged as the culturally responsive educator or CRE program, and the rationale for the equity education team joining forces with instruction.

[02:10:06] I'm second, Dr. Russell Carlock, equity education data scientist, will share some initial CRT program results and recommendations from the recent program evaluation, which provides insights into some of the shifts that were made to the programming this year, as well as set the stage for the work the team will be engaged in for the upcoming school year and moving forward.

[02:10:33] Third, Ms. Ayanna Mitchell, Director of Equity Education, will discuss the CRE programming that was launched this year, which is consistent with the feedback from teachers and staff, as well as some of the recommendations that Dr. Collarix will present. This data will be utilized to inform further shifts during the transition to instruction and beyond as the program expands. Then the team will shift to policy updates with Dr. Eric Irizarry, Director of Equity, School, Family, and Community Relations, who will

[02:11:12] provide information regarding the ABAR, or anti-biased, anti-racist, instructional supports, and Ms. Ayanna Mitchell, Director of Equity Education, who will discuss the transgender and gender expansive professional development and student support. Lastly, Ms. Mitchell will detail the culturally responsive educator or CRE program moving forward and show the relationship to the policies.

[02:11:39] During the July school board meeting, our team will come back to you with updates specific to community engagement. So everything we do in ACPS is centered around our strategic plan learning for all. Our vision: learners are engaged in authentic, challenging, and relevant learning experiences, becoming lifelong contributors and leaders in our dynamic and diverse society. Our mission: working together as a team, we will end the predictive value of race, gender, and

[02:12:16] special capacity for our children's success through high-quality teaching and learning for all. We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds and we will know every student. Our values include equity, excellence, family, and community and wellness. Our goals, thriving students, affirming and empowering communities, and equitable and transformative resources. And although our equity update tonight touches on all three goals, the primary focus will be goal one, thriving students, and goal two, affirming and empowering communities.

[02:12:53] Over the last two years, the current Culturally Responsive Teaching Programming, or CRT, has undergone shifts to support our overarching mission and strategic plan, directly aligning equity work with the instructional needs of students and teachers.

[02:13:13] Moving forward, the CRT program will become the Culturally Responsive Educator Program. The five equity specialists who have been a part of the Office for Community Engagement will transition to three equity coordinators merging with the Department of Instruction.

[02:13:32] The culturally responsive educator programming will continue to support teachers and staff with obtaining their micro-credential and certification. This move will foster a stronger alignment and collaboration between the equity education team and instruction.

[02:13:50] Equity is a part of every aspect of our work and should be interwoven into the instructional fabric visible within all curricular. Through our various listening sessions, we identified several areas within the programming to adjust based on teacher and staff feedback.

[02:14:11] First, teachers voiced a need for more diverse options to access the programming. We streamlined the program, incorporating self-paced modules to ease teacher and staff access and provide clear expectations and outcomes.

[02:14:29] Second, teachers stated the importance of having flexibility when progressing through the program requirements. Teachers and staff can now determine when and at what pace they would like to work on the requirements for micro-credentialing and certification.

[02:14:45] And third, at the division level, central administrators recognize the need to significantly scale up the program to meet the goal of all ACPS staff members earning their micro-credential by 2026.

[02:15:02] By making these shifts, significantly more teachers and staff will be provided with the necessary support to complete the program, setting the division up to meet and exceed the 2026 culturally responsive micro-credentialing goal.

[02:15:21] In addition, we heard from teachers about the need at the school level to have more individual coaching support, mentoring, modeling in the classroom, co-teaching and team teaching, co-planning, as well as support within professional learning community meetings.

[02:15:41] At the division level, we recognize the need for a team to work collaboratively to develop division pacing guides as well as quarterly assessments across all content areas centering on equity.

[02:16:00] With this new structure, both the equity coordinators and content coordinators will work together to ensure the tools and resources are aligned with the CRE framework to ensure we provide rigorous materials to meet the needs of our diverse learners that will be infused in lessons and implemented in classrooms throughout the division.

[02:16:22] We will be able to increase accountability across the division via the team of coordinators continuously analyzing and monitoring data, understanding students' performance strengths and areas of growth, and communicating this information to the organization.

[02:16:40] In addition, division coordinators will serve as a touchpoint and direct link with the instructional coaches to provide division-level data, insights, and strategies to the instructional coach team to inform their work, address data with teachers and staff, and assist with the implementation of school action plans.

[02:17:03] At this time, I will turn it over to Dr. Russell Carlock, Equity Education Data Scientist, who will talk more about the preliminary data and recommendations from the recent Culturally Responsive Teaching Program evaluation.

[02:17:20] Thank you, Dr. Kaiser, and thank you, everyone. I'm really excited to share the findings from this report with you all. This was a collaborative project between Albemarle County Public Schools, the University of Virginia's Equity Center, as well as the School of Data Science at the University of Virginia.

[02:17:38] So when we evaluate a program and this was an auspicious time to do so as it begins to make some of these changes, the program has been around for about eight years. It's gone from a voluntary program to a mandatory program so this is a really great time to look deeply at what has worked in the past and what we can continue to improve as we move forward. So we're going to take a moment just to look carefully at what is the improvement plan for this program?

[02:18:04] What is the theory of improvement around it? So the theory of improvement is when When all ACPS educators develop the characteristics of culturally responsive educators, all students will improve in their learning growth, and groups for whom the education system historically has not worked will experience accelerated learning compared to their peers, providing a foundation for district-level transformation to better meet the needs of all students and make meaningful, sustained progress towards equity.

[02:18:29] So I'd like all of us to just hold that in our mind as we talk through the findings and sort of just compare what we found to what this theory of improvement states. So our methods were mixed. We used quantitative as well as qualitative methods. We had 161 surveys from teachers who had completed the program and were in the classroom teaching last school year, 2022 to 2023. We also had 17 semi-structured interviews with a subset of that 161 group of teachers, and we had over 9,000 SOL value-added growth scores from our students in math and in reading. And we'll talk

[02:19:08] a little bit more about what that value-added score is. This is a really great tool to use for program evaluation because it is longitudinal. So what it does is it takes all of the students' previous SOL scores in the state of Virginia, and then it creates a prediction of what they will score in a particular subject area based on that historical record. And then it measures the difference between what they actually scored and what that predicted score was. So another way to put that, it's a measurement of how much more or less a student learned in a particular school year than we would expect or what they had done historically. And this is for fourth through eighth grade because that's where we have that robust value-added score because they're taking

[02:19:47] those tests every year, the reading and the math tests. So we'll start with the qualitative data. This is what our teachers responded about the program. And you can see that overall there was positive experience that the teachers had in the program, especially with that question 11 when it talks about analyzing your perspectives and potential biases that could influence your work as an educator. This was overwhelmingly the one that teachers in both the micro-credential as well as the full certification said that this had an impact on them. You can see as we go down to improving learning outcomes for my students, it's only about two-thirds of our teachers said definitively yes, I feel like this program led to improved

[02:20:26] outcomes for my students. And so this brings us to an important finding that we had in a difference between the micro-credential and the full certification. So if we look at the different experiences that teachers reported across those two versions of the program, the micro-credential and the full certification, and I want to be clear that the micro-credential as it existed in this data set is not the micro-credential we have now. One of the the important findings and one of the changes that's been made the program is The micro-credential now requires a deeper understanding of all three characteristics of culturally responsive teaching, not just one.

[02:21:02] And so you can see that there is a big difference, and we get to close to 80% of our full certification teachers reporting that, yes, this program did have a direct impact on my students' learning versus only a little bit more than half of our micro-credential teachers reporting that.

[02:21:18] When we asked teachers to report, what did they feel like was the most important component of the program for impacting student learning. They said learning partnerships with families and community was the most important. And the second most important was culturally responsive instructional strategies.

[02:21:35] And these were not different across the micro-credential and full certification. And then we asked them, what were the most important factors for you completing the program and being able to engage with it and apply what you learned from it to your classroom? The first most important piece was dedicated time during contract hours.

[02:21:53] They reported in the interviews as well that this is a great program, and it takes significant time to really do it well, and having that time was really important, and there were some differences across our schools in terms of principals who used some of their school professional development time on this versus others that didn't, and we saw some of that difference in the data set as well.

[02:22:13] Another important support were equity specialists. That was the number two support reported by teachers, and they talked a lot about one-on-one coaching and small group PLC type sessions with equity specialists as being important for them applying what they learned from this program. And we're going to talk a little bit about the quantitative findings. So what this is a just a really top level finding is that

the full certification had a significant, positive, meaningful relationship to student growth in mathematics. And so this was a statistically significant finding. Our data set included both teacher and student demographic variables. So we were able to control for things like a teacher's

[02:22:52] education level. We were also able to control for a teacher's experience level. And we saw that that was important, that more experienced teachers did have larger or higher value added scores for students than less experienced teachers. We also found that effect sizes were larger for students of color. When I say effect size, it's important to note that this is not an experimental study.

[02:23:11] This is observational. So this is not about a causal relationship. It's about discussing the magnitude of that relationship between fully certified teachers and the learning of their students compared to non-certified teachers in the learning of their students these relationships were all true the relationships we found which I'll show you really briefly on the next slide were also true in the reading data set but they were lower in terms of their magnitude so it didn't rise to the level of statistical significance so this is just a top level finding of looking at the impact or the relationship between student learning and the different levels of certification. Important finding across

[02:23:51] both the reading and the math data set is that the micro credential is indistinguishable from not having a credential at all in both of those data sets. Now that doesn't mean that micro credential wasn't supportive of teachers. Teachers reported having a positive relationship with that program, but it wasn't substantial enough to lead to significant outcomes for students. And we can, I'll give you a brief summary of why that might be at the end. And this just, you can go through this on your own time. This is just looking across our different demographic groups, what those relationships were for each of those groups. I wanted to pull out just, if we could put this

[02:24:30] into like one student, hypothetically, what would that mean for one student? So in the special education data set, we saw that for math, there was a 14-point difference in value-added score between students who are learning with non-certified teachers versus students who are learning with certified teachers.

[02:24:47] So just to put that in perspective, if you had a student that was at a 390 one year and they got to learn with a culturally responsive teacher and those associations held true, that could mean the difference between them being a little bit below grade level to being on grade level. Also thinking about the cumulative effect of this.

[02:25:05] So if you just have a one-off of a teacher that has this effect, but imagine if you have it year after year after year, you can begin to see more substantial differences in student learning. So quick summary recommendations. Evidence supports the program's efficacy, especially for full certification.

[02:25:23] However, the micro-credential showed much less efficacy, indicating that all three of those components may be necessary for us to see those really significant, positive impacts on student learning. That these three characteristics of culturally responsive teaching may work synergistically together to create the kind of learning experience we want for our students. We also saw that teachers were very clear as we move from this being a voluntary to more and more of a mandatory in terms of the people who are coming on board now into the program. It's gonna be really important to pay attention to what teachers are saying in terms of what they need to complete the program and apply it and adequate time and equity

[02:26:01] coaching in their schedules is what they're saying is most important. And then finally, to impact student learning, we have to make sure that the family and community partnerships are happening and that the application of the new instructional strategies are occurring as a part of this program as well. Thank you. So where are we now? So as you've heard we changed our program this year to the culturally responsive educator program for 23-24 and we did

[02:26:36] restructure. There were some of the things that I already kind of knew and they were already named Like, we need to know all three characteristics in order to really see outcomes for students. So we definitely have changed some of the things we're doing by working closer in partnership with our schools.

[02:26:55] We have thought partners and check-in connects with our administrators and our candidates who are in the program. We do co-planning and we provide staff professional learning. We use strategic PLC support during DPLC days as well as during the regular school day where equity specialists are working directly with PLCs at specific schools.

[02:27:19] We support the school and climate family engagement nights. So they go to those family engagement nights and they support the planning of with the teams and the administrators. And equity specialists support the guidance towards credentialing.

[02:27:36] So the restructure looks like a book study as the foundational text. So we know that Zaretta Hammond's text is the foundation of our culturally responsive teaching program. So there is a six-session book study that happens throughout the year, of which I will go through those numbers soon.

[02:27:58] But we have that as the foundation. Then they move into the micro-credentials, so it is mandatory to understand the foundational context of Zaretta Hammond's text. Hammond's Culturally Responsive Teaching Programming. And then when they go into the micro-credential, it is actually just the learning. So that is their opportunity to learn how it is associated with the culturally responsive teaching framework. And that is where they start to really apply and start reflecting on the learning. Ultimately, we would like to get them to certification. So the micro-credential does go through all three characteristics and all of the

[02:28:34] indicators so that they learn about the full 360 view of being a culturally responsive educator but certification now becomes where they're applying it to a problem of practice and actually analyzing how they've made changes based on what they've done so basically it becomes an action research project. This year with our new programming we've had 161 educators to date complete the micro-credential or certification, which was the highest number that we have had

[02:29:10] since we've had our program. We have 311 educators who were involved in our culturally responsive teaching and the brain book study across the school division, and we have 510 people who have recorded progress towards completion because they do not have to do it all in one year.

[02:29:30] they can take one this year, one the following year, and one the next year, and still get to a micro-credential, as opposed to what they used to have to do, which was if they didn't do it all in one year, they have to start all over. And that was part of the feedback we got of why it was so difficult. So we really just broke it up so that once they learn what they learn, they just move on to the next module. So at this point, 43% of our staff has at least a micro-credential, which

[02:30:05] is about 528 staff members across the school division. 351 currently have completed the book study and are ready to start and have not entered the micro-credential program. And 338 still have to, at

this point, start from last year, who have not, across the division, even begun. And you can see here we added the breakdown so you can see by school where they were and where they are and

[02:30:39] what their increase was from last year to this. So our 24 to 26 target, in order to reach our close to 100% completion, next year we would need to have 338 additional educators enter the book study to set them up to complete their micro-credential or certification. We are anticipating

[02:31:13] 300 to 600 people going through the micro-credential next year. As you can see, 520 have already started, along with an additional three who are ready to get started. So we're talking like 800 people. And we have, we would like to get 20 certification candidates or more, but based on funding, we're trying to really balance out what we can do because it would be something that would be past where, past the work that they would have to be, that is mandatory within the school day.

[02:31:45] So funding is something we're going to need to be thinking about and how we can incentivize certification because that would be more work outside of the school day. 25 to 26, we're thinking that at that point we're just focusing on new hires and we are going to be working on a new teacher program that will integrate the micro-credential programming as well as the book study as part of their learning as they're coming in. So this program is specifically set up for the people who are currently in the school system because as new teachers come in, they will start

[02:32:21] right away into integrated learning about culturally responsive teaching as part of our merger. So just so that we can see visually how that's going to look, right now we are working with Dr. Kaiser and myself and Eric and Rusty work with the five equity specialists, 32 school-based diversity resource teachers which we call our school-based equity specialists and we have some school-based

[02:32:55] equity teams based on the administrator. Next year we will be working with Dr. Chandra Hayes and the instructional department and I'll be working with the three equity coordinators as well as having three instructional coaches who will be assigned to working with us directly to support the programming and it will be the launch of the new what will be the continuation of the new culturally responsive educator programming supports which they will need to be taught so that's going to be a little bit of a learning curve just on they they all have their cert their

[02:33:32] either micro credential or certification those coaches but teaching it and supporting it and coaching it is a little different than going through the program so we'll have to work with them to teach them how to do that. And we will be looking to have 25 school-based diversity resource teachers as well as creating a job description for equity teams that's going to really support our DRTs and buildings to develop equity teams. So next year we will be looking to the people within our schools to really support the programming and the consistency of the programming

[02:34:07] because as I named 800 candidates and three people is a little bit daunting. So we were thinking of ways outside of the box to really not only support educators through the program because as Rusty named, the direct coaching is so important to the programming, but it really adds value for the candidates to have somebody that they can think these things through.

[02:34:39] You're good. We're going to give just some quick updates on some of our policies. Policy ACC or anti-racism policy, as you know, when we adopted this policy, one of the components was implementing an anti-racism curriculum into our middle schools through the middle school advisory lessons. This has continued to grow, and the purpose of the middle school advisory lessons, there's a sequence that I'll go

over in a second, but the purpose is to support the whole child by building skills that empower students to fulfill their highest potential as collaborative, thoughtful, caring, and successful

[02:35:19] individuals and contributors to their school and larger communities. And we do this by engaging students in experiences that help them gain awareness of their identities and other identities, become more aware of the issues that are impacting our communities, affirm their own and other identities, interests, strengths, and passions, and then to exercise their agency to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve their individual goals. And you can see the sequence here. In sixth grade, they understand their own identities. They trace injustice to the past. In seventh grade, they start to understand other identities by exploring narratives and challenge the single stories. They develop

[02:35:55] action research skills. And this year, in the eighth grade, they started their YPAR lessons. And YPAR is Youth Participatory Action Research Projects. And they're very similar to the CAT projects that we have. So now we're in the process. We're still working with Dr. Jahari Harris, who is working right now with a focus group of teachers to figure out what went well this year, what we need to improve on, so we can make some adjustments to the programming over the summer. The middle school advisory lessons, you can see right there, the sixth grade has 11 lessons, seventh has nine, and then the eighth grade lessons, the Y-part lessons

[02:36:33] have nine lessons as well. So last year, Dr. Harris looked at student input to figure out what we can do to improve those lessons. And this year she's working with, like I said, that focus group of teachers for feedback to improve these lessons as well. So you will see some adjustments to that and we're looking forward to the work we're continuing to do with our middle school advisory lessons. And before I name what has happened with the transgender policy, I want to thank this board for keeping the transgender policy that we currently have, policy JBA, and not making any

[02:37:11] changes because you understand the importance of what the students said when they said please help us make this policy and you heard them and you are supporting them so before I get into that I want to say thank you on behalf of the students and behalf of our team so we did continue moving forward with supporting the expectations and the deliverables for our transgender gender expansive policy where we really worked with our committee who, even when there was a little bit

[02:37:47] of downtime and we were trying to see where we were going, we just kept moving forward as was requested. So we have a committee that worked on a student support plan, which is now being implemented with guidance counselors. So if a student has any specific needs or if they have any specific questions or concerns within the building, they can go to the guidance counselor and that is something that it's a checklist that they go through so that everyone's on the same page around the expectations of what kinds of things we can or can't ask.

[02:38:18] And it's clear when parents need to be involved and when parents don't need to be involved in a conversation as well as when there are things within the school that can happen but things outside of the school that cannot happen. So it makes it very clear what that looks like.

[02:38:35] Then we also implemented our OACH training, which is the county training that goes out electronically through HR that updates policy, the community around policies, and reminds them of their expectations. So that has gone forward, and that is something that was part of this year's OACH training.

[02:38:54] And then we have an asynchronous training that actually is a deep dive training into the policy that we have already shared with the executive leadership team for their feedback. and we are still gathering that so that we can make adjustments going into next year and that will be shared with our staff going into next year so that they can have a deeper understanding. So as far as the actual policy and how we're supporting students and the staff and understanding the policy, we have those particular categories completed, but then when you start thinking about what do students need as a human, not just this is what you need to do, we really

[02:39:34] found it important to have training so we've partnered with inclusive VA and side-by-side who have offered trainings for our staff across the division with making connections as one of the touch points we had a few sessions that were available that departments and schools could use so there are some departments and schools that took advantage of just having side-by-side come and do a one-to-one training with their staff and we did a committee training where we all as the committee did a complete training with our cabinet members who were able to attend

[02:40:08] so that we were all on the same page and came to an agreement as to what was going to be shared. And that was a very exciting time because we all got to learn together. And then finally, we have a GSA sponsor liaison, Megan Washburn, who works directly with the sponsors so that they can do evaluations on what they need to support the students in the schools and how to keep the program moving forward and really identify what students consistently are asking for.

[02:40:41] And through Student Senate, GSA found a voice as well. So it gave them an opportunity to be part of a larger community of affinity groups to be able to advocate for themselves. So thank you, Dr. Uzzeri, for that. So as we move forward into the 24, 26, 26 Act, 28, after now we don't have to worry about did they complete their credential, we're really spending a lot of time as an equity team thinking about this idea of a portrait of a culturally responsive educator,

[02:41:14] which really is an ACPS educator, because one of the ways that you're an ACPS educator is that you're culturally responsive. So we're really thinking about what that realignment of culturally responsive practices look like as we integrate with instruction and think about curriculum and instruction that's embedded with culturally responsive and anti-bias, anti-racist practices as part of the instructional core. So we are working on a leadership framework and professional learning workshops because even though teachers have to be culturally responsive and we're talking about what does that mean to be a

[02:41:51] culturally responsive and that's why the switch to educator I might be a culturally responsive teacher but it takes all of us as educators to make this work so culturally responsive leadership is pretty important and we know that if we don't have culturally responsive leaders who understand what it means to lead from a culturally responsive lens it always feels like you're going up the down escalator as an educator we are making some adjustments to the micro-credential program by having cohorts because one of the things we heard from the feedback this year is that they really loved the

[02:42:28] asynchronous sessions but they felt alone so that we wanted to give them opportunities to be able to work with others and we wanted to capitalize on those opportunities of the book studies and the cohorts they had there and be able to continue to work with their cohort through their micro-credential we also know that when people are working together they hold each other accountable and they feel more supported and then they move through it together instead of falling off and feeling like they don't have

anybody to work with. And then we are also redesigning our culturally response educator certification program and that is going to, as mentioned before,

[02:43:06] become a much more robust opportunity with clear protocols and we're looking to have that switch to becoming a portfolio with an executive summary so that they can work through different components of how to what are they doing what is the problem based on their data what are they doing to make changes did it work didn't it and then trying something new to really see outcomes for students for opportunity access and achievement gaps to close so this will give them an opportunity to not be on the you did it you didn't do it but really thinking about how do we support

[02:43:42] them to make the change they want to make rather than you didn't make it which is another thing that we heard over and over. I put in years, all this time for work, and it was so much work in hours, and then at the end of the day, I didn't, I failed.

[02:43:58] And we don't want anybody to feel like they failed because when they put in that kind of work, it's intentional, and they did make some progress, and we want to celebrate them and support them for the change they want to make. And finally, the tools that we are really focused on working with instruction to move forward with are some walkthrough tools so that leaders and peers can do some walkthroughs and see culturally responsive practices. You could walk into a room with the tool and be able to name a culturally responsive practice when you see it because of that walk tool. And there will be

[02:44:34] checklists and different resources that we're continuing to develop and give to teachers so that they can sit in a PLC without a equity coordinator and still be culturally responsive because we want to make sure that they too are independent learners so that is where we are with that so our 10th annual equity education conference better together will be at Monticello high school on June 7th 2025 from 9 30 to 2 30 and I want you to put it on your calendar from now because I

[02:45:07] can't wait to see you there because we plan to have a great time together. Questions? Do you have questions? I just have two. What are the incentives that we have for micro-credentialing or certification, if any, right now? Right now, they get professional development points for it and they get a certificate and they got a keychain that said micro-credential 2024 this year. A t-shirt, and they got a t-shirt yeah but that's what we that's what we offer and it's um it is offered

[02:45:47] during the school during the school day here so we have our time when they can meet with a equity specialist during their school hours and during dplc days it's a small amount of time if they're able to make it they do and they get support from their equity specialists there or in their PLCs if they're able to have. So what happens if they don't meet the criteria by the deadline? Do we have anything? Have we determined what happens if a teacher doesn't become certified

[02:46:23] or? At this point, we haven't made any decisions about that. I think that, you know, it's directly aligned to standard six in the EPA. Yeah. So I think at that, what we're really thinking about is are you meeting the standard or not is it effective or ineffective and I think that's where we can really see whether or not they're using it they learned it and I think it's really up to the building administrator at this point to determine what they're going to do but the program is set up so that they can have access to continued learning so you know there's a six-week module

[02:47:02] for each characteristic so they have the time to do it. And we support them to continue working on it. We're even offering sessions during the summer and things like that. Gotcha. Yeah, I think from

what I've seen, the people that have the buy-in are the ones that are already getting the certifications and the ones that don't have the buy-in to it are the ones that are pushing it off.

[02:47:28] And when we're talking about GSAs and when I met with students at Alomar from their GSA, one thing they mentioned was the teachers that are certified or have their micro-credentialing are the ones that are using the correct pronouns and that are making those students feel safe and welcome in the classrooms. And they could really tell the teachers that didn't really have the buy-in and were intentionally not using the right pronouns and things like that. So I'm wondering kind of how we align that as we go into the next two years towards this deadline and really encouraging those staff members and teachers that don't necessarily have the buy-in? How do we get them

[02:48:06] to be excited about the way that our division is moving and what we expect out of our teachers and our staff? So I love that comment for a lot of reasons. One, because when teachers see their colleagues doing well, they want to know why, even if they didn't have that buy-in, because they want they want their students to do well either also because all educators want their students to continue to be successful regardless of their political or religious or whatever views so I think that's one thing that I've noticed

[02:48:44] is that they're as they're understanding the why and they're seeing success and they're seeing their colleagues go through the programming and understanding more about it is the more that they're going forward which is I think attributed to how we have 500 people who started working on doing this and moving forward with it as far as the pronouns part or any of those a bar parts of it anti-racist or anti-bias practices we have multiple ways in which we address that so it's not just through the culturally responsive teaching

[02:49:20] programming so those different experiences also allow them to engage in understanding and learning. And then finally, because we're moving into instruction, there's a lot of that that will be embedded into the work that they're already doing, whether they knew it or not, because it's just part of the way we roll here, because that's what we do. We're a culturally responsive organization, and that's how it is. And I think, again, when it comes to whether or not people are going to honor the policies we have, that starts to become some responsibility and accountability from the administrators yeah no I totally agree and then just in

[02:49:57] brief talking about the GSA's I you know know from personal experience how important those are to the students so one I want to commend you guys and Dr. Azari and I have discussed wanting to even expand the GSA's further in our our middle school and our high schools and have a more collaborative environment where they're working within the schools together to create that community.

[02:50:24] So I'm excited to see where we go in the next year. So thank you. Thank you. I don't really have a question, but I'm just really glad to see that we are implementing again the middle school advisory program.

[02:50:39] That was really important. So I'm glad to see that that's being implemented again. Yes. I was interested in a slide that you guys moved off pretty quickly. It was the one that had all the schools listed and where their progress was.

[02:50:57] This goes a little bit back to what Allison was saying. Because it seems like I got down to Albemarle and it looked like things were moving pretty slow over there as compared to a lot of the schools.

[02:51:13] Albemarle High School? Yeah. Well, they had a pretty large cohort that participated in the book study this year. And the book study is the prerequisite. Prerequisite, yeah. So they needed to do that before they could get into the micro-credentials.

[02:51:28] So that's a year-long program itself. So we anticipate a higher number. But again, this is something that you have to kind of move along. And the other thing is we have this great opportunity with all of the learning that our elementary schools have to do next year and sixth grade that we can really focus, too, on secondary.

[02:51:48] Because the program, again, even when it's only six equity specialists, there's a lot of people at Albemarle High School. And trying to get to all of those spaces with just a few people also becomes a little bit of a task.

[02:52:04] So this allows us to spend some more concentrated time in specific places because that coaching is very, very important when it comes to doing this work. If you are resistant or you don't really understand what it means to be culturally responsive and you're engaging in those modules, There's a lot of dissonance, and it requires someone who you can sit with and talk it out and get a deeper understanding.

[02:52:26] Because if not, then it just becomes, I did it, I filled out the form and checked, and I'm moving on. And that's not what we really want. And our educators don't want that either. We have many educators who started off saying, I don't want to do anything with that. And now they're excited to move on and want to know what's next for certification.

[02:52:44] So it's a slow-moving thing. And this new programming has the highest number of educators participating. So that makes it hopeful that we'll keep scaling up at a pretty rapid rate. Good to hear.

[02:53:00] And one more thing. It came on the board in January. So I'm not familiar exactly with the difference between micro-credentialing and a full credential. What's the difference? So our new programming has us set up so that the micro-credential is actually three six-week modules that goes through asynchronous learning videos, reflective articles, and then a reflection or a product that is uploaded that we review and give feedback on.

[02:53:39] So that's the micro-credential as of now, this year. This is the first year we've done it that way, where they're really applying and learning. And it's really about the learning. The certification is not about learning anymore. Now it's about application. So certification is where they take what they've learned from the book study and the microcredential.

[02:53:59] They recognize an area of problem of practice, a gap that they need to change. And they see, oh, if I do this thing, it's probably going to change it. Like if I call my families and set up something that's more consistent and have student-led conferences because these are the things I learned, now I have a new outcome.

[02:54:21] So that's what that is. That's really thinking about how do you apply what you've learned so that you can get an outcome. Previously, there was a book study that was mandatory but not really monitored. And then there was a micro-credential that was a five-page paper for one characteristic.

[02:54:41] And then certification meant you did a 10-page paper on all three characteristics with a presentation. So those were the differences in the previous model that Dr. Karloch was referencing. And

now that's the new model is the one with the asynchronous modules. But going from micro to full would be a huge difference in practice, it seems, based on the numbers.

[02:55:02] Yes. And I'm hoping, so when you scale up, you always gain and lose some things. So one of the things that we've done with scaling up in the way we have is we now have the micro-credential set up so that you learn all three characteristics, which is something that wasn't required before, which I believe attributed greatly to why it is we did not see the gains that we will see now that they understand all three characteristics deeply.

[02:55:32] Where before, if we just needed to know one thing, and that was it, and then I wrote a paper about it, and it might have been deep and meaningful, but that doesn't necessarily mean I have a full view on what to do. So the problem is, now with our micro-credential program, you don't associate it with student outcomes, and then you did.

[02:55:50] So that's a little bit of a piece that we've lost, but that's the heavy focus for certification. Really, it's about incentivizing people to go for certification and helping them see the importance of how do I apply this and what am I doing with it, not just I learned it, okay, move on.

[02:56:08] Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry, Graham. Go ahead. Yeah, could you go back to the list again of schools? Do you see the same trend occurring at Western that you mentioned at APMA, like an increase in the number of people in the book study or anything like that?

[02:56:28] There was a significant increase in Western Albemarle. Western Albemarle also has a team of educators that were awarded this year for their equity team, got an educator equity of the year award because of the work that team is doing, not just to support the candidates within their building, but to support their students.

[02:56:51] So that's a place that's primed for some really big changes. And we didn't have a huge, did we? Rusty actually would know that answer better about the book study. So yes, we saw a big change in Western with their book study.

[02:57:11] And again, that's the baseline. So we're ready to move forward with some big outcomes next year. And their full administrative team will be going through the program, the micro-credential program during the summer for the administrative cohort. I was just noticing the correlation of our lowest micro-credentialed and certified schools and our SOL scores.

[02:57:39] And also, it seems that those are also a lot of the schools that have the most turnover when it comes to teachers. And is it correct that they can't become certified in their first year of teaching? No, there's a book study first. There's a book study first, right. So, you know, that correlation is noticeable, I think.

[02:57:58] If we're having a lot of turnover in those specific schools, then automatically their CRT numbers are going to be a lot lower. So, you know, I think that there is something to be said about that. But I also wanted to bring up one more thing. Just you were talking about the extra time that it takes to do this and that they're given it during school, but is that during planning time?

[02:58:20] And does that take away from teachers' planning time in order to do this? You have been asking all the right questions. Okay. So when you do the program, it's actually structured to align with what should be happening in your PLC, and it's designed to use products that are directly associated with your

classroom experience. So my learning does not take more than the hour that is given during DPLC time, so I should be able to get through the actual reading or the videos or whatever. That part

[02:58:57] should take an hour but the actual what do I do with it and to be able to get the product should be happening during your actual that's your job stuff to do so if I'm thinking about I did this lesson how did I build relationships with my students that's part of what I do as an educator is build relationships with students all you're doing is putting the product in of what I did to build relationships with my students and those are the types of things we ask them to use so the products we're trying to really align it with what they're already doing yeah so if they're

[02:59:34] looking at data during their plc whatever they did to look at their data in their plc to disaggregate their data should be an equity audit that's going directly into the and are we sure that it is only taking that hour well different people read at a different rate and different people process at a different rate so I can't speak to how long each individual is going to take but that is the goal is that we're trying to keep that component of it and if you haven't done the book study first and that's one of the things we've seen people who did the book study just last year and went into the program this year had a significant difference from people who maybe did the

[03:00:12] book study a few years ago where they did some of the book study at some point in time and now they're trying to learn the text and the understanding of what to do and now apply it to the micro-credentialing program. And there's been a pretty direct correlation between those who did the book study just last year and how they've been able to move through the program and those who maybe haven't done it in a long time. But that's part of the learning and it was structured that way intentionally so that you can literally go straight from the book study and what you've learned in the book study. And there's actually parts that you learn within the book study and you're exposed to that go directly into the

[03:00:51] micro-credential products. So this year was a bit of an anomaly just because we didn't want to make everyone go through the book study all over again. And we wanted to honor when people said, I've done the book study already. I don't need to do it again. To let them say that and not prove a point, you know, by saying, well, show me and tell me when did you do it and where's the receipts?

[03:01:16] So we wanted them to be able to say, yes, that's what I did, and be okay with that. But that structure has been made so that it can go from the book study directly to micro-credential, and it's a direct association and correlation directly into certification, because what they did in the book study sets them up for the micro-credential.

[03:01:37] What they did in the micro-credential sets them up for success for the certification. Gotcha. Thank you. I just feel like I have to say this. First of all, a huge thank you for the team for all the work they're doing on this.

[03:01:52] But I have to think about, like, I know we don't live in a perfect, equitable world, obviously. But here we are. These are all certified teachers, right? Wouldn't it be wonderful if they went to higher education programs that included this in their teaching and state certification programs, you know, were certified in states that included this as requirements.

[03:02:17] So I just have to make that statement. Like, I'm so proud for the fact that we're making this commitment and we're putting budget behind this. I just wish these students were getting this when they

were going through the programs. And so I'm hoping that, I mean, one of the things I ask of you is, you know, how, as we go forward, are we kind of sharing this up, down?

[03:02:42] I'm trying to think which way we're pushing, you know, pushing it into higher ed. I mean, and I think I'm hopeful that in the future, as students are coming out of higher ed, in the future, maybe we'll have them have some of these experiences. So I would actually like to say that part of why we are able to structure the new teacher program around the credentialing the way we can is because they do come from university with a lot of learning.

[03:03:09] because that's something that I have noticed a lot more teachers are coming from university with that background with some baseline understanding about culturally responsive practices or at least equity focused practices so when they come to us they have a little bit of something they're already drawing from and we can move them directly into the book study and we can move them directly through the learning as it's embedded into their new teacher programming as opposed to only go for a year and now and now that you learned how to be a teacher now you can do that what we really want to do is just this is what we do so as you're learning to be a teacher this part of what you're doing

[03:03:48] and we know you're coming with someone with a wealth of knowledge already and we can grow from that together as a cohort thank you most of my questions have been answered it's been a terrific presentation and I really am proud of all of you and I think the work of the division on these areas. Graham and I were just writing down that next year's CRT conference because I think we've been to every one, but so it was a good one this year. But thank you all. Thank you. And you are invited to participate

[03:04:25] in our credentialing program, so please let me know if you're interested in joining. My book study is a little rusty, so I may have to go back and reread it. Thank you very much. Thank you thank you is there any more school board or division business so i just had one quick announcement uh just i had had to meet i had my monthly check-in with the county executive today and you just wanted me to give a quick update to the school board on the employee health clinic um just a reminder the purpose of the health clinic is to enhance overall health of employees

[03:05:01] and their families provide dedicated quality health and wellness services to employees and their families and manage rising health care costs. Some examples of services will be offered include primary care, occupational health, urgent care, pharmacy, dispensary, behavioral health, physical therapy, preventive exams, and sports physicals. And the current status of the project is that a vendor was selected after an extensive RFP process. They're sourcing two separate locations right now one on 29 north and the other one at pantops human resources will play a

[03:05:40] significant role in the clinic implementation along with key stakeholders including partner entities and the school division and the county executive staff is working with their vendor to determine the type and number of medical personnel to be housed in each clinic starting this fall employees so that's all of us will receive regular updates and information about clinic services and resources. So it's just an update from County Executive on that project. Thank you, Dr. Haas.

[03:06:09] Is there any other business? With that, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you.



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