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Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, September 11, 2025

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Place Albemarle County Public Schools / School Board meeting, Virginia
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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCTl6DhdnGc>

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[00:00:02] - Good evening. This September 11th meeting of the Albemarle County School Board is now in session. Mr. Page, do we have a motion? - We do, Chair Acuff. I move that the board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each board member's knowledge, only a public business matter is lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

[00:00:33] we have a second second motion made by mr page seconded by miss osborne lauren can you please call the vote miss spillman yes dr berlin yes miss prior yes miss osborne yes mr page yes chair acuff yes motion passes uh now um we have a roll call to start the meeting uh let's start with mr mclaughlin good evening everyone patrick mclaughlin assistant superintendent roselyn schmidt chief operating officer amy wong altman high school student representative allison spillman

[00:01:11] at large representative graham paige miller district representative kate acoff jack jewett rebecca berlin whitehall ellen osborne scottsville district leslie prior ryle district chandra hayes assistant superintendent josiah black school division council lauren crawford acting clerk of the board and officer do you want to identify yourself thank you um i just want to say that we have you may see that we have a student representative on our board tonight this is the

[00:01:46] fourth year i believe that we've had student school board representatives and she will be making a statement a little bit later but we want to welcome her to the board we have five different school

board student representatives that will rotate during the course of this year and they have been a great benefit to us on the board next is pledge of allegiance those who can please stand

[00:02:12] now i'll have a brief moment of silence the next item on our agenda is approval of the agenda

[00:03:01] do i have a motion i move we approve tonight's agenda second motion made by miss osborne seconded by miss prior and miss spillman motion passes um next is school board and superintendent business and i just want to make a note that dr haas is at a i think beautiful back to school night he'll join us after a bit dr hayes good evening chair acuff we do have a few items tonight and i'll start with ms schmidt thank you dr i was asked to give a brief update on uh our weapons screening

[00:03:40] systems which we've recently deployed as you know we initially deployed the systems at large athletic events this last fall but beginning this school year we are now utilizing them for daily screening at our three comprehensive high schools this initiative is part of the division's ongoing efforts to enhance school safety and maintain secure learning environments the rollout of these systems began in a staggered fashion just last week so we're only in the second week of use we know this is a major change for all involved so we appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation as everyone learns the process and schools are making daily and continuous improvements continuous

[00:04:17] improvements to it schools are getting increasingly efficient in the process is much quicker than it was just a week ago but in full transparency here the times that's taking Monticello was able to clear their screening by 9:00 a.m. this morning Western 9:05 and Albemarle 9:07 so those times will only get better as we continue to make improvements. Our goal is that this is not a stressful start of the day for our students and that it does not interfere with the instructional day. So we will keep making improvements to meet that goal. Thank you, Ms. Schmidt. Thank you. Good evening, board. I want to make a request to the school board. I would like to make a request that aligns with the recent

[00:04:56] decision made by our governor. Governor Youngkin recently granted a half day for government employees on Wednesday, November 26th, the day before Thanksgiving. I am requesting that the board approved for all 12 month acps employees to be granted a half day on wednesday november the 26th as well do we have a motion to make that the case i think this is something that we've done many years we typically do but this is a will require a formal motion i'm happy to make the motion just remind me the date again the 26th november 26 november 26 um i move that the board

[00:05:35] grants, the half day on November 26th that has been authorized. Thank you. By the governor. A second. Any further discussion?

[00:05:51] That's not a -- there's no students on that day. Is that correct? That's correct. Okay. Any further discussion? All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? Motion passes. Thank you.

[00:06:06] Do you have anything else, Dr. Hayes? Yes, Dr. Acuff. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, so I would like to read a statement. Good evening, Chair Acuff, members of the board, and members of our community. September is recognized nationally as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness, share hope, and remind one another of the importance of the connection and care.

[00:06:31] Established in 2008, this observance includes National Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day on September the 10th. These designations reflect a nationwide commitment to ensuring the individuals and families know that support is available and that suicide is preventable.

[00:06:48] One important advancement in recent years has been the creation of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. This national initiative reflects a growing recognition of the need for accessible mental health services. The lifeline provides free, 24-7 confidential support via call, text, chat, and it connects individuals not only with trained crisis counselors but with local mental health resources for our military families it also integrates directly with the veterans crisis line offering specialized support here in albemarle county public schools we recognize that the well-being of our students is foundational to their success to strengthen this commitment we

[00:07:26] have implemented the help me confidential reporting system which allows families to be connected directly with our dedicated professionals including mental health support specialists school counselors, and school psychologists. Every day they provide students with safe spaces to share their struggles, equip them with coping strategies, and connect families with resources they need.

[00:07:45] Their presence, guidance, and advocacy saves lives and we are deeply grateful for their service. Several of these dedicated professionals are with us this evening and I invite all of us to recognize their commitment to our students and families. I also want to acknowledge those who could not be here tonight. Their work is equally vital and their unwavering dedication continues to make a difference every single day. Our vision is not only to provide immediate support, but also to create a community of care where every student feels seen, heard, and supported. One important step towards that vision is teen mental health first aid. Our first step is within our high

[00:08:22] schools where we are preparing students to notice when a peer may be struggling and take the first steps in connecting them with help. As a school division, we remain committed to fostering a culture where every student knows they are seen value valued and supported suicide is preventable and by working together as educators families and community partners we can break down the stigma open doors to help and ensure that every student knows they are never alone thank you thank you and miss spielman do we have we have will you please read the resolution of this board i'd be happy to whereas september is recognized nationally as suicide prevention awareness

[00:09:02] awareness month a time to raise awareness share hope and emphasize the value of connection and care and whereas this observance established in 2008 includes national suicide prevention week and world suicide prevention day on september 10 and reflects a nationwide commitment to ensuring that individuals and families know that support is available and that suicide is preventable and And whereas in 2023, Virginia experienced 1,243 deaths by suicide, making suicide the 10th leading cause of death in the Commonwealth, including 184 young people ages 10 to 24 for whom suicide was the second leading cause of death.

[00:09:42] And whereas one important advancement in prevention has been the creation of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which provides free 24/7 confidential support through text, call, or chat and connects individuals with trained crisis counselors and local resources including the veterans crisis line for military families and whereas albemarle county public schools has implemented division-wide support such as the help me confidential reporting system and teen mental health first aid ensuring students and families have access to timely assistance and tools to recognize when help is needed and whereas albemarle county schools vision is not only to provide

[00:10:21] immediate support but also to foster a community of care where every student feels seen heard and supported and whereas the work of our school-based mental health professionals educators

families and community partners is vital in reducing stigma expanding access to support and ensuring no student is left to struggle alone now therefore be it resolved that the Albemarle County School Board does hereby recognize September 2025 a suicide prevention awareness month in Albemarle County Public Schools and encourage all members of our school community to join in supporting this observance promoting hope and ensuring that every student knows they are never alone. Thank

[00:11:01] you Ms. Bowman. Did you have anything else? Not until the spotlight. Okay. Ms. Wong, are you prepared to make your introduction to the school board and the community? Hello I'm Amy Wong and I'm a senior at Albemarle High School. I'd like to begin by saying that we've had a strong start with our club fair and sports season and senior sunrise at Albemarle High School but through a student survey, students have expressed concerns about several issues. So the first concern was weapons screening. So many students have expressed words over being late to class, due to long lines outside of these screeners and would like

[00:11:36] more screeners if possible. Furthermore, they've expressed concerns about having these large crowds and have mentioned that these crowds could cause danger and they feel more vulnerable in these crowds than being in a classroom. Students have mentioned that despite their frustrations they appreciate their safety being taken into consideration another issue that students have raised is that they believe that banned websites on school computers is a bit excessive and that has gotten into the way of their schoolwork but regardless they're all looking forward stories we're all looking towards a successful square thank

[00:12:16] you miss Wong the next item of business then is spot no spotlight on education Yes, and in a continuation of the Acknowledgement of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, I want to invite Mr. Miles Nelson, our coordinator of mental health and wellness, Mr. Cabell Guy, our coordinator of school counseling, and Mr. Kevin Kirst, our executive director of student support services.

[00:12:46] Good evening, board. My name is Cabell Guy. I am the coordinator of school counseling for Albemarle County Public Schools, and I want to take just a moment to thank Dr. Hayes for her words.

[00:13:06] I have to acknowledge that they are scary words right when we're talking about suicide when we're talking about student self-harm it can elicit a lot of response from students and adults alike which I think goes to highlight the good work that our school counselors our mental health support specialists and our school psychologists are doing at the school level every single day for school counselors we start this work very early when we're focusing on helping our elementary students learn to deal with big feelings and powerful emotions and learning what resources are available to them. We know that that work gets harder as they get older because the trust in adults and fear of the spotlight of attention being on them

[00:13:45] becomes a bit of a barrier. That's why the work that we do at the school level with needs assessments and student surveys, the MTSS SBIT process are all paramount to identifying kids that are struggling. I would also like to say that one of the things that we focus on is a group that's oftentimes overlooked which are those students who are the friend group of the peers that are struggling with their emotions because we know that as they get older and they're not sharing that information they're having to balance how do I be a good friend and keep a secret but also try to help with something that's developmentally not appropriate for me to deal with like

[00:14:21] suicide talk so resources like what we talked about a moment ago with the help me app are really paramount to making a difference and giving kids the support that they need at the school level to

deal with these things most importantly though is the relationship we have with kids and the people that are joining me tonight school counselors school psychologists mental health support specialists they really are the frontline workers that have their finger on the pulse for our students in our schools every day and it really is paramount that they continue doing that work and I think I would be remiss if I didn't thank you all as a board for funding those positions and continuing

[00:15:00] to make our students' psychological health as important as our educational needs. Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Guy. And so just to piggy off of what Mr. Guy said, really wanted to thank all of our individuals that are here today.

[00:15:19] They're with us in the crowd today. So all of our school-based mental health professionals, our school counselors, our school psychologists, school mental health support specialists, but also our community partners. So we have region 10, oh my goodness, gonna forget someone i should look at my list uh we have active and connected um a new family legacy man i really should have looked at my list before this ready kids region 10 family support program through dss we have so many community partners and it

[00:15:52] creates a safety net that really just provides that community of care um but also we have here today region 10 and spark which is the suicide prevention awareness resource council that provides a lot of the training and support for us so they were handing out t-shirts here tonight to honor our school-based mental health staff that's here today as a way to say thank you for all the work that they do um but to come back to the power of community i was recently having a conversation with a crisis counselor and they were talking about how the student came into services

[00:16:29] and it really comes down to students peers and that peer encouraged them to talk with their their family to talk with a counselor and that's how they engaged in services and that's where we get to the power of community we talk about the adults the professionals the supports the care but like Mr. Guy said it's our relationships that we have with the children that we have with each other that we have with our peers and reducing that stigma and being able to have an open conversation about something that most people don't want to talk about and so the professionals we have here tonight engage in that conversation almost every single day and we're continuing to

[00:17:08] support it. Our health and PE teachers are now supporting Teen Mental Health First Aid and teaching peers how to engage with their, or talking with students and helping them engage with their peers. And they do that alongside mental health professionals. We engage with, again, I'm terrible going off script, but that conversation and that implementation of Teen Mental Health First Aid is really empowering not only our adults to have conversations with kids, but it's engaging students be able to have that conversation with each other so right now we're implementing that with our

[00:17:45] freshman class and so this is our second year of implementation within four years every one of our high school students will have that knowledge base that we can continue to support and reduce stigmatization and have a conversation around what healthy thoughts are and how and who do we talk to when we need that help and so again that's why we have the individuals we have here tonight and we're here to say thank you to them and so i really wanted to ask if y'all would stand and be recognized so we can say thank you to all of our school-based mental health professionals

[00:18:15] thank you all thank you thank you mr nelson mr kirst you don't have anything okay thank you all uh as you know this board has long supported as you know strengthening of the mental health

resources we have in our schools and i am very pleased that we are we are there for our kids one of my colleagues miss priors pointed out that i was remiss and not noting that

[00:18:49] today is the 24th anniversary of 9 11. there's so much else going on that it would it got lost in my head for a bit but i think that's all just we should remember what happened then the next item on the announce on the agenda is public comment and dr berlin will be managing that thank you so much chair i'm going to start by reading the public comment guidelines just as a reminder we welcome public input at our school meetings to sign up and speak during the public comment period, you can do it several ways. Online, sign up is available from 9 a.m. on the Monday

[00:19:27] of the meeting week until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. By phone, call the school board clerk's office to sign up until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. Or in person, sign up at the meeting is available from 6 p.m. until the public comment period for in-person meetings only. Please note that public comment is not received at special board meetings unless specified on the agenda.

[00:19:50] each speaker will have three minutes to speak the maximum number of people or groups that may speak at a meeting is 20. in the event there are more than 20 people or groups who wish to speak at the particular meeting each speaker will be signed a number and the numbers will be drawn those who do not have the opportunity to speak at a particular meeting may sign up to speak at a subsequent meeting or may submit written comments for the school board's considerations speakers should state their name address or voting district address comments to the school board limit comments to the school board governance of school division operations and provide written

[00:20:28] statements and supporting material to the clerk the school board will use a timer to track each speaker's time once the time is up speakers are asked to wrap up their comments to me maintain respect please refrain from clapping or other audible forms of support you may raise your hand instead to paint with the school board is not allowed and the projection system is for staff presentations only i do want to check on something before we start i we i noticed a difference between what was um online and the paper i have um so i have sydney duncan indigo

[00:21:03] mathan sonia karik heather lindsay heidi gilman bennett and dan mcdonald on the i did have we did have a Jim Dylan Bach you are not on this list I just want to you have time if you want it I just I think there was just a description a description between copy and paste so please note that that time is honored unless you withdrew your name perfect I would ask that the first three people be ready Sydney Duncan Indigo Mathon and Sonia Carrick and as always if any of us mispronounce your name we deeply apologize and just correct

[00:21:38] us sydney duncan please come forward hello my name is sydney duncan and thank you for taking this time to listen to our concerns i am a senior and captain on the cross-country team this fall and i'm missing practice today to speak on behalf of my fellow classmates regarding the state of almaril high school and the detective district in the past three years that i have attended almaril never have i felt as restricted and dismissed than i do today almaril preaches to us about safety and how important attendance is for our student body but shows us students the

[00:22:16] the exact opposite during school hours. In the past week, as many of you may be aware, Albano implemented the new weapons detectors. This includes two located in the lower Mesa and two located our athletics entrance for bus users, along with one detector that supposedly is supposed to be open at 9:00 a.m. in the front office. This is four working detectors during the hours of 8:15 through 9:00 when 95% of

our students enter the building for a student body of over 2,000. In this process the last week, me and my classmates have been yelled at, lined up, and treated under heavy stress. As stated in the ACPS website, along with reported by school officials on the news this past week, there should be no reason for students to

[00:22:55] pull anything from our backpacks unless the exception of our computers. We've seen that opposite from our administration as we are yelled at to empty all metal from our backpacks and as we approach the school building. Under the circumstance that the weapons detector goes off, which has been every day for me this week our admin has searched our bags in person some even asked to lift bras out to make sure that we are hiding nothing underneath them i believe our admin is abusing the use of weapons detectors in order to find other items that may be on students all right secondarily if you need to we will hold the time secondarily our school

[00:23:32] preaches to us daily that attendance is key for education i agree with the statement what i do not understand is why attendance is so important that why is the administration making it so hard to attend school on monday due to the line many of my classmates were late to class as they were marked hardy from five minutes to an hour and 20. we are missing vital instruction time due to the lack of detectors that were provided for outlaw within the school is a district within the school is a different story our administration have been made made the rule that our online passes if they exceed the limit by even a second we are punished with lunch detention this includes for teachers forget

[00:24:11] to end our passes or if the has passed has been forgotten about this isn't as relevant to teachers but it puts an incredible amount of unnecessary stress on students during the time we should be able to take a break for ourselves on top of this the school is just in general overcrowded we've known this for an issue this has been an issue for years through all the school uh feeder patterns and it continues to get worse every year our hallways are packed and often we barely get get to class on time, trying to go through narrow stairways.

[00:24:39] The admin closes off large portions of our hallways during lunches to restrict our movement, which enhances this even more. To conclude, I have to advocate for change for actual working students. We understand we need for safety and accessibility, but those goals should not ever come to a cost of dignity of our student education.

[00:24:57] We're asking you to truly listen to the people who are most affected by these policies, the students. Involve us in the decision-making process, because if we want schools to be a place where students grow, learn, and thrive, then we need policies that treat us like real human beings. Thank you again.

[00:25:12] - Thank you very much. Indigo Maython. - Good evening, members of the board. My name is Indigo Maython, and I'm a senior at Albemarle High School, and I live in the Rio District. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you tonight, not just on my own behalf, but for many of the classmates who feel unheard and overwhelmed.

[00:25:33] Let me begin by stating that as students, we all appreciate the attempts to regulate and establish safety in the school environment as our world is changing. But I want to talk about a few issues that have deeply affected our abilities to succeed and feel safe in our learning environment. First, the recent implementation of weapon detectors at school entrances.

[00:25:50] While we understand the intent is safety, the reality is very different. These detectors have caused backup lines so severe that students, especially bus riders, who have no control over when they arrive, are facing delays of up to 45 minutes just to enter the building. That's nearly half of a class period lost. And these students are then marked tardy through no fault of their own.

[00:26:08] Even if our tardies are being dismissed, which we're not sure or have confirmed to be true, we are still losing vital class time. It does not make us feel safer. It makes us feel stressed, punished, and frankly unwelcome in the place where we spend most of our time. Second, the bathroom situation. Currently, we are given timed online bathroom passes capped at 10 minutes.

[00:26:26] If we go over, even by a second, we're automatically assigned lunch detention. That might sound like a fair system on paper until you realize that over 2,200 students, and there are only 40 to 45 bathroom stalls. That's a 55 to 1 ratio, which does not meet the Virginia State Board of Education's own requirements of a 30 to 1 ratio.

[00:26:45] These three of the entire bathroom facilities have been closed off by administration. We are literally being punished for needing to use a restroom that isn't even realistically accessible in time. And then there's the overcrowding. Hallways are packed. Classrooms are cramped. During lunch, many students, especially underclassmen who aren't allowed to leave campus have nowhere to sit, especially when it rains.

[00:27:04] There is no break from the building. Despite all of this, our administration strongly promotes the importance of attendance and mental health, which I agree with, but how can you expect students to show up when it's physically hard to get in the door, emotionally draining to stay, and logistically impossible to meet basic needs? We want to learn, we want to show up, but these policies, however well-intentioned, are actively creating barriers to the very success we're told is important.

[00:27:26] I'm asking the board to reevaluate these policies with real student input because right now it doesn't feel like we're being protected, it feels like we're being controlled, and that is not the kind of environment that helps anyone thrive thank you for your time thank you very much sonia carrick sonia carrick did i say that correctly i'm just gonna check one more time

[00:28:00] for sonia carrick if that person is not here i will move on heather lindsay good evening my name is heather lindsay and i live in the rivana district um first i want to thank the students for speaking out with such poise and sharing their concerns um i'm the parent of a recent Albemarle High School graduate and a current Albemarle High School student, but I'm a school counselor at Lakeside Middle School and that's why I'm here tonight. I thank you all for the

[00:28:36] recognition of the support and the support that you give us to do our jobs to build connections with students every day. Thank you for recognizing the need for mental health in our schools. Over my 25 years working for this division, I've seen many changes in our schools and in the needs of our students, but one thing that has not changed is that school counselors have always been at the forefront of supporting students mental health needs and social emotional learning most days i go to school with a plan of what i think i'm going to accomplish in the day and my plan gets set aside because student concerns come first whatever rolls in that day is what i attend to

[00:29:16] it could be anything from the loss of a pet or the loss of a parent it could be dealing with changing friendships and learning how to manage conflict it could be managing feelings about an

incarcerated parent, general anxiety or thinking about self-harm or suicide.

[00:29:32] While the mental health of our youth has been in the spotlight for the last five years, this has been the work of school counselors for my entire career. The work that school counselors and other mental health professionals do in the schools cannot be misunderstood or underestimated and I thank you for recognizing that. I thought that September and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month would be a good opportunity for me to share these thoughts with you. Thank you for your proclamation and acknowledgement of our work i also wanted to the opportunity to express my gratitude for the support that you've given school counselors over the years and for keeping that emphasis so that we can create safe schools and healthy students specifically i also want to thank

[00:30:11] division like leadership and the board for supporting the reinstallation of the coordinator of school counseling position that's a position that hasn't existed for quite some time and has been very needed with mr cabal guy in this role i believe that we'll be better supported at the the division level to ensure that we're seeing positive outcomes for all students and to help all students thrive i tell my students that my door is always open and i extend the same to any of you if you're ever curious about what a day in the life is like or have any questions and i invite you to come welcome come visit anytime thank you very much for all your support thank you very much i just noticed the name damien barfield on the line with with sonia carrick

[00:30:51] i just want to make sure i didn't make it okay just want to want to make sure i always give everyone the opportunity um heidi gilman bennett hello my name is heidi gilman bennett samuel miller district officer of family council speaking my personal opinion on high school capacity number one we need a new northern high school population growth up 29 demands it the key data was already

[00:31:26] presented to you by acps staff a fourth high school when just a fraction of the already approved housing is included in enrollment projections a new high school would be filled to a 1500 seat capacity in just 10 years there are 8 000 units of housing approved in northern albemarle alone if it were funded now it would be full by the time it opens it's that straightforward number two do not build center three it will not solve overcrowding at western or monticello They need additions.

[00:32:01] Students and families want a comprehensive high school with sports, with drama. Very few want to travel away from base school every other day. Center three means high transportation costs, high environmental impact with more busing, high annual operating costs, high risks to safety as kids walk between separate buildings.

[00:32:24] Going above 1,200 student size frankly seems risky for student outcomes, including the ability to build strong relationships that are positive between staff and students and frankly I worry that ACPS can't effectively operate a large high school but have you seen the housing development that's going on in Crozet at Old Ivy Road seen the plan for 1200 new units at 64 and 29 please do not put any more students in trailers we need additions to our schools doing all of these things plus the backlog of other CIP projects is expensive and it is

[00:33:02] possible other school divisions are doing it experts in our community have told us it is possible but this requires you as our elected officials to get to work we families who are not being paid are holding meetings with supervisors with a Planning Commission we are showing up we are talking to candidates and housing experts our kids have suffered for decades due to poor decision-making they are squished

into pressure cooker high schools no windows and classrooms that have been subdivided with flimsy walls I say it's the adults who are now behaving badly I'm calling on you and the people you've

[00:33:41] appointed to create a real plan that we can all stand behind not just a long wish list of a half billion dollars of placeholder projects instead a detailed proposal for what must be built and improved and how to fund it tonight is the night to tell your long-range planning committee that we need a new northern high school no more centers we need additions you need to deliver on physical spaces where our youth can thrive thank you thank you

[00:34:08] very much dan mcdonald is there a dan mcdonald here dan mcdonald so you know dan mcdonald i'm

[00:34:30] jim dylanbeck good evening chair acuff other members of the board dr haas and staff my name name is Jim Dylan Beck and I live in the Rio district as you may have heard I'm rather stubborn and I'm running for a seat on this board again because I believe a good quality education is the key to giving our young people the tools to be successful members of our community unfortunately many of the

[00:35:06] students in the Rio district are not thriving currently my hope is to bring some fresh ideas to the board based on my experience as a teacher and coach and parent and with my conversations with many teachers and parents in the Rio area. I attended the PTO meeting at Woodbrook Elementary School on Monday evening and I'm happy to report that they have a lot of energy and great events planned for this school year. If elected to this board, I've pledged to donate half of my stipend to the PTOs in the Rio district. What I'm compelled to mention tonight though is the abysmal test scores in our district, particularly

[00:35:44] among students of color. The SOL test results from last school year came out recently and I feel the need to mention some of the results. For black students at Woodbrook Elementary School, only 28% passed the math test, 26% passed the reading test, and shockingly, only 3% passed the fifth grade science test. These results are deeply disturbing.

[00:36:10] Unfortunately, the test scores for students of color at both Agner and Greer Elementary School aren't much better. I don't blame the students or the teachers or the hardworking staff. I blame the system. The mission statement for ACPS says, in part, we seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds. We will know every student.

[00:36:35] Yet, unfortunately, many students are not succeeding. In fact, in the ACPS as a division, more than half of the K-12 students of color failed the reading and math and science SOL tests, and two-thirds failed the history SOL last year. The achievement gap for black and white students remains at an astounding 27 to 32 percent clearly changes need to be made as a teacher i got to know my students in the first few weeks of school but that didn't help them succeed they need to be educated so that when they go on to college or the workforce or the military

[00:37:13] they can thrive we owe that to every student and family in the county i look forward to hearing what changes will be made in order to improve outcomes for all students regardless of race background and economic status and oh by the way i would also urge the board to approve the speedy planning to build the fourth high school as the best long-term solution to the overcrowding problem that has existed since the mid-90s when i taught from a trailer at albemarle high school thank you for your time thank you very much and thank you for all who shared their comments with

[00:37:49] us today particularly the two um students from ahs i know how difficult it is to speak in front of this board and i appreciate your engagement in the civic discourse that's the end of public comment okay thank you miss dr berlin we now have on the agenda approval of the consent agenda do we have a motion i move we approve tonight's consent agenda i second moved by ms osborne

[00:38:21] seconded by dr berlin all those in favor aye opposed motion passes next item is um school division business and we have uh three meaty topics tonight uh beginning with building

[00:38:41] services annual report and mr workman good evening chair acuff members of the school board and dr

[00:39:22] haas my name is matt wordman and i'm the director of building services i'm excited to be able to provide you with a brief update on recent work completed in our department within the last year i'd also like to briefly just introduce with me this evening is jeff rom our deputy director as well as Tiffany Morris, our Assistant Director for Custodial Services.

[00:39:41] Of course, this evening we will be discussing our third strategic goal of equitable transformative resources. However, we're also going to touch this evening on goal two of affirming and empowering communities, specifically around our staffing. Our agenda for this evening will include a brief update of projects completed this past summer, an update on ongoing construction projects, and some operational updates. Okay, summer 25 updates. One of our biggest accomplishments this past summer was opening Trailhead Learning Community. Opening a new school with little

[00:40:20] to no budget was a huge hurdle. However, using different line items in our CIP maintenance budget, we were able to repaint the entire school, upgrade the HVAC system, outfit a serving line to provide meals to our students, and upgrade some of the furniture throughout the building, as well as make necessary security enhancements such as the installation of our card reader system.

[00:40:44] This was a major accomplishment that was successful thanks in part to several members of our capital team. As we do every summer, we had multiple electrical and HVAC upgrade projects. You can see the full list here of schools that received some portion of these improvements. Monticello High School's track was completely replaced this past summer. This now just leaves Albemarle's track to be refinished. And then all three stadiums at all three high schools will have been

[00:41:14] completely refurbished in the last three years. In recent years, we have also been increasing the amount of maintenance funds that go towards maintaining our stormwater facilities. With increased regulations from DEQ over the last decade, many of our facilities that we have installed over the past few years are starting to require some major maintenance work. Here you can see a major stormwater retention rejuvenation project that was completed at Mountain View Elementary School this past spring. Other stormwater maintenance projects were completed at Crozet

[00:41:51] and Western Albemarle High School. We anticipate a significant increase in stormwater maintenance projects over the coming years. We also completed bathroom renovations at three schools, including Murray, Stony Point, and some staff bathrooms at Burley Middle School. This project is a great example that shows how our office utilizes the internal facility condition assessments that we perform to determine where to best spend the resources that we receive, as both Murray and Stony Point had some of the lowest scores on conditions of their bathrooms across all of our

[00:42:25] facilities. We were also able to continue our multi-year project of upgrading windows at Albemarle High School. These new windows not only provide a modern upgraded aesthetic, but also provide significant energy savings in our facilities. While these projects, these sample projects, do not reflect all of the work that our office did this past summer, it gives you an idea of what our office completed in the shortened summer period. Collectively, this summer's CIP maintenance work consisted of \$12.5 million worth of work completed across all facilities.

[00:43:02] You can see the breakdown of spending by feeder pattern in the pie chart on the right. Of this \$12.5 million, and I should add too, that does not factor in the two new schools. Of this \$12.5 million, a little over 13.5% was spent in Title I schools, and \$1.6 million was spent in our transformation schools. When factoring in the two new schools, an additional \$8.2 million worth of work was completed just this past summer. Collectively, that accounts for nearly \$3 million

[00:43:36] worth of work per week. That's an insane pace of work. And I'm incredibly proud of our capital team and the outstanding work that they were able to accomplish this past summer, particularly given how challenging of a year this was with the shortened summer period. Our team stepped up to the challenge and delivered. I also want to take this moment to just to announce that I'm really excited that Kagan Squire, who is one of our senior project managers, has recently accepted the role of assistant director of capital planning and construction in our office.

[00:44:12] Unfortunately, Kagan can't be here this evening because he's on his delayed honeymoon. But Kagan is an exceptional project manager, and I'm really excited to see where he can take our capital program. Okay, shifting towards ongoing construction projects, we'll first talk about Mountain View Upper Elementary School. As you can see from these series of photos, work is progressing on the new elementary school at a steady pace. Over the last several months, significant site work has been completed, including the construction of stormwater facilities, installation of

[00:44:49] underground utilities, and the parking lot is starting to take shape. On the building side, steel has been erected, the ground floor slab has been poured, and framing along with mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in are well underway. We have also begun drilling the geothermal wells. As you can see from these photos, the contractor has three drill rigs on site and are well underway with that work. As you all know, just last week, we were able to celebrate the highest beam being lifted into place. This was a monumental occasion, and I'm so glad that we were

[00:45:25] able to include our students in the signing of the beam and that ceremony. Thank you to Chair Acuff and Judy Lee. I think I caught everybody that was there. I was actually on vacation last week, so if I missed you, I apologize. But as you can see from the photos, this was an incredibly successful event. This slide provides just a brief summary of the project's status. As the work continues to progress, our risks continue to diminish. We anticipate the steady pace to continue over the next several months as we drive towards the opening of that facility next school

[00:46:00] year. Shifting towards ACE Academy of Lambs Lane Campus. Progress on this project is just a little behind that of the new elementary school, but it's still progressing at a steady pace. As you can see from these photos, steel erection is well underway. Under slab MEP is rough and is completed.

[00:46:19] And actually just this past week, a significant portion of the ground floor slab was poured. As you know, this building will also house the school division's main data center. These photos show the extensive concrete structure that was constructed to protect those assets. This part of the building is also

designed to have significant waterproofing materials to further protect that equipment from the elements. These aerial photos show how the site is integrated into the Lambs Lane campus and seek to redesign and re-envision that campus in alignment with the Lambs Lane master plan. You can see here where the road network, including the first leg

[00:46:57] of the future Lambs Lane loop road, has been completed and is now open to traffic. And here is progress on the new parking lot that will be located just past the Albemarle High School tennis courts. This work is also making significant progress in the last week since these photos have been taken. This portion of the work is on pace to be completed by the end of this month.

[00:47:20] I also want to give a huge shout out to Andrew Smith, a student at Albemarle High School who has graciously been documenting this project really since the beginning and has provided these aerial photos to us for this presentation. And here's an overall summary of the project.

[00:47:35] Just like the new elementary school, as work progresses, our risks continue to diminish. We will have another heavy lift next summer on this project as we seek to construct the new student drop-off area between the Albemarle High School cafeteria and the stadium.

[00:47:51] However, at this point, we are on pace for this project to open next school year. We wanted to provide you with a brief update with respect to the name of the new facility. As the rebranding efforts have finalized, we have started to try and solidify a shared understanding of the names for the two ACE Academy facilities.

[00:48:09] We've implemented use of the word campus and shifted from calling the first center from Seminole Trail to Seminole Place. As we move towards the opening of ACE Academy on the Lambs Lane campus next school year, I wanted to also provide a brief programmatic update.

[00:48:26] will be eight studio program offerings offered at the new school. Based on current studio enrollments, we project that the new facility will have about 640 students in attendance next year or an average of 320 students per day. The following year, we project that enrollment will increase to the full capacity of 800 students or 400 students per day as the larger cohorts pass through. Shifting to the Albemarle High School second floor connector wing project, this project is moving along at a very steady pace. The contractor was able to complete their key milestones this past summer

[00:49:04] of completing the steel erection and pouring the concrete deck. As you can see from these photos, work is well underway with framing, MEP rough end, and exterior sheathing. This project is currently anticipated to be completed no later than late winter, early spring of this academic year. I wanted to also provide you with some brief operational updates. As I stepped into this role just a little over a year ago. One of my first priorities was to establish a set of core principles to guide our department. We designed a logo of these principles to fit together like a jigsaw

[00:49:43] puzzle to signify that while each one of these is vital on its own, it's even stronger when connected to the others. Whether it's employee engagement, excuse me, whether it's employee development, operational excellence, customer service, sustainability, or innovation, each piece is interchangeable and interconnected, shaping the culture we are building in our department.

[00:50:08] Together, they provide us with a clear compass, one that empowers staff, strengthens our service to schools, and helps us approach challenges with creativity and accountability. And later this month, we will be giving out our first annual Core Principles Awards to five employees in our department

who exemplify each of these core principles each and every day. These core principals really manifest themselves in the incredible staff that we have. I wanted to share

[00:50:42] a brief story with you from the very first day of school. We received a call at about 2 30 or 3 o'clock that afternoon that there was a large power outage at Albemarle High School that was affecting an entire wing of the building. Our crews were quickly dispatched and when they arrived they started to assess the situation. They learned that there had been a power surge that had blown the transformer to that part of the building all systems including hvac it elevator everything was

[00:51:15] down in about 30 classrooms by four o'clock that day we realized that we were in a real bind and we weren't sure what we were going to do we moved quickly and were able to secure an extremely large generator before the rental companies closed at five o'clock that evening and our crews worked until 8 p.m. that evening to ensure that the generator would function and provide power to those 30 classrooms so that we would not have to cancel the second day of school on a day when the temperature, mind you, was projected to be in the mid-90s. By the end of that first full week of

[00:51:53] school, a permanent repair had been made. I was so proud of the way our maintenance team responded to this effort to ensure that our students would have a safe and comfortable place to learn. They stepped up and met that challenge and I'm very proud of them. Just to show you how incredible our team is, here are just a few of the high-level operational statistics. Our custodial teams waxed over 1.2 million square feet of floors. For last fiscal year, our team completed over 7,000 maintenance requests, which is more than we received, and these were done with an average

[00:52:31] resolution time of just less than 40 days. A breakdown of the nature of those work orders can be seen in the pie chart on the right. Just this summer alone, nearly 1,300 work orders were complete it in the shortened window. On average, our team is completing 28 work orders per day, which is incredibly impressive given that we only have a maintenance team of about 40 people.

[00:52:53] And to be clear, these statistics don't even account for preventative maintenance work orders that our team handles on a routine basis. Our office also manages the community use policy. Last fiscal year, ACPS hosted over 2,200 community events in our schools across 93 different external groups, resulting in \$320,000 in revenue as of August 29th of this year.

[00:53:19] A breakdown of these statistics by school and the types of events can be seen in the charts and graphs here. And now I want to turn it over to Tiffany Morris, our Assistant Director of Custodial Services, to provide you with some really exciting updates that are happening within our custodial team. Thanks, Matt. Good afternoon, members of the board. I'm Tiffany Morris, and I've had the privilege of serving as the Assistant Director for Custodial for the last two and a half years. Today I'm proud to share some of the incredible work our custodial team has done to enhance the learning environment for our students and staff over the past year.

[00:53:58] As you can see in this slide here, it shows the incredible work that our team has completed over the last two summers, refinishing millions of square feet of flooring. We've actually painstakingly removed years of buildup to reveal clean floors, which have dramatically increased the overall feel of the learning environment in all of our schools and we've also brought our gym refinishing in-house and by doing that it's given us greater control over the quality and the scheduling of the work we've actually also started using a higher quality more sustainable product

[00:54:32] with lower vocs which is and it also has improved durability by prioritizing this healthier more sustainable and longer lasting solution for our building occupants to support our team's personal and career growth we've actually implemented a custodial career ladder and we're really excited about this this actually this program provides a clear path for advancement while teaching both technical skills such as proper cleaning methods and equipment use but also teaches interpersonal

[00:55:08] skills such as communication professionalism and customer service available to all custodial staff it aligns with our department's focus on continuous improvement and development and also fostering a culture of growth and excellence this slide actually shows one of our classes in our level one certification participation in this class is voluntary but as you can see every class is full of eager and motivated custodians who are really looking forward to advancing their careers each

[00:55:45] level of the certification is designed to take 12 to 18 months to complete at the conclusion of the program the participant applies for certification and then they complete a hands-on and written assessment to earn their certification this process ensures not only we're not only improving technical expertise, but we're also fostering a strong sense of professional pride and accountability. Lastly, I'd like to focus on team culture and recognition. Our annual custodial Olympics, as you can see here in the

[00:56:21] photos, always brings fun and camaraderie amongst our entire team. We get all 140 of our custodians together and we have games such as the mop bucket obstacle course and a electrical standalone scrubber chariot race. We also held our very first custodial awards this past summer where we were able to recognize the individuals that go above and beyond to keep our schools clean and safe. I'm proud of all the work that we've accomplished and I'm excited to keep building on the momentum that we've built. Now I'll turn it back over to Matt

[00:56:57] Wirtman so he can conclude the building services annual report. Thank you, Tiffany. I'm really proud of the work that Tiffany and the entire custodial team are doing to transform our schools. These efforts were clearly reflected in our Gallup data from this past year, which saw a significant overall jump among the custodial team. These efforts resulted in increases in every single Gallup question, including four questions that saw a significant increase.

[00:57:30] This data is clearly a direct result of the changes that have been implemented over the last year and I couldn't be more grateful for the team's hard work and energy lastly I want to provide a very brief environmental update John Coles who many of you know is our environmental program manager will be before you later this fall to provide a full update from the ACES committee but just briefly last year we saw our lowest energy consumption year excluding 2020 despite continued increased square footage across the division we also saw

[00:58:07] our highest amount of composting collected, and we are seeing some successes from our conservation mowing. A bird survey was conducted earlier this spring by the Piedmont Environmental Council in partnership with the Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative. During that survey, they were surprised to discover nesting grasshopper sparrows, which is America's most endangered songbird.

[00:58:32] The birds were discovered to be nesting immediately within our conservation mowing areas, which is a strong testament that these areas are seeing the desired effects that we hoped for when we implemented that program. Lastly, I want to conclude with this photo of a cultural wall that we installed in our office this past spring. It's a world map where each pinpoint represents a member of our team and where they're from. Building Services is the most globally diverse department in the school division, and

this wall celebrates the rich backgrounds and experiences our staff bring with them. It's a daily reminder that our strength comes from the wide range of perspectives

[00:59:12] that make us who we are, and that no matter where we start it, we're all working toward the same mission together to clean, maintain, and create learning environments for the students, staff, and ACPS community. And so with that, we're happy to answer any questions that you may have.

[00:59:35] Yeah, I have one question. Matt, could you go back to one of the first slides that was showing um the property at mountain view thank you this one yeah um on that slide it's hard to tell whether or not there's been any type of vegetation or any type of protective covering on that place has there been yes yeah this was a progress photo taken during design but yes it's been hydro seeded with grass seed and it's taken taken root if we were to go out there today you'd see

[01:00:12] grass growing in in that area okay thanks am i allowed to participate in custodial olympics absolutely sounds really fun i would love to use one of those like buffer things that sounds really fun absolutely okay we'll definitely make sure the board gets a calendar invite out there it's usually it's usually during spring break every year so i'll make i'll make it i'll make a i'll make an exception and be there um you probably i know the answer sort of um i was I used to be on the ACES -- I don't want to call it a committee because it's already in

[01:00:47] the name -- but I was on ACES, and one of the issues that keeps coming up is the effectiveness of recycling, and that sort of falls in a no-person's land of responsibility. Some teachers do it, and John Coles isn't here to talk about it, but I'm wondering what kind of instruction -- and maybe this is a question from Ms. Morris -- do the custodians get in terms of the recycling because we do have recycling bins but i've been told it's not been as efficient as it might be yeah absolutely when i i came here from the university of virginia

[01:01:23] where we had an excellent recycling and reduce reduction product program so we're taking a lot of what i've learned there and trying to put it into process here the first thing i actually did was change our buying habits so we've actually as a custodial team we've actually reduced our packaging and the the carbon footprint of where we're ordering from so we are doing that as a custodial team we are in the middle of training all of our staff as you can imagine it's a little bit difficult when you have staff that speak upwards of 10 different languages of how to process recycling and of course there's turnover we're lucky that there's not as much

[01:02:02] turnover as there was at one time but this year we're focusing on paper so we figured we're going going to focus on one thing in the classroom obviously paper is the first and easiest thing to do so we're all classrooms have paper recycling and the custodians are starting there and then we are working school by school with the composting but you're right it is kind of like all it's not exactly streamlined between a child nutrition teachers and custodial so it does its students it does I do want to shout out to Albemarle High School I've spoke with the team there and they're doing an excellent job and we're we're working a little bit with them to

[01:02:40] help increase the recycling there so um we're making progress but i would say this year we are focusing on the paper just because it is a monumental task to train 140 multicultural custodians on how what goes in what container and how to take it out so thank you that's are there any any more questions or comments i would just say good job too bad you missed the topping out ceremony last week it was really it was excellent i'm really sorry i missed it i heard great things

[01:03:17] so well thank you thank you okay colleagues we have a scheduled break do we want to take 10 minutes

[01:03:31] okay let's take 10 minutes we'll be back at what 7 47 okay we got we got providing direction

[01:13:46] to our long-range planning committee on what we would really like a deep dive about with that Ms. Kumazawa. Good evening. I'm Maya Kumazawa, Director of Budget and Planning, and this evening we'll continue our discussion on high school facilities planning. This topic aligns with our strategic plan learning for all with a particular focus on goal three equitable and transformative resources. Since your work session on August 14th you asked a lot of great questions

[01:14:23] and we've pulled together data that hopefully answer the questions you had at that work session session, as well as subsequent questions we received after the work session. On this slide is a list of the topics that were covered in the Q&A document that was shared with you.

[01:14:38] I just wanted to pause here for just a moment to see if there are any more questions about these topics, or if there's anything else missing that you would like more information about. I thought it was a very helpful document. Thank you.

[01:14:57] Yeah, I just also wanted to say, I know I was one of the people responsible for many of the questions and it was very helpful because it kind of brought together a number of pieces that I think at least in my head I had been missing to both think about what had happened in the past, what is happening today, and what could potentially happen in the future. So it was very helpful. I've updated this slide to put in front of you today to better frame our discussion for this evening. These are the same long-term alternatives that were presented last

[01:15:33] month except they have been we've added a likely scenario that would accompany each of these alternatives now these are not final or recommended scenarios this is a likely scenario so that you have something more tangible to discuss and that we could the evaluation metrics could be a little bit more specific so the first alternative is a new center in this scenario there would be a third center built that would house about 600 students per day and in addition there would be an addition built to western albemarle so if we're we'd add a total of 1 000 seats the second alternative is

[01:16:10] to expand on our existing buildings so these would be expansions to ace lambs lane western albemarle and monticello high school for an additional 800 seats and then the third long-term alternative is to build a comprehensive high school that would add 1300 to 1600 seats again these are the same alternatives presented before with just a little bit more specificity.

[01:16:36] The preliminary evaluation metrics are shown here and they have been updated slightly to reflect the more specific scenarios and I just want to reiterate that these metrics are not exhaustive and they carry variable weights. It doesn't really make sense just to add them up because everyone may have different opinions on the weights of each of these metrics. This is just a suggest suggested framework for evaluating the alternatives and you've got a note taker in front of you to make notes the colors are designated relative to each other in terms of the alternatives

[01:17:11] red represents the most challenging and green represents the least challenging for each metric and again depending on the final scope of the projects these designations could vary as dr akaf just mentioned the purpose for this evening is to provide guidance to the long-range planning advisory committee who will develop a report that will be presented to you on october 23rd and there will be

additional time for discussion at that meeting we would request an action from the school board on november 13th to approve their cip request which could be the long-range

[01:17:48] planning advisory committee's recommendations or it could be amended as well on december 3rd there will be an opportunity to have a joint meeting with the board of supervisors and then on february 25th is when the FY27 CIP and budget will be presented by the county executive and that's when the county's budget development process would begin. So with that we've outlined some suggested questions to help with your discussion this evening and I will turn it over to Dr. Acob.

[01:18:19] Thank you. I apologize I did have one question I just realized we do we don't have any updates of the official counts for 25 26 for the three high schools yet correct we use September 30th counts correct and we pull that data a few days after that and from there we would develop updated projections so in the October time frame we'll come back with an update will the long-range plan

[01:18:53] whichever option we ask or options we ask the long-range planning committee to look at will include looking at the projects we already have on our wish list yes that's right we typically start with the baseline of our current list of projects and make amendments from there because as it is a long-term project list they typically don't change much from year to year the purpose of this is for it to provide more specificity around the high school project which was a

[01:19:30] placeholder up until now and then depending on the project the committee the goal of the committee will be to prioritize this project against the others and they will come back to you with a ranking a suggested ranking of course the issue in making any of these decisions is financial feasibility so will these i hate to even i'll jinx it well any will the the report or the

[01:20:05] advice consider whether or not the one-cent sales tax gets added and how that might impact available funding or i mean well or that's going to be a discussion and you know december 3rd with the board of supervisors because they're the ones ultimately who have this decision so the long-range planning advisory is charged to provide a need space plan right so that will be the true needs okay okay funding sources and affordability is a good joint board conversation thank you for

[01:20:42] reminding me of that ms schmidt i i think that's an important note is that we are um bound to determine what our needs are um that said we can't just ignore the fact that we have to figure out the funding and several board members and myself have been digging into this over the last few weeks to think about you know if if we were to say okay let's do a new high school what does that look like how do we get there and I do think that there are some creative options and I do think that we can

[01:21:18] afford to do it if we can think about some of these things one is the 1% sales tax and if that were to go into effect miss kumazawa correct me if I'm wrong it's about 25 million dollars a year if we were to do additions now those aren't gonna solve our long-term problems but they're gonna help us significantly if we were to do additions like the one at Western we can pay for now is what I'm being told with current capital improvement funding that we have is

[01:21:52] that correct um we estimate that we could build about a 200 seat edition not the full 400 that's recommended but it would be a phase somewhere we're getting there um if we were to put that 25 26 million dollars in a high interest bearing account for a couple of years we would pay for a new high school within not a very long amount of time and that's just one of the solutions we've talked about a bond

referendum Dr. Berlin and some community members and I met with former COO of Albemarle County who was also at Fairfax for about 20 years

[01:22:29] and he passed their bond referendum but he also did a lot of building for them and he is gave us a lot of really great ideas on how we can fund things like this and how to work with the community to make sure that another bond referendum is passed i think that is a really good option for us and yes it would require um working with the board of supervisors but having people like sally duncan who are going to be on the on the board of supervisors who are very invested in our schools i think is a really big step in the right direction so i think that given all of those things um we can't really just

[01:23:07] keep kicking the can down the road and hoping that things get better that we can you know convince the Board of Supervisors I think our needs are very apparent we need a new high school and we need to put some additions on our current high schools it's also very apparent that the center model is not working and it's apparent to me I mean that we may not all agree on that but I think that I don't see us filling and build spending the money to build another center that may or may not get filled that does not seem like a good fiscally responsive to responsible

[01:23:43] decision by our board so in the research that i have been doing um and i think that we are in a place where we have to say we need a new high school and we need these additions we can get these additions done relatively soon that will help solve some of these problems and then we get to the point where within a relatively you know what does this say within four years like if we can get the one percent sales tax passed at the beginning of 2026 um you know it could be within you know five to eight years that we have maybe sooner than that with other you know political things that go on you never know but even if in the worst case scenario we put that money we put

[01:24:22] it in an interest-bearing account we can pay for it and that's not even talking about the ppaes which did i get that right i don't close enough eaa we have some land that acps owns that may be very exciting to some developers.

[01:24:40] And some developers are actually really interested in this. And I think that there is a good opportunity. And then the last thing I want to say, and then I'm going to stop, but Board of Supervisors, the main thing they're concerned about is their triple bond rating. And I completely understand it.

[01:24:56] But there's still a gap. We're at about 5%, 5% or 6%. And we could even go up to 8% or 9% of lending still keep that that bond rating and that gives us a good chunk of money that we can put towards capital improvement projects if we can all agree that that's what we need to do so I think that there are options available for funding this new school okay thank you I agree wholeheartedly and I I don't think this can be an either/or I think this is has to be a both/and you've heard our students talk about the overcrowding in our high schools we've

[01:25:33] seen the data i think it has to be a western edition in addition to a new comprehensive high school i mean the growth in this county is unbelievable the yield that i think we'll see going forward in the next 10 years is something we can't ignore like i don't feel comfortable looking at the capacity numbers and saying okay i'm going to continue having students my kids did it now someone else's kids are going to be in schools that are over capacity by 200 plus students and that don't have natural light in many classrooms.

[01:26:05] I had the opportunity to visit the Boys and Girls Clubs last week, and the difference between walking into the Boys and Girls Club with the amazing amount of light, and when you walk into AHS. And again, I appreciate all the amazing work we have done to bring it forward.

[01:26:23] However, it's still not what our kids deserve, and where I am is our kids deserve the best schools, and that's where I'm gonna, you know, that's my line. And so I think this board needs to be much more aggressive in funding the building of a new school and of renovating the current schools to provide additional capacity.

[01:26:44] And we need to look at all options that are on the table and we need to press our voice with the Board of Supervisors. And I'm not gonna stop until we have new schools. Like, that's my bottom line. - Amen. - Ms. Osborne?

[01:27:00] - Amen. - Amen. Ms. Pryor? So when you're speaking of the new school, would that replace AHS? No. An additional. It's a fourth high school. Under a scenario for a new high school, we would be building a high school for 12 to 15, 1600 students somewhere up north on 29, off 29, and we would have to redraw

[01:27:34] draw all of the district lines, so there would be, it's the most expensive, the most disruptive, but it produces four schools of similar size, and it probably satisfies our high school capacity issues for a generation.

[01:27:56] The challenge is getting it financed, and the challenge, but we have to make that argument. I agree with Ms. Spillman. I mean, Graham and I were on the school board when we decided to go with the center model.

[01:28:12] But the center model has never been fully implemented. It's been delayed five years. It's been cut 30, you know, one-third in size. And by now, we were supposed to be having some other centers. I think the capacity issue has caught up with us and that we at least need to direct the long-range planning advisory committee to take a serious look at it, put everything on the table.

[01:28:44] Let's decide if we can sell this idea to the community and to the board of supervisors. There are pros and cons to it. And the issue is how much expansion can we do in the existing schools before we have a high school.

[01:29:02] But I think I would, as Ms. Spillman knows, with great reluctance, I would have to agree that we need to -- Can someone document this? No, no, no. I'm kidding. We agree on more than anything. No, I'm kidding. I'm playing.

[01:29:17] I'm playing. But no, I mean, I have to be open to the arguments that we are over capacity. We are grossly overcapacity. We were overcapacity when we did the referendum in '16, which is why we bought, you know, the first nine trailer, eight classroom, you know, mobile, you know, whatever they're called, learning cottages.

[01:29:41] And we have two of them now. And even with the center, we're still going to have at least one. So let us take a look at it. Let us see how, what it looks like. There's also a significant community benefit to having a high school up in that area as things happen there it's a oh I and if you look at the pattern of growth it's sort of terrifying I mean we've been dealing with we have about half of our students in our

14,000 student Albemarle County school system in schools that are at or over capacity and we have to do something and you know if we have to go

[01:30:21] to every single Kiwanis Club and Rotary Club and senior citizen and PTO we can make the case that we need a new school let us let us look at it let's see what we can get done mr. page did I usurp your time okay I agree with everything that's been said and I think the main two things that we need to look at would be the additions and the new comprehensive high school and this is sort of rehashing a whole lot but thinking back to when we first came up with the center proposal at the same time we were expecting like additions to

[01:30:58] be made right to all about three high schools that did not happen right so that put us behind the eight ball from the very beginning with the center's model so I think we do need to look at additions and also to new comprehensive high school I think once we have the new high school if we do that I mean it's going to be disruptive sort of we're going to have students coming like we had tonight very upset about the weapons screening, but I think in the long run, long run, it will be

[01:31:35] lovely being able to present our, well, our students with a beautiful new high school. My concern and the concern that Mr. Page and I had when we made the decision to go with the centers, there was always centers plus additions and modernization. That got whacked off and the center itself got delayed and shrunken so the best of ideas don't fly if they're not implemented well and I think that's where we are and sadly but the centers aren't for everybody but they are for some some

[01:32:13] folks are sure sure I think the centers there's not and right right anyway so what concretely do we need to say to the long-range planning advisory committee to get them to do this work? Just two points of clarity. The first is the comment about we have enough funding for the addition to Western. That's true with an asterisk.

[01:32:41] Right now we have funding for what we call high school renovations. We asked for it in the lump sum money, but it was funded over a course of five years, so many million per year and so the only way to fund that addition is to save up with those five million so that delays that and that decision would come at the cost of not making necessary improvements to Albemarle I just think there's you don't have to have that conversation tonight I just want to it's not as easy as we have the money right now the second is I think I'm hearing clear direction that you are interested in long-range planning further

[01:33:19] studying and including a new school in their plan i think i'm looking at the staff to i'm not hearing great clarity and additions we had always presented them as separate um for a couple reasons one you are creating enough capacity with the new school and financially and timing and all of that above so i'm thinking you need a little more clarity on what you mean by and additions in addition to the new school i don't think that we want to make it and or i think that what we're looking at is

[01:33:52] do some additions now with funding that we can come up with in the next year or two while we figure out how to fund a new high school with that being our absolute intention and we move forward with those plans you're looking for both a short term and a long term correct correct correct right I mean, when I say short, sorry, I was gonna say short term, meaning like, yes, it's, it's not going to solve all the problems, but we're it's getting us all all in the right direction.

[01:34:23] And this county is going to continue to grow. So even a different way, a new high school is going to take a lot of community planning a lot of that is not going to happen tomorrow. Absolutely. Right

land. There's just some realities of that. As we are working to that, what are the necessary projects until that?

[01:34:41] Correct. we have a very robust list of projects in our five-year capital plan already, and we need to think very carefully about which ones we might bump, and because all of them are needed, as someone said, some of the maintenance and improvements in the bathrooms in our high school, in our couple of the elementary schools, they were like the worst, you know, facilities in in the county we we need we need upgrading we need to continue the funding for that we've been trying to put elevate second elevators in multiple

[01:35:18] schools for years so this is a major financial commitment that could delay or bump other projects so that's why we need the long-range planning committee to find the magic solution well and I just want to continue to go back to where start. This is a needs-based plan. We all understand money, like we all, however, like this is what our students and teachers and faculty and community needs and deserves and we need to figure out as a community how we're gonna do this.

[01:35:50] So it's up to all of us, parents, retirees, UVA students who are staying and living here after graduation, like this is what our community needs. I just I just spent time in DC, Falls Church, and Fairfax looking at high schools and elementary schools.

[01:36:09] Our kids deserve those schools, and we need to figure out with this community how to make that work. - And included in that conversation, too, would be making sure that the supervisors are aware of this need.

[01:36:25] - Well, yeah, absolutely. I mean, absolutely. Our partners on the Board of Supervisors are over the work of every all the needs in this community, including and one of the most important thing is the education of our future taxpayers.

[01:36:46] And so we need to make sure that they understand that and they understand the priority that that holds. Right. Anyone have anything else to add?

[01:37:01] Do you have what you need? I mean, yeah, thank you. Thank you. I look forward to their report. of work to do by the end of October. Well, I say they, I know you're all involved in that, so thank you in advance for all the work. With that we have Dr. McLaughlin talking to us about SOL performance review. Good evening board members. Pat McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Planning,

[01:37:38] and I am pleased to be here tonight to talk you through our SOL performance review. Tonight we're going to look at our performance over the past three years. All of the data that you see tonight comes from the Virginia School Quality Profiles. Within the presentation there's a link to the School Quality Profiles. Those were just updated about two or three weeks ago with our data from the 24-25 school year. We're going to focus tonight on division results for math, reading, science, and chronic absenteeism. Those are the areas that under both our previous and our current accreditation system impact us the most when we're talking about performance. So

[01:38:18] we'll look at those four areas for the division. Individual school results, if you're interested in those, can be found on the school quality profile site. SOL results under the assessment tab and chronic absenteeism under the enrollment tab. In the final piece, you may recall several months ago we came and talked to you about the new performance framework that is being established in the state of Virginia for this school year. That data is scheduled to be released by the end of September and I will be back in our

October board meeting to give you an update on that where we'll look at individual schools and where they landed

[01:38:52] on the new performance framework. So starting with reading, these graphs one of the things that one of the reasons that we wait to use the official state data for this is because the school quality profiles give us a comparison to other school districts in the state of Virginia and other students in the state of Virginia so when we look at our overall performance for reading our blue bars here are the performance of our students in the school division and the orange bars are the comparison to the state since 2022 2023 our reading scores

[01:39:26] have been primarily flat they've gone up one point since since 22 23 and we've stayed one point above the state average for a score of 75 this year compared to the state's 74. When we look at this data we also look at performance of some of our individual membership groups. In particular we look at black students, economically disadvantaged students, our English learners, our Hispanic students, and our students with disabilities. Those student membership groups are traditionally where we see our achievement gaps. And just to narrow the

[01:40:03] focus a little bit on this slide. I know it's kind of busy. The bars on the left, on the far left, are all of our students aggregated for reading. So that blue bar is our 74% for all of our students from 2022. The red is 75% in 2023-24. And the yellow is the 75% in the 24-25 school year.

[01:40:26] Isolating one group here are black students. So we can see that that group, you can see, has not improved their performance over the past three years. In fact, they have gone down by one point. From 48, they did see a little bit of a bump two years ago, but then went back down to 47.

[01:40:43] So they've lost a point over the last three years. When we expand that back, and we look at our other membership groups that traditionally have achievement gaps, our economically disadvantaged students have increased one point in that three-year period. Our English learners have had a significant improvement from 24 to 37.

[01:41:01] Our Hispanic students have gone up by one point from 50 to 51, and our students with disabilities have gone up two points from 45 to 47. This is where you want to see a nice stair step, and for our reading scores, we're not seeing that for the last three years in terms of improvement.

[01:41:20] The other way that we look at our data is by our achievement gaps. How much difference is there between our membership groups and our overall results. And again, I'll isolate that for you here in our reading scores.

[01:41:37] That when we look at our all students' bars over on the far left are always going to be zero. That's the baseline. Any groups that are underperforming that threshold will have bars that go below that line. Any groups that are overperforming that threshold will have bars that are above that line.

[01:41:54] For our black students, when we look at this group in particular, their gap has widened over the past three years. They've gone from a 26-point achievement gap to a 28-point achievement gap. We see that the same holds true for many of our groups if they're either flat or maybe slightly increased.

[01:42:15] Economically disadvantaged has remained exactly the same for the last three years. Our Hispanic students has remained the same over the course of three years. English learners has seen a significant lowering of their achievement gap and our students with disabilities has decreased by just

one point. Moving on to math, here we see a little bit better improvement for the division over the past three years. We've gone from 69 percent to 72 percent to 74 percent over the past three years. We went from being even with the state of Virginia to to

[01:42:50] exceeding the state of Virginia by by two points. When we look at that for our membership groups this is an area where we do start to see those stair steps come in with some increasing performance for for many of our groups. Black students went from 42 to 47 percent over that time period, economically disadvantaged from 43 to 50, English learners from 33 to 45, Hispanic students from 48 to 52 and students with disabilities from 41 to 47.

[01:43:23] And while that progress is something to be lauded, we still have much lower scores for those students than where we want them to be. To close achievement gaps, though, those groups need to improve at higher rates than our overall rate of improvement.

[01:43:44] And when we look at our achievement gaps in math, we don't see that same shift that's there. Because our division scores have risen as a division over the last three years, the scores of many of our membership groups have risen pretty proportionally.

[01:43:59] And so for our black students, you still see, even though they're performing better, you still see a 27-point achievement gap. A little bit smaller for our economically disadvantaged students from 26 to 24. English learners have moved from 36 to 29. has grown by one point and students with disabilities has shrunk, has decreased by one point.

[01:44:22] And then our final academic area that we'll look at is science. Our science scores have been improving over the last three years from 67% to 68 to 70. We were even with the state three years ago and again last year or two years ago and the state improved a little bit more than us last year.

[01:44:42] we're actually one point under the state average for science. Again with science for our membership groups you do see that stair step here. Our black students went from 35% to 43, economically disadvantaged from 39 to 45, English learners from 15 to 35, Hispanic from 39 to 47, and students with disabilities from 39 to 45. And science is one of the areas where you are starting to see a bit of shrinking in the achievement gaps. Black students have gone from a 32-point gap to a 27, economically disadvantaged from 28 to 25, English learners from

[01:45:21] 52 to 35, Hispanic from 28 to 23, and students with disabilities from 28 to 25. A final piece of data that I'll share with you tonight is our chronic absenteeism data. We all know that since the pandemic, chronic absenteeism has been a nationwide problem, and Albemarle County is no exception but I am pleased to say that over the past three years we have seen some what I think are some significant decreases in our chronic absenteeism

[01:45:52] moving from 17.7% three years ago to 11.8% last year. Some additional highlights that I want to share with you are some real success stories that we have throughout the division. One is at Brownsville Elementary School. For many years I personally felt that Brownsville has been a little bit underachieving in their SOL results and when you look at their that top left box is on their reading performance over the past three years the I guess that's kind of a light gray is the Brownsville numbers the middle bar is the Albemarle school division and orange bar on the right is the state Brownsville has improved their

[01:46:31] reading performance they actually took a little bit of a dip two years ago down to 84% they're back up to 94 which is one of the highest rates I think they've ever seen their math performance has

improved steadily over the last three years from 78 to 95 percent in fact some of their grade levels I think it was either their fourth or fifth grade had a 99 percent pass rate on the math test and science has gone from 83 took a dip down to 76 and then bumped back up to 91 percent and so that is the type of achievement I think we would expect to see from Brownsville elementary school and and I think Jim Kiner's done a great of getting them there. Monticello High School is another school that I'd like to

[01:47:11] point out. Three years ago they were really struggling with their achievement in Algebra I. That has been kind of traditionally at our high schools one of our lower performing areas for mathematics. Beth Costa and her team put some put some increased focus on the Algebra I program at Monticello and two years ago they came from 68% up to 84 and unfortunately one of the things we tend to do in education is think it's a fluke right oh that really couldn't be right it just must have been an easier test that year something like that but that was sustained this year when when her results came in and actually she even

[01:47:48] got better so they were they were far below both the division and the state level of performance and now are are beating the division averages and and at same level of the state. Special education is an area that we that we continually have a focus on and we know that our special education numbers are are not where we want them but one thing that I did want to point out is that this year for the first time that I can remember in reading in math and in science we are higher than the state average for our special education students. You can see that this is not a problem that is that is specific to

[01:48:27] Albemarle County when you see the state averages where they are but for many years we were we were below in one or more sometimes all three of those categories so special education I think is moving in the right direction and then one final piece I'll share with you is a couple of success stories around chronic absenteeism these are data points from Mountain View Elementary School those are the three pie charts on the top of this slide and from Journey Middle School, the three on the bottom. Mountain View went from over a 20% rate of chronic absenteeism three years ago to 16% last year to 8% this year, 8.4%. Basically cut their

[01:49:06] chronic absenteeism in half from the year before. Journey went from 22.3 three years ago to 14.6 to 9.8 this year. Both Seth Kennard and Ashby Johnson put significant resources an effort into this chronic absenteeism program they they put a lot of time into after-school programming tutoring programming where kids who were chronically absent could get a chance to buy back some of their time for that and and their results i think are really starting to pay off one of the final pieces that i wanted to share with you tonight that's not directly related to

[01:49:43] our to our sol results but i think is is certainly connected is a quick update on our instructional practices audit. We know one of the reasons that we focus on our achievement gaps is because we know they've been persistent for quite some time. And it's important to us. So much so that three years ago we had the Bellwether Corporation come in and do an instructional practices audit for us. That group landed with five recommendations for us. Those five recommendations had 19 separate projects that they recommended we work on. And as we started to put those

[01:50:19] projects together they had a total of 92 separate components and I just wanted to give you a quick update that over the last three years 89 of those 92 project components have been complete we're 97 complete percent complete with with the bellwether suggestions that they made to us I remember three years ago dr. Haas sitting up here and saying we are going to do 100% of of the recommendations that that

came through and we're close to that there is just of those three one One is actually a repeat, finishing the processing of creating common instructional tasks.

[01:50:53] That was scheduled to be complete by the end of the 26-27 school year. So we are still on track with that project, and that is actually a component of two separate projects. So we counted that one twice. And the other was to conduct an evaluation of our high-intensity tutoring program, which turned into all-in Virginia tutoring, and decide whether to stop, continue, or to scale that.

[01:51:15] We were originally scheduled to complete that by spring 2025, and we revised that completion date to this spring because of some of the funding issues that are there and determining whether that's something that we think should continue for us. So that is kind of our current state of both where we landed with our SOL results, where we are with the bellwether project, and I'll be back in October to talk through the performance framework a little bit more and then we'll be back again in November with the state of the division report to dig into some other elements of the school system and where we're performing well and where we need some improvement and I'll

[01:51:54] be happy to take any questions. What is the high-intensity tutoring program more specifically? So that's what we call all-in tutoring. You may remember that the state and the VDOE proposed an all-in tutoring program to improve student scores so that looks different a little bit at many schools it's got to be it's got some parameters in it it's got to be outside of class time generally our schools do it as before after-school tutoring it's got to have certified teachers who who work with students on there and and when you see things like

[01:52:34] our intercession work that has taken place over the past couple years during our winter break during our spring break some of that is the result of some all in tutoring funding that we've had. - Does any of that include summer school? - Summer school, I believe, is funded, yes.

[01:52:51] I'll defer to Dr. Hayes on that one. - We actually have our expert, Mr. Dahmer, is here, so he may be able to speak too, 'cause there's some different components in terms of the funding. - There's always strands of funding that you weave together.

[01:53:18] - I'm Craig Dahmer, I'm the executive director of Curriculum Assessment and Instruction. In short, summer school is generally not funded with all in we did supplement summer school the last few years a little bit in order to decrease class sizes and to make sure that we ran the algebra bridge program at all five middle schools so that was the small piece of all-in funding we used for summer school okay I have a question on the economically disadvantaged what is the overlap of black and browns like what percentage of black

[01:53:51] and brown students fall into that bucket as well and is there is it broken out at all so so it's generally we that is one of the most private pieces of information that exists in the division because of some federal regulations around it so we generally do not know the the breakout of our economically disadvantaged numbers but what I would say is we generally see quite a bit of overlap between some of our students of color some of our students with disabilities and some are economically disadvantaged students in fact so much so that they used to call that a separate group they used to call it gap group one in a previous previous

[01:54:30] iteration of accreditation so I think there is significant overlap between those groups it's concerning our lack of progress in our our black and brown students and even going backwards and we

spent all this money on the bellwether report and it feels like we're not getting anywhere at what point do we say maybe the things we're trying aren't working and I think as a board as we go into budget and we're looking at where money is being spent I think it's it behooves us to look at what is actually working and what's not and where money

[01:55:07] needs to be allocated to get these kids into a better position and and something I'm interested in is how much of it is related to not necessarily instruction although obviously that's the most important but coming to school fed and and you know, free and reduced lunches, early childhood intervention and preschool, so these kids are coming to kindergarten ready to learn and not so far behind. All of that plays into it, and I think that that is a much bigger issue that we need to look at, but I don't think we can stand

[01:55:43] another year of sitting up here and saying that we've made zero progress in this area. It feels like we're failing so I would just to be clear I would I would not characterize our progress as zero progress I think our black students for over the past three years in math and in science are showing gains in from where they are in reading we did not see that over the last three years but to characterize it as zero progress I'm not sure is quite fair thank you I appreciate the clarification thank you yeah and to add to that and you may have already answered as she asked you about the socioeconomic part, I was wondering also about the absenteeism.

[01:56:22] Is that also covered by private, federal? 'Cause there's no breakdown as to the-- - As to who the chronically absent students are. Yes, we can break that down into different membership groups. We can do that on the school quality profile site.

[01:56:40] When you look at any of the school's chronic absenteeism, you should be able to see that by the different membership groups as well and see what we've traditionally seen in the past as chronic absenteeism is, again, disproportionate to some of our students of color and our students with disabilities and our economically disadvantaged students.

[01:57:00] - Have we seen an improvement in, I feel like that's something we have talked about as an improvement in chronic absenteeism over the last couple of years? - Yes, that's what we saw right here. - Perfect, thank you, okay. - Can you talk a little bit about how, kind of now we have the numbers and we see kind of, let's focus on those places that did well, like as we look at Brownsville and reading, as we look at Mountain View and Journey on Chronic Absenteeism, talk to me about how you kind of look at the data, that's all right, there's the data, dig into what they did from a leadership and a teacher level,

[01:57:39] and then how do you kind of take those micro learnings and say, okay, how do we then share them with others? Now, some of them may work in other schools, some of them may not, but just how do you kind of dig into the data, a data dialogue to say look at these places that made some surprising progress how do we you know are they transferable to other places and how do we continue to have that learning happen across our principles yeah that's right and so one of the um uh pieces that i would point to is our science curriculum uh if you remember uh we came to the board three years ago and we said there's been some pretty significant changes to the way the state is going to assess science and to our

[01:58:18] science curriculum we adopted five ponds a science curriculum three years ago and and I think just now we are starting to see the results of that science curriculum which is more hands-on more project-based before our students the the assessment has become much more challenging for kids if we remember from our presentation a few years ago it used to be very much rote memorization and kids could almost figure out the test without knowing the science and now they really have to have an

understanding of the scientific principles and so the encouragement that I see is that last year we adopted HMH and I can tell you

[01:58:55] from the reports I'm hearing from the field last year at this time there was a lot of stress I think you all were hearing that there was a lot of concern about how are we going to do this we've got letters training on top of that this year we've hit the ground running with with HMH we're we're in the process of adopting a new math curriculum right now we're seeing some similar bumps in the road with that but I think our reading scores are really poised to to take off in a smaller sense when you talk about how do we look at the schools that are that are really moving this work forward I think it comes down to something we

[01:59:31] refer to as data-driven instruction when I look at at Brownsville's work that Jim Kiner did out there I know that he really revamped his professional learning community structure with with his teachers and and made sure those professional learning communities were focusing on what their assessments were telling them and what they could do because of it that's work we're doing with all of our principals we actually just kicked off yesterday we're training all of our principals and assistant principals in data-driven instruction and in fact it's some of our schools that have our most significant challenges Woodbrook Greer Mountain View those principals have been trained last year in

[02:00:10] that and are already implementing some new structures that I think are going to pay some big dividends for them. The other thing I'd be interested in, sorry, is because I know there's a group of like districts that I think over the last two years leadership has been meeting with, listening to, seeing different, like, kind of comparing to, I'd be curious as part of that analysis just to see kind of where they are in schools again and so like again for continuous learning at the cabinet leadership level where are they making progress or the places they're making progress we're making progress again to

[02:00:46] continue that conversation yeah I was gonna add on to that I saw this week that Stanton publicized jumping at 70 spots or something in SOLs over 70 years I'm just curious like you know it would be interesting to see like what other people are doing versus what we're doing what what's working what's not working if there's things that we can implement especially going into budget season that we would could consider as we're looking at funding one of the things I'll just add is in addition to the data-driven instruction we've tried to create opportunities for principals to be able to share with their colleagues some of the things that they were doing that they were doing in their buildings

[02:01:25] to share best practice i think at the back to school kind of leadership kickoff we had some principals come up and highlight some of the things they did around algebra one around chronic absenteeism so that they can start to maybe share some of those practices with different buildings and then also we've also began partnering with districts just using this data districts that are starting to close achievement gaps in special education and math and finding out what it is that they are doing how they're implementing certain programs and strategies and then bringing those things to to Albemarle so some of those things are happening in a final piece I

[02:02:02] would I would add on to that is a structure we started on a smaller scale last year what we call 90-day planning where we had our transformation schools come in at the end of every quarter for a three-hour workshop just to dig into their data with all of our curriculum coordinators our intervention personnel to set two to four targets about what they felt was the most important work for them to be doing

right now with this our previous structures were really year-long school improvement plans and they often didn't get updated based on the current needs of the school this year we're expanding that out the 90 day

[02:02:39] planning process to all of our schools so beginning in October they'll come in for those workshops dig into their data see where their kids are and what standards they need to improve on and get and get a strong focus on that moving forward and I'm sure if you'd ever like to hear any more more about any of those things uh we would be happy to to come and um and take a deeper dive with the board i think another thing that's important and i forget who up here just mentioned about the um pre-lunches and some of the other um basic life things that come in place that um i'm speaking primarily for

[02:03:14] woodbrook now um i was there recently and i know that alder skate church i believe has reached out to them and trying to do some creative things to help improve some of the reading scores and some different things and they now have you know new administration and so there's a lot going on I think you spoke I don't know if it was the last school board meeting or a couple school board meetings back where there were some things that the district was going to try to do to help improve the scores of our black youth can you speak on what may be taking place as it relates to that or is there any I could speak a bit to to what we're doing Woodbrook Woodbrook

[02:03:54] Woodbrook is an outlier. There's no doubt about that. When you look at the scores of Woodbrook compared to our other schools, it stands apart from the district. I think we'll see that when our performance framework results come out as well. So one of the things that we're doing this year is we had a team that just met for the second time this morning of about 20-plus central staff who are putting some intensive support measures in place at Woodbrooke to support that team. We've got our key curriculum coordinators, our intervention coordinators, our student support services, our special education services, spending a lot of time

[02:04:33] in that school and talking to Christy Isaiah, the principal, and to our group about what they're seeing and helping us, again, get focused on a bi-weekly basis about what we need to be uh what we need to be working on right now to uh to get some improvements uh at woodbrook yeah i was looking at the ratio of students to teachers there and and one thing that um i discovered while i was there last week was that i guess a few years ago there was possible mention of some trailers being added um and so we'll have to continue to look i don't know if anyone here recalls that

[02:05:10] discussion i was not here at that time i don't recall a discussion on we recently redistricted students from Woodbrook due to capacity concerns to Agner so that that was the solution there. I'll get back to you on that one. Thank you. Ms. Philbin mentioned early childhood education as one of these kind of other things to look at right the more you can close an achievement gap before kids enter kindergarten the better we are long term and I know there's an opportunity now that the state finally has early childhood data with United Way and Ready

[02:05:47] Regions and I don't know where we are in the process of getting an MAU so that could kind of take that that data link it to our data to begin to look you know to see is that a piece of what is supporting schools like Brownsville and which I think will help us think about okay how do we also like you know we want to take out everything how do we also support the community in additional early childhood or partner with early childhood so I don't know where they are about working on an MOU but just met with last week I believe with our

[02:06:23] community partners to begin having those discussions to determine because with some of the changes there's some staffing that we have to discuss and so being the biggest financial partner yes in this process we are beginning those conversations to make sure that there's a clear clear understanding between the districts involved well in two things one that I mean but there's also an MOU around just data sharing from data that is in existence from ReadyRegions and United Way.

[02:06:52] And so, I know those are data agreements, it's always hard to get different groups together, but I think it would be helpful to see some of that data. And I think then as we look into our SOL data, it's just another input to begin to think about what's working.

[02:07:09] - The last thing I'll add, and I know I'm hearing a lot about redistricting, that Woodbrook has I believe eight or nine apartment complexes that our students are sent to Woodbrook you know as compared to Agner and so that in itself presents a lot of different challenges as well but you know there's a lot of work to be done yeah I think it's important that individuals are aware

[02:07:42] of that anything else I would just add I'm in the back of today but I would add that i did anecdotally just have a conversation with akisha craven how she was one of the bellwether consultants that joined us i think we what did we spend about eighty thousand dollars on the bellwether study something in that ballpark um and they a couple times since then they've asked us for recommendations to work with other other districts so i did have a chance to follow

[02:08:16] up with her she was very pleased that we had accomplished 97% of their recommendations and when I shared with her our academic results she was also very pleased with that she said you've done heavy lifting as a school system and I agree with her that we should be enormously proud of our teachers our education support specialists all of our staff in the schools they are moving the data. Albemarle County Public Schools has experienced significant demographic shifts over the last 20 years. Our percentage of free reduced lunch students

[02:08:53] has climbed dramatically more than 50 percent. Our diversity, the diversity of our system and the international nature of our school system has is an enormous change for our community. We also will always have a barbell effect of University of Virginia because when you compare all students at university with University of Virginia in the mix you are talking about a community where roughly 100% of the of that community around the university have at least a bachelor's degree in Albemarle County 70% of adults have at least a bachelor's

[02:09:29] degree there's two places in the county that exceed that the other one is Silicon or in America that exceed that number of 70% that's Albemarle County and silicon valley so in one sense you've got a community around uva that's on one extreme the farthest extreme probably that you could possibly have and then you've got as leslie mentioned a school fed with nine apartment complexes where people need extra support to make ends meet so i think we're always going to see that gap our job is to keep up and not give

[02:10:09] up to not just someday say well we don't like the data so we're going to stop looking at it that it's not the things that we're doing are not giving us quick enough progress so let's jump to something else and move away from what we know are true tried and true practices there is something called the flywheel effect you're starting to see it you when you begin pumping a flywheel it's very gradual and slow to begin with and frankly it can even go backwards on you if you don't get your timing right right now you're starting to see that flywheel moving it's

[02:10:43] taking a lot of effort and these conversations are tough and believe me i'd much rather be talking about the rapid success that we're seeing however that is what you will see but it requires persistence excellent persistence you to stay the course put our faith in what we were provided in terms of recommendations from the bellwether study that's why i wanted an outside organization to do it not just keep listening to ourselves and we will see the progress that we want to see it may not come as fast as we want it but we will see it many of you on the board will see it during your

[02:11:22] tenure that you're on the board and so i want to encourage you to stay the course if if you had if you could see these numbers five years ago or three years ago coming out of the pandemic you might have said well the way things are right now i'm not sure we'll be able to get back to where to where we want to be but we will and you'll you'll keep seeing the improvement and we need to keep doing the heavy lifting but i would say to all of our school community especially the the the day-to-day classroom teachers this this is great progress that you're making heavy lifting

[02:11:57] keep lifting we're here to support you and i really want to thank dr mclaughlin in particular dr hayes also um dr kaiser for the for that three-pronged effort of building community building our academic excellence and making sure we have accountability for the results that we're expecting to see i want to couch that with the governor said after all the tests were giving that they were 30 to 40 percent harder than last year that's the first time i heard that was in that press release so maybe it's true maybe it's not it wouldn't be the first time

[02:12:32] that we've had changes and maybe it's a good explanation for why the whole state stayed flat who knows i also know that they are going to raise our cut scores next year for the entire state so then begins to bring into question you know what are these tests for ultimately they're mostly to make public schools look bad in comparison to private schools that don't have measures like these but we have to have these kinds of tests we must have standardized assessments so that we can help be held accountable so that we can benchmark against other districts i want to always say

[02:13:09] though that it's about what we take away from them and the improvements that we want to make and be careful not to weaponize schools like woodbrook and hold up those students as failures because they're not failures they're a success story we have a 93 plus percent graduation rate those students are in that graduation rate they may not pass the first sol take test that they take they may not pass the second one that they take but eventually they're gonna pass that test and they're gonna graduate and they're gonna meet the attendance requirements that we have so oftentimes we hold up a school and we think we're championing it but what we're doing is pointing out that in some

[02:13:48] respects the students and staff there are failures they're an enormous success success story for what they're accomplishing and we need to keep supporting them and keep putting resources behind them and not give up on them. Thank you, Dr. McLaughlin. Just one last thing, if I may. So I can't recall if you said you all met today or yesterday or 20 plus. Could you invite me to the next meeting? Thank you.

[02:14:13] That's it. I would just like to not echo, but along the lines of what Dr. Haas just said, I'm heartened by the progress as, I mean, we all want everyone to skyrocket to 80% or 100% and see that gap, the gap shrinking. We're generally going in the same, in the right direction. Bellwether was an important evaluation of our instructional methods in reading and math. We have a new reading curriculum, a new math

[02:14:49] curriculum, we have a new science curriculum, and we have an energized teaching staff that you know once you know everyone wants to succeed so I am I would support staying the course and let's see how these things work out I mean our reading program just started last year I would like to see but I do want to see some movement by you know when these kids hit you know sixth grade fifth grade I do want to see that but let's pedal to the metal and I would

[02:15:26] like these kids that are currently Woodbrook to enroll in a brand new high school in the northern feeder pattern. We hear you, Ms. Osborne. Are there any more questions? Thank you, Mr. McLaughlin. And we look forward to the reports in October and November. Other business? I have a quick question. During the public comments, one of the students from Abmal spoke about the problems that was going on with the security.

[02:16:01] Have those things been sort of alleviated? They've definitely gotten better as the week has progressed. But I remember at the beginning, students were waiting in line for anywhere between 20 minutes to an hour just in the line.

[02:16:19] And I couldn't hear everything that she was saying that sort of brought tears to that one person. But all those things-- Amy? I think one of the things mentioned was that at Umwell, we have a policy where we have smart passes restrooms and there are like no fly times and I think that causes a lot of stress to students especially when there are 2,000 students limited restrooms and you have to wait in line for those passes and then they get detention. I will add that I have heard of students being patted down

[02:16:57] every single day I heard of another female student who had to shake her bra out in front of other people so it's not going super smoothly so i just i i'm glad i'm happy to hear that it's improving um but those are definitely concerning things to be hearing from students um and to have those students up here that upset um is is not great i would agree i mean i think we need to do a better job with implementation training of the staff what is appropriate what is inappropriate and

[02:17:34] And training of the students too, but I don't want to have tearful students coming at the next meeting if at all possible. And our school shouldn't feel like a military zone. Right, right. We want to keep, when properly implemented, these devices can add significantly to the safety in the schools.

[02:17:57] And so how do we make these devices work better? I did want to say, Ms. Wong, I didn't ask you what your opinion was on the high school discussion and if you have a brief comment I would love to hear it I agree that we should have a new high school I think one thing that has been a common experience for many students at HS is that we have trailers behind our school and those often aren't the best like environment for learning my colleagues

[02:18:35] know I've talked about that for some time but thank you anyone else have anything? Dr. Haas? Dr. John Hayes? Well, if there is no more business, this meeting is adjourned. Thank all of you.



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