



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, October 9, 2025

Date Thursday, October 9, 2025
Place Albemarle County Public Schools / School Board meeting, Virginia
Length 3h 11m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdY-shWnLtY>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-14. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:01:14] Good evening, everyone. This meeting of the Albemarle County School Board is now back in session. Do we have a motion, Ms. Lee, from closed session? We do, Chair Acuff. I move that the board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

[00:01:40] Do we have a second? Second. Motion made by Ms. Lee, seconded by Mr. Page. Could I have a roll call vote? Ms. Osborne? Yes. Mr. Page?

[00:01:56] Yes. Ms. Pryor? Yes. Ms. Spillman? Yes. Ms. Lee? Yes. Dr. Berlin? Yes. Chair Eco? Yes. So moved. Motion passes. Do we have a motion coming out of closed session? Yes. I move that we approve candidate A for the chief communications officer position.

[00:02:14] Do we have a second? Second. motion made by Ms. Osborne seconded by Ms. Lee all those in favor aye aye opposed motion passes next let's have roll call just so everyone knows who everyone is why don't we start with Dr. McLaughlin good evening everyone Pat McLaughlin assistant superintendent Leighton Cox community lab school Judy Lee Rivanna district Allison Spillman at-large representative Graham Paige Miller district Kate Jacob chair and Jack Jewett district Rebecca Berlin Whitehall district Ellen

[00:02:52] Osborne Scottsville district good evening Leslie Pryor Ryo district Matthew Hawes superintendent Josiah Black school division council Christine Christine Thompson clerk of the board Tanisha Thompson coordinator of office operations thank you and the folks and over here Dan Redding chief HR officer Chandra Hayes assistant superintendent thank you all next we have the Pledge of

[00:03:27] Allegiance let's stand those who can please stand in a moment we'll have a moment of silence but I would urge everyone who can get a seat to get out of the aisles and take a seat we don't want to violate fire code there are

[00:04:06] seats in the front mark reserved I do not believe we need to keep them as reserved so please take those seats thank you miss dr. Berlin now we will have a moment of silence. Tonight we pause to honor the memory of Ashley and Stephen Williams who tragically lost their lives in a house fire in Keswick earlier this week. Our hearts are with their daughters Emma and Lily. Emma is a third grader at Stone Robinson Elementary School and Lily is just three years old. We extend our deepest condolences to their family, friends and

[00:04:42] entire stone robinson community as they navigate this unimaginable loss please join me in a moment

[00:04:49] of silent silence in support of these children and in remembrance of their parents thank you

[00:05:23] now we have approval of the agenda i move to approve tonight's agenda second motion made by Dr. Berlin, seconded by Ms. Lee. All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? Motion passes. Next item is announcements and the announcements are going to be a little longer than they are usually because of the issues that we are addressing tonight. First Dr. Haas, no I'm making a mistake already.

[00:05:55] First I'd like to introduce again our student school board representative Layton Cox. This is his first night as student representative with this board and he has a brief statement and make sure you pull your mic down thank you miss acuff hello members of the school board i'm happy to join you today school board members my name is leighton cox representing community lab school and i'd like to take this opportunity to share a few things that my fellow students and i have identified as cls for your consideration i want to bring attention to the inconsistent room temperatures in classrooms some are too hot others are too cold it is affecting comfort focus and

[00:06:34] learning i ask that the board look into possible solutions and ensure a more consistent comfortable environment for students and staff i'd like to point out that there are very few spaces outside of our classrooms for students to eat lunch or work because of our school because our school does not have a cafeteria or large gathering space other than the small gym but it does not have bleachers or any other seating because of the limited room many of us don't have a quiet or comfortable space to go when working or simply eating lunch I know the school board has approved a renovation plan so my fellow students and I request you continue to advocate for the renovation at community

[00:07:11] lab school I'd like to point out excuse me lastly I'd like to suggest the idea of mental monthly mental health days and wellness days for students with the stress of school activities and personal life, many students feel overwhelmed. A regular day to reset could really help with mental well-being and overall performance. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Cox. We next have statements by Dr.

[00:07:42] Haas, Dr. Berlin, myself, and then Ms. Spillman. Dr. Haas. Thanks Dr. Acuff and welcome aboard Mr. Cox. Thank you. So I'm going to just provide a timeline on on the issue that's very prevalent

tonight around the Turning Point USA guest speaker, and it's just the background on it.

[00:08:05] So on September 25th, 2025, principal, Western Elmaw High School principal, Jennifer Sublett received a flyer from the student president of Turning Point USA Club at Western Elmaw High School, announcing that the club wished to host Ms. Kimberly Cobb as a guest speaker on the topic of two genders, one truth.

[00:08:27] Ms. Sublette contacted school board legal counsel and me to discuss whether the event could occur during the lunch period. I advised her that the event should be moved to after school out of concern that it might spill over into the instructional time and disrupt the remainder of the school day.

[00:08:43] At that time, I did not ask whether the club had previously hosted guest speakers during lunch without incident, and the decision was made without that information. The next day, September 26, the Founding Freedoms Law Center sent a letter to Albemarle County Public Schools asserting that the decision to restrict the event to after school hours constituted viewpoint discrimination.

[00:09:08] The letter referenced the Equal Access Act and constitutional law and requested written confirmation by October 3rd that the club could host a speaker during lunch. The Equal Access Act is a federal law enacted in 1984 that requires public secondary schools to provide equal access to all student groups when they allow any student group to meet on school premises during non-instructional time, regardless of the religious, political, or philosophical content of their speech.

[00:09:43] So on September 30th, after further consultation with Mr. Black, legal counsel, and his sublet, I reviewed the facts in our past practices related to lunchtime speakers. We found that not only had other student clubs hosted lunchtime speakers without incident, but the Turning Point USA Club itself had also done so previously without disruption.

[00:10:09] Acting under my advisement, Ms. Sublett determined the Turning Point USA Club will host this presentation during lunchtime, as it had before and as other clubs have been doing. provided an update to the school board noting that the club's next meeting was scheduled for October 22nd and that the speaking event was tentatively planned for early November. October 1st we sent out a draft community message and it was prepared to clarify that student clubs are permitted to invite guest speakers and that the WAHS clubs have previously hosted speakers during lunch. The

[00:10:47] principal's determination that the TP USA Club may proceed during the lunch period was made in consultation with school board counsel mr. black and me the event date has not yet been set we did recently respond to several media requests so there's probably a lot of media out there about this um and you can look at that they our responses reference uh our own policy igda which references student organizations it provides equal access for student groups during non-instructional time and reaffirmed that our decision was consistent with

[00:11:23] constitutional law and long-standing division practice. I also want to clarify that there was there was no and there has not been a reversal of Al Maul's position. After reviewing the facts in consultation with legal counsel and me, the principal approved the event for the lunch period subject to expectations of order and respect. The rationale for permitting the guest speaker is that under constitutional law, public schools must grant student organizations equal access to meet during non-instructional time and to invite guest speakers, provided the events do not materially or substantially

[00:12:02] disrupt instruction or infringe on the rights of others. Once any student organization has been permitted to invite guest speakers, all student organizations must be afforded the same opportunity under the Equal Access Act. and finally our own policy teaching about controversial issues states the school board welcomes the study of controversial issues and encourages students to examine multiple sides of such issues critically intelligently and with respect for the opinions of others so consistent with this policy and with our practice of equal access the Turning Point USA clubs request met the

[00:12:42] criteria for approval the event will take place during non instructional time and the principal has established clear expectations for respect and orderly conduct. In anticipation of the event, our school safety services department will coordinate with Ms. Sublette and her administrative team to ensure that our protocols are in place for heightened security.

[00:13:04] Additionally, by holding the presentation during the lunch period rather than after school, we can restrict attendance by outside visitors, which we would not have been able to do as easily after school, further enhancing student and staff safety.

[00:13:21] Thank you, Dr. Acuff. - Thank you, Dr. Haas. There remain a few. Please refrain from clapping, hooting, making comments. Disrupting a public meeting is a violation of Virginia Code.

[00:13:38] And we don't really wanna go there. I think we're all very interested in this topic. There are a few seats for those who are standing up here. And if anybody who has an empty seat next to them can sort of hold their hand up, then some of the guests can come in and sit down.

[00:13:56] Thank you. - Mr. Vaynam, is the upper loft open? It is not open, okay. - No, no, for security, no. - If everyone could raise their hand one more time, I see a few empty seats right over here.

[00:14:12] - Thank you. - You are standing, before I continue, I'm gonna ask for you to take a seat. I see empty seats.

[00:14:34] - Sir, there's some seats in the front. ask that you sit down, please. Could everybody who's standing, please take a seat. There's a

[00:15:08] couple of empty seats down here toward the front. For the safety of the board and everyone in the audience, I'm going to ask everyone to take their seats, please. Thank you. I see that it's a bit

[00:15:44] of a tight squeeze, but we still have a few seats up here in the front. He has a camera. Thank you.

[00:16:08] Dr. Berlin. Thank you very much, Chair Icoff. Good evening. On behalf of the Albemarle County Public School Board, we want to take a moment before public comment begins to address the concern and emotion surrounding a student-led club at Western Albemarle High School.

[00:16:27] The Turning Point USA Club has received approval to host a guest speaker, Victoria Cobb, during an upcoming regular lunchtime meeting. The topic of her talk, Two Genders, One Truth, is one that many in our community, ourselves included, find deeply troubling and contrary to the values of Oberbart County Public Schools and to our long-standing policy protecting transgender and gender expansive students. Please refrain from making

[00:17:03] audible comments or you will be asked to leave the auditorium. Thank you. Thank you. We want to be clear permitting this club to meet does not mean the school board or the division endorses the speaker's message or viewpoint. Policy IGDA, interscholastic extracurricular activities, which govern

student organizations and the right to meet during non-instructional time, ensures that access cannot be denied based on the content of a group's speech.

[00:17:39] Upholding that policy and the constitutional rights behind it sometimes requires allowing speech that we strongly disagree with. At the same time, policy JBA, treatment of transgender and gender expansive students, which affirms protections for transgender and gender expansive students, reflects our unwavering commitment to ensuring that every student in Albemarle County Public Schools feel safe, seen, and supported for who they are. Our division has

[00:18:19] a long and consistent history of standing up for these protections, including amending our non-discrimination policy years ago to include gender identity and adopting a standalone policy in 2021.

[00:18:35] Today we remain steadfast in our belief that no student should ever feel less than fully accepted in our schools. While the board disagrees with the message of this particular speaker, our disagreement is not directed toward the student who invited her or those students who wish to attend.

[00:18:57] We recognize and respect students' rights to form clubs, invite speakers, and engage in dialogue, rights that are fundamental to learning in a democratic society. The decision to hold the meeting during the club's regular lunch period ensures that the event takes place in a supervised, structured setting.

[00:19:21] All standard safety and supervision measures, including the school's entry screening systems, will be in place. This is a challenging moment for our community. It is clear that many of us hold deeply felt and differing beliefs around this issue, and some of us are even conflicted within ourselves.

[00:19:45] As we drive to uphold both students' rights and the dignity and safety of every student, we remain united as one community. with a shared responsibility to support and educate our students.

[00:20:01] As a school board, we hold both of these truths at once. Respect for individual rights and concern for every student's wellbeing must coexist in our schools. Our students are watching how we engage with one another.

[00:20:22] Let's show them that even when we disagree, we can do so with respect and compassion because that's what our students deserve from us. Thank you very much. - Thank you, Dr. Berlin.

[00:20:40] I too have a brief statement. The school board has received many emails from our community questioning both our continued commitment to transgender policy, as well as our support of the First Amendment free speech rights of students.

[00:20:57] There's been considerable misinformation circulating, and I hope that the statements made today by Dr. Haas, Dr. Berlin, and myself will correct the record. A catalyst for this concern includes both the very existence of Western Albemarle High School's Turning Point Club and their recent invitation of a speaker, Victoria Cobb, to discuss two genders.

[00:21:21] A threshold issue is whether the WA WAAS Turning Point clubs should even be permitted at ACPS? The short answer to that is yes. Note that ACPS has many student clubs, including political clubs.

[00:21:37] The Turning Point Club was launched during last school year, and it has had other speakers, even controversial speakers, with no disruption. Student clubs meet monthly during the lunch period, and no one is required to attend.

[00:21:54] We are prohibited by law from discriminating based on the content or purpose of such clubs. Restricting the establishments of such clubs or their content they have is a question of student free speech.

[00:22:09] And as noted by Dr. Haas and Dr. Berlin, the Supreme Court in 1969 ruled in Tinker versus Des Moines. In that case, students have the right of free speech and expression, and these do not stop at the schoolhouse gate. Students have very wide latitude in their exercise of these rights. Since Tinker, student free speech has been repeatedly affirmed by appellate courts. Neither the school board nor ACPS can constitutionally treat this club differently from how we treat all other

[00:22:44] clubs based on the content of what they discuss. Second, even if we permit such a club some have argued that the invited speaker challenging the existence of transgender students itself is a violation of this school board's transgender policy and it should be blocked again we cannot set aside student free speech rights because we disagree with the content the club holds its sessions in a classroom and no student is need attend although this will not satisfy everyone we must work to balance our support of free speech and the

[00:23:22] protection of our transgender students the vast majority of the emails the school board has received appear to have been spurred by personal social media and press comments by our colleague at-large representative Alison Spillman she like each of it is a duly elected member of this board who speaks only for herself. Only the chair and the vice chair speak for the full board. Ms. Spillman's statements do not necessarily represent the views of any other member of this board. Multiple emails have also

[00:23:58] cited the school board's code of conduct as providing the legal grounds for removing Ms. Spillman from her office. We affirm the code of conduct each January to meet and strive to meet standards but the provisions are aspirational only we cannot control what our colleagues say or the medium on which they say it because seven members of the school board are elected by the community any sanction of its members are made by the voters at its ballot box thank you and now miss Spillman I

[00:24:32] believe you have a I believe you have a statement thank you good evening this has been a difficult week for me for students for families and for our school community I want to take a moment to share what happened and sorry and what I will do going forward last week I did make a Facebook post on my personal and private account I expressed my concerns about a speaker invited to Western Albemarle High School and within hours someone screenshot my post and shared it

[00:25:09] with media outlets and political organizations what followed was a coordinated campaign of harassment and intimidation and it was terrifying I received thousands of messages to my personal work and school board cell phones email accounts and social media accounts full of assaults thank you harassment and statements containing threats against my family including my kids and other students at WAS we had to involve law enforcement and there were so many to go through that we had to get people to help sort through them. To those of you that

[00:25:45] did reach out and offered support, I'm really grateful. I can't read the worst of the worst because they're too obscene, but you need to hear a few of the examples. Good morning, you child grooming demon. You're going to hell for what you've done to your poor child, you disgusting freak. One called me sexually mutilating terrorist scum and perhaps the most chilling of this bunch. You are the kind of people that were burnt at the stake 500 years ago. It seems like a fitting tribunal to reinstate at the moment. And there are thousands more where that

[00:26:25] came from. I did not intend to equate the WASTPUSA member students with the KKK, and I realize that that is how it was interpreted by many. I tell my children all the time that if you hurt someone, Whether you intended to or not, you should always apologize.

[00:26:44] So to the TPUSA students and your families, I am sincerely sorry. And for anyone else that I hurt, I am sincerely sorry. What I did intend to do was raise a crucial question about principles and policy, about where we draw lines regarding outside speakers in our schools.

[00:27:05] If we condone outside speakers coming on campus during school hours, what procedures are in place to vet their credentials, their topics, and the groups they represent? Are there mechanisms to ensure that other school board policies can be followed and upheld?

[00:27:22] And if those policies and procedures allow a speaker whose message invalidates the identity, existence, and dignity of transgender students, shouldn't we reexamine those policies? Turns out there is no clear policy on this subject, a shortcoming that has led to back and forth conflicting messages from the school administration, the school board members like myself, and the central office. During lunch our schools have been turned into open public forums where essentially anyone can come and espouse their views to our children. It turns out that the answer to the question I

[00:27:58] initially posed on Facebook may actually be yes. This is not a theoretical for me. When speakers come into our schools advocating for measures that deny students identities and humanities, that affects my family directly and it affects many many other families in our district it contributes to an environment where lgbtq students who already face dramatically elevated risk of harassment depression and suicide feel even less safe school board members across the country are leaving public service in record numbers due to harassment and threats there are school board and professor watch lists the people

[00:28:37] on these lists have received death threats rape threats racist and anti-semitic harassment some have been physically attacked. One professor received emails saying, "I hope you die in front of your family." Another was told, "I'm going to rape you in front of your children." These aren't hypotheticals. These are real educators whose lives have been upended. The campaign to silence me is part of this broader campaign and it's working exactly as intended. To make any educator, any school administrator, any school board member think twice before speaking up for vulnerable students. I do support every student's right to organize, to express their

[00:29:15] political views, and to engage in respectful dialogue about their beliefs. That includes TPUSA members and GSA members, for example. But there's a difference, however, between encouraging student speech and allowing outside non-student speakers into our school building, and that distinction matters.

[00:29:34] School boards and administrators exercise judgment about the content of what's being said and taught in our schools all the time and we should as it's our responsibility being entrusted with the care and education of students I was elected to this position by the voters of Albemarle County and I will not stop advocating for every student in this district especially those who need advocates the most I will speak out in service of my position and face those consequences rather than stay silent while students suffer to the students who might be watching and will hear or will hear about this meeting I am here to serve you all of

[00:30:13] you I will continue doing the job that your parents and community elected me to do and to everyone in this room and watching tonight what happened this week should concern all of us regardless

of your political affiliation I want to have serious conversations about speaker policies about how we protect both student expression and student safety and about how we support each other when we disagree. The question before us now is whether we will continue to be a school district that protects all students, including those who are most vulnerable to discrimination

[00:30:48] and harm. Will we carefully consider whom we invite to speak to our children, and can our elected officials do their jobs without fear of coordinated campaigns designed to destroy them? I will continue serving this community, advocating for comprehensive policies that protect all students, and asking hard questions when necessary, because that's exactly what I promised and was elected to do. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Spillman.

[00:31:20] Thank you, Ms. Spillman. Next, we have our public comment, and Dr. Berlin will be managing that. Thank you, Chair Agoff. Please be respectful. Please. I'm going to ask that everyone be respectful during this public comment, and I'm going to read the rules for the public comment as well as make a statement about that.

[00:31:49] Yes, sir. Public comment guidelines. We welcome public input at our school board meetings. To sign up to speak during public comment period, you can do so in several ways. Online sign up is available from 9:00 a.m. on Monday of the meeting week until 2:00 p.m.

[00:32:08] on the meeting day. By phone, by calling the school board's clerk to sign up on 2:00 p.m. on the meeting day 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.

[00:32:28] Each speaker typically has three minutes to speak, but the chair with board consent may reduce this to two minutes should there be 14 or more speakers. Today, we have about 52 speakers signed out. The maximum number of people or groups that may speak at a meeting is 20.

[00:32:49] In event that there are more than 20 people or groups who wish to speak at a particular meeting, each speaker will be assigned a number and the numbers will be drawn to determine which people or groups will have the opportunity to speak.

[00:33:04] 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 consideration. Speakers should: State their name, address, or voting district. Address comments to the entire school board. Limit comments to school board governance and school board operations. Provide written statements and supporting material to the clerk. The school board will use a timer to track

[00:33:38] each speaker's time. Once the time is up, speakers are asked to wrap up their comments. Tonight the microphone will stop at the two-minute mark. To maintain respect, please refrain from clapping or other audible forms of support. You may raise your hand instead. Debate with the school board is not allowed. The projection system is for staff presentations only. I'm going to read an additional note on today's meeting. As a reminder, our public comment period is governed by the

[00:34:15] guidelines that I just read. Each speaker will have two minutes to speak. All comments should be addressed to the board, not to individuals. Please refrain from applause, shouting, or interruptions so that each speaker can be heard and the meeting can proceed in an orderly manner. And I'm going to

repeat something that I read at the end of my statement. Our students are watching how we engage with one another let's show them that even when we disagree we can do so with respect and compassion

[00:34:51] because that's what our students deserve from us and that's what i will expect during public comment tonight i have just received the first three numbers from superintendent haas so give me a second to look down at my list to see who will be speaking and i will let you know the first speaker is number 47 allison wood from white hall allison if you would come up and just stand until

[00:35:28] i'm ready to start public comment the second speaker is number 17 anna malo from the rio district and our third speaker is number 50 and that is gray tracy from samuel miller i'm going to ask each of them to come up for two minutes while they are speaking um dr haas and others will be pulling the next set of 10 numbers and i will let you know those names as soon as they are

[00:36:07] completed can you move the microphone down there you go hold on one second please until the clerk is ready you may begin good evening board and my community i'm here because i'm outraged by the comments made by one of our school board members comments that were diverse inappropriately and completely unacceptable for someone else elected to be present

[00:36:46] all families in this district when a board member calls a difference of opinion hate speech and compares it to KKK that is not leadership that's emotional outreach and an attempt to silence others let's be honest she is focused on protecting her own child's feelings however when you elected to the school board your responsibility is to every child where is that same energy for all

[00:37:23] of the students who test scores are dropping and whose education is suffering our district is struggling academics are failing behind while personal agenda takes the spot enough is enough we need leaders who focus on improving education not creating division i feel that she cannot represent all students fairly and because of that I'm asking her to step down not out of anger but

[00:37:58] because our children deserves better if we don't start holding her accountable now well when will we thank you for your time thank you when the next speaker comes up please state your name and your voting district my name is Anna and I'm in the Rio district I want to start off my public comments today to the board by stating that I am an out, queer, non-binary, anti-fascist

[00:38:35] community member. I am saying this proudly to let the community know and this board know I will never capitulate to fascists who want people like me and kids in Albemarle County Public Schools to be put in camps for simply existing.

[00:38:52] I'm also saying this because I want the queer and trans kids of Albemarle County County Public Schools to know your elders have your back. I know how hard it can be to exist in this administration, but my queer ancestors threw bricks so I could fight for you. Keep going. I went to a high school in an incredibly conservative town in Virginia where it's frowned upon to be anything but normal. I was lucky to be a chameleon. I fit in with most groups seamlessly, but something always felt different about me, something I couldn't put my finger on. It wasn't until I was approached my senior year by friends wanting to start a gay-straight alliance that I started to

[00:39:32] put the pieces together. The GSA was a place I could feel comfortable to think and speak about queer issues. Ultimately, it's where I realized if I was queer, there was nothing wrong with that. In a town where homophobia was the norm, my GSA made school a space where I could be me.

[00:39:48] I may not have come out until two years after I graduated but I think often about how having that space in high school pushed me to accept my true self I'm gonna cut my speech off here what I've written to say do not capitulate to fascists to this board do not capitulate to Christian nationalism to authoritarianism protect trans kids the most marginalized the most marginalized in our society right now who are the scapegoats Allison we support you I will never be afraid of fascists ever in my entire life and you shouldn't either stand up for what is right and what is good and what you will be judged about

[00:40:25] thank you very much as a reminder you may stand in support you may raise your hands like this in support you may do this in support but I ask that they're not be cheering booing or any other disruption or we will have to stop this meeting you may not and no snapping of your fingers you can put your fingers together like this I am asking for respect I would like to continue with

[00:41:00] these public comments but I will stop if I need to everyone receives the respect and the time that they have been allotted thank you very much please state your name and your district hello I'm Gray Tracy I'm from Samuel Miller district I'm a senior at Western Elmore High School I'm here tonight because I'm deeply troubled not only by the decision to allow Turning Point USA to proceed with their two genders one truth event but by this board's response to negative feedback. The title of the event alone reveals a disconnect between the views

[00:41:34] being espoused and reality. Scientific consensus has for decades held that sex and gender are not inherently coupled and that individuals exist with genders different to the ones assigned to them at birth and indeed with genders outside the conventional binary of man and woman. However, the claims that Turning Point wants to bring to my school aren't just untrue, they're cruel. I am transgender and non-binary. I have first-hand experience with the ignorance and hate that are sadly so prevalent in our society. To be reminded

[00:42:09] daily by the news, by the internet, and now by my school environment that many see people like me deviant, looted, or ungodly is both heart-wrenching and exhausting. In an email statement to students and families, the superintendent, members of this board, wrote that these discussions have left many feeling angry, frustrated, or invalidated, while others feel supported. The former feel invalidated because the board has allowed a guest speaker who intends to come spread bigoted misinformation. The latter feel supported because they're being allowed, they're being given license to demean and discredit their peers based on an

[00:42:48] immutable facet of our identities. Studies show that for transgender youth suicide rates are significantly lower among those who consider their schools gender-affirming spaces. I urge the board please don't let future classes down. Keep our schools safe and supportive for every student to come. Thank you.

[00:43:09] Thank you very much for your comments. I'm going to read the remaining speakers and then I will be calling you up at three at a time. Ashley Nettleton, Scottsville. Travis, or excuse me, Tavis Coffin, Samuel Miller.

[00:43:29] Lely Coffin, Samuel Miller. Cameron Medor Whitehall. And if I mispronounce your name, I apologize, and please just correct me when you come up. Will Woodrow, Samuel Miller. Nancy Muir, Whitehall.

[00:43:48] Sheila Bird, Samuel Miller. Michelle Karpovich, Samuel Miller, Matthew Christenden, Ryo, Lily Kovach, Ryo, Saber Lyon, Samuel Miller, Ike Noth, Ryo, Dana Langley, Jet Jewett, Maria Kronbrush, Ryo, Lauren Baum, Samuel Miller, Kayla Shifflett, Other, Gracie, Tracy, Samuel Miller.

[00:44:28] The next three speakers are Ashley Nettleton, Tavis Coffin, and Lely Coffin. You may begin.

[00:44:45] Ashley Martin, Scottsville. Most of us are here because we care about the well-being of children. For thousands of years, humans have differentiated between children and adults. We have rules and laws that prevent children from doing certain things, either for their protection, lack of knowledge, or experience, or inability to understand the lifelong consequences.

[00:45:03] Children can't get tattoos, they can't get married, they can't vote, they can't drink alcohol smoke cigarettes fight in war or work certain jobs if a teenager wanted to work in a grocery store they can stock the shelves but they cannot use the meat slicer in a deli why because it's too dangerous they could slice off their finger we want to protect children until they become adults that's why many people don't think children should be able to get castrated have double mastectomies take putity blockers or hormone therapy which leads to sterilization making these decisions require the ability to understand the lifelong consequences consequences which children cannot. The best thing to do when making life-altering decisions

[00:45:41] is to discuss them over and over again because what if the decision you make is the wrong one or what if you grow up and you change your mind? You can't undo certain decisions which is why for thousands of years adults didn't make didn't let children make those decisions. When students from a local school invite people to hold the discussion about gender they may disagree with someone else's view but that doesn't mean that they hate the other person it just means they disagree. Not only that, if some of these students are Christian, they are called to love everyone and protect them, potentially from making decisions with lifelong consequences. If people on the school

[00:46:17] board refuse to hear both sides of a discussion and be impartial, maybe they shouldn't be on the school board, especially when one side is asking to pause and first do no harm when it comes to children. As I said before, children cannot get married, get tattoos, smoke cigarettes, fight in or use a meat slicer. Why is it wrong to ask why children should not get castrated, sterilized, or get double mastectomies? Thank you. The next speaker is Tavis Coffin, Samuel Miller.

[00:46:50] Just move the mic up. Thank you. Good evening. Over the past year, the Turning Point USA chapter at Western Albemarle High School has quietly shown what civil discourse can look like. From the start, the club has welcomed speakers like former Congressman Bob Good and TPUSA influencer Isabel Brown, encouraging students, including those with opposing views, to think critically, ask questions, and share their perspectives. Controversial topics have been addressed, but always with respect and openness. From the beginning, the club faced organized opposition. Some students tried to prevent others from signing up, mocking them, using verbal harassment, and even

[00:47:28] forming a human wall to block participation. But TPUSA members chose not to retaliate or escalate. Instead, they turned to school leadership, and under principal sublet steady guidance the situation was handled swiftly and fairly Western under her leadership has remained committed to ensuring that all students regardless of belief have a safe respectful and supported platform to express their views which is why it's so troubling that a member of our school board recently made remarks indirectly comparing TPUSA in its guest speaker to extremist groups like the KKK this kind of rhetoric is

not only irresponsible it's deeply unfair to the student to have conducted themselves with nothing maturity, love, and respect of others, including those who disagree with their

[00:48:08] positions. More importantly, it reflects a dangerous assumption that disagreement equals hate. Believing in traditional gender roles or holding religious convictions about sex and identity is not hate speech. If we continue to start labeling every traditional viewpoint as dangerous or extreme, where does that leave the thousands of students or churches across this country who hold these same beliefs? Are they also to be considered extremists? We often underestimate young people assuming they are incapable of engaging in difficult conversations but in truth many are handling them better than the adults around them they're navigating complex issues calmly respectfully and face to face if we're serious

[00:48:47] about instilling leadership principles in our youth we must be willing to recognize when they are already leading and teaching us how to rebuild the dialogue we as adults have lost thank you - Our next speaker is Lely Coffin from Samuel Miller.

[00:49:04] - Kelly Coffin. - Apologies if it says L. Kelly Coffin. - My son is the founding member and president of Turning Point Club at Western Albemarle High School. He has had the opportunity to work closely with Mrs. Sublette from the time of club application until now.

[00:49:21] I want to commend Mrs. Sublette for facilitating the freedom of speech for all students at Western Albemarle High School. She is truly making Western everybody's school. Last spring I had the privilege to volunteer at a Turning Point meeting where guest speaker Isabel Brown spoke to over 120 students on the sensitive topic of abortion.

[00:49:44] She was knowledgeable, engaging, and connected well with the students. I saw Western students actively engage in civil discourse with the speaker and with one another. I left that meeting feeling encouraged by the Turning Point chapter and the environment that they had created promoting freedom of speech and civil discourse in our school.

[00:50:06] In stark contrast, a school board member has shown that she believes that free speech is for some, not for all, and she has elevated the rights of some students above others. In recent weeks, this school board member likened my son, members of the Turning Point Club, and a scheduled guest speaker to the Ku Klux Klan.

[00:50:28] She accused them of hate speech and stated that their speech has no place in our schools. Her words were divisive, spoken in anger, and have brought harm to our community. Not only that, they were reckless in light of the recent assassination of Charlie Kirk.

[00:50:47] Albemarle County School Board, thank you for a second. I'm asking for decorum so that all speakers can be heard. Thank you. Would you add 10 seconds to the clock, please? Albemarle County School Board thank you for reversing course and allowing the Turning Point Club to host this guest speaker. By doing so you have upheld students right guaranteed by the Equal Access Act and the First Amendment to the US Constitution. However by addressing only policy in your statement on this matter and being silent on the dangerous words that were spoken by a

[00:51:21] member of the board you have condoned. I asked for her to have ten additional seconds because she was it we are in a let's recess under school board policy and Virginia code 22 179 the chair is responsible for maintaining decorum and orderly conduct during meetings this is a public meeting of the school board not

[00:51:57] a public forum interruptions shouting or personal attacks are not permitted in In addition, disrupting a public meeting like this one is a crime under code Virginia 18.2-415.

[00:52:15] This is the first warning. Further disruption will resort from removal in our meeting. I am going to ask that you have 10 additional seconds because of the disruption.

[00:52:33] So you may have 10 seconds to finish. Thank you. By addressing only policy in your statement on this matter and being silent... One second. we will turn the microphone on and reset that 10 seconds you're good school board i challenge you to follow the example of western students and jennifer sublet making sure that albemarle county schools are truly everybody's school thank you the next three speakers are cameron medor from white

[00:53:07] hall will woodrow from samuel miller and nancy birch moore from white hall as a reminder just state your name and your district as you come forward. Cameron Meader. Good evening. My name is Cameron Meader and I'm in the Whitehall District. I have two sons in Albemarle County Public Schools.

[00:53:37] My son Liam is in 10th grade at Western. He's a member of the Turning Point chapter there. I have always wanted our boys to be in public schools because I can think of no better way to prepare them for life than to be a part of their community. Being taught by adults and learning with others in their community in their lives they will always encounter people with different opinions one of our guiding principles as americans is the first amendment americans have the right to express their views without censorship and americans have freedom of sim of assembly the

[00:54:14] right to gather peacefully any student group in our public schools has the right to express their views and gather peacefully and this includes turning point this group of students has been meeting peacefully, sharing their views, listening to speakers, all the while respectful of their peers and their teachers with different views.

[00:54:38] Regretfully, they have not been treated with the same respect. As their principal Miss Sublette recently said, Western Albemarle is everyone's school. This should always be our attitude as Americans. We must reach the point that we can have difficult conversations about controversial topics without threatening to ban or censor the person who disagrees with us. As adults in these young people's lives, we must model this for them, not choose sides, not call names.

[00:55:15] Our school board members should advocate for the rights of all students, not just equate them to bad people when they have a difference of opinion. The turning point chapter at Waz should absolutely continue and they have a constitutional right to do so. Will Woodrow is our next speaker. Hi, Will Woodrow. I'm a father of one of the founders of the turning point chapter at Western. Please adjust your mic. Regarding the controversy around the recent KKK comments,

[00:55:52] I would just like to say I think we can do better. I've been very proud watching these kids and their club at Turning Point, the bravery that it's taken for them to build it, the maturity that they've developed and demonstrated, and the grace and the respect that they've shown for classmates who have disagreed with them.

[00:56:14] Shame on us adults. We are a community. We get to choose. Do we want to look like the rest of the country or do we want to build an oasis of kindness where we can disagree with ideas without attacking the people who hold them?

[00:56:32] that we can do better. And now I have a strong view and most of you have expressed that you don't agree with it. I believe that the aggressive promotion of gender ideology to young children does more harm than good. It confuses kids when they're most vulnerable, when they're the most uncomfortable in their own skin that there will ever be. And I don't see good fruit as a result of that. But here's the point. My concern for our kids is based in love. Love for all the kids in our community. And I understand the strong disagreement. I understand that those on the other side often come from a place of love as well. Misguided love, I believe, but love nonetheless.

[00:57:12] And that's where we as a community need to be honest with each other. The majority of us are motivated by love on this issue. Let's focus on that fact with charity for one another. Yes, we have diametrically opposed ideas of what love looks like. So what do we do? We trust our kids.

[00:57:29] We respectfully engage our ideas in the best of the Western tradition. We don't put a thumb on the scale. We don't demonize our silence differing points of view. We don't dishonestly accuse each other of being motivated by hate. That's intellectual violence. We're better than that.

[00:57:45] Let truth defend itself. Our ideas will rise or fall on their own merits. - Thank you for your remarks, your time has expired. Thank you for your remarks, your time has expired. Our next speaker is Nancy Birch Murr from Whitehall. - Good evening.

[00:58:01] Nancy Muir. I'm from Whitehall and I'm the chair of the Albemarle County Republican Committee. I want to thank Principal Jen Sublette and the school district for upholding students constitutional rights by allowing Victoria Cobb to speak. This decision reflects the best of public education, teaching students to engage in critical thinking with diverse ideas. I'm saddened that it took legal action to reinstate the lunchtime TPUSA speaker. Since every student club has a right to invite

[00:58:39] speakers during their meetings, I hope this is a lesson learned for the future that neutral viewpoints will be used consistently in decision making regarding applying school policies. Public education should champion student instruction and not waste time, money, and energy on refereeing partisan comment.

[00:59:06] Unfortunately, the at-large school board member, Allison Spillman, publicly posted an irresponsible, demeaning, slanderous labeling of Western Albemarle USA students, drawing comparison, as you know, to the Ku Klux Klan.

[00:59:23] This rhetoric incites violence and squashes civil discourse. And Allison, I'm sorry for the emails that you've gotten from some people that are also very violent. Violence kind of begets violence, I think. My foremost concern is the prevention of any more rage or violence.

[00:59:44] Haven't we all seen enough in our beautiful community of this violence? Suppression of free speech stifles debate, breeds resentment, and erodes trust in institution. Let's promote harmony and cancel the vitriol.

[01:00:00] I encourage the board to lead. Thank you for your remarks. I am aware of the clock. I don't need to be reminded of what the time is, and I will stop the speaker. Our next three speakers are Sheila Byrd from the Samuel Miller District, Michelle Karpovich from the Samuel Miller District, and Matthew Christensen from Rio District.

[01:00:29] There are, before you start, Ms. Byrd, if you are standing, there are seats in the front. If you have a seat next to you, please raise your hands. Thank you very much.

[01:00:46] You may begin. Thank you for the opportunity to address the board tonight. My name is Sheila Byrd. I'm an Altenborough County parent, grandparent, teacher, and the granddaughter of a brave county sheriff who, in the 1920s, spearheaded the elimination of the Ku Klux Klan from his hometown.

[01:01:02] How did we get here? We say we want civil discourse, but do our actions affirm or belie that stated intent? Charlie Kirk wanted civil discourse, so he led a movement to resuscitate it.

[01:01:23] I'm asking for quiet during the speakers. We will stop this meeting if needed. You add a few minutes? Please add ten seconds, the clock. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much for doing that. You did not lose any time.

[01:01:44] Thank you. Charlie Kirk wanted the free exchange of ideas, so he spent his days welcoming dissent, listening to other people, assuming the best about them, and rarely raising his voice. Charlie Kirk treated everyone he debated with respect, and he did so because he understood why our founding fathers had pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to establish this constitutional republic which every one of you has sworn an oath to support. In contrast, state candidates for lieutenant governor spewed

[01:02:23] despicably violent rhetoric and not a single member of his party has condemned him. The candidate for governor admonishes citizens to use rage to motivate behavior and here an elected school board member distinctly and publicly compares young engaged students who want to exchange ideas freely to the KKK my grandfather fought. No school board member should ever suggest that the board violate the US Constitution by squelching free speech. I thank you for ensuring that every student is safe and supported regardless of their sex or

[01:02:59] their politics and that all students have their constitutionally protected rights to free speech protected. Thank you. Michelle Karpovich. Good evening members of the school board, parents, students, and community members. My name is Michelle Karpovich, Samuel Miller District. I've taught at Western Albemarle High School for 27 years, and I proudly serve as the faculty advisor to the WASH chapter of TPUSA. Tonight,

[01:03:34] however, I speak as a private citizen about a matter of public concern. I am deeply troubled by your recent social media post. Ms. Spillman, in that post, you equated speaker Victoria Cobb of the family foundation invited by our chapter to discuss two genders one truth with hate groups like the kkk this comparison is not only inappropriate but dangerously inflammatory our schools should be places where all students regardless of background or belief feel safe

[01:04:12] respected and heard equating a speaker meeting or a speaker presenting a widely held biology-based perspective on gender excuse me i'm going to ask again tell you where that's coming from if you'd like to know if we will now recess this meeting for five minutes to allow order to be restored we are committed to hearing public input but we cannot continue while the

[01:04:50] meeting is being disrupted our acpd officers will assist as needed to ensure safety and restore order. We will reconvene once order is restored and the room is calm. She will get her 48 seconds back.

[01:05:43] i'm going to ask everyone to take their seats i'm sorry mr christians you may stand the two speakers

[01:11:07] that have been called may stand when everyone except for the speakers is seated and we have silence i will begin but i have a few comments to make first of all i want to make sure those who have signs keep them away from the speakers please no comments and i'm going to read the rule

[01:11:43] again as a reminder our public comment period is governed by the guidelines that i read earlier each speaker will have two minutes to speak all comments should be addressed to the board i'm going to repeat that all comments should be addressed to the board as a whole and not to individual board members that is part of our guidelines please refrain from applause shouting or interruptions so that each speaker can be heard and the meeting can proceed in an orderly manner

[01:12:21] and i'm going to read this one more time our students are watching how we engage with one another let's show them that even when we disagree we can do so with respect and compassion because that's what our students deserve from us. Ms. Karpovich, we have put 59 seconds on the clock for the remainder of your time. Thank you. Equating a speaker presenting a widely held biology-based perspective on gender with a historically violent hate group is a reckless

[01:13:00] misuse of language. It undermines the values of respect, inclusivity, and open dialogue that our schools must uphold. Beyond the hurtful nature of Ms. Spillman's words, her post shows contempt and prejudice toward constituents with differing views. It reflects a mindset unwilling to engage respectfully or represent the full diversity of our community. Her words have sown division and created an atmosphere of intimidation that threatens free and respectful discourse.

[01:13:29] As elected officials, School Board members must uphold the highest standards of professionalism and fairness. I therefore call on Ms. Spillman to resign from the Albemarle County School Board. We are sincerely grateful to Dr. Hawes for his message to the community. Let's reaffirm our commitment to schools where every voice is heard, respectful discourse is welcomed, and all students feel safe. Thank you. I'm going to remind everyone again, all comments should be addressed to the board and not to individual members. Matthew Christensen.

[01:14:05] Matthew Christensen, Rio District. I am not trans myself. As a social worker and child welfare as a therapist and as a friend i have sat with people who are trans i have heard their stories heard the pain and hurt they have endured the rejection the hate the denial of their very

[01:14:43] existence i have heard some tell me they want to die because of the way they've been treated that they don't know if they can keep going under the weight of the hate that has been piled on top of them. The death threats they've received just for existing. Schools are supposed to be a safe place for our children. Why allow in a speaker who is going to tell trans and non-binary students

[01:15:16] that their existence is a lie? You're telling trans kids that they aren't safe in your schools, that they shouldn't even exist in your community. You may be able to go home tonight and wash your hands of this. But I will continue to hear their pain and be a safe person for them and tell them

[01:15:45] please there are people who love you and want you here. Don't listen to the others. Please stay. I wish you didn't have to fight just to exist. To be allowed to use the same facilities. I'm sorry I can't keep you safe. Thank you very much. Before we move on I do need you to move that sign and keep

[01:16:18] all signs be behind that podium. The next, excuse me, the next three speakers, Lily Kovach, Sibir Lyon, and Ike Noth. Good evening. My name is Lily Kovach, and I'm a student at Albemarle High School and a proud member of the Young Democrat Club. I'm speaking to you tonight because I'm furious, heartbroken, and deeply disappointed. Western Albemarle High School

[01:16:58] is bringing in a speaker to speak on a topic called Two Genders, One Truth. This title is not just words. This is an attack on our non-binary and transgender classmates. This title is diminishing our students and peers acting like they're a problem we need to take care of and address, while the only thing we need to take care of and address is the hate they are receiving.

[01:17:20] Albemarle County claims to be inclusive and diverse, but how are we supposed to call ourselves that if we allow a club on our campus to spread a hateful message to our fellow classmates? this is not only harmful but outright humane and dehumanizing this is not about different opinions this is about what is right and what is wrong it's about protecting students who already carry the weight of being misunderstood mocked or targeted simply for being who they are and an event like this doesn't promote dialogue it promotes hate and cruelty which was we as a community should stand against public schools should be a safe space for every single

[01:17:56] student turning points event does not reflect those values it undermines them Turning Point speaks so highly of letting people express themselves through three free speech, yet when their so-called free speech goes against their own ideals all of a sudden it doesn't apply to that. You as a school board should stand up for what's right, stand up for us, stand up for our non-binary and transgender classmates. Let's stand up for what we believe in and let's put our values on display for everyone to see. In no way am I asking you to deny students of their opinions. I'm asking you to recognize the difference between free speech and hate

[01:18:33] speech. No one's identity should be in question or denied at a school event, especially not at our schools. Please show that every student, no matter their gender identity or background, that they belong here. They are seen and respected and valued. Thank you. Thank you very much. Again, I am going to ask that there be no outbursts during speeches. Sorry, comments. Please state your name. Hi, I'm I'm Sabre Lyon, I'm in the Samuel Miller District.

[01:19:05] And I'm here as somebody who went to Western Elmore High School and is a trans person. Every single one of my peers that I went to school with 20 years ago and myself were deeply, deeply suicidal.

[01:19:20] Every single one of us, every single child that I'm an auntie to has shared these devastating secrets with me that they don't feel they can share with anybody else. And I recently, as in last week, lost somebody in my community.

[01:19:37] She was only 23, no, not a high school student. But this is where we come to. This is more than just conversation. This is more than just language. This is people acting as though other people don't exist, as though we don't have a right to breathe, as though there's no space for us in the world.

[01:19:57] And I know that many of you don't want there to be space for us in this world. And the reality is that we exist and we're going to continue to exist. And we have always existed. It's genuinely a shame that people are here hunting children.

[01:20:17] Because ultimately, metaphorically, that's what this is. If we're pretending like this doesn't turn into bullying, this doesn't turn into cyber attacks, this doesn't turn into blood and knuckles, then you're doing nothing but deluding yourselves.

[01:20:35] I encourage you again to be brave, to do what's actually right. Because like that brave student just said, there's a difference between speech and hate speech. There's a difference between putting people in danger and supporting people.

[01:20:53] - Thank you very much. Our next speaker will be Ike Noth. - Good evening board. My name is Ike Noth. I live in the Samuel Miller district. I'm a member of the student council at Western Albemarle and I am a friend to countless people in the LGBTQ community at Western.

[01:21:16] The existence of trans and queer people is not a controversy. There is not a discussion. Trans people exist. I am disappointed by the school board for allowing Ms. Cobb to speak at Western. Her talk denies the reality and dignity of trans people's existence.

[01:21:32] School should be a safe place for students. This is not safe. Her rhetoric is harmful and misinformed. If the school board's goal is to make sure students are comfortable, this is a failure of that duty. We must be accepting and create a community with compassion coming from a student at Western.

[01:21:48] Thank you. - Thank you very much. Our next three speakers, Dana Langley, Maria Kronbush, and Lauren Baum.

[01:22:06] Those three people may come forward.

[01:22:26] Hi, thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Dana Langley, and I live in the Jack Jewett Magisterial District. I would like to start off sharing a quote from Franklin Graham. Charlie Kirk said, I want to be remembered for courage for my faith.

[01:22:43] The most important thing is my faith. A single bullet silenced his voice on that platform on September 10th. But it can't erase his influence, his legacy, and his testimony for Jesus Christ.

[01:23:01] Just a few days before his death, he posted, Jesus defeated death so you can live. He wasn't afraid or ashamed to talk about his faith. I think the devil has overplayed his hand. I pray that tens of thousands of young people will pick up Charlie's banner, courageously speak truth in a culture that tries to deny God's truth. At this time, I'd like to offer a prayer of gratitude for the school board. Heavenly Father, we lift up our school board

[01:23:33] members to you tonight. Thank you for calling them to serve and for the commitment. Can I have time added for that interruption? You may have five seconds for that interruption. We will adjust your time. Thank you. Lord, we ask that you would cover each board member with your peace, protection, and guidance. Grant them clarity of mind and unity of purpose as they make decisions

[01:24:10] that affect the lives of so many. May their leadership reflect your love, justice, and grace in every word and action. Lord, you tell us that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Pray that any board member or community member present tonight that does not know you, Lord, that they would be sensitive to your spirit. Thank you very much. We ask this in

[01:24:34] mighty name of Jesus comments hi Lauren Baum Miller District I'm here to say do not relent to those who marginalize you must protect students from ignorance prejudice and hate that the hate that Victoria Cobb seeks to promote Mr Haas your legal analysis fell short of considering the district's obligation

to prevent discrimination and harassment this is not just any speaker invited to a lunchtime event you know what this speaker promotes you've heard what this speaker

[01:25:11] is going to promote. You not only can legally, but you must stop this event. By the way, I'm a civil rights attorney, not licensed in Virginia, although I will change that if I have to. I represent public schools currently on these issues. I know what you guys are dealing with, but I also know what I'm talking about. The First Amendment and the Equal Access Act do not protect discriminatory speech.

[01:25:34] You may lawfully prohibit speech that poses a material risk of substantial disruption or interferes with the rights of others. You also have a legal obligation, this is acknowledged in board policy, to maintain a safe and supportive school environment, free from harassment and discrimination.

[01:25:51] You have a legal duty to restrict this speech because it is likely to create, if not already has created, a hostile environment for students based on their identity. Imagine being a gender non-conforming child right now. Your very existence is attacked daily.

[01:26:06] Then someone's allowed to come to your school, perhaps your only safe space in life, and tell other children that you do not exist. Imagine the irreparable damage that that will cause. You cannot keep students safe while allowing this event. I'm going to borrow some language from a federal judge here.

[01:26:22] This type of discriminatory speech cuts to the core, belittles an individual's sense of place in society, and creates a feeling of inferiority that is unlikely to ever be undone. have a choice right now to protect these students or do some allow something that will harm them in a way that is unlikely to ever be undone make the right decision if not i will help all these trans and non-binary kids lawyer up and sue the thank you very much for your comments thank you very much for your comments do you want chair do you want to move into recess let's try to proceed

[01:27:01] we have three more speakers left i would like to proceed we have a full school board agenda that i would like to get to in addition to these comments lauren bomb that was her marie kronbush okay apologies it's been a long night and day kayla shifflett and gracie tracy

[01:27:31] are my last two speakers what i think you're good kayla shifflett yeah let's pick another one

[01:27:49] thank you very much Sam Rosenbaum good evening my name is Sam Rosenbaum and I'm

[01:28:34] speaking today as a senior at Western Amaral High School I'm from the good evening my name is Sam Rosenbaum and I'm speaking today as a senior at Western Amaral I'm concerned for the future of my school due to the allowance of divisive rhetoric during school hours specifically I would like to address the board's decision to allow Victoria Cobb an activist who has repeatedly targeted Albemarle County for its policies regarding inclusion and equity for marginalized students to speak during school hours. By allowing two genders one truth, Albemarle County is disregarding the students and the policies they have fought to uplift in years past in favor of the free speech of an outsider. This

[01:29:14] event should not take place during school hours. The potential harm of bringing in a speaker who could intimidate students and faculty with her rhetoric far outweighs any potential benefit. Words have meaning and they have power. Rhetoric has transformed in the past couple of years. Political debates turn hostile instantly, result in political violence, which endangers the safety and the security of ACPF students, faculty, and staff. Keep our lunch period free from political escalation. Ultimately, higher education is the place for a speaker like this, conversations like this. As a senior,

[01:29:51] I know that my younger self was more malleable, far less mature than myself now. Think of the freshman who haven't yet had the opportunity to develop their political beliefs. Students feel bombarded by one side of the political spectrum. TPUSA is an organization with the external funds and support to provide large speaker events with food and prizes, but no other club exists to this level at Western. If we allow Victoria Cobb to speak, who is next? In the current political sphere, there just is not a liberal equivalent to TPUSA, eliminating the needed neutrality of schools. Please, member of the board, rethink your decision.

[01:30:26] Keep this speech out of our school and think of the policy Elmore County was so proud of just nine months ago. Thank you. Thank you for your comments. That will conclude public comment for today. We will now move into an immediate 10-minute recess. Can someone give me an official

[01:30:45] are they not on 21 we just need to have this on oh they do don't they okay hello hello everybody

[01:41:33] um if you you are absolutely welcome to stay we are moving into the business part of our meeting

[01:41:40] but if you want to leave this is the opportunity to scoot out of the auditorium thank you hello

[01:42:44] can i ask the officer to close the doors because there's a lot of talking out in the foyer and the And the one on this side would be great, too.

[01:43:00] Thank you. Thank you. We are now back in session. We had 20 speakers signed up, and given the contentious nature of the topic and how full we were, I thought it went reasonably well, with some exceptions in terms of directing comments to a specific school board member.

[01:43:22] The next item on our agenda is approval of the consent agenda. I move we approve the consent agenda. I second. Motion was made by Ms. Lee, seconded by Dr. Berlin. All those in favor? Aye. Opposed?

[01:43:40] Motion passes. Next item on the agenda is an enrollment update by Ms. Schmidt. Good evening.

[01:44:03] I'm Rosalyn Schmidt, Chief Operating Officer. Tonight I will be providing an update on our enrollment as well as our class sizes. These are two data sets that we annually report to the board. this is the first time we have presented them together however the full reports are included as enclosures to this agenda item and then you also have hard copies of it the class size report looks like this in our typical format and then your enrollment projection table is that there all data is based on september 30th before we get into the figures let's first frame this work

[01:44:41] within our strategic plan i want to draw attention in particular to the first and third goal thriving students and equitable transformative resources, as I think these are most relevant to this item. Starting with the enrollment, this table shows it by a summary by level. At our elementary schools, we have enrolled almost 6,200 students. It does not include pre-K, which is about 75 students less than last year. We had projected a slight decrease, but this is 68 students less than what we had projected. You can see our middle school enrollment grew by 50 students and came in right at

[01:45:19] projection at high schools we have 70 students less than last year and that's 50 students less than what we had projected so division-wide that means we have 89 less students which is just a minor decrease of 0.6 percent and slightly less than what we projected which is about one less than one percent again this is just by level but the enclosure has it by school and by grade just a quick note about our

projections as you know we utilize a cohort progression model to project um project our enrollment kindergarten projections utilize live birth data from five years prior

[01:45:59] our current kindergarten class was born in 2020 which is hard to believe that's our coveted babies now in school that year had low birth rates and therefore we had projected a lower kindergarten class division-wide we were accurate within 10 students but which schools they showed up was highly variable but that's why you're seeing a decrease in the elementary level so looking at this in historical context we have a graph that goes back to 2015-16 the blue line is our actual enrollment by school year the dash green line is what we had projected and budgeted for

[01:46:37] in that same year so you can see pre-pandemic we were actually coming in under projection for a couple years we had that unexpected growth in 2019-20 and the pandemic hit when our enrollment decreased and we've been increasing since so while this is a decrease in this current year you can see the trend line since 2020 is pretty consistently upward at your next work session you will be receiving the long-range planning advisory report and included in that material will be the updated 10-year enrollment projections based on this new data the last detail i have on enrollment

[01:47:14] is to look at it as a comparison to last year by school i've grouped this chart by schools who increase by 20 or more students on the left the middle of schools that were plus or minus 20 students and then schools that decrease by 20 students are more on the right side of the chart but again the enclosure has more details by individual school now we have the class size report this report is produced annually and has a consistent format for many years now it provides transparency and oversight into one i think the most important resources that we can allocate to schools which are our classroom teachers it speaks to both the student and staff

[01:47:52] experience. The full report is included and provides information by school, including mean class sizes, information by grade level, and subject. You can see in the summary table that a division level, despite budget reductions, the mean class size has remained the same or less than last year. This is due to combinations of principals making staffing decisions that are reduced away from core classrooms, and then the lower than expected enrollment. Similar enrollment we can look at the state data in historical context it's the same time frame

[01:48:26] back to 2015-2016 the teal and circles are elementary class sizes the dark blue is middle and then the orange is high school you can see we've been stable the last two years but it's an increase from three years ago but we're still lower than pre-pandemic are there any questions we can answer either about the enrollment or class size report just do the mean class sizes differ between the high schools i mean albemarle class size is different than monticello yep so as

[01:49:04] you we've produced on a differentiated staffing model so we do expect different class sizes i'm going to pull it up that is on page eight seven page seven of that full report albemarle high school has a mean class size of 20 this year monticello high school 19.7 and western albemarle 22. so they're pretty close thank you you'll see more variability at the middle school level is it too granular to uh know why like stony point went up 20. i mean that's a lot for a tiny school

[01:49:38] yeah so um based on the past redistricting um decision um cascadia is a growing community and they had a very large kindergarten class um that can contribute to that are there any other comments

[01:49:57] or questions thank you ms schmidt thank you thank you ms schmidt next on the agenda then

[01:50:19] is student discipline review and mental health and wellness mr kurtz and mr nelson thank you

[01:50:55] uh good evening i am kevin kirst i'm your executive director of student services and along with me tonight uh is miles nelson coordinator of mental health and wellness and eileen gomez who's a coordinator of nursing and health services and we're basically going to give you our data story tonight, which is a state of Albemarle County's Student Services Department.

[01:51:19] And I'm going to start with a review of some data with regard to school discipline. And I'd like to pair that with restorative practices. In the interest of time and the amount of data here, I've included some resources for the board and the public to use. There are some groupings of behaviors, student behaviors and administrative responses, they are clusters, right?

[01:51:54] And I've put some examples in here so you could see and unpack like what are those groupings? What are those behaviors exhibited by students? So that is what they are in there for, including examples of disciplinary responses that are available at the schools and utilized in our division.

[01:52:17] The next three slides I'm going to start, I really went with 22, 23 to last year, 24, 25, has an array of data. The intent here was in response to last year's presentation of could you break it down by grade level, by different levels in the school.

[01:52:39] So this is more of a caricature of the types of student behaviors that administrators are responding to. And at the three different levels. At elementary, the information is elementary primarily reports behaviors of a safety concern, which include things like fighting, throwing objects, and shoving, versus middle school that report the primary issue being relationship behaviors, teasing, profane language, failure to respond to requests by staff.

[01:53:15] And in high school, they note behaviors related to school operations, like refusing to comply with requests by staff, violation of school technology or the internet policy, and not going to classes assigned. I do want to point out that other schools, that's like post high, center one, the number of incidents is less than 20.

[01:53:36] So there's inconsistency from year to year. The number is so low that those things change a bit much. So over those three years, what we've seen is there's some consistency in those characteristic behaviors that each level is dealing with, although all of those categories are represented.

[01:54:06] So there isn't a behavior that's off limits at any level. When I break down, I do want to point out one of the findings is elementary and high school report about 1100 incidents in 24-25 and it's middle school that is about 2300 incidents it's almost right elementary and high school combined so middle school is a hot spot and it has been for a bit this next slide is one

[01:54:44] that has indicates the frequency and so there's there's always good news bad news but I want to point out just in general from 21 22 this new data reporting system took over the state started this student behavior and administrative response process for reporting discipline and in 22 23 it took off but a lot of inconsistency across the division and our practices so double down on that to really get a solid handle on accurate reporting and processes in '23,

[01:55:22] '24, and then ultimately '24, '25, which I feel very confident to say in '24, '25, we saw a decrease in the number of incidents that administrators had to respond to almost and I don't think it's a tiny little decrease but a decrease of almost 640 incidents.

[01:55:44] want to point out right the good news bad news is that was primarily felt at the high school they felt that decrease middle and elementary that was pretty stable in terms of the frequency even though there is an uptick so an uptick in the disproportionate representation of students with disabilities in incidents. I do want to point out that they also frequency wise saw a decrease,

[01:56:21] almost 100 less incidents for students with disabilities. So still disproportionate. But I did want to point out that there was some movement, still a priority for student services. But I did want to point out some context there. Let's see. In this slide, the data shows both the frequency of disciplinary incidents that required administrative responses showing relatively consistent practices across the three years in school suspension at the secondary level it's

[01:56:58] called step or short-term educational program and short-term suspensions outside of school still are the primary response or disposition by administrators for behaviors okay this slide highlights however an increased attention to academic support when suspension or even in-school suspension is utilized by administrators i i believe this is not insignificant this is

[01:57:32] regularly considered when that has to happen last year one of the concerns was hey how do we how are we doing with regard to the state could you give us some context so the state across the board. The most recent data I could get my hands on as of about five days ago was from 23-24. I have not seen state 24-25 data yet, but it's trending increases across the board in all the categories. When we compare that to Albemarle County

[01:58:10] in particular, we have one category that is decreasing significantly and that is behaviors related to school operations. So I want to point that out. And the other categories are very consistent with the state. Not that that's a good thing, but yeah, wanted to report just on that difference. Sticking with Albemarle, Albemarle County schools saw an increase in the use of detention outside of

[01:58:48] regular school hours, like after-school detention, loss of school privileges, out of school suspension by school administrators and suspension of bus privileges those were all an increase a decrease in the use of class removal for less than half a day and in-school suspension for a half a day or more when we reflect on the state data we see a trend in an opposite trend detention

[01:59:24] outside of schools and within school suspensions those decreased where Albemarle we saw increases in those. I did want to highlight some of the work that's being done across the division that while this is one data point it stretches all the way down to what we're doing with all students and that is the utilization of restorative practices but this data is explicitly tied to administrative responses to behaviors that require some disciplinary action and the

[02:00:01] utilization of restorative practices from 22 through last year is increasing. 25-26 is on here, but again, that's just September and a tiny bit of October. I expect to match. My goal is to far exceed 24-25. This is daily work to support administrators, teachers, staff, families, and students but wanted to highlight that that is still a work in progress and there is some

[02:00:38] equity and inclusive data there as well that we're trying to keep an eye on and use with all of our with all of our students so some takeaways the types of behaviors seen at elementary middle and high are different from each other but consistent across several years there is a decrease trending in disproportionality of discipline with black students in particular that's consistent not as great as I would like to see but it's a mild trend there is slippage on disproportionality with students with

[02:01:18] disabilities although again I want to point out frequency is decreasing but I'm working on that disproportionality overall incidents are trending on the decrease right when we unpack and look at individual and where the decrease is happening it's somewhat concerning but overall we're seeing less incidents than the year before restorative practices are on the rise and number six I'm gonna do a little restorative work myself I have to fix number six because it's actually swapped it's the state utilizes out of school suspension less and then

[02:01:54] what we're trending we're we have an uptick of you doing at using out of of school suspension as our so I will submit that and hopefully restore my sense of trust with you folks and number seven alternatives out of school suspension are regularly considered that's an after school what other things can we do restorative practices in school work and then the data is consistently more accurate allowing us to make decisions and to use that to indicate when we are aligning our practices and then before i go uh just wanted to give you a

[02:02:31] sense of next steps i do believe restorative practices and work with regard to some some relatively antiquated punitive practices like out of school suspension are done at this with all children at the classroom level and i am working with division leadership to plan and implement professional development to increase our work in the classroom with regard to classroom management that ultimately leads to our response as administrators when behaviors are exhibited that need to be addressed. My department continues

[02:03:07] to support schools, principals right down to families to understand, apply, and utilize restorative practices. I do that quite a bit daily and then continue to work on collecting data that we can trust and that we could utilize to target our resources and make positive changes in the future not sure how you want to structure this questions now for me yes yeah sure could you or can we

[02:03:45] receive the data from in-school suspension and short-term by the principal by race I know that you do the other the main thing by race but if I have those two categories, race two, in school suspension and short term by the principal.

[02:04:04] Yes, I could get that. So short, the different dispositions by race. Yes, I could get that to you. Go ahead, Ms. Prior. No, I'm sorry. Can you share what sort of incidents do you use restorative justice for?

[02:04:21] Honestly, it runs the gamut, but typically I'm called in with the larger fights, things that involve staff from sometimes it's staff caught in the middle but it fights bullying we've been called in for I'm just trying to think of larger scale conflicts at the school this morning you know a student got hurt by another made a threatening move toward him and there was an accident right and someone got

[02:04:59] cut it's like yep let's get in there work that out but then we've also moved too because I we're not going to get a lot of leverage just by the big end high level intense behaviors we are working myself and Aaron English in our step programs like okay here's a child that now this year is repeating why are you back in step for a number of times let's talk about why you're here how you could be a student how we keep restore you back to the so it was we're expanding

[02:05:32] from the high end, which I typically do. Those intense behaviors all the way down to being out of class on a repeat kind of rotation. Do you do collaboration with the Central Virginia Restorative Commission? Not intensely so. I've worked with them, talked with them, but I don't like have them coming in or directing our work.

[02:05:59] So if you're the one doing most, it sounds like you're doing most of the restorative work. For my cases, for disciplinary hearings, yes. But restorative work is happening at the schools with our STEP program, with Aaron English supporting those.

[02:06:20] We're pulling in our mental health support specialists, school counselors, principals. So it's not just... They don't all come to you. Right. They don't all come to me. it is a way of thinking and working with kids so i go in and there are folks working on restorative plans it's more that's my default when i'm called into a disciplinary hearing versus coming in and dropping the hammer in an old school punitive way it's what happened who was harmed where are we going from here that's the first story because as we talked before restorative practices done badly or worse than nothing at all, so almost worse.

[02:07:00] It could be hurtful. Yes. Yeah. It's like the Wild West or something. Yes, there is a process, and it is a way of thinking and working with kids, absolutely. And are you trying to get that way of thinking pushed down into all levels of the school so that it becomes a way of operating?

[02:07:18] Absolutely. And honestly, with all the efforts that the division has done already, it's meeting in the middle. you've heard about responsive classroom and developmental designs at the secondary level they use as a basis of building community the restorative mindset so I'm not doing any of that I'm meeting at the top reaching down to the base but we want to shore that up to make the link for everybody so that is happening already in our division I actually if you could go back to the

[02:07:55] very beginning the slides that we're talking about the percentages yeah do those align and I don't know this off the top of my head but like our for example are 30 roughly 37 percent of our students African-American what are the number what are the comparisons I'm curious like how disproportionate it is you know you talked about that we've slid one way or the other but you know I I don't know off the top of my head what percentage our student demographics fall and then how

[02:08:32] big that number is. So I haven't run, there is a state algorithm, it's like two times the chance that it could happen is their version of it's disproportionate. I have not applied that to these numbers, but I could.

[02:08:49] Yeah, I would be really curious to see how that aligns and if we're way off or if we're And my other question was when you were talking about students with disabilities and that we've had slippage in that way, you know, Dr. Hayes and I have had some recent discussions about this, and I think that something we've really kind of honed in on is that administrators don't seem to have the full understanding of their students' IEPs and 504s, and so there seems to be a gap there where we're coming in and we're disciplining a child who has

[02:09:27] an IEP or who has a 504 whose disability, you know, may be, you know, having an outburst or flipping a desk as part of their disability, that's, you know, whether it's sensory seeking or whatever, and our first instinct has been discipline. So I would really like to see some sort of plan in place of what that looks like for those administrators that are in charge of our SPED students, our students with 504s, what is that training going to look like as far as learning and knowing their 504s and their IEPs knowing those students so that our immediate reaction isn't discipline when it's often disability-based. I could say at least now being

[02:10:06] the previous director of students or special education that that is front and center. When I go into a disciplinary hearing it's automatic like where's the IEP? Right but that's after they've been

disciplined and we're at a discipline. We need to be front-ending that because then we'll never get to a And I think that the damage that is done, especially to a child with a disability, being punished for something that oftentimes they don't have control over, the regression is very big.

[02:10:39] And you know this, I mean, you've been there, but I would hope that that's where our plan is going, and I would love to see what that looks like going forward. Thank you. you can clarify for me so what constitutes the unique students 1621 from you have the total incidents 3901 oh yes so students in a in a behavioral incident it could be one incident but four behaviors took place right cussing hitting this that that's the difference so

[02:11:13] an individual student can have even on one event multiple incidents that's where you get the higher incident rate does does that make sense on top of multiple times so it's 1621 individual students could have multiple incidents over multiple days it's i was just trying to tease out because a lot the question had been is this a few students or is it many students doing a few things um does that does that answer your question just one way i frame it too is i look at 1621 unique students

[02:11:51] that's just a little more than like maybe 12% of our of all of our students so 88% of our students have no disciplinary record in our system and the elementary schools that was an area where we weren't you know prior to a few years ago I don't think our data collection was great but it's getting better all the time so I think that it really speaks well of our students and our school community that really about 12% of our students are having these issues but the other positive thing is it's a it's getting to be more and more of a

[02:12:27] workable number you keep bringing it down you can as Miss Spillman was pointing out you can get more proactive you keep getting more proactive because you're not just every time putting out a fire the other thing I want to share is that I'm really pleased that we just aren't using the the school board level discipline committee very much anymore i haven't actually been to a discipline committee since i was on the committee i haven't been to a meeting yet we're very pleased with that and i'm pleased with it too because to me that's like the tip of the ice yeah that's like the volcano yeah so if we're working at the base and i say we but you know kevin his staff the

[02:13:04] principals working at that base level keeping the temperature down and the teachers are doing a a dynamite job of working in the classrooms to solve the problem before it turns into a bigger issue, and they're collaborating with families.

[02:13:22] If they're doing all those things, we should continue to see the unique number coming down, and we should continue that trend with the exception of the way off the chart thing that we didn't see coming, having those discipline hearings.

[02:13:37] I mean, I heard what Dr. Haas just said, but the stat that had, I think, African-American students at 37%, and you were saying just 22%, I think 88% was the percentage of students that weren't having any disciplinary challenges, 37.2 here.

[02:14:05] So we have something called an equity table that's published every year in our state of the division report. what we'll do is we'll get patrick to share that with the board from it'll it's coming up again we do it every year and it shows the percentage of student representation of our overall student body and then it has different indicators including reading scores um special education identification some other

things like that attendance but then it also speaks to discipline incidents and our we are we're extremely disproportionate um with our uh by race by um

[02:14:44] free reduced lunch but we're trending in the right direction and we're better than largely better than the state so the other part is if you can bring down your overall numbers of discipline incidents you're you're still going to see disproportionality because even if it's let's say we had 10 discipline infractions next year and it was one from every category that we have you're gonna see a big disproportionality because of the lower representation of the students in the overall student body so when we used to work with Dewey Cornell more directly over at the youth violence project he said what you've

[02:15:20] got to do is just keep pushing the whole thing down just keep pushing down the numbers of students that you're suspending work with restorative practices be proactive as board members are pointing out you bring that whole thing down you're still gonna have disproportionality because the disproportionate representation of students but you're not suspending them at a great frequency one I just have one final question and I think last year we were talking about the increase in racial and identity slurs I think it

[02:15:58] increased by like something like close to 80 percent or something it was like astounding and I don't see that number and that doesn't look like it was um is that something you could get for us or is that something you have been tracking um because it was concerning when it went up such a large amount um last year and I'm curious if that number went down or if we're still I don't have it right here but I could get it with the other data for sure thank you Ms. Lee, Mr. Cox, do you have anything?

[02:16:28] No. Given the disproportionality of discipline with our black students, which is like 37% or 39%, depending on the year, I mean, overall, our black population is in the 11% range, so it's about triple.

[02:16:47] What kind of feedback are you giving school administrators in terms of what looks like over disciplinary actions with their black students or how should we be looking at that? So the way I believe we should be looking at this is the work that's already begun which is art. All behavior is communication and when needs aren't met we all try to get our needs met. When we build a community and use practices like restorative

[02:17:22] restorative practices and responsive classroom and developmental designs we take care of the needs at the base and that's the intent to firm ensure that up first and then look at alternatives look at alternatives other than punitive so many times that question is what do i do can i suspend and the question is why what are you trying to do and is that the best we can do so it's that whole gamut from the classroom all the way up to a decision about to be made and the

[02:17:57] critical questions being asked like why and what do we want to happen and what does what we're doing match out of school suspension doesn't work as a punitive intervention it just doesn't work to go this will teach them if the data doesn't support it so that's that's my belief as we start as a need fulfilling classroom and work our way up to thoughtful interventions that are based on evidence. Thank you. Any further questions? Okay. Miles Nelson's up next.

[02:18:35] Hello. I'm Miles Nelson. I'm the coordinator of mental health and wellness. Thank y'all for letting me provide an update. I'm going to talk a few things about community-based referrals, direct services from counselors, peer nominations, help me, our DCJS climate survey, then stop for some questions oh going the wrong way there we go uh but first just wanted to anchor in our mission vision so

students mental health is our foundation so it's not separate from learning and it's really what makes students mentally well to thrive and with that kind of start talking about

[02:19:14] some of the data i showed last year so this is the data i showed last year this is our high school data and the department of criminal justice survey climate survey too many surveys comes up every other year at the secondary level so one year it's for the high school the next year it's for the middle school and so it's an every other year survey so right here we're looking at the high school and so this is our 2022-2024 data in 2022 we saw that numbers were around 42 percent for the first question they ask is does a student feel so sad or hopeless that almost every single

[02:19:50] day that they have stopped engaging in their usual activities and you see the numbers are pretty high and so the bar on the far left is acps and then it moves over to regional numbers and then it moves over to state numbers and so we're seeing decreases so in 2024 we saw a significant decline and that dropped to 33 percent for acps and then the second bar graph that you see there is students have seriously contemplated suicide and so this is one of our more significant ones that i look at each

[02:20:24] year and on 2022 we were about 9.5 percent and in 2024 it dropped to i got that backwards i'm sorry it was 12.6 in 2022 and then dropped to 9.5 in 2024 and so it's just showing a trend line from

[02:20:47] the amount of services that we're putting into schools and help support students that we're seeing a decline and we're staying below the state numbers and we're starting to see significant gains. So this is the middle school data from 2023 to 2025. Same survey except for now it's delivered at the middle school level. So on the left hand side you see we were at about 29% in the 23 data for feeling for hopelessness and then for suicidal ideation it was about, oh I got my numbers again, 9.4%.

[02:21:21] no sorry I should have had this laid out better there we go oh yeah 9.4% and then when we look at the 2025 data we see even more gains so we dropped to about 26% for the hopelessness and suicidal ideation dropped to 6.5% and saw significant gains there and so this leads into my next point is talking about our community-based referrals so we are continuing to see expanded supports through both our community partnerships and our mental health support

[02:21:57] specialists both long-term and short-term mental health challenges can prevent students from thriving in schools though through these partnerships and the work of our mental health support specialists we're really beginning to see beginning to address these needs and these program and this progress is reflected in the data from the DCJS survey so a key piece to meeting our students needs is through this and you see that even as we're progressing in the number of service you also see a different variation in colors because we're adding in more services so in the 2020-25 school year we brought back therapeutic day treatment services we see the

[02:22:35] increase in mental health support specialists meeting students our partnership with region 10 which is our sap counselors outpatient counseling referrals is our contracted services with companies like active and connected and providing outpatient services our connection with the department of social services for family support workers and working with our own mckinney-vento connection for families that are facing homelessness so we're continuing to see an increase in services and then this pushes into our school counselors so this is a chart you see in front of you for the direct services from our school counselors and the partnerships they have with students families

[02:23:15] and schools and so this is their direct contact and they are the linchpin linchpin of our schools they provide the connection between community services and schools and not only do they provide mental health services they also attend to the career and academics of our students and so you can see the small bars at the bottom of those bar graphs are the connections of our community supports that you saw from the last chart so those are the intensive services where they're digging in and helping support kids meeting some of our very intense needs and then then this is where our school counselors are being that case manager they're the ones

[02:23:54] connecting families, schools, and services. Just to highlight a few other things throughout the division, this is our peer nominations. This has been a long-standing process that is one of the things that I'm a huge proponent for. So this is a yearly survey that we give which looks at and asks peers to nominate each other of individuals they think might be being bullied by others and it's really just a pulse check. It's given once in the fall and it's really a chance to try to encourage students to have an opportunity to let a trusted adult a

[02:24:33] counselor have someone to check in on and so this really helps us with those stop gaps of trying to check in with each student that might need some extra supports and so it's just one other way that we try to check in with students and as you can see over the last 10-ish years we've seen a decline in nominations so again making sure that we're continuing to talk through these services and what it looks like for kids and then jumping into our help me does so this is something that we've been implementing for the last two years

[02:25:07] and this is the wheel of services that get put in when students families community members put in information into our help me app and so there's a broad range of categories but as you see most of it falls under bullying harassment and other and then I always like to highlight the portion on self harm and suicidal ideation because this is a peer nomination service it's where they either ask for help for themselves or they nominate a peer that needs support and I think that's one of the purest forms of the system is that we're asking for help and support from untrusted adult within the school

[02:25:44] building and they're looking for how to get the help and then that goes into the next slide these are our response for the help means that we put out our thought that we put out for the helpings that come in these are our response and over 50% of our response is either conference or counseling. You are most likely to get a supportive response when something comes through there and then some of the reports that come in there do have to have the disciplinary response. And then one of the things that I'm also very excited about since our implementation, we're now in the second year of Help Me, is that 99.9% of our cases have been

[02:26:20] closed. So these concerns are being addressed, they are being looked at. We're still working through some education and training for students on what it looks like because I know there are some complexities to it and that it's not always the easiest to get back into the system and see the response that's given from an administrator or from a school counselor but we are looking at it we do see what you're saying we do hear you and I think that was my last slide any questions a note and a question I guess so um would you go back to the slide that showed the

[02:26:58] categories of types of support it had the McKenna Vento I just wanted to I mean we've been talking about the increasing homeless population I'm sorry on home population in our community and it definitely shows kind of that you know year-over-year significant increases so we just wanted to to note

that and just make sure we're all aware of that and then the second question is just I think to the second to last slide where you could have showed the different areas

[02:27:37] like what is the time for is this this school year is like what am I what am I looking at yes great question this is for the 24/25 school all the data I pulled from for this presentation was from the 24/25 school year it would be helpful maybe to compare right to kind of compare to a similar slice of data for last year to see how this has changed like because my head goes to that bullying number but I'm not I have nothing to comparison it to so just kind of to see where we're seeing things going up and down absolutely I will more

[02:28:15] than happy so we used to use a different system and so our data was vastly different and so it's been we used to use anonymous alerts and so we saw a huge change when we changed systems because it went from anonymous reporting to a system that says help me and it was intentional because now we're asking what can we do to support so yes you feel like someone's bullying you how can we support you what can we do and so we have seen a change in what these reports look like so it is it does vary a little bit but I'm more than happy to that into that's right because this is 24 25 data that's when we started using help me so maybe

[02:28:50] you know maybe it's in next year future or or as we have it we could begin looking at you know you know as we get to january maybe we look at because we did we start in september or was it a little delayed in 20 the schools the school the um when when did we start using help me this is a full year of data so maybe what we could do is look at um start of school like first first half of the the year yeah absolutely like in January that would like a January end of January meeting would be great to kind of come back and just look at that a

[02:29:22] little bit I would love to thank you so much okay if our staff is aware of maybe a time where there might be a lot of stress for some of our students say for instance the trans students with what's going or what might happen at Western with that speech could there be any provisions made to have maybe extra counselors or some method of counseling the students around the time of an event like that yeah absolutely and so I think it's twofold one it's our team into

[02:30:01] health first aid program I think that's a huge part of this and I actually had a nice little speech about it I forgot to mention but it's a great segue so with team mental health first aid it talks about peer-to-peer support so if you are struggling or if your peers struggling it talks about how to notice and then how connect them with a trusted adult and so the same thing with our youth mental first aid course it it works really with staff on how to connect with a youth who might be struggling with a mental health challenge and so it's that great partnership between the two and then if you don't know where to turn to where you're unsure of that's where help me fills in that's where you can say hey I'm really struggling I need to talk someone well we can connect you with the

[02:30:40] school counselor if it's the high school level we have our region 10 partnership we have the mental health support specialist and so if you're unsure of where to turn to that's where i always suggest going to help me as a starting base and then from there they can get you the resources you need and i was going to ask so for the bullying harassment here it's 19.6 and then under the discrimination 1.6 so it could be a fine line sometimes so how do you distinguish the difference between those categories so this is student generated so it's what they select as a category so I can go back and look to see

[02:31:19] if people are adding in coding afterwards but I'm unsure so I'll have to double check on that one for you what's the total number of students total number of students so we had a total number of about 1,200 alerts last year which is a increase of about 20 to 30 percent based on what we had when we anonymous alerts so this is the pie chart is based on 1200 students using it and the percentages are the percentages of that group of students yes so it's 1200 students 20 would be 240 of of the

[02:31:59] students that are reporting or saying they were bullied or harassed i'm going to agree because i can't do that math in my head is that students or incidents so it's incidents it is it's what is reported in that one subsection this is actually not a number of students then it's a total number of incidents incidents so out of the 1200 incidences 19.6 of those reports were about bullying i know when you were last here miles that excuse me um one of our student reps uh said that there

[02:32:34] was some confusion about what helped me was but did it you know whether it actually um was the same as as the anonymous helpline she you know thought it was much more looking for help for the individual have you seen a more robust reporting as students have become more familiar with it or is there still that barrier and if mr. Cox has anything to say about having it on the everybody's computer and if that how that has worked out I mean everyone knows that mental health it's very

[02:33:10] stigma uh stigmatizing sometimes and it but anyway yeah i would say i take every opportunity i can to talk about it within schools um one of the things that we did this year was we had a slide deck that was available to administrators for like the beginning of school year to introduce it and whatnot um always looking for other opportunities to engage with it and so one of the things that i have also done in partnerships with help me is i've introduced it when i sit at the crisis intervention team table with or the cit team and i've introduced it to our first responders so when they're talking with families so as we have first responders on scenes they show families

[02:33:49] how to use it and i've engaged with the heart team about it i've talked with our region 10 crisis team so that they can introduce the kids and show them that it's a resource when they're working with kids if they're not able to talk with their region 10 counselor they can always reach out to this service I will say I was looking at some of the data and we have had what feels like quite an increase and what they consider imminent calls and so those are their escalation pieces so if someone puts something within the help me app that is of imminent concern where there is a potential chance for harm that

[02:34:26] the call goes directly to myself or to the Department of School Safety and security and then we end up contacting the family and I haven't written down the exact data for it but it has felt like an increase what it's my understanding that helped me software is on middle and high school students and I was just thinking of mr. Kurtz data on disciplinary actions and in middle school are you seeing middle schoolers take this up or utilize this do we have data on them? Absolutely. Different than high school data? I would say actually our middle

[02:35:02] schoolers use it more than our high schoolers. We have one particular middle school that utilizes it much more than other schools and there it varies and so I think again the more that we can provide training and education to our students and staff around the system the better it's going to get.

[02:35:29] Again, this is year two of the implementation of it. I think it's just going to improve from here on. And I know that we were actually just on a call today with our customer success manager talking about different ways to engage and make improvements to the system to help show the keys to be able to get back into the system to respond or see what an administrator has written to a student.

[02:35:53] And that's where we're seeing the largest hang up. And so that's why I like highlighting that the system that we have closed all of those alerts, because I do want individuals to know that we are seeing them. And right now, that's our biggest hitch in our education piece of it is how to get back into the system to see that an administrator has responded to it.

[02:36:15] Thank you. And not to tell you, what might the inappropriate conduct? I would have to look into it. I believe I heard you say there was an increase in responses when it is no longer anonymous.

[02:36:32] I was just wondering if you have a theory on why that is, and do the people using the survey know that it is no longer anonymous? It's still a confidential reporting update. We don't know who the students' reporting are.

[02:36:48] I hold very tightly that it should be an anonymous survey, that it's an anonymous system. There is a nice article from the Secret Service that talks about the need for an anonymous reporting system. So we hold that very close.

[02:37:05] And generally the only way to get past it being an anonymous system would be to make a request of the police for a warrant to gather that data. So it is a very secure system.

[02:37:22] I promise you that it will take a lot to make this not confidential, and I would say it is very, very anonymous. Any other questions, comments? Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

[02:37:40] Absolutely. Thank you. Next, we have, well, two things. Mr. Cox, it's after 9:00, so if you care to leave, you feel free to do so. Your comments are great, but I understand that you have to get up in the morning, too.

[02:37:55] do we want to take another break or do we want to push ahead let's keep going miss Gomez you're up next hello I'm Eileen Gomez I'm the school health services coordinator for Albemarle County Public Schools and this is the first time I've used this so I'm going to share with you some data with the school health services and the school clinics for the last couple of years you

[02:38:30] you have that in front of you don't you so you can see that our clinic visits have increased over the last school year from last year and the year before some of that i think is the post pandemic during the pandemic we discouraged students from coming to the nurse's office because we were trying to separate the well children from the ill children and so we're turning to the numbers that we had prior to the pandemic you can see that the nurses are busy

[02:38:59] over the course of last year they saw 148 544 unique student visits i am i just have a few of the major categories here as you can see then i break it down by school and school level so the elementary schools you know that there's a very big difference in the size the enrollment numbers there and you can see that doesn't necessarily correlate with the busyness of the clinic some of

[02:39:33] that is school culture i would say and some of it has to do with the the needs at the school so you can see the busiest school there is baker butler with an average of 64 visits per day which is mind-boggling and then the smaller schools they may see maybe nine or ten as you can see at a red Hill. And then we have the visits for high school. Overall, there's fewer - oops, that's still all mentioned - fewer visits at some of these larger high schools per enrollment, but some of the

[02:40:10] visits take quite a lot of time. There's a lot - sometimes they're very serious matters. Then every year, the state asks me to turn in numbers on chronic illnesses in our schools. So I have highlights of those

numbers here. You can see some of our most common conditions that involve frequent nurse visits are diabetes, asthma, seizures, severe food allergies, and I'd like to

[02:40:49] point out a few differences that we've seen, some trends. One is that I find very surprising, seizure we've had an increase in seizures or students diagnosed with seizures i can't say we have an increase in seizures at schools but students diagnosed with that and some of that can be attributed to our um our refugee population we have some um some some students that have not had medical care for a long time they get here they go to the international family clinic and there's a high portion of those who are diagnosed with seizure disorders.

[02:41:27] I'm happy to report that we now have seizure rescue medication that's available in nasal form, so that has really revolutionized the willingness of people to be trained in administering that medication. Food allergies, we saw such a big increase, almost exponential over the last 10, maybe 15 years but then recently the last few years we've seen fewer of that and we're finding that students are going to allergists and testing out of their allergies which was surprising to me

[02:42:02] we also now have epinephrine available by nasal form as well so that that is helpful to families So, I wanted to talk briefly about immunizations.

[02:42:19] So, the immunization project is very large. You can imagine with all of our students and all of the different immunization schedules, we are constantly trying to keep up with this. We have the immunizations that are required when students start school, and then we also have immunizations that are required prior to entry into seventh grade and twelfth grade.

[02:42:42] So at last count, this is the data I have on our immunization compliance rates. Very interesting trend to me is that the percentage of our students who are religiously exempt from immunizations has gone down over the last five years, maybe from before the pandemic to now, we have fewer.

[02:43:07] And I didn't really notice this until this year really dug into it that we have some students who are religiously exempt to all vaccines but then we have some who are just exempt to some they choose to or the religion prohibits some vaccines some of it is when they get to the secondary level i think families are saying we're done with immunizations we don't want to get the seventh grade or the twelfth grade ones but some of it are there's exemption to some of the components in the vaccines themselves we have very few students

[02:43:42] who are medically exempt and when they are they it's quite often a temporary exemption but sometimes it is a student might have had a reaction to a previous one so then they will be exempt for the rest of their lives on that then conditional enrollment describes students who have at least one of each of the required vaccines with a schedule on file for the completion of the series so we we are working with the students to try to get everybody up to to catch up on all the vaccines that they still require the spacing intervals that prevent them from getting low in the beginning of

[02:44:19] the year some of the problems that we've run into over the last couple of years has been that come august appointments for vaccines and physical exams are nearly impossible to get so if a family postpone that or they just move to the area in august they're likely not able to get in to get in immunization even at the health department for a month maybe two months or to try to get in to see a physician as a new patient for a physical exam could be several months so that has been a challenge for us the immunization schedules are very complicated especially when you take into

[02:44:54] consideration the catch-up schedules and the minimum intervals it's very difficult for us to keep up with that but we're doing our best on it we have taken some of the barriers away by bringing in immunizations into the schools.

[02:45:12] So we've held several different clinics in the buildings. We've partnered with the University of Virginia Health System, the Childhood Wellness Initiative, which is a collaboration between pediatric associates and the health department. And then we bring in the health department immunization nurses and whole vaccine clinics in the schools.

[02:45:31] And then Cynthia or Martha Jefferson has helped us with some physical exams. So we have, because of these problems of having all the students get their immunizations by the first day of school, we, last year and this year, have issued a reasonableness approach where students may start school if they have their complete health records, including the required physical exam and an up-to-date immunization record, or they have documentation of an appointment scheduled to get either the physical exam or and or the completion

[02:46:11] of their vaccine series. And so now I'm going to move on to tell you about the medical trainings that we're doing for our teachers and other school personnel. You might be aware that I think it was last year, the legislature passed a law that all All school employees who have regular contact with students with seizures undergo a seizure training program on a biennial basis.

[02:46:42] So we set that up within our professional learning management system so that the teachers can take these courses. We have it in seizures, but we also now have it in anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and naloxone, which is Narcan.

[02:46:59] teachers could take it through the online modules and then the school nurses work with them to show them the specific care plans for the students at their schools as well as the equipment for the students with diabetes i wanted to share with you that we have many emergency rooms now it seems at the schools we have aeds we have stop bleed kits we have narcan we have undesignated albuterol inhalers to be used on any student believed to be suffering an asthma attack we also have undesignated nephrine that can be used on any students believed to be suffering anaphylaxis

[02:47:37] and we have undesignated epinephrine in both the auto injector format of the epi pen and the nasal and which we got from both of those through a grant from the manufacturers that's what i have any questions um i'm very glad to see that we have the narcan bill um how many do you know how much usage we've been getting on that we haven't used we haven't used it at all okay and that's also in the elementary schools as well it's in all schools and then in elementary schools

[02:48:14] most of them have one and sometimes individual staff members will also have it if they undergo the training at the middle and high schools we have more than one just a question on that if an adult is suffering either a staff member or a parent who is visiting is are we allowed to use that yes hopefully they're not using Narcan but actually at the elementary school probably more likely to use it on a visitor I just want to take a moment though to put and just

[02:48:53] really celebrate Eileen. I mean, if you look at that list of the emergency services that we have, can you show that again? Eileen's been the Hollymead nurse early in her career, and then through her leadership, took on division-level nursing. And I had the privilege of working with her like 15 years ago,

knowing nothing about nursing, got to work with Eileen. And I just want to say your ambition has always been to get out in front of these things. So the AEDs, for

[02:49:30] example, we were among the very few school systems in the state to just start having AEDs on our own and it was all around Eileen's initiative to do that. The other pieces I remember you working really hard on was the auto injectors for allergic reactions. That was something you were pushing before the state came out with it and then we had a legislative process that we went through to to work with the state to make that a bill so when i look at that growing list i just want to recognize just your being on the forefront of that and always putting the safety of our kids and our staff in

[02:50:09] the forefront thank you i have to say that rob bell was helpful too because he's a force of nature so if you give something to him he'll take it i actually have a question related to that actually talking about getting ahead of things. Do you anticipate with the changes going on with health and human services and potential with vaccine changes how does that affect us on like a very local level? I mean do you anticipate any changes in that and how we'll have to I mean I'm even thinking like from a budget standpoint as we're thinking about like where we're allocating money like you know are we going to be needing to like have vaccine clinics or educational things for our

[02:50:45] students anything like that that's going to like keep our kids safe well i i guess i don't really know how that's going to impact us are we going to get to the point where we're not requiring vaccines i'm a little nervous about that um we vaccines are required vaccines are available to families irrespective of their ability to pay so the health department has several different pots and they have the vaccines for and so does uva and martha jefferson they have vaccines for children

[02:51:18] so those are available at no charge to families who can't afford them and um and i if the vaccines are no longer required we might not be able to get the vaccines from those kind of programs so i really don't know i i was talking to the health department epidemiologist today he said that he's a little nervous that these uh government shutdowns are going to trickle down to the state level and we might have a problem with the health department and not having as many employees.

[02:51:52] Some of them might be furloughed, but I don't really know how that works. - Interesting, okay, I was just curious. - I have a kind of blended question comment. So I was recently on a school visit with Dr. Haas and Ms. Spillman, and I was kind of floored at, I think it was 9:30, quarter to 10 snack time, and I saw your slide about diabetes and some of the children and whatnot.

[02:52:17] Is there any correlation between nutrition and the dietary departments at the various schools for children? Because that time when they were on snack time and I saw ho-ho's and M&M's and Cokes and energy drinks, and I know it's even hard to educate adults to do the right thing.

[02:52:38] And so I'm just curious and do this, are any of the lunches geared toward children who may be diabetics or what have you? - Yeah, the Child Nutrition Services have ingredients lists. And I was at one of the schools, I was talking to them, and they have the list of students who have dietary restrictions.

[02:53:00] We have students that have severe allergies, but we also have students who can't have certain things because of their religion, or because they're gluten intolerant, or lactose intolerant. And so the cafeteria does make allowances those students and they can provide safe nutritious food for the students with the restrictions as far as what the kids bring in from home at the school health advisory board level

we try to address that it's very difficult to tell parents what they can and can't feed their children and they they have a choice in that matter so we do try to educate the families and the students about

[02:53:39] the nutritious food that is good, the ideal setup for good learning. And so I think having the free breakfast and lunch programs at the schools really help because kids have those as an option. Thank you. Just one thing, Dr. Haas mentioned how you've been very assertive in building our health program. And I know my colleague Rebecca knows that you're also working with a dental committee or dental committee to try to bring increased dental care in our schools which would

[02:54:19] be a huge huge benefit working with the foundation i hope as well i'm very happy with that foundation i'm glad that that's part of our team now yeah um i think with that i think the combination of what we do in terms of putting out 14 000 touches for students plus the number of mental health contacts It makes, I think, Albemarle County Public Schools one of the biggest basic pediatric care providers, certainly in Central Virginia, and I think that's something to be proud of.

[02:54:58] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for everything. The penultimate speaker will be Dr. McLaughlin. I lost my voice. All right.

[02:55:13] Good evening, board members. I'm Pat McLaughlin. I'm here to give a brief overview of the Virginia School Performance and Support Framework.

[02:55:32] tonight and also to review our school level results with you. The Virginia School Framework, the new Virginia School Performance Framework, is going to be a pretty integral measure of whether or not we are meeting the mission that we have in Albemarle County Public Schools to end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities. If you remember, our accreditation and accountability system has undergone some pretty significant changes in this past year. We used to have six to nine indicators that were ranked on a level of one to three, and if any of those indicators were a level three, then a school

[02:56:10] was accredited with conditions. This has changed beginning in the summer of 2022. I'll give you a brief timeline, but I won't go through all of it. But starting in the summer of 2022, the State Board of Education was charged with coming up with a new system that separated accreditation from accountability, and those are some of the key milestones that they met along the way, with one of the final ones being just this month, us getting our first glimpse at our performance results from the 24-25 school year.

[02:56:41] You may recall that back in February, I came and gave a rather detailed update on how those performance framework scores are calculated, so I won't go into all of that tonight, but this has a link to that previous presentation if you want to get those details in a nutshell the each of our schools depending on the the level of the school it gets a certain percentage of their final score from things like growth mastery readiness and graduation rates that are there it's generally a combination of reading math science and English language learner progress growth

[02:57:18] in reading and math and chronic absenteeism in advanced coursework for our kids. At the high school level we see a little bit of a difference where we factor in both four and six year graduation rates and a new measure called the 3E ready-for-life framework. Some key reminders about our data this year: high school data for the most part with the exception of chronic absenteeism is cohort based data for

the most recent graduating class. So when you are looking at when you are hearing about individual scores for high schools for reading

[02:57:55] or math or science those are up to four years old from from when the graduating class took their first test in math or their biology test or their reading test so it doesn't really reflect last year's scores that we shared with you at our previous board meeting chronic absenteeism does reflect the last year of the school but all the other measures are graduation cohort based the other key piece to remember is that growth is now calculated in a very different way previously growth was students were put into performance bands and if you moved up from one

[02:58:35] performance band to another but didn't pass your test you were counted as a pass for the purposes of accreditation because of because you met growth now growth is calculated for 100 of our students who took a test in the previous year and it's done on a bell curve by percentiles but we don't know what percentile students need to get to to achieve that growth score so that's one of the things that is a bit of a frustration for schools is that they don't really know how to predict whether students are on track to hit the state growth scores or not so when you put all

[02:59:10] of that together each school comes out with a score and falls into one of four performance categories the highest is distinguished which is 90 points or above on track is 80 to 89 points off track 65 to 79 points and needs intensive support is below 65 points one other caveat i will put on this is that none of the results you're going to see tonight are official yet uh we have been uh see saw these for the first time probably about a week and a half ago uh since then there have been almost daily updates because different divisions around the state are finding discrepancies

[02:59:48] in them, reporting them to the DOE, and they're running the numbers again. I think that's somewhat to be expected with a new system like this, but we expected to have a full report for you tonight. There's one key piece that's missing that I'll discuss in just a minute. So in addition to those performance indicators that are created at the state level in order to to meet our federal accountability measures we also have to have what we call a federal accountability program as well there are two categories of federal improvement that schools can fall into this year one is called comprehensive support and

[03:00:25] improvement that only impacts title one schools and and if you are in the lowest five percent lowest performing five percent of title one schools you get a designation of comprehensive support and improvement that stays with you for three years we also every annually the state identifies schools for what they call targeted support and improvement it's a rather complicated formula that's based on some of the scores of the title one schools that are there there is a third category called additional targeted support and improvement but that is not good that's a three-year identification and that won't be

[03:01:00] identified again until the 2028 school year so what we are missing right now is any federal accountability indicators and that's important because if a school is identified for federal improvement status all those categories do despite where they land with their score they get a one category penalty and they move back one category so with what we know as of this morning's update these are the scores of our schools. Any school that is in the green is above 90 and in the distinguished category. Any school that is in the blue is in the on-track category

[03:01:38] and the schools that are in the orange are in the off-track category. You can see that some of these margins are very slim between those two categories. We've got two schools that are just under the bar by less than about two tenths of point or one tenth of a point we've got one school that's over the bar

uh by two tenths of a point there to look at this uh another way we can see here's just a list of where our schools fall right now uh with um western brownsville murray ivy stony point lab henley and hollymead and distinguished i won't read every single one to you you can see our on-track schools and our off-tracks

[03:02:17] are burley agner scottsville greer and woodbrook and remember that this is prior to any federal designations coming out so if burley for example were to get a targeted support and improvement designation uh despite the fact that they were just uh two tenths of a point away from being on track they would move back to needs intensive support um so that is the last piece of information that we're waiting for we've been told uh well we were told it was going to come out last week now we've been told it's going to come out this week uh whenever that comes out a week from then they are going to make uh all of the information public on the school quality profile sites uh

[03:02:56] that's when we'll be able to see kind of what percentage of of schools throughout the state are in the different categories and um and have a little bit more information for that so that's what i've got for you tonight i'd be happy to um to take any questions did we have a school that was in the in needs intensive support last year and is no longer in that so last year was all model data because we didn't have the system but they ran it on the 2324 data and we had i believe four schools that were below 80 uh there gotcha yep okay thank you so it looks like we're improving at least well now we've got five right um well i meant well i meant the one

[03:03:36] Sorry. Can you go back to the here. So this is where we are right now. That's correct. Okay. So we don't have anyone that's in the needs intensive support category at this. No, but it is certainly possible that we will see one or more schools.

[03:03:54] Right now we have five schools that have a targeted support and improvement designation for them. So it's possible. But targeted support and improvement is calculated totally differently this year than it was in the past uh so do we expect them to we will have more in that category or what we would so if any school got one of those designations they would move one category to the right to the right okay one category down got you thank you for clarifying i think i've asked you this if if we get that designation of needs targeted support or whatever

[03:04:29] it was is there any money that follows that so this is basically what we know uh right now is that the uh the second paragraph in each of these at least in the off track and the needs intensive support is that schools may receive intensive support from the state or supports for student groups uh we don't really know much more than that i will say that when um when schools have received the federal designation they are grant eligible uh the targeted support and improvement in the past has made schools eligible for a \$75,000 grant, which all of our schools applied for and used, and I think used in a way that is certainly helping them improve.

[03:05:05] We did have a couple of schools last year, Greer and Red Hill, that were previous targeted support and improvement schools that worked their way out of it last year. And now they're... And now it's a yearly designation, so we're just in wait-and-see mode with that.

[03:05:22] I don't know how you do all these numbers, but... It's a lot. anybody have any further questions thank you thank you it's dr haza thank you patrick so i actually have no presentation uh so uh everything that you've got i put in the item um i'll be really brief so with some of our staffing changes in our communications department we use that as an opportunity to have a discussion about how we work with the legislature about our priorities

[03:06:02] So, Dr. Acuff charged me, charged Jennifer Butler and I to have a conversation with her, come back with a proposed structure for that. I've attached a draft structure for you to take a look at.

[03:06:18] There's no decision tonight, so if you didn't get a chance to take a look at it, that's fine. The other part is we did take, as part of that structure, VSBA has a set of talking points for the legislature for this year.

[03:06:37] VAS has a draft set of talking points that we haven't voted on yet, but we will at our fall conference. So those are both provided. And then what I did is did a quick analysis of the two sets and came up with one set for you to review.

[03:06:57] So my ask is that you take, look it over, look at what VAS came up with, look at what VSBA was looking at, because we generally don't deviate a whole lot from them in terms of priorities.

[03:07:13] And no decisions this meeting, next meeting. It's not a big priority. As we work our way through, we'll at some point want to arrive at a set of talking points that you can use, and then we can carry those forward. The other part is if there's something that's not on that set that you want to advocate for, then I think we need to bring that to the board and have a broader discussion about it to go ahead and then have the board make a final decision on this is our set.

[03:07:42] So I did provide some discussion questions, although I can imagine, you know, you may not want to have that discussion tonight, but these are ponders of how's this structure going to work for us? What would we like to do?

[03:07:57] should we align with the the two broad organizations where are we different and then uh where we really want to have our our impact any questions are we going to leave the legislative priorities area under the new communications person what we will do is we'll just work on it as a board and then if you when you take a look at the draft process what we said was if there is something unique that this board really wants to push for, then we would work with our communications department because there is expertise in that department to carry it forward to the legislature. Perhaps even

[03:08:36] to do advocacy during the legislative period and then also do visits. The other, I'll detour a little bit. When I first pushed this out, I pushed it out as well to Amber, who works with the student school board reps and i also have a student cabinet we her proposal was that the student school board reps and the student cabinet plan uh our legislator visit and they host it they talk with them they do all the things that the communication shop used to do but it would be

[03:09:12] more fun because the students could get to do it and they would learn a lot from it and the board could enjoy kind of taking the back seat to the kids feels like a broader ownership of it kind of yeah i mean what man and i talked about was given that that used to be what the lobbying used to be what um helen did whether it should remain in communications whether we should outsource it whether our lunches with the legislators made any sense how could we make it a more effective and

[03:09:47] more efficient entity and i guess that's what we're working toward so and our first step was to collect data from our from the region and you'll see a little report at the beginning where most of the school systems in our region don't do not have staff that do that they they will do what kind of what we were proposing so first is i mean the structure seems to make sense start broad and then change as we need to um one thing i also want to mention is that i was was at the ACEs meeting yesterday and this might be a thing for Rosalind but I know that we had

[03:10:24] talked about possibly adding one thing to our priorities this year about the difficulty of getting solar onto new buildings so I just want to mention that so that it's sort of in the air I know that'll have to come back and we'll have to think about it but I just want to note that from the ACEs meeting yesterday. Thank you. Is there any other business then? I have a comment.

[03:10:54] I just want to thank Dr. Berlin. You were a rock star tonight. You did a really good job of handling the crowd. Thank you, guys. Appreciate it. Thank you. Any further business? Well, with that, we have a very late night, but I think we got through it just fine.

[03:11:13] Thank you, everybody. Thank you, all the police officers. Sorry about that. Good night.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com