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Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, May 28, 2026

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[00:01:17] Clerk Thompson, could we do a roll call for this? Yes, Dr. Berlin, I did not hear the motion. Oh, I move that the board uphold the decision of the superintendent's exudy in step two of the grievance presented in closed session.

[00:01:35] Thank you. And the second again? Who seconded? Ellen. Ellen. Ms. Osborne. Ms. Fillman. Abstain. Dr. Acuff. Yes. Mr. Beard.

[00:01:53] Yes. Mr. Dillon Beck. Yes. Ms. Lee? Yes. Ms. Osborne? Yes. Chair Berlin? Yes. The motion carries. Do I have any other motions coming out of closed session? Yes, I have one.

[00:02:09] I have two. I will run them together. I move that the school board approve the addendum to the superintendent's employment contract regarding the annual salary increase effective July 1, 2026. Second. Moved by Ms. Osborne.

[00:02:26] Seconded by Dr. Acuff. This will be a roll call vote. Mr. Dillenbeck? Yes. Ms. Lee? Yes. Ms. Osborne? Yes. Ms. Spillman? Yes. Dr. Acuff? Yes. Mr. Beard? Yes.

[00:02:42] Chair Berlin? Yes. Motion carries. Thank you. And the next one is a move that the school board approve the addendum to the chief legal officer's employment contract regarding the annual salary increase effective July 1, 2026. Second.

[00:02:58] Moved by Ms. Osborne. Second by Ms. Lee. we will need a roll call vote for this. Dr. Acuff? Yes. Mr. Beard? Yes. Mr. Dillenbeck? Yes. Ms. Lee? Yes. Ms. Osborne? Yes. Ms. Spillman? Yes. Chair Berlin? Yes. Motion carries. Thank you. Do I have any other motions coming out? Nope. Seeing no other motions coming out of closed session, we will do our roll call and introduction. Mr. Black, would you mind starting today?

[00:03:29] Good evening, everyone. I'm Josiah Black, Chief Legal Officer. Matthew Hawes, Superintendent. Bob Beard, Samuel Miller District. Jim Dillenbeck, Rio District. Allison Spillman, At-Large Representative. Rebecca Berlin, Whitehall District.

[00:03:45] Ellen Osborne, Scottsville District. Judy Lee-Rivana District. Kate Acuff, Jack Jewett District. Dan Redding, Chief HR Officer. Pat McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent.

[00:04:06] St. Thompson, Clerk of the Board. And I know for those of you who are, not to call you out, but sometimes when you're watching, you don't realize while we're laughing. But I'll just say that Dan gave himself a different title for a moment that he decided he really didn't want.

[00:04:22] So thank you. And as always, thank you to our two officers in the back who serve us every day in our community and protect us every day and are here to keep us safe during this meeting as well. We will now stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:04:39] We are going to pause for a moment of silence, but during this moment of silence, I want to remember a student, a past student at Monticello High School.

[00:05:14] I would like for everyone to pause for a moment of silence in memory of Walker William Fenley. Walker was a 2024 Monticello High School graduate and was attending the University of Mississippi. He is remembered by his family and friends as joyful, energetic, deeply loved, and someone who brought light into the lives of those around him.

[00:05:37] Please join me in a moment of silence to remember Walker. Thank you so much.

[00:06:05] Please remember, as always, to hug your kids close. Deep breath. The next item on our agenda is the approval of our agenda. Do I have someone who has a motion for the approval of tonight's agenda? I move we approve tonight's agenda.

[00:06:22] Second. Moved by Ms. Lee, seconded by Ms. Spillman. All those in favor of tonight's agenda? Aye. Any opposed? That motion passes, and we will move on with tonight's agenda. The next part of our agenda is our announcements. And for the first piece of it, we are going to do a spotlight on education.

[00:06:42] For those of you who were with us last board meeting, we celebrated our 25-26 school board student representatives and the amazing influence they had on the work that we do on this dais and support us and help us as a conduit to the voices of the students in each and every high school across the district.

[00:07:05] And tonight, as a way to move forward from that, as to continue to grow into next school year, we are pleased to recognize and introduce the students who will serve as the 26-27 student school board representatives. These students were selected to help bring student voice and perspective to the work of the school board.

[00:07:24] While they do not serve as voting members, their role is an important one. They help the board better understood the experiences, the concerns, and the ideas of students across our schools. Each

representative brings their own background, interests, and perspective to this role. But they share a common commitment to listening to their peers, to representing their school communities, and to contributing thoughtfully to the conversations that shape our division.

[00:07:48] We are so grateful for their willingness to serve and look forward to the insight they will bring during the coming school year. At this time, we would like to introduce our 26-27 school board representatives. And Jim, I'm going to start with you. Okay. I'm happy to introduce to the Albemarle High School representative, Milan Mukherjee.

[00:08:14] Milan is a rising senior at Albemarle High School. Since joining ACPS, Milan has built connections with students from many backgrounds and brings the perspective of a student who understands both the experience of entering a new school community and becoming actively involved in it.

[00:08:30] He's played on the AHS-JV soccer team and also plays travel soccer with students from across ACPS, giving him the opportunity to hear from peers throughout the division. Milan describes himself as a thoughtful listener, confident communicator, and a team-oriented problem solver.

[00:08:48] He brings a strong interest in student well-being, belonging, college and career prep, and making sure student voices are part of the decisions that shape ACPS schools. Welcome. Thank you so much.

[00:09:05] And if you are in the audience, would you just stand to be recognized? I don't know if our representatives are in the audience or not, but if any of them are, just let us know with a quick wave when we read your bio.

[00:09:24] Ms. Lee, would you read the community labs? Yes, I'm pleased to introduce Charlotte Belsh's from Community Lab School. Charlotte is a rising junior at Community Lab School. They value listening to different perspectives and believe strongly in respectful dialogue and student voice.

[00:09:40] Through Community Lab School's project-based learning model, Charlotte has developed skills in public speaking, critical thinking, and collaboration. As a student in a small, county-wide school community, they're able to connect with peers from across Albemarle County and hear a wide range of student experiences. Charlotte brings a thoughtful perspective to their role with a particular interest in helping all students feel supported, heard, and represented.

[00:10:03] Thank you so much. Ms. Osborne, would you read about our representative from Monticello High School? Yes, the representative from Monticello High School would be Kenny Chinchilla. Kenny is a rising senior at Monticello.

[00:10:18] He brings a strong desire to represent his school community and help ensure that all students feel included and heard. Kenny has a long-standing interest in student leadership and previously represented his elementary school in discussions about how to improve schools for students and teachers.

[00:10:36] He is proud of Monticello High School and ACPS and sees this role as an opportunity to give back to a community that has made him feel welcomed and supported. Kenny brings a thoughtful student perspective with particular interest in curriculum, responsible use of technology, and student engagement.

[00:10:56] Thank you so much. Welcome. Ms. Spillman, would you read about our representative from Western Albemarle? Sure. I am pleased to introduce Madeline Brand. Madeline is a rising junior at Western Albemarle High School. She's been connected to ACPS through her elementary, middle, and high school years and brings a strong understanding of the student experience across the division.

[00:11:18] Madeline describes herself as a dedicated listener who values hearing the needs and concerns of her peers. She also serves on the Youth Council of the League of Women Voters, where she has gained experience representing student perspectives in a civic setting. Madeline brings a thoughtful voice to the role with particular interest in student safety, classroom engagement, and ensuring that school policies are balanced and responsive to students.

[00:11:40] Thank you so much. And last, our alternate from Albemarle High School, Mr. Beard, would you share that? Thank you. Pleased to introduce alternate student school board representative Jacob Miller. Jacob is a rising junior at Albemarle High School and will serve as the alternate student school board representative.

[00:11:57] He's actively involved in a wide range of academic, music, leadership, and student organizations, including Tri-M Music Honor Society, Albemarle Acapella and Minute Men, Physics Club, We the People, Model United Nations, the Revolution Student Newspaper, Jazz Band, Math Honor Society, National Honor Society, and the Albemarle County Student Senate.

[00:12:22] Through these experiences, Jacob has worked with students across many interests, backgrounds, and perspectives. He brings a strong interest in policy, governance, student voice, and constructive dialogue to his role as alternate representative. Thank you, Jacob.

[00:12:39] - Thank you so much to all of our student representatives. They will begin when the school year starts and you will see them alternating. So we will have one representative from each school, one representative at each meeting and they will spend their additional time coming into any of the meetings, but they will kind of rotate their time on the dais.

[00:13:03] And then while they are at the school, part of their time is meant to be gathering information through either focus groups or surveys or conversations within their clubs so that they are truly being the voice for all of the students. In addition to the other pieces like the Student Senate that we shared about last board meeting.

[00:13:22] So huge congratulations to everyone and we look forward to working with you in the fall. The next piece on our agenda is our school board superintendent and committee updates. Mr. Haas, I see that you have a brief statement that you wanted to share about the end of the school year.

[00:13:41] Absolutely. I just want to thank our community, thank all of our students, our staff of all kinds, our educators, education support specialists, our leaders for just a really great school year. I think a lot of us remember that last summer was two weeks shorter due to opening a little earlier.

[00:14:02] And to me, that just meant extra work, extra adaptation from all of our employees. And they were really up to the task and really surpassed, I think, everyone's expectations. All of us had the opportunity to attend graduations last week and even the week before.

[00:14:19] And with all the years that I've been in the county, I have to say that they were the most positive and, I think, centered on student expression and student-centered of the graduations that I've ever seen,

including when I was a principal.

[00:14:37] And they really felt like celebrations of students. I want to thank our board members for attending those graduations. I know it can be a long evening, but I observed all of you at the graduations. You're smiling at each student coming across the stage, and I hope that you can see really the fruit of the labor of the school system come through and really speaks highly of our community and all the support that we have.

[00:15:03] So I just want to thank everyone for all your outstanding work and another exceptional school year. Tomorrow we have a half day, and so students will be coming in and celebrating the end of the school year, And then Monday will be our last day for pretty much all of our 10-month employees at that point.

[00:15:22] So thank you. And I think, did you want to get an update on EDEP right now? Yeah, why don't we, we can go ahead and, if you wanted to go ahead and give an update on that. Dr. Kaiser does have a few updates on that.

[00:15:37] Thank you so much. Sure. We're currently working with community partners for our two smallest programs, Scottsville and Red Hill Elementary School. The Scottsville program, we will be working with the Boys and Girls Club, and we recently had an open house where families were invited to talk with the Boys and Girls Club and hear about the programming for the upcoming school year.

[00:16:11] We are very close to being able to have an open house for Red Hill. We had wanted to do that before school was out. However, we have to go through the procurement process through the county.

[00:16:29] And until we have completed that process, that piece is on hold. But we are definitely having open house for families for Red Hill. Our community partner is very excited to engage with families and they are on board and ready to go once we are finished with the process.

[00:16:53] So we're really excited about next year and having our community partners really engage and be part of the after school programming. And as a reminder, we have our combined site at Agner with Greer, Woodbrook, and Agner together.

[00:17:16] And very excited about that. We are already talking about different enrichment and club activities and working on the schedule and structure for that program. So we're excited about all of the new opportunities for our students for next year.

[00:17:36] thank you can i ask a quick question and we usually don't ask questions during this but because it will the update to the red hill program will come after the school year how will families learn about that open house how will it be so we will send messaging to all of our families in red hill and we will invite them to come we'll invite them to come to the school to meet with our community partner and and have an open house uh meet and greet type of event so parents should

[00:18:13] look at sir at email or at power school or what would be the what mechanism we'll send a direct message from the edep office perfect regarding the event and a flyer thank you i appreciate that other updates or committee updates for other updates i'd like to just to tell everybody about an event tomorrow at the yancey community health center they are having a back to school vaccines and physicals event for rising k through 12 12th graders at the yancey community center

[00:18:47] in esmont tomorrow from 1 to 3 30. they're going to be offering physicals for k5 students and vaccines for k12 students including dtap tdap hpv hep b hep a mmr polio varicella and then and

meningococcal so this is a if you're looking to get vaccines or physicals before school starts next fall yancey tomorrow from 1 to 3 30 would be a good uh alternative for you thank you thank you so much uh chair berlin i want to tell you that the audit committee uh which you guys

[00:19:24] have graciously allowed me to continue serving on uh met uh on the 19th uh to kick off the county audit and the schools are represented on that just to make sure all the i's are dotted and t's are crossed it was good meeting it is the audit is moving forward with a company called brown edwards we went through the new gasby regulations that will be required of the county it was all very interesting all designed to make financial statements much more understandable by the general republic so those things are moving in a good direction and also um one of the things that

[00:20:01] we do at the audit committee is we learn about the county's fraud and abuse system. There's a county hotline, and we learned that the county stopped about \$260,000 worth of fraudulent checks from going through. So there's good progress. Kind of some good stuff on that. Awesome. Thank you so much. Other updates, Mr. Dillenbeck? Dr. Acuff and I had the opportunity to go to Ms. Brown's AP bio class yesterday for presentations or tuesday uh from three different student groups the students

[00:20:40] at albemarle high school i don't know about western monticello but i can say that the students at albemarle are doing some amazing group projects and uh that was that was exciting to see and shout out to mr thomas at center one several of us were there for the capstone presentations a couple weeks ago that were just, again, just so impressive.

[00:21:05] Impressive, and I mean, the two in Ms. Brown's class, one was on, what, the moths, whatever the moths were, but also about vape detectors and the number, only the newest bathrooms have them, and there's problems with the bathrooms that don't have them, as well as with the ones that do. But it's something that we perhaps should talk about at some point.

[00:21:34] Thank you so much. Any other updates? The next item on our agenda is public comment, and I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Acoff. Ms. Thompson, do we have any additional? Okay. I will read the guidelines. We welcome public comment at our school board meetings. To sign up to speak during the public comment period, you can do it in several ways.

[00:22:07] Online, sign up is available from 9 a.m. on the Monday of the meeting week until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. By phone, you can call the school board clerk's office to sign up until 2 p.m. on the meeting day. In person, sign up at the meeting is available from 6 p.m.

[00:22:24] until public comment period for in-person meetings only. Please note that the public comment is not received at special board meetings unless specified on the agenda. Each speaker will have three minutes to speak, but the chair, with board consent, may reduce this two minutes should there be 14 or more speakers.

[00:22:45] The maximum number of people or groups that may speak at a meeting is 20. If there are more than 20 people or groups who wish to speak at a particular meeting, each speaker will be assigned a number, and numbers will be drawn to determine which people or groups will have the opportunity to speak.

[00:23:02] Those who do not have the opportunity to speak at a particular meeting may sign up to speak at a subsequent meeting and or may submit written comments for the school board's consideration. Speakers should state their name, address, or voting district.

[00:23:21] Address the comments to the school board as a whole, not to individuals. Limit comments to school board governance or school division operations. Comments may not be directed to individual board members, division leadership, or staff.

[00:23:37] Provide written statements and supporting materials to the clerk. The school board will use a timer to track each speaker's time. Once the time is up, speakers are asked to wrap up their comments. To maintain respect, please refrain from clapping or other audible forms of support.

[00:23:56] You may raise your hand instead. Debate with the school board is not allowed. And the projection system is for staff presenters only. Tonight, we have 10 speakers signed up. I will call you three at a time, so numbers two and three be ready.

[00:24:16] The first speaker is Heather Tierney, and then Allison Keenan, and then Vanessa Smith. And you can adjust the microphones when you're there.

[00:24:36] Can you hear me okay? No. No? Better? Better. All right. Thank you. So good evening. Thank you for having me. My name is Heather Tierney. My address is 2852 Monacan Trail Road in North Garden. I am a Red Hill Elementary School parent, president of the Red Hill PTO, and I'm here tonight on behalf of the Red Hill community to speak about the Extended Day Enrichment Program. I appreciate that you addressed it already, but we know procurement can be a long process. This statement has been signed by 47 people in our school community, most of whom

[00:25:12] could not be here tonight due to a school event. The Red Hill community is deeply concerned that the EDEP program is not currently planned for the 2026-2027 school year. Many of our families rely on this program so they can continue working, and the absence of EDEP places a significant burden on our school community. Every other school in the county already has plans in place for next school year. Red Hill families deserve the same stability and support. We have several concerns.

[00:25:44] Red Hill is a Title I school, serving families who already face economic challenges. There are six Title I elementary schools in Albemarle County, and five of those are the schools being impacted by this change. We are a very rural community. No alternative for after-school care exists.

[00:26:02] Without EDEP, many parents will be forced to reduce work hours or even leave their jobs. This is exacerbated for single parents. The county has not communicated with us clearly or transparently, despite indications that this has been under consideration for more than a year.

[00:26:20] Transportation is not a viable substitute. We don't have the bus capacity to send students home safely at dismissal. Red Hill consistently receives fewer resources and later communication than other schools, and this situation reinforces that pattern.

[00:26:37] Medical needs of our children need to be considered. When EDEP operates as part of the school system, Staff can be trained to support students with 504 plans and medical needs, such as type 1 diabetes, asthma, and epilepsy. Some families have already set aside dependent care funds through their employers, expecting that our program would continue.

[00:27:00] Trust and reliability matter. Families need to know that we can trust the people caring for our children. The lowest bidder-as-care provider does not promote this trust. The existing EDP program has been thoughtfully planned and implemented. outdoor playtime, older children, mentoring younger children, arts and crafts, outdoor learning, even literacy. This isn't just babysitting.

[00:27:24] With those considerations in mind, we have two requests. We need confirmation that there will be an EDEP program at Red Hill for the 2026 school year immediately. We want clear and timely communication with leadership at Red Hill and families that utilize EDEP services about the future of the program.

[00:27:40] We urge you to act quickly and ensure that Red Hill has a reliable, fully supported EDPP program for next year. Thank you. Next, Allison Keenan, and then following that, Vanessa Smith, and then Ari Zlotnick. Hi, my name is Allison Keenan. I've been the site facilitator for the EDEP program at Red Hill for the past five years. During that time, I've come to know every student and their families personally. These children and families became much more

[00:28:19] than students and parents to me. They became my friends, my community, and honestly, like a second family. I've watched these kids grow up, celebrated their accomplishments, and built relationships with families who trusted us to care for their children every day. Redhill is a small, close-knit Title I school, and that sense of community matters deeply. In our program, we created a safe environment where children felt known and cared for. I want to be clear that my concerns tonight are not a reflection of our current EDEP director. She has been supportive throughout the process and was not the director when these decisions were being made. What has been the hardest is learning that concerns about funding have been known for quite some time, yet staff and families were

[00:28:57] informed so late in the school year. Because of that timeline, many families still do not know what child care will look like next school year. While another program may eventually take our place, there's still uncertainty around when that could realistically happen. Contracts take time to finalize, and licensing alone can take up to 90 days. That means that families could potentially begin the school year without child care in place. I truly believe that with earlier communication, more notice, and community involvement, this program could have been saved through Community Solutions. Red Hill families have always shown up to support the people and the programs that

[00:29:34] care for their children. Many parents are now stressed, scrambling for answers, and are trying to figure out how they will continue working with very little time to prepare. This is not just about a program closing. It is about children losing a place where they felt safe and cared for and families losing a support system they depended on. I ask the board to please consider the real impact this has on the Red Hill community and to do everything possible to support these families

[00:29:59] moving forward. Thank you. Thank you. Next, Vanessa Smith, Ari Zlotnick. Hi, my name is Ari Zlotnick and I'm the school counselor at Red Hill Elementary. I'm here today to ask the board to reconsider eliminating the EDEP program at Red Hill next year. I share the same concerns that several of

[00:30:38] the Red Hill community members have detailed in an open letter that Heather just read. In particular, I'd like to echo the concern about the lack of transparency around this decision. Despite ample time to collect input from families and staff, we were never consulted about a decision with a direct impact on our community.

[00:30:58] It's hard for me to imagine a similar decision being made without any parent input at a more affluent school. As a small, rural, Title I school, may not always be as vocal as wealthier schools, but our community cares about the quality of our students' care just as deeply. If we have been asked, I'm sure any of our staff members would tell you how important the EDEP program is to our students and their families. Red Hill's EDEP staff, Allison Keenan and Allison Moore, are trained, gifted, and caring educators

who have been at Red Hill for more than four years. That kind of retention seems unlikely at most vendors,

[00:31:37] who likely offer lower wages and lower training standards than the EDEP program. Students frequently tell me how much they enjoy the program and how much they love the staff. Ms. Allison and Ms. Moore are integrated into our community even beyond the EDEP program.

[00:31:54] Ms. Moore is a teaching assistant in kindergarten, and Ms. Allison goes out of her way to have lunch with our students almost every day. We're moving these stable, trusted adults and replacing them with workers who likely have less training less competitive wages and higher turnover means that we would not be giving our students the same level of care as other acps schools in addition as the open letter pointed out a vendor would not be required to follow 504 plans or iep's which means our students with disabilities would not be served as well as those at other schools one of the benefits of edep is that the staff get the same training and are held to the same standards as other acps

[00:32:32] employees including the anti-racism policy and CRT work. The same can't be guaranteed of outside contractors. I understand your program is small and that the budget is tight for next year. However, I know from experience that our community is dedicated and resourceful when it comes to solving problems and taking care of each other. If you reconsider eliminating the program this coming school year and allow us to participate in finding solutions, I'm confident we can find a way forward thank you next uh the next three speakers are reed crowback

[00:33:09] nancy konig and latara radland members of the school board my name is reed crowback and i'm a student at community lab school here in albemarle i am part of the green teen alliance a group supported by the community climate collaborative that unites the various high school environmental clubs in the area for meaningful student-led environmental action all of the environmental clubs in the area have identified problems with recycling and composting systems in the Albemarle

[00:33:48] and Charlottesville public schools, including inconsistent management, poor communication, and high contamination rates. In the high school, student-led environmental clubs take time out of their busy days to remove contamination from recycling and composting bins while ensuring that these bins are easily accessible and are widely available. In the past few weeks, I've dug damp paper towels and half-eaten food out of recycling bins, and removed plastic bags and glass bottles from compost bins at my school. Students at other area high schools face similar

[00:34:23] challenges, often at a much larger scale. In elementary and middle schools, recycling and composting systems are widely unavailable. On average, over 30% of waste produced in educational systems belongs to the food waste category, and a significant percentage of waste is recyclable.

[00:34:42] Yet the existing waste management system at the schools results in most of this being thrown away. Students have had little success addressing these issues at the individual school level, so we are coming to you to work towards a universal solution. The petition that was emailed to you this morning and has been presented to the clerk outlines six concrete methods for improving recycling and composting systems in all Charlottesville and Albemarle schools.

[00:35:07] We are asking you to adopt a paper and metal only approach to recycling and ensure that that every classroom has a clearly labeled recycling bin. We are asking you to introduce paper towel composting in bathrooms and food composting during lunch periods.

[00:35:23] We are asking you to increase education efforts around recycling and composting and clearly communicate changes to waste management systems to the entire community. Finally, we are asking you to facilitate a gradual transition towards school staff managing and recycling and composting systems, so that student and so that student clubs can focus more on education efforts and other issues. Staff must be fairly compensated for this increased responsibility to ensure that they are incentivized to properly manage with these waste systems. The petition was signed by 292 students, school staff, parents, community members, and local

[00:36:02] organizations, illustrating the importance of this issue to the broader community. About 59% of signatures came from students, 11% from school staff, and 11% from parents. We believe that positive environmental action only works if it is carried out collaboratively, so we want to work alongside the county and the city school divisions to implement meaningful change. Schools throughout the country face the same waste management issues, so adopting a universal waste management system would be great. Thank you.

[00:36:31] Thank you, Mr. Komet. Next, Nancy Koenig, next Latara Raglin, and then Emily Burton. Hi, I'm Nancy Koenig from Scottsville. I'm the parent of a 2002 Monticello High School graduate.

[00:36:47] I retired from Red Hill in 2014 after teaching for more than 30 years in three county elementary schools. The students of Albemarle County need a method of discipline that supports their education while affirming them personally. At the last board meeting, I heard parents report a lack of effective discipline at two schools.

[00:37:09] Since then, I have reviewed the October 2025 update from the Department of Student Services. I substituted from 2014 through the pandemic. I chose to substitute only at the three schools where I already had a relationship with the children and families because in my experience, effective teaching involves relationships and consistent discipline. 15 years or so ago, the county spent thousands of dollars to send teachers, principals, and counselors to workshops to learn about responsive

[00:37:44] classrooms. As a result of implementing this program countywide, the children knew what the consequences of their actions would be. They knew if they harmed a classmate or school property, they would need to make reparation. Through the program, students got an education in civics and American values.

[00:38:03] The community of the classroom and relationships were strengthened. Students didn't have to worry about the misbehavior of their classmates. They knew how they were to behave and they knew the consequences of their classmates and their own actions. With these expectations, they could concentrate on learning. At that time, parents outside of the county paid money to send their children to Albemarle because of the quality of the education and the culture. Scores were high.

[00:38:35] What has happened to that successful program? In 2022, I stopped substituting because there was no consistent discipline at those schools. From what I heard at the last meeting, what I found in 2022 persists in 2026, at least at two schools. As you know, a key duty of the school board is student discipline. The October update does show improvement from 2022 to 2025, yet the scores are down and parents are concerned about discipline. The school board and the school

[00:39:13] leadership need to be of one mind on school discipline and that discipline needs to be consistently and clearly stated to the students and implemented and supported by the superintendent and

by the board thank you very much thank you miss connick laura latara raglan uh emily burton and leighton cox i bring this way down good evening my name is latara raglan residing in the vienna district i'm afraid my comments are going to align very closely with the red hill

[00:39:50] community i come to you tonight respectfully as a mom an active mom a caring mom a current acps mom who not only cares about what happens to my children but all children this is evident the way that i show up beyond the school meetings but also my participation on acps committees and boards because i deeply care and want to do my part and what we acps have made it a mission to ensure all students thrive i stand before you feeling a bit weary about what that really looks like in action especially in these last few months where we have seen what i personally would name as drastic changes at our most vulnerable students and families while i have a few at the top of my list tonight i just want to talk specifically about the changes that are happening at stony

[00:40:29] point elementary beyond the lack of physical investment in our school the choice to move the preschool special education program to baker butler elementary i am here tonight to express the utter emotional distress of the whole process of even trying to enroll my child into the program much less the impact of transitions.

[00:40:46] It starts with lack of clear communication. To this minute, I have not heard a single word from anyone about this decision, much less what it would look like as we wait, along with other families, to even hear if we have a spot. In fact, I heard it on the radio before reading the press release. I immediately reached out to all of my contacts with no real clear communication.

[00:41:04] This is irresponsible. This takes our autonomy as parents to make educational decisions for our children. Secondly, there was no collaboration this decision-making process no connection with any families about this decision who will be most impacted transparency failure at best i'm urging you all to really think about how decisions are being made and the greater impact of our school communities especially when we are investing thousands of dollars into consultants striving for input that seems to be often dismissed i urge you all to seek the input and use it and not just make decisions solely on a funding level or school admin staff leadership level we can do better we can be creative and resourceful in our

[00:41:42] approaches taking advantage of being good models and stewards for all students let's also take the time to make real investments in our small schools thank you miss ragland uh emily burton layton cox and esham mittal good evening members of the school board my name is emily burton and i'm a student at community lab school i strongly support the petition to improve recycling and composting in all of Charlottesville and Albemarle County schools.

[00:42:22] I've seen students take out the recycling at my school and they found half full drinks, candy wrappers and many other contaminants. It should not be a student's responsibility to take time out of their busy days to manage their school's recycling and composting systems. Students have given dozens of presentations and put up countless posters over the last few years promoting better recycling and composting practices.

[00:42:43] We've talked with teachers and raised the issue to school administrators. However, none of these educational efforts have seen much success, largely due to the lack of consistency in waste management systems across schools. By adopting the universal recycling and composting systems outlined in the petition, as well as increasing educational efforts around these, you can help solve this problem.

[00:43:03] Efficient universal recycling and composting systems managed by school staff will significantly lessen the unfair burden placed on uncompensated student environmental clubs. Consistent and clear communication to students, school staff, and the broader community about what can and cannot be recycled and composted, as well as why both are important, will help address the high contamination rates seen today, making these systems easier to manage.

[00:43:26] My generation will inherit a world shaped by the environmental decisions made by today's leaders. It's essential that these decisions keep student perspectives in mind in order to ensure long-term sustainability. The nearly 300 signatures on the petition highlight the broad support for this initiative among students and school staff and community members.

[00:43:46] Please review the petition and add a discussion of it to the June 11th meeting agenda. thank you thank you miss burton layton cox my members of the board i don't have script up here today so this might be short but i would like to echo what emily and reed are saying i have firsthand picked all the things that they've previously mentioned out of the recycling which is not a good thing as we all know and i would like to encourage you to add the petition to the

[00:44:26] discussion in a meeting soon and i would just like to say that the lack of support of this issue is a genuine issue that needs to be discussed and i would also like to say that well to be honest that might be my last point but i'm just echoing what they say and i'd like to just bring awareness to that to that issue thank you thank you mr cox i'm massacring his name ishan we tell please

[00:45:02] correct me when you get up at the podium. It's Ishan. Ishan. Yeah. Good evening members of the school board. My name is Ishan and I'm a student at Albemarle High School. I also co-lead our environmental club which is responsible for the student-led recycling and composting programs at our school. I'm here today to ask you to improve our recycling and composting practices in Albemarle County by adopting policies laid out in the petition. This issue is important to me not just because I care about the environment but because I personally experienced how broken our current

[00:45:39] system is. At my school, students have been the ones trying to keep the recycling going. Instead of having a clear school-supported system, environmental clubs and student volunteers are expected to manage it ourselves. We spend time sorting through bins filled with trash, food, and half-finished drinks because contamination makes entire bags of recycling unusable. In fact, today, we found large amounts of unknown orange mystery liquids and other unsanitary products in our recycling bins. It is not a responsibility to go do unpaid dumpster driving to maintain basic sustainability standards, which should be the responsibility

[00:46:13] of the county. Sometimes students give up lunch periods, class time, or club time just to make sure recyclable materials don't end up in the landfill. We want to help the environment, but students should not be carrying the full responsibility for an entire school's waste management system, especially without support, training, or resources from the school itself.

[00:46:33] Right now, recycling systems vary widely between schools. Some classrooms don't even have clear recycling bins. Composting is inconsistent or unavailable to students, even when both school divisions already pay for composting services. In many cases, food waste that could be composted is simply thrown away.

[00:46:52] That matters because food waste in landfills releases harmful greenhouse gases. Schools produce large amounts of waste every day, and we have an opportunity to dramatically reduce that impact. These programs shouldn't depend entirely on unpaid student labor. If we want real change, we need consistent systems supported by the schools themselves.

[00:47:10] These changes laid out in the letter would not only reduce waste and support local climate goals, but they would also show our students that we are serious about building a healthier future. Albemarle County has plans to achieve 45% reductions in emissions by 2030 and to go net zero by 2050.

[00:47:26] As a school board, you have a responsibility to strive towards this. I care deeply about this issue because I've seen both the problems and the potential firsthand. Students are already doing everything we can. We urge you in the school system to work with us. Thank you. Thank you, Nation.

[00:47:44] That ends our public comment for tonight. Dr. Balloon, I just have a couple of fact checks real quick. So we do continue to invest heavily in the responsive classroom approach. This summer, we have three sessions running that are two weeks long, and they have 30 teachers signed up for each.

[00:48:05] Since we typically hire about 160 teachers, and roughly half of them are elementary school teachers, we'll have nearly all of our new elementary school teachers signed up to be in responsive classroom training sessions this summer. And that's every summer. Several years ago we expanded to include developmental designs which is the middle school version of this program and we have a we do have one session of that running this summer as well for the same number of staff in terms of school performance and enrollment our student scores across all standards of

[00:48:43] learning testing subjects continue to top the state averages as they always have as long as I've worked in the school system our graduation rates are also above the state averages. And in terms of out-of-county enrollment, this may have been different at one time because the school system hasn't always been at capacity as it is now. But we do not have an open enrollment policy for out-of-county residents due to capacity restrictions. Charlottesville City Schools, for example, anyone can attend from outside their district as long as they're willing to pay tuition ours is only open to

[00:49:24] it's reserved for children of school board and board of supervisors employees and we currently have dozens of dedicated staff and families who take advantage of this benefit so we do still continue to have out of district enrollment it's just restricted to employees what I always say is that if someone has a concern about a particular school culture or maybe a discipline incident at the school, they should first contact the principal to have a conversation because that's usually where it starts.

[00:49:55] We do have systems in place across the system. And many of you remark on attending school-wide morning meetings. That's an outgrowth of responsive classroom. One of the centerpieces of responsive classroom is the morning meeting.

[00:50:10] And every one of our elementary classrooms across the division, if you went to the school at the beginning of the day, they would have their announcements, morning meeting, and when you go and it's a whole school, like, for example, if you go to Woodbrook and there is in the neighborhood of 500, 600 students in the gym at one time, that's their school-wide morning meeting.

[00:50:32] And I think it's a testament to the behavior of our students and our staff ability to work with them, that they're able to have events such as that and have them come out positively and build school communities. So I just wanted to provide those facts as an update to the board.

[00:50:49] Thank you. Thank you so much, Dr. Haas. And thank you to everyone who brings public comment to us, particularly to our students. We will take your letter under advisement and make sure we're connecting with the Board of Supervisors as well as our ACES committee about follow-up.

[00:51:08] So, thank you so much. We will now move to the next point of our agenda, 6.0, approval of our consent agenda. Do I have a motion to approve tonight's consent agenda? I move we approve the consent agenda. Moved by Ms. Lee. Do I have a second?

[00:51:25] Second. Second by Mr. Dillenbach. All those in favor of tonight's consent agenda? Aye. Any opposed? Tonight's consent agenda clearly passes. The next item on our agenda is 8.1, the Achievement Gap Advisory Committee.

[00:51:45] Dr. Haas, did you want to touch on this? How do we want to talk about the charter and the next steps on the charter? So at this point, this is a school board initiative, and so I will leave it with the school board to discuss.

[00:52:01] In terms of professional development with Gene Cash and the Race Matters series, Dr. Kaiser and I had the opportunity to get our heads together this week, and what we're going to be proposing to Gene is a year-long program of once a month conversations with Gene and the school board and then also the cabinet.

[00:52:23] So we're going to flesh out, but it will be a year-long commitment about once a month, so nine sessions is what we're thinking. So we're in progress on that. And then there's the other piece about the GAP committee that's really for the board, I think, to discuss.

[00:52:39] And would the conversations of the professional learning, would the, I know you're still working on it, but the anticipated start date be September? Just kind of thinking about the trajectory of the learning, because I know one of the questions that came from the board previous is what is the, in a way, I have to say preparation, but what is some of the learning that could happen either in advance or at the same time as that?

[00:53:11] And so just wanted to get a handle on kind of guesstimate, Would we probably start in the summer or in September? So pending Jean's availability, I would be aiming for August.

[00:53:29] Okay. So thoughts from the school board about kind of, so I think we talked about a couple of things. One was consistent professional learning, I'll use that term, in conversations for the boards that we're all kind of learning together, learning individually as a basis for both all of the work that we do as a board, but also particularly for this work.

[00:54:00] And so I think that's an important commitment for the board to make, to learn together. We can talk about what that looks like and making sure that it works with schedules and timing. But I think that's a, and I want to actually say that it's an important piece for us to do almost like as a baseline, not just because of this charter.

[00:54:20] So the more that we are learning together and reflecting on our own background, I think is really important for us as we lead a very diverse linguistically, culturally, racially diverse community.

[00:54:36] And then the, so there's that piece. And then I know there had been to the, to the charter, some recommended changes. And those, I'm just looking at Dr. Haas. So the, so the board, and I assume the public also has the, this, and so the updated charter, there were some questions, there were some

recommendations around making sure in the composition of it. There was a change made so that there are more students, including representation from the student senate. So initially there were two to three members,

[00:55:16] and now there's four to eight members. And then the appointment and selection process. So there were updates made around how those appointments would be made, who would make those appointments, making sure that they were representative of magisterial districts as well as the feeder patterns, and then that there would be student members, superintendent appointments, and then staff and school-based members.

[00:55:47] And then I believe the last change was just about timing of the report so that it would be available because so that recommendations would be available so that we could then use them in beginning to plan the school board budget. And then the last change was reviewing the charter annually. So I just wanted to summarize those. I know Mr. Dillebeck, this is something that you brought up initially. I don't know if there's anything you want to say, but I just wanted to open it up to the board for any other kind of discussions

[00:56:24] or next steps yeah obviously this is something that i feel like is important for us to focus on but i also understand there are some concerns from other board members who've been serving longer than i have so well i don't have a concern that we should focus on student achievement and the student achievement gaps that's written into our policy into our strategic plan

[00:57:01] We've spent time and treasure for the Bellwether report, the audit of our reading and literacy and our math programs. We asked Dr. Haas and his team to map what efforts we have underway and how they interact with one another.

[00:57:19] So from my perspective, looking at the details of a charter for yet another committee is jumping the gun. I mean, I think focusing on the issue may be important, but I don't see what the value add of yet another committee.

[00:57:39] We are the committee that's supposed to be looking at it. Anyway, so my view is that it is an important topic, whether we need to charter yet another committee. I'm not persuaded at this point.

[00:57:58] I also appreciate, again, the topic. It's something that I feel like in every conversation that Dr. Haas and I have, it comes up. We talk about it every single one. And we have, you know, I've learned a lot about what the school division is doing, and I still don't know everything.

[00:58:16] I think there are a lot of unknown unknowns. And if we are committing to do this professional and personal development, frankly, to understand our biases, then I don't understand why we would put this policy into place knowing that we will get more information both about what the school division is doing and about ourselves and about our place in this community and about the community.

[00:58:43] So to me, it also feels like jumping the gun because it might turn out that we go through all this and we decide that it's far more urgent than a committee. maybe it and as Kate says, it is something that we all should be involved in. So for me, this also feels quite premature, especially knowing that we will have more information. And for me, knowing that our minds will be different after that information, because three of us have gone through something

[00:59:18] like this before in 2020. And it really was humbling and changed me. So I look forward to moving through that process further. I realize this is, as Stephen Covey would say, one of those important but not urgent issues perhaps. So I'm not suggesting that we have to do this last week or tomorrow. I'm not proposing that we rush into it. The other point that I would make is that

[00:59:54] although we on the board are charged with addressing the issue and we've gone through the bellwether report this committee would include members of the community that currently don't have a voice in assessing and coming up with ideas that maybe we haven't thought of so the inclusion of members from other than obviously on this board i think would be some valuable insight yeah i don't

[01:00:34] don't disagree with that at all. But again, I don't want to get people involved in something that wastes their time and frustrates. I think I take exception to that in that we've been punting this in a way. I mean, we've had this issue ongoing and we're still here. We still have an achievement gap issue. And if we are saying that we as a board are the ones that are responsible, then we have failed significantly because we have not fixed this problem. And I think we are, I would argue, are at the point where something else needs to be done.

[01:01:12] We need community involvement. We need to put a fire under us and say, like, enough. We did the Bell Brother Report, and it's been three years since that. We are putting money into different programs, and we're still not where we should be. It may be progress, but I would argue that it's been far too slow and not nearly enough and if we have an opportunity to pour into this more to have more input to potentially have different perspectives i don't see the harm and i don't see it as a waste of time um if it's another thing that we can do that will potentially

[01:01:51] solve this problem um but that's just my opinion other comments i think i mean i think where i stand is and I hate one of the things I often tend to be feeling I'm often in the middle of I do think there's a both and I there is a piece of me I believe that the need for this board as a whole to go through some self-reflection

[01:02:27] personal as well as professional individually and as a group I also see the need to continue to put an important, just to continue to know that this is a 20-year issue, at least in the school division, that we need to address and that we need to make sure both our urban green schools, our larger schools, our smaller schools, we have representation talking about those.

[01:03:02] So my kind of opinion is to kind of do these two things simultaneous, like begin to charter this, to put forward the charter for this committee, get it set up while we as a board are kind of going through some learning together.

[01:03:20] But I'm open to kind of my colleagues to continue to listen to my colleagues about what the next step is. My concern is that if we have this committee and we have two board members on that, do the remaining five not worry about the issue too much because we know we've got two people on that committee?

[01:03:45] I mean, how many of you guys even think about audits? Did you get me? I was in another audit committee. So that is a concern that we offload this to a committee, and then we feel like somebody else is handling it.

[01:04:05] And so we do not own it completely as board members, because as I mentioned before, we are this committee. Thank you for lifting us up. I guess my question is, I'm sorry, Mr. Beard. I do not have a

problem with this at all.

[01:04:23] I think it's a great idea. I'm wondering whether we should do it maybe as a pilot program for maybe a year or two and see what actually happens, what comes out of it, whether some of it is actionable work.

[01:04:41] And, you know, how many people from the community are you going to get to actually volunteer on this and do the work over the course of the next couple of years? But I don't have a problem with it. I think it would be a good thing to have the community involved in trying to alleviate the achievement gap.

[01:05:03] Thank you. Mr. Mayor. Before I'm moving on with our agenda, do I have any motions? Are we looking for a motion to move forward?

[01:05:19] I guess I'm asking what you're asking. So this has been on, well, I'm looking at Mr. Black. This has been on our consent agenda, so I believe we could make a motion to adopt this. Right, so this is on the agenda for action if the board is ready to act.

[01:05:40] There have been a couple of different versions of the written charter for the committee. So at this point, I think the question to the board is whether someone's ready to make a motion to approve one of those versions. Yeah, so that would be, so kind of my ask to the board as chair is, you know, is there a motion to adopt this?

[01:05:59] Is this, you know, continued discussion? Is there a reason that we would need to do this before we do some introspection and a complete understanding about what the division is already doing? I mean, I don't understand quite the timing.

[01:06:21] I just don't have a concept of what the division is doing and who all in the division is involved in this work that might help inform this committee if we go forward with it. I move that we table consideration of the committee until such time as we get a readout on current efforts addressing the Achievement Gap and whatever professional development that we're going to undertake.

[01:06:53] Second. Can I ask a procedural question? Sure. If you want a different motion, do we vote on one motion first and then a second motion? There's now a motion on the table that has been seconded, so that motion takes precedence over any other motion until the board takes a vote or until the motion is withdrawn.

[01:07:12] Gotcha. So we have a motion by Dr. Acoff, seconded by Ms. L. I just wanted to make sure. Do you want to just repeat your...

[01:07:30] See if I can. I move that we table the proposed charter for the Achievement Gap Committee until such time as we get the mapping of current efforts on the Achievement Gap plus the professional development that Dr. Haas presented tonight.

[01:07:57] Do I have to second that again? You don't have to second it again. That was just for clarification. So move my Dr. Acuff, seconded by Ms. Lee. I would like to take a... Is there any further discussion? Yep. Is there any further discussion by the board before we take a vote?

[01:08:14] I would just like to say that I'm not completely opposed to it, but I don't think we have enough information. Yeah, I don't want to move forward in ignorance. I think it would be interesting to see what the SOL scores are, and we get a report in July and August.

[01:08:31] I've been accused of being a detailed person and an implementation person, And so my concern is that we don't have a well-defined process to move forward.

[01:08:55] I'm not suggesting that if we adopt this charter this evening, that the committee has to be formed by August the 1st. And certainly, we would want to be open to receiving the information, finding out how we're doing in terms of prior goals and mapping.

[01:09:19] But I still feel like we can adopt the charter and begin to move forward, whereas I feel like to delay until certain benchmarks are reached is not moving forward.

[01:09:39] That's my personal opinion. I don't see any information that we get. Our gaps aren't going to be closed with whatever information we get. I hear you that there's work to be done as a board and information to be gathered, but I don't understand the need to stop or halt any additional progress that we're trying to make, additional work that we're trying to do.

[01:10:06] It feels work is being done within the division. We know that, and we can gather that information and figure out what's being done, but it still doesn't feel like it's enough. We haven't solved this problem.

[01:10:22] And so if there's more work that needs to get done to solve this problem, then we should be doing that now. And if we've only got three meetings this summer and we're pushing this again to the fall, then we're going to be another year before we're going to get SOL scores again next year. And we're going to be coming back to this and it's going to be another year and another year. And we're all going to be off the board and we'll be like, well, it's not our problem anymore.

[01:10:41] It is our problem and we need to start doing something now. I understand. I understand that. I feel that urgency. And the thing that I've learned in my time on the board is that often when I think, oh, well, I think we should do this, and we move in that direction, then that has been a mistake.

[01:11:01] And it's because there are people who understand the work daily and are doing it, and we need to learn from them. And also, I mean, all across the division, at every level of the division, people are working on this. And so every conversation that I've had with people at different levels of the division, I've learned more about what we're doing and about what we may have tried that didn't work that maybe set us back.

[01:11:25] So I don't think that moving forward immediately is benign. I don't think that it is necessarily the thing that will get us there. I've seen a lot of, we talk about initiatives at Bridgetime, we talk about initiatives that didn't do well, that have taken up time and money and treasure and all these things, and they just didn't move the needle for us at all.

[01:11:50] So that's why I'm interested in finding out everything that we can, and that is movement forward that we can make. I don't know. I mean, I assume that we have it scheduled at some point for us to learn what the division is doing. That, to me, is the progress that I want to make for an informed decision.

[01:12:10] I don't think, I don't feel like making uninformed decisions is going to move us forward. So one of the things that I have heard in the last six board meetings is that many of our communities, our Baker Butler community, our Greer community, our Stone Robinson community, our Stony Point community, and others that I'm, and our Red Hill community tonight, feel that we are not, as a board, and even as a division, listening to what the community is feeling.

[01:12:51] And one of the things that we have on this committee, again, I would love to have 100 community members. That's just not physically possible. But we have parents and guardians. We have students and we have community members.

[01:13:06] And I feel like it is our responsibility with what I have been hearing and continue to hear. We need to continue doing a better job listening at every kind of fringe of, I hate to use the word fringe, but every point of our committee, right? All the way up to the top, the bottom, and the left and the right.

[01:13:22] And so I think this does give us that ability to listen to those different places that maybe we're not hearing from. And then for those of you who are at the Monticello and the AHS graduation, one of the things I said is I have learned so much from our student representatives.

[01:13:42] who have been here who have shown great courage and have been very just very candid in what is happening at the schools and have led me to think in different ways so for that reason is why you know i i am really this is something that i am interested in doing to make sure that we get other continue to get additional voices um to uh to what those things we're struggling with and i don't think like just because we have a committee doesn't mean that this is Dr. Haas's number one job that he has to do doesn't mean it's the school board's number one

[01:14:18] job that they have to be focused on it's just another place for us to be working and gathering information so I mean I think this is a so but so kind of I know we have a discussion and then we'll I think that um doing this badly is will be worse than not doing it at all um and while our intent is good it will be the impact that matters so that's my concern thank you and i know this is a you know a topic um that um that that is important in many ways and i and i appreciate everyone on the board kind of um spending time reflecting on this and thinking about this um

[01:14:58] and it's a i think it's important to all of us how we do it how we are thinking about doing It's just we have differences in that. But I know I have a vote that is on the floor. And so I am going to ask Ms. Thompson to do a roll call vote on the motion that Dr. Acuff put forward.

[01:15:21] So the motion is to table? Correct. So yes. So a yes would be to affirm the table. A no would be to deny the table.

[01:15:37] And then an abstain would be to abstain from the decision. Ms. Philman? No. Dr. Acuff? Yes. Mr. Beard? No. Mr. Dillon Beck?

[01:15:53] No. Ms. Lee? Yes. Ms. Osborne? Yes. Chair Berlin? No. With a vote three for the motion fails. Chair, I move that we adopt the charter of the Achievement Gap Advisory Committee that was presented in our folders tonight.

[01:16:16] I have a motion on the floor to adopt the charter as is with the current edits. Do I have a second? Second. Moved by Ms. Spillman, apologies, seconded by Mr. Dillenbeck. Do we have any discussion on this point?

[01:16:34] Hearing no discussion, we will move to an immediate roll call vote. Dr. Ankoff? No. Mr. Beard? Yes.

[01:16:49] Mr. Dillenbeck? Yes. Ms. Lee? No. Ms. Osborne? No. Ms. Spilpin? Yes. Chair Berlin? Yes. With the vote for three, the motion passes. Thank you so much.

[01:17:06] I will ask Dr. Haas and the cabinet to move forward with the charter and following what has been recommended in the charter for the timing and the membership, and then to provide an update to us either in the June or July, whichever is available to you.

[01:17:33] So the next piece on our agenda is a break, and I might just recommend that we go ahead and do that. We have two updates from Ayanna Mitchell and then a work session on research practice partnerships.

[01:17:57] So my thought is we will take a 10-minute break and reconvene at 8 o'clock, and then we will move through the next three parts of the agenda. Thank you so much. We will reconvene again at 8 p.m. My pleasure to call the school board work session back into order.

[01:18:22] And we are now moving into school division work session. And Ms. Ayanna Mitchell, our director of equity education, is going to do two separate presentations for us. The first is on the new equity and diversity advisory committee structure.

[01:18:38] And then the second will be on the new cultural competency framework structure. Thank you. Good evening. Chair, Vice Chair, Superintendent, and Captain. Thank you all for being here. Ms. Mitchell, you're just moving us up a little bit.

[01:18:55] You're taller than us. How about I move that? There you go. Thank you so much. Thank you so much. I appreciate it. All right, great. So I'm here. I represent the Department of Instruction. I'm the Director of Equity Education, and we have a wonderful committee, Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee.

[01:19:12] It feels like it's going to be giving me feedback. So tonight, I wanted to briefly walk you through the historical context of the committee, lessons learned from that time, the rationale for the restructuring, and the proposed direction moving forward.

[01:19:29] The goal of this proposal is not to have another committee, but to strengthen this sustainability, representation, communication, and coherence across existing ACPS school board advisory committees.

[01:19:48] This work is grounded directly in the strategic plan learning for all. Equity is already embedded throughout our mission, vision, values, and goals. Our division has been committed to ending the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for student success through high-quality learning, teaching, and learning for all.

[01:20:11] The strategic plan also emphasizes affirming and empowering communities, strengthening family partnerships, and ensuring every student is known. This proposal is not introducing a new direction.

[01:20:27] It is intended to strengthen the structures that have already been developed by this community and the structures to support the existing commitments we've made. As we continue this work, the advisory structure must evolve alongside our instructional and organizational priorities.

[01:20:49] Student success, belonging, and trust are connected to how effectively we listen to students, family, staff, and community and how effectively they want to share with us. This proposal is intended to support stronger communication, clearer engagement across pathways, and greater coherence across the systems that exist.

[01:21:11] Ultimately, this work is about building sustainable structures that help connect community voice with organizational learning and continuous improvement. EDAC, or the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee, was grounded in a longstanding school board policy that was passed in November 8, 2001.

[01:21:38] There was an amendment in September 10, 2015, to add a school board advisory committee. And I went back to their notes to look at what that looked like when they started their committee. Just out of curiosity, you happen to have one of the founders, Dr. Rusty Carlock, who will be coming up later, who was part of that committee.

[01:22:01] And they really thought about establishing the longstanding commitments to equity, especially when it comes to our student achievement gaps that have been longstanding as what was brought up earlier. And at that time, they proposed that they would have a superintendents and school board committee that would specifically be looking at the longstanding reading achievement gaps for all of our students who are underperforming, specifically our economically disadvantaged students and our black students in the school division.

[01:22:35] This proposed restructure builds upon the work and that foundation while adapting the structure to better align with our current division needs and our current initiatives. As part of this process, the deep conversations and meetings show that they were talking about equity beyond demographics, connecting race and opportunities to our systems.

[01:23:07] And they really started defining what was equity for Albemarle County Public Schools. During those conversations, they really wanted to take some action-oriented leadership.

[01:23:27] And what stood out to me was that even over a decade later, we're still having those same conversations even today. So this restructure is really intended to respond directly to the reason why this committee was formed in the first place.

[01:23:44] and to continue to think about how we can continue moving that work forward, even now as we continue working towards closing those gaps. So our current structure is that we were meeting monthly, and we've been meeting, I can pick up data from 21, 20 to 25, and those meetings typically had one or two consistent community members who would be a part of it because it was by choice.

[01:24:16] The attendance and the engagement varied over time, and the initiatives and recommendations were not consistently brought before you. However, they always were consistently considered and used in the decisions we were making as a school division.

[01:24:31] So despite the participation challenges we had, the committee continued to make really valuable finds. One of the big things that came out of it was the equity dashboard. and the affinity groups that we are having now.

[01:24:50] We just did that recently. The proposed restructure is intended to strengthen the representation, the voice of our community, to build sustainability and create communication pathways that will be all funneled towards the same outcome.

[01:25:12] Currently you have 14 plus, I counted on my spreadsheet, school board and program advisory committees report to you in some way or another. Student, family and staff and community engagement structures are in place and we have lots of pathways for feedback and collaboration. This opportunity

presents us with the goal to strengthen that coherence by having streamlined communication and connection across the existing advisory committees we already have. Which brings me to the proposal

[01:25:48] that instead of having monthly meetings that would may or may not result in a follow-up conversation with you at some point is to really think about having the school board representatives from the other committees come together in EDAC so that it is a streamlined way that's purposeful that the people as a liaison from the advisory committees that are already in place can come and bring their ideas and their concerns to this space

[01:26:25] and that way we are not fragmented into individual siloed conversations. That committee collectively can look at the issues and the concerns that we are having, thinking about what is going on with the achievement gap, thinking about what is going on with curriculum, getting feedback concerning the equity initiatives, the curricular initiatives we have in place and determining what we should do for next steps as well as recognizing the opportunities that have developed and the celebrations we have.

[01:26:58] And at the end of the year, we would be able to really think about how we bring that back to you whether it's through a report, whether it's through a presentation or we present to the superintendent's cabinet.

[01:27:15] So their work would really be focused on that streamlined opportunity to share with you what we see across the division. It also helps us determine what is an outlier versus something that's really happening that's a trend across all of the different advisory groups.

[01:27:34] So we would switch from monthly to quarterly because that also became a little exhausting because they already are on other advisory groups where we would set some goals. We'd have a mid-year analysis and get feedback to determine what's next. And then we would make our final decision about how we're going to present our information to you and share with you what the school division has done based on what they heard and what we think that needs to rise to the level of your committee where you can talk about other equity initiatives as they pertain to the ones I named before.

[01:28:17] And that is pretty much it. Do you have any questions for me? How would you see our newly formed board committee working with or in competition with the EDAC committee?

[01:28:32] I wish we'd had this presentation before we had our discussion on this committee charter because it's 20 minutes later, and I'm already realizing that there's a whole lot of stuff I didn't know that was happening before we had made that decision.

[01:28:50] But how do you envision these committees working together? That committee would be an advisory committee that would have to send a liaison just like all the other committees. That's how I would see it working. The one question I just have is on the, just going back to the kind of like the timing of the quarters.

[01:29:17] I mean, one of the things I'm always laser focused on, but already thinking about next year's budget, while we're still waiting for the state to pass their budget, which would be helpful for us, no commentary intended there, is that making sure as we are getting information into the board and into board committees, we're getting it at the right time so that we can activate it for the next year's budget.

[01:29:43] And so just as you think about kind of that timing and kind of report out, making sure we're getting, almost doing that, like laying all these committees out so that we're getting information so that

when we start the, when we launch the budget planning for the next year, we have all those inputs that we need so that we can make sure we're considering them as part of that budget.

[01:30:07] I totally agree. And since this is a committee that is to report to you as a school board committee, I think that that is something that is up to you all what those timelines would be. That is just my initial proposal, but I would certainly be open. I mean, it's really to serve you and your purposes and have community voice so that they can inform those decisions for you.

[01:30:28] So whatever that timeline would be, I think we could talk about what's most appropriate. Thank you so much. Were there any other questions? I know Allison is the representative, so I'm excited to have us lunch again.

[01:30:43] Yeah, we've talked about this. I'm excited about it. There are no questions. For me, it was important to separate these two. So if there's any kind of further questions, discussion on this, kind of speak now.

[01:31:00] There's another piece. There's actually two more pieces. One we're doing tonight, one we will be doing at a future board meeting. What do you need me to do?

[01:31:21] I have no more questions on the first one. Thank you. Thank you.

[01:31:31] Switch to the other one. I have one more. She's phoning around. I don't know how to get to it. How do I get to the other one? I'm sorry. And while we're dancing, the 9.3 on our agenda tonight is the new cultural competency framework structure for 26-27 school year. And Ms. Ayanna Mitchell, our director of equity education, will be presenting this as well.

[01:32:06] I'm Ayanna Mitchell, director of equity education. Long time no see.

[01:32:58] I am here to talk about the cultural competency framework and commitment and thinking about building further coherence across teaching teachers, leaders, and operations and expanding the alignment of our cultural competency frameworks from teacher frameworks only to leadership and operations and technology framework as well.

[01:33:25] So our work is embedded in our strategic plan, Learning for All, as it addresses specifically our equity, excellence, and our entire mission, specifically working together as a team to end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities, which means that we have committed to being a culturally responsive school division.

[01:33:50] I am proud to say that the work that we have done so far has become the fabric of who we are as a school division. And because of the tireless work, not just of the school board, but of the cabinet and the equity team, we have really moved our division forward from a time when some people couldn't even say the words to where it is so deeply embedded in who we are.

[01:34:19] and it's also why people come here. So I just wanted to give like a very quick history on why I'm bringing this to you for approval, which is that in 2021, Virginia state law requires that the school board actually make the decision around what cultural competency, the definition of that is for the schools and what their instruction will be. So that is why I'm bringing it to you for

[01:34:56] approval. This is going to really be thinking about the training requirements, which is required every two years as per the law. And it is required that there is the cultural competencies training is

completed in order to get licensed. The evaluation is embedded in the education performance plans and the instructional practices. So as teachers and

[01:35:30] educators are being evaluated, this is part of their evaluation. And it is the division's responsibility to implement a program and have ongoing professional learning systems in place. And it is up to you to make that decision of what that looks like. So the four competencies as per VDOE is self-reflection, instructional practice, learning environments, and community engagement. At this time, we currently do have a framework in place that addresses all four of

[01:36:07] those embedded in our three competencies and our characteristics. So what I have noticed is that specifically for our educators, if you saw 2.1, it's like really expansive and it talks about data and it talks about classroom environment, and it talks about curriculum, and it talks about instruction, all in the same thing, which is what really ignited my thinking about changing the frameworks and really thinking about separating them. But as our school division has expanded in

[01:36:41] the work that we've done, and we know that the cultural competencies are also part of operations and technology standards, not just BDOE standards, and we think about how do you lead for culturally responsive teaching and education which is different than actually implementation in the classroom. It takes a different skill to really think about how to lead for that. The team and I decided that we really needed to think about how do we expand this across the vision, especially now that it is what it is for us here in Albemarle County Public Schools. So currently we have a model where there's a book study, there's a micro-credential pathway. You're all very familiar with

[01:37:21] that. We've talked about that before. There's Schoology modules, reflective tasks, one per module, and there's really a heavy teacher focus. The other feedback that we received was that people didn't see themselves in the framework because it's so teacher-centered. So we wanted to address that by really thinking about how can we move our current strengths of that shared foundational understanding and that strong educator engagement, along with establishing that credential structure, which really made it clear for everyone what it is we were doing

[01:37:59] and why, and made it a division-wide thing. But it was educator-focused, it was not role-specific, and it was hard for you to be able to see what do I need to do. So I did provide you with the new proposed framework.

[01:38:20] Thank you to Dr. Kaiser, who was one of the people who were on the focus group committees. She really pushed me to thinking about how do we make this a shared document so that it is one full competency framework that is appropriate for all employees and everyone can see themselves in it.

[01:38:43] So if you take a look, you'll see that there are four characteristics. In those four characteristics, it still talks about self-reflection. It still talks about environment. It talks about collaborative partnerships, which gets to community engagement.

[01:39:01] And it addresses removing barriers, which also aligns with our anti-racism policies. On the back, you'll see a little bit more of a breakdown. As you look at the other pages, that's where the indicators become clear based on your role.

[01:39:25] So if I'm a leader, I would look at my leader indicator page, and that would tell me specifically and directly what does that characteristic mean if I am a leader here in the school division.

[01:39:40] And I think even you would agree that if you read any of those indicators, you would right away be able to see what that expectation was, and you would know what that means for you, even as a school board member. And each one of the indicators are broken down that way per role.

[01:40:01] So there's the pre-K to 12 educator indicator list, which are basically the look-fors, the leadership list and then operational and technology indicators that align to the overall cultural competency framework. So the way that this model would shift in the professional learning is that as you know we have our new teacher and novice teacher cohort but across the division it would mean that the foundational learning will always look like coaching cohorts and embedded indicators

[01:40:40] that would be part of their onboarding. Then they would move into an applied learning process, which would include some more coaching workshops and departmental implementation. So it would be differentiated and specific to the departmental needs based on the indicators in the frameworks.

[01:40:59] And then they would move to a sustained learning, which is where they would receive a certification and do deeper reflection and continuous learning and improvement. That would also address the two-year cadences because each one of those can be broken down into two years.

[01:41:16] The goal is not that we get everything done all at once. It's that we can really have sustainable change that is part and continues to be the part of who we are as Albany County Public Schools. So just so that you know, our current participation is, this is based on our current numbers of staff who are still here.

[01:41:42] who were hired by 2024. The book study completion at this point is 1,262 educators. The micro-credential completion is 705, and in progress, meaning they are in any stage or of the modules at this point, is 557. That includes people who were in letters and VALS training and got the extension. Staff completion for this year alone, 85 staff completed

[01:42:21] the book study. That number is shrinking tremendously because we don't have as many people who need to complete the book. 241 completed the micro-credential this year, and we did begin a new certification pathway pilot that currently has three participants.

[01:42:40] I am one of them. I won't name the other unless they want to be named. And we have one that has completed already and received her certification. And we are very excited about that new pathway. So if you have any questions for me about that, I'm more than happy to answer them for you.

[01:43:05] Thanks, Ayanna. I know in the past we had some concern about whether how people were getting time allotted and paid for this training. What is that situation now?

[01:43:21] That has been embedded in the time that they have during the work day. Also, since they were asynchronous, that meant they could do it at the time that they felt they could do it. The other thing I would say is that there is no building in this school division, and I can say this confidently, that did not provide at least one full year of time that would be during their planning or their after-school meetings that they needed to have, that they did not provide time for people.

[01:43:58] They spent a year that they dedicated to culturally responsive education and allowing their teachers to engage in the training. So there have been lots of opportunities for people to participate down to every administrator in the school division has provided time during their school hours to support staff through this programming.

[01:44:19] We also continue to do it through the PD days that have been in place. So we do cohort models through that. And we have book studies that go through the DRTs who support directly the people who are coming into the buildings up until our new teacher programming, which started two years ago now, and they are in the novice teacher program.

[01:44:40] They're in number two, so they will be completed next year. I know that in years past, I've gotten to learn about a lot of the projects that people have completed for their certification on one day, and it was a great day. Are we going to have that again this year?

[01:44:58] The equity conference has kind of waned since COVID-1, and once it became mandatory, that took a little bit of the, I think, excitement away from the accomplishment they had, and we noticed that there was a drop in the numbers.

[01:45:15] So it started to become an expense, when we think about fiscal responsibility, that just seemed like it wasn't worth that money to put out for that specific activity. so the proposal is that we will continue to do that but we're going to start inviting our community to see more what it is we do by offering by having by working in partnership with AFE to have a um a banquet that would be able to allow our community stakeholders because internally

[01:45:50] our what we were trying to do with that is really ignite our staff internally to get excited about the work and see themselves where now it's really about getting our community to see and learn about our work so we want to shift it so that it becomes something that our community partners who support us in our school division can really start to see and they can attach themselves to what we're doing and be able to give back to who we are because they can see what we do thank you thank you remind me i know we have a policy for new teachers in terms of micro-credentialing

[01:46:29] What do we have for new principals or assistant principals or building administrative folks? So we don't have a policy that says that they have to go through any specific programming like that, but new staff coming in do need to complete their micro-credential within the first two to three years of them being here.

[01:46:50] So the expectation is that they were engaged in this programming the way it was created, which was specifically for teachers. So because they're a new employee, they would be participating in that programming, the asynchronous modules, which is why we did a pilot this year where I developed a leadership program specifically so that that is what they would engage in.

[01:47:16] And that's part of this proposal is that that's why it would be separated like this so that they would have a more differentiated experience that would meet the needs of a leader coming into the school division and that they would be able to participate from that lens and be able to lead for culturally responsive practice and pedagogy rather than learning about what the teachers are supposed to do.

[01:47:41] Thank you. I think it was the last slide that showed the number of staff that have gone through each of the credentials. who are still here and who came here before 2024. Okay.

[01:47:58] It might be helpful to just see, like, of all of our staff that are here, like, what percentage of our teachers and our administrators have received their credentialing at each level, just so we have a general idea of kind of action.

[01:48:14] I would love to do that at that next meeting that we talked about and referenced in the beginning, where I will be doing some more specific updates about that. I just wasn't going to have enough. Oh, no, I wasn't asking you to throw it out of the air. I knew the question would come.

[01:48:29] I would love to see that at the next meeting if you could pull that information. Yes, I knew that question would come, so I wanted to make sure you had some numbers. At least what we did this year. But when we do the next follow-up conversation specifically about the programming, then I can give you that information.

[01:48:47] Awesome, thank you. And we are just wrapping up this year, so all of those numbers aren't complete yet. Great. Thank you. Yeah, one year you showed it to us by school, and that was really enlightening. Yes, and I will do that again, for sure. The only other thing I would say is I really appreciate you breaking this down for the different types of staff within our division.

[01:49:14] Because I hear what you say, and I hear staff saying that, like, that's a teacher thing. How does it apply to me as the director of technology? not that our director of technology said that but and so that it is very focused on kind of leadership teacher level and then operational and technology and then specifically not just kind of like how that the slide that showed like how it in a way activates for them very specifically in the type of work that they're doing on a daily basis so I really appreciate that because I think so many times people think oh this is just something the teachers are doing but because

[01:49:52] this is a this is something that is so important across our division making sure we're thinking about those things when we're thinking about technology when we're thinking about operations and and putting that lens on so um i appreciate and i know because i know that that like work doesn't come easy right and so taking the time to help people understand and i think overall it'll help as we um onboard new staff members to to really understand okay this is what this means for your job um with this lens that is very um specific to the county yeah thank you i know there's some new people that i haven't personally met before because i just haven't been here so

[01:50:31] it's nice to meet you thank you do you have any questions before i step away likewise okay no questions before i step away from youtube we're still sponges okay look forward to working with Well, as always, Ms. Mitchell, thank you so much, and we look forward to talking with you again soon.

[01:50:51] Okay, thank you so much. I'm looking forward to hearing your approval. Thank you. Do we need to do an official vote on this, or because it's on the agenda and we have reviewed it?

[01:51:12] It just works with info. It's for info now, and we will do our official vote next. Yeah, it'll come back for action next time, and we can discuss whether to put it on consent or as a separate agenda item. Okay, that's what I thought. I just wanted to make sure that Ms. Schill was not looking for an answer today.

[01:51:31] The next and last piece of our agenda is one I'm really excited for as a researcher who has done work with these. So we are doing a session on, this is really what we call a work session, so it's less of kind of someone presenting to us.

[01:51:48] So if you're kind of in the audience or watching visually, you will see actually some movement on the dais because we will be going into some small groups after an initial presentation. But this is about the UVA and Albemarle County Research Practice Partnership, which are often called RPPs.

[01:52:05] So, Dr. Russell Carlock, Director of Educational Equity Data Scientists, and Dr. Nina Schoenover, Associate Director of Education Research, the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Virginia. And then I know they will be also bringing forward a number of students from the Star Hill Pathways Partnership that we are excited to be introduced to.

[01:52:26] So, please come forward. Good evening, Chair Berlin and Vice Chair Spillman and school board members. Tonight, the school board will hear a presentation on research practice partnerships and the ongoing collaboration between Albemarle County Public Schools and the University of Virginia.

[01:52:48] We appreciate the continued partnership and collaboration with UVA in supporting the division's efforts to strengthen data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement. Research practice partnerships are designed to strengthen connections between educational practice and research by bringing together school divisions and university partners to collaboratively study questions that matter most to students, staff, and the community.

[01:53:16] This evening's presentation will provide an overview of the division's current partnership work with UVA, highlighting examples of ongoing research collaborations and introduce the Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium, or MERC, model utilized by the Virginia Commonwealth University to support K-12 school divisions in Richmond.

[01:53:40] The presentation will be followed by interactive discussions and breakout conversations designed to help the board members deepen their understanding of RPPs and explore potential research priorities and questions that could help inform future collaborative work aligned to board priorities in the division's strategic plan.

[01:54:01] Later in the session, students will join breakout discussions to share their perspectives and experiences as part of this collaborative process. Tonight's work session is intended to support discussion and collaborative planning as the division continues development of its research practice partnership framework.

[01:54:20] At this time, I would like to welcome Dr. Russell Carlock, ACPS Equity Data Scientist and Researchers, Dr. Nina Schoonover, Associate Director of Education Research, and Dr. Asha Merlinder, Senior Education Research Specialist from the University of Virginia Center for Community Partnerships, along with some of our students who serve on the Star Hill Advisory Committee.

[01:54:51] Jordan Spencer, 10th grader from Monticello High School. Mary Catalan, 11th grader from Albemarle High School. Stephanie Martinez Pina, 9th grader from Monticello High School. Zulie Blanco Pina, 11th grader from Monticello High School. And Marina Santos, 10th grader from Monticello High School. All of our students will be participating this evening during the breakout discussions and now I will turn it

[01:55:28] over to Dr. Schoonover to begin the presentation. Thank you. Thanks. So good evening. I'm Dr. Anita Schoonover. I'm at the Center for Community Partnerships. I'll scooch ahead to that. I'm the Associate Director of Education Research. We were formed in 2019 to build a better bridge between the university and the community and the work that I do is really specifically the Education Research practice partnership work. So defined by the National Network of Education Research Practice Partnerships or NERP is a long-term mutually beneficial formalized collaboration between researchers and practitioners and it's a strategy that's meant to produce more relevant research

[01:56:06] improving the use of research evidence in decision making and engaging both researchers and practitioners in doing this kind of work. So it's meant to be a long-term sustained research project it's not us coming in asking some questions collecting some data and walking away but it's a long-term partnership where we're working together and designing research that's relevant to what is going on in the schools day by day so in our timeline we started probably before 2022 but formally in summer of 2022 with the first star hill pathways student cohort and some of the students are here tonight and that program started in summer 2022 it's a college and career pathways

[01:56:44] program for ACPS and CCS students. And it started the RPP because that's where we started asking these questions around how is the program supporting them in their career growth and their college pathways. So from that process, some of our key milestones, we have an IRB, which is a blouse for the ethical research practices that we do. We have a data sharing agreement in place with both Elmira County Public Schools and Charlottesville City Schools.

[01:57:09] We have signed data sharing agreements with the families that are part of the program, approved research consents from everyone and so that was a big push to start all of this is being able to follow all of those procedures and make sure that the research is protecting all the data that we're collecting. Another milestone was in spring of 2023 we were awarded funding from the William T. Grant Foundation to help fund some of this project and a large part of that funding was supporting the school district and having a research role in Dr. Carlock's position in establishing that capacity for the school district to do more research and program evaluation work

[01:57:45] that was needed to push this stuff forward. Another part of this work is a community advisory board and I'll talk about that just briefly tonight but that's the board that guides all of the work that we do and in spring 2024 we had our first board that was primarily built around Amara County Public School teachers and counselors but that's expanded since we've expanded with our partnership with PVCC. As our students are getting older and about to go off into college, potentially going to PVCC and beyond, we've started to ask some other research questions that's involved them. And so our full community advisory board actually has membership from Amara County, Charlottesville

[01:58:23] City, PVCC, and our Star Hill Pathways program. And then most recently, in the past couple months, we've applied for more funding to support more of this work and to continue to grow this cross institutional collaboration. So this is just a brief visual of our actual structure.

[01:58:42] So the education research team is here in the center. That's us at the center. And then there's our faculty and graduate student partners that are also sometimes involved in our projects. We have some of our graduate students here tonight to help us just collect notes in our small group discussion. And then from there, we have our nodes into our other local education agencies that we partner with.

[01:59:02] And then all of this is guided by our community advisory board. So all the research that we are planning, either faculty, graduate students or us, that's gonna use any data that involves the school systems or the students that are in our projects is run by our community advisory board. And they advise us on the kinds of questions that we should be asking as well as actually, should we even pursue the research?

[01:59:24] And then also any publication that was meant to go out will be reviewed by the community advisory board. So just quickly, this is the structure of the board. And so for Amara County, we have a teacher. We also have a parent who's a parent of a Star Hill Pathway student and an Amara County Public Schools parent.

[01:59:41] And then an actual student from Amara County who is also here tonight. So I'm not going to go through all the details of projects, but I wanted to highlight just this as an example of the cycle of the projects that we've done. So I mentioned the career project that started in 2022.

[01:59:58] We've been studying for the last few years how Star Help Pathways as a program, as well as other initiatives in Amara County Public Schools, are impacting a student's career self-efficacy and outcome expectations, and that has been involved interviews as well as surveys.

[02:00:15] We do already collect data from 6th through 8th graders across the district measuring those constructs, and then from that process, we also then publish reports both internally with de-identified and identifiable data. We've also published articles academically. We've presented at multiple conferences about this work, and then some of that work has then been used to make some small and large changes. Similarly, we just heard a little bit about the culturally responsive teaching program, so we did a program evaluation report together with Amara County, and we did teacher interviews and surveys around student achievement data, and then used that to

[02:00:53] build a program evaluation and published articles and conference presentations and that both of those projects have involved multiple faculty and graduate students as well as us at the center as well as folks at Amara County Public Schools. Two of our newer projects so as this has grown we've been doing a lot of discussion around how to support students with their post-secondary achievement and there's two areas that we're really looking at algebra one and dual enrollment enrollment so algebra one in middle school right knowing that seeing how students take if they take algebra one of seventh and eighth graders what are those impacts long term as well as when students take a dual enrollment course what are those impacts

[02:01:33] long term and that has been driven by data that we've looked at both in conversation with acps as well as pvcc and seeing as we follow those patterns how what are the long-term impacts and so we've used that data to then inform building out research research studies we've involved different faculty and graduate students to bring on multiple expertise into these projects and that's really at this point built out into research plans that have been approved and run by our community advisory board and then trying to build up then the similar path of what kind of publications how are we going to disseminate these reports back as we start to

[02:02:09] build out these projects over the next couple years and we mentioned briefly uh dr kaiser mentioned merck and we'll talk about that in our small groups too there are other models for these kinds of RPPs. So VCU has the longest standing I think maybe nationally. They've established this in 1991. VCU has a partnership with Henrico, Hannover, Gushland, Richmond and Chesterfield and we do work closely with some folks there and I've been in conversation with them about their model and and how they have structured this. So their partnership looks the same where they have similar

[02:02:47] research projects. They do a lot more white papers. They think they even do some podcasting and reporting. They have an annual summit with all of the members from across those different districts and regular meetings and annual strategic alignment so that the research that they are conducting at VCU is responsive to the questions that they're asking at these districts. George Mason more recently in the last couple of years has also formed a similar research alliance with I think 20, I did put the number there, 20 of their public school divisions. I know their most well-established one is with Prince William County. And they're still trying to grow

[02:03:26] across the whole Northern Virginia area. And they're similarly trying to build research projects that are relevant and responsive to the questions that those school districts are asking. So now I want to spend some time doing some small group discussions. So we're going to be in three different groups. One group is going to be working with the students. And so that's going to be asking them about how they would want to be involved in some of this research. What are the things that students, the questions that they have, what kinds of research they're interested in seeing. One of the groups will be looking at the different models and discussing what is it,

[02:04:02] what is Merck, what are the things that we could adapt here in our partnership between UVA and Amarillo County. And then the third group will actually be talking about creating research ideas. So how generating ideas for what research could look like in the future. And I'm going to ask Dr.

[02:04:19] - Thank you, Nina, thank you, Dr. Scunover. So we're gonna break up into three groups now. So the students and the people presenting or facilitating will be rotating. The school board members will be staying in one place and that's so that the people at home who are streaming can hear all three panels as we rotate through.

[02:04:39] So I'm gonna ask Dr. Acuff and Ms. Lee if you could stay here, Ms. Osborne, Dr. Berlin, if you could go to 2:35 first and then if the other school board members can start at 2:41. And our students are going to start here, so we'll come up around the table, do our best to make space, and we'll have about 10 minutes at each session.

[02:06:24] sophomore at Monatilla High School. Hi, my name is Stephanie Martinez-Pena. I am a freshman at Monatilla High School.

[02:06:39] Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Penny, junior at Monatilla High School. I'm Kate Ancouf, and I'm on the school board. At junior high school, and I also have a son who's a sophomore for three more hours, and I'm wrong. Oh, really?

[02:06:55] Abbott Leona? Oh, yes, I know him. Well, welcome so much for being here. Thank you for being here. So I'm going to start with what I think is the most important question first, then kind of go backwards, because I want to know how do you want your voice to be heard.

[02:07:11] So one important part about research is engaging students, not only in making sure their voices are heard, but then also sometimes in the research process itself. So when we talk about surveys, we talk about interviews, how do you want your voice to be heard when people like the school board members are making important decisions about your life?

[02:07:33] I'll start. The way I want my voice to be heard is like through interviews and also being asked questions like being approached normally because I feel like when you're like pressured to answer by like surveys or like oh we need an answer now it's like very difficult to like come up with it and like when you're just like cool about it or just like come up to you like normally it's a lot easier.

[02:07:56] I agree. I think especially with surveys, a lot of students, when they have to do it during, I think, our high school is called Patriot Period. When we have to do it during Patriot Period, a lot of them rush through it. They don't answer it. They just click, click, click until they're done and then they go to Patriot Period. I think that having interviews with students, like representatives, helps researchers gauge a better idea of why they chose this answer specifically in surveys.

[02:08:20] In those surveys, I believe that we should post questions and go into more free response questions. And I feel like there would be more thought put into those answers rather than stay sure.

[02:08:40] Yeah, I agree. I think that with the difference between a survey and an interview, I think that an interview can be more engaging in a way. And I think that, especially since during Star Hill Pathways, we've had, like, lots of experience with interviews.

[02:08:57] Like, Nina's been interviewing us since we've been in sixth grade. So I think that, like, having this connection with the people that are interviewing us really help us feel comfortable in the space that we're in to be able to just speak our minds. A little more candid. Yes. I agree with, like, the one-on-one sit-down conversations to, like, act, get to know the person and, like, their actual answers.

[02:09:19] Another question is, how, if at all, do you feel like research is being used in your school to help people make decisions? I think that research every day is making a really big impact, especially on our schools.

[02:09:36] I feel like the environment overall at Monticello has gotten, in a way, sort of lighter because they're listening more to student opinions instead of just, like, going based off of what the staff or, like, the administrators think in our school.

[02:09:51] I think that also it's kind of just helped everybody get along better in a sense and I don't really know the facts on this but I feel like fighting has been happening like significantly less which is really good for a school environment to be able to thrive because I think everybody just has better and more healthy mindsets now that like the examples of our administration and like our staff are just like they're putting more positive things out into our school environment.

[02:10:25] Do you think you're good representatives of other students? Are many of these interviews your views, or are you trying to represent a bigger swath of your colleagues? I think it's really just a lot of us say what we view it as.

[02:10:44] But I also think that what we're saying is influenced by what we see around school. For example, if you were to ask me something about how I feel about the school environment, I would say that it's really positive, but someone else could say something different because it's really just during these interviews, a lot of people say what they think, but it's not really a good representation of how the school is as a whole.

[02:11:06] Marina, I'm wondering if you could give examples or anyone from your schools of how you've seen decisions being made with student input. Yeah, I think that students, like, for example, like SEA or just, like, the clubs we have around our school are really student-led, and I think our school is mostly just really student-led, and they listen to student voices a lot.

[02:11:29] They really let us be independent in the decision-making in our school, but they also set boundaries. So I think that it's really important letting students be independent and letting them really go based off of what they've been through throughout high school or even middle school.

[02:11:47] I think that's really important. Examples from the other schools? Who was listening to me? I feel like the people that were listening to us to the most were the adults and other children our age were trying to listen to us to us.

[02:12:09] You mean in Monochelle High School? Yeah, at Monochelle High School. So this question is about how, if you could design how youth are involved in a research project, what would that look like? I think that a mix of both, like interviews and surveys as well.

[02:12:25] I think surveys are a really good way to gather information, like a lot of information about students. And so everyone can answer, because I know at Albemarle We Allakey, I'm pretty sure the first 10 minutes of Patriot period for everyone to answer the survey. But I think that the downside to that is that so many people don't want to do it, so they just click through it.

[02:12:43] But that's when interviews come in. The reason why interviews are so important, especially in getting a better idea of what we can do about, I guess, school in general, having interviews kind of helps researchers think, okay, what should we do about this?

[02:13:00] and having a better idea of why they chose this on a survey. - How do you feel participation in interviews? - I think that a lot of the times, participation in interviews, they're more likely to answer and really just like, more just engage in general.

[02:13:21] I think that's the thing with interviews. A lot of people want to have their voice heard one-on-one instead of just being on an, just going on a survey and clicking yes, no, neutral. It's really just they can explain why they think this way.

[02:13:37] I have a question about the interview piece, because this is something that's not on our list, so sorry. But often I've thought about doing interviews in a randomized way where you can get different perspectives. I haven't done that yet, but I'd love to hear your feedback, because what that would have to look like if I don't know you, because you talked about you know Nina really well, you've known her a while, you know me pretty well, so if I were to interview you, it's one thing.

[02:13:58] But I want you to think about if there's a stranger, somebody that you don't know, what would that look like with that because they would have to call your parent first right to make sure that they're okay with it before they come to you do you think that that could potentially work to get greater representation from students and if so what would what would it would need to be done really carefully so what would be your advice for doing that kind of work I wouldn't do it one-on-one I do it in small groups as we are right now and

[02:14:25] then also going like through so and also questions I disagree agree is that's one way so instead of doing an interview to do a focus group right because then you're not by yourself does everybody have the perspective that that would be easier for you and i think maybe instead of just like during especially like i keep saying patriot period like putting the first 10 minutes in for a survey or an interview it's just super rushed so obviously they're going to answer the questions and they're probably not they don't really know what they're what they're saying

[02:15:05] so you're not going to get really like a good idea of what they're thinking i think having Like, it's just taking up the entire Patriot period when they're free is also a really good idea. What about students doing research? What are your thoughts about that? Like, students interviewing other students and then doing the research on that information to be able to present things to school board members, to principals, things like that.

[02:15:29] I feel like that's a pretty good idea because instead of a student just maybe saying what an adult wants to hear, they can open up more. And they're opening up to a student, so they're giving their, like,

true opinion and not a sugar-coated one that an adult might want to hear or what they think they want to hear.

[02:15:46] Because I think especially when you talk student to student, it's more honest. So if, let's say, an adult was talking to you, obviously you're going to give them an answer that's sugar-coated. You don't want to make them disagree with you. But when you talk to students, someone your age, it's just, you can be more honest about it.

[02:16:04] I think that with the small group and the student-led interview, I think those align because of just having, not a shoulder to lean on, but having somebody to kind of relate to in that type of situation and somebody who's actively in your shoes and, like, going through what you're going through kind of, like, in high school, even though everybody's experience in high school is individual, I feel like there's always, like, a generalization for high school.

[02:16:32] The last question is, what kinds of research would you want to read or receive as students about your own experience to help inform you? one that I would like to like see do is what people don't know because so many so many people know stuff but there's like a lot more that people don't know what they don't know what they can't like what they're not able to know maybe because of like maybe a language barrier or they're not able to like communicate or they're not being communicated to yeah I agree especially because they're not being communicated to a lot of decisions we hear comes from a word of mouth

[02:17:11] we don't see it on the announcements, we don't hear it, like, we don't watch, I guess, you don't watch it on the announcements, you don't hear it over the announcements, you just hear it from other people, and it can be misinterpreted and miscommunicated among so many people. So, you know, it's just, I think, broadcasting that, on school magazines we have that, we also have announcements, and we also have A-Town Today, which is the daily news report.

[02:17:38] Thank you. Are there research questions that you've not been asked that you think should be asked? I really think it's always what can we do to kind of make the school environment better, but I also think it should be resources for mental health or just help with the workload at school.

[02:18:04] I think that contributes a lot to the environment aspect and, like, what life at school is like. So I would want to hear more questions about mental health in general, even though it's a really hard subject to talk about, even among, especially among teenagers, 'cause it's like the age, nobody really wants to open up, but I feel like if adults show teenagers that they can be vulnerable, I think that motivation and getting school work done, even attendance rates can go up by doing this.

[02:18:36] - Thank you so much. Well, go ahead. - You're so articulate on the news. - Yeah, thank you. - Thank you.

[02:18:48] I'm Kate. I'm Judy. I'm Nina.

[02:19:21] I'm going to talk to you a little bit about the different models. So I brought these and I brought them on and I said we'd prefer a visual version. I'm not expecting if you're ready to commence, you can imitate.

[02:19:37] So, I mentioned briefly this model of ECU, so they have a partnership with the five districts around Richmond, and we've been working with them as well as... And so I think I just wanted to poke

around this is their annual report.

[02:20:05] - Just generally, I mean, we can nose around to this clearly, but how does the structural model actually differ?

[02:20:28] - Yeah, that's the next slide will be about what kind of an idea for this would be if if we had really a strategic plan together to align research. So if it's, let's say in the summer and you identify, we're gonna propose about three to five, these are the questions that we have for the next year and we really want to focus on that.

[02:20:51] This is why I brought their annual report 'cause I know that theirs were, like they have some literacy and they had some CTE questions. They had this one around course scheduling. So those were their priorities and if theirs had identified cross districts, So between the right goal, I'm sure, whatever.

[02:21:11] So that could be a long-term dream of like, well, I don't wish we're out to the city, and county, and PDCC, and all of our partners. But to start really just at ACPS, how do we identify those priorities so that we can build research projects knowing those are the priorities?

[02:21:28] - Okay, so right now, it's more atomized with ACPS versus Charlottesville schools? We each have our own. - Yeah, and it's, they pop up. It's a question that kind of emerges out of discussions around data with Dr. Carlock and I, we meet regularly.

[02:21:48] - So it's more ad hoc, each school division, okay. - Yes. - I don't know how I'm losing my voice tonight. It seemed to me. - Yeah, and I, so it's more of a way to align it so that it's, it gives us space from the research side to identify these are the priorities we need to bring to the table.

[02:22:07] So, for example, the Algebra I project, I brought this up, I was an English teacher and I did my PhD as English Ed. That's the expertise that I bring to research. And then there's this question around Algebra 1. I need to find somebody who has a lot of math knowledge.

[02:22:23] So we brought in some faculty and grad students who and postdocs who know a lot about math education to help us think through that project. And so knowing those priorities would help us give a better timeline for finding who we need to be able to do those research projects. And give you more robust and longitudinal data.

[02:22:41] - Yes. And then little things to other, this is one that came up just now too. They did a project around course scheduling, so they wanted to know across the district. - Okay, I only brought two for today. - Thank you.

[02:22:56] - The school districts are average and wanted to know about course scheduling, whether or not block scheduling or period scheduling was better for their students. So that's a, in my mind, like that's a study that could be conducted at a shorter timeline with the seven issue comeback at a faster pace than a longer term research project that you want to know five years from now, did students graduate because of something.

[02:23:20] I wish we had that research because we had to face that a couple of years ago. And it just was based on like five. So I wish we had that information, whatever it is. No, that one really, when they presented about that a couple months ago, I thought, that's a great question.

[02:23:36] Yeah. And it's very practical, really tangible. Here you can make some really concrete decisions around whether or not this is a question. I guess my, the ones that I've known about, and it's very few, have

mostly had the underlying achievement gap, opportunity gap, bones, for whatever the research is.

[02:23:59] I think there was one I heard about, I think with Prince William, about low Hispanic participation, and then there was research done and how they were able to review their participation goals.

[02:24:15] So I'm just curious if they're, like, the block schedules make sense, like, I wish I didn't know all that, but are there things that underline most of these research projects? Not sure about Merck, but for us, one example would be our career self-efficacy project that's been going on.

[02:24:34] So we're looking at how is Startup Pathways impacting a student's career self-efficacy, but through that we've also been looking at different membership groups. So we were finding that black girls were performing higher than their peers, so we were doing some matching analysis and that's led to us doing further studies and to look more into those students.

[02:24:54] What is it about the STARL Pathways Program maybe that's supporting them? Are there other levers that are shaping that? And so that we have been, there are different questions that we ask based off of the data that we find. So I find that, like, even with the course scheduling, that might be the larger question is, like, is course scheduling impacting students' achievement, and then through that you ask more questions about membership groups and follow up on future projects related to that. That answers the question.

[02:25:23] Yeah. I have to confess complete ignorance. Tell me about the Star Hill Pathway. Yeah. So it's a program that's out of the century. Well, I mean, I've heard of it, yeah. Yeah, so the students, they start, the ones you met are all part of style pathways. They start as rising 7th graders through graduation.

[02:25:41] They do mostly career exploration between 7th and 9th grade. And that career exploration is led by community organizations, some UVA departments, and different partners around Charlottesville. So, for example, there was an architecture pathway, and the School of Architecture at UVA led that pathway.

[02:25:59] So students get this really intensive career exploration. They learn how to be an architect for a couple weeks, and then they do another pathway where they learn how to be a filmmaker with Lighthouse CEOs. So that's the premise of the early stages is really just to get them exposure to all these different career opportunities to show them the breadth of things that they might pursue in the future.

[02:26:24] As they move into 10th, 11th, and 12th, they do a little bit more refining of that. So there's internship opportunities the summer before their 10th grade year. And then as they move into 11th and 12th grade, it's identifying they should be taking dual enrollment.

[02:26:41] If they want to be taking any of the scholar studios, if that's the path that they should be taking things at PBCC that they might be interested in. If they're really college bound for your plan. And is it targeting, I mean, like the AVID program in middle school, I mean, it's targeting first generations.

[02:27:06] Yes, it is for first gen and low incomes. Right, right. Yeah, yes. So it sort of has elements of both. Yeah, so we have some overlapping students in AVID and Startup. So when we look at the career self-efficacy data, we look at them if the students are in AVID and Startup Pathways and how those programs might be impacting their career self-efficacy.

[02:27:29] And how many students in each cohort, like each year you start, how many do you start out with? They're just about, they're going to start in a week or so. They'll be 49 total, and most of those, about 42, I think, are rising 7th graders.

[02:27:48] There's a couple of them that are joining in C. Is it about the same every year? Yeah, it's around 40 to 50. And then what grade are the oldest kids in now? They're about to be seniors, so a couple of those students. seven years and just like four or four no five years four years five years yeah as a researcher i'm very excited yeah we're finally getting to this point where you're like how it hasn't made any impacts these relationships that you've had where will it go i can't wait to find out i know so you anticipate having ongoing you know track them yes that's not lost to follow up yeah and part

[02:28:27] Part of the partnership with PDCC in the research has been really great and they also wanna know some of these, they wanna know how dual enrollment is impacting their students and the students persisting into a second year at PDCC and succeeding there.

[02:28:42] So those conversations have been growing the last year and have been really great as we can follow up. - I was just gonna talk about what June went on there but she was advocating more dual enrollment.

[02:28:58] - Yeah. - So there was a third model, not the Merck, then there was a third model. - Yes, so that's a George Mason. Yeah, so George Mason has, that's a newer one.

[02:29:16] So that's the biggest variance, I think, is that their goal is to be with all, they wanna have RDPs with all 20 school districts in Northern Virginia, so whatever all those are. But their strongest is with Prince William. So I've met with the director of Era Nova, is what it's called, and then someone Prince William County was involved in that research. So they have a data sharing agreement established. They're about to start doing more research questions, but they're trying to, they've been doing more conversations with Mark also about building a similar model.

[02:29:52] There's another one in the state that's, we've met with, this last year we did workshops with folks at JMU, Virginia Tech, RBCU, and George Mason, everywhere. So we did all this really intensive conversation around what each university is doing, but the three closest to what we're are doing, or the two classes, sorry, are at VCU and Virginia Tech has a different way that they connect with it.

[02:30:27] So what research questions would you like to ask that you haven't done that you haven't done? I think personally, because I have an English background, we haven't done as much research around literacy in our RPP, at least, around literacy and English supports, particularly for middle grades and high school students, that's my work, but that's the...

[02:30:51] Well, if you sat through part of the school board meeting, you know that we're, you know, we, we, I have a, a lot of us have the question of, of all the various things we're doing that are supposed to be, what is working, what is it, what is duplicative, well, et cetera.

[02:31:17] How can we do that better? I mean, we have had audits, we have an audit of literacy and we're working on those things, but we have math interventionists, we haven't even started yet this year.

[02:31:37] Reading, literacy interventionists, extra special ed and culturally responsive Educator, education projects, what's working?

[02:31:56] Will another committee move the ball forward? - Yeah, we talked about that in another group too, about the actual implementation of the research, and that's a question I know nationally in conversation I have with others doing RPPs, is how we can do the research project and have the findings and share it back, but how do we know that it's in practice with teachers in the schools?

[02:32:22] that's kind of an ongoing question of discussion I think of how do we actually push that back and make sure that the findings are being taken up implemented in the classroom is a priority also in terms of like reading and writing a big question will be a long amount of time but it's certainly starting now yeah especially for I don't know enough to know when they really start to need to

[02:32:58] use that, but how cognitive decline changes, I will be very curious. Have you done any work on generative or science?

[02:33:15] I have not personally. But yeah, but that's a good example of if there, I know there are folks who do a lot of that at UVA, both either at School of Ed or in the School of Data Science. If that was a question, we really want to know more about that. We can find the people who can help us build out those.

[02:33:32] And there's like the intuitive part of it too, which I think is important about having the community aspect of it where like teachers and people who are seeing it every day but don't aren't on the research perspective side of it can also kind of pitch in and give a visual perspective.

[02:33:53] So how much, and you may have said this before, if I missed it, but if we had an infinite number of questions and wanted to research, how many would you tackle for a year or a period of time? Yeah, so that's going to be on our final kind of slide.

[02:34:10] It's just this vision of having three to five. - Okay, three to five. - And knowing that at the start of the year would be what would be really helpful. Like this is what we know are the priorities, who do we need to find to help us build out those projects. Feels realistic, at least with the staff capacity.

[02:34:27] - How are the research questions now developed? - Yeah, so I meet with Rusty and Mordebrog every two weeks. - Things out of a hat? Almost. - You're all the guys? No. So, for example, the dual enrollment came out last summer.

[02:34:42] So I'm on the PVCC College Board, and I'm in those meetings, and I'm hearing about all this data around dual enrollment. I thought, we need to bring some of this back into our conversations. So I started linking Rusty and me and some folks from PVCC, and we started asking these questions about the data we were seeing in dual enrollment, that they're looking at PVCC and what is Rusty looking at across the district.

[02:35:05] And then that's led to a lot more conversations that have brought in counselors and other leaders from different schools and now there's this pilot initiative happening in Monticello to help enroll more seniors in SDV 100 who are planning to go to PVCC and so that that's how we grew this so the research hasn't even started but it's been this year-long conversation of this is the data we saw at PVCC and ACPS bring everybody to the table what are the questions and concerns they have around dual enrollment what are the things we we can do today and then what are the things we can ask and study longer term to build

[02:35:41] out stronger initiatives. And has that, has there been a somewhat recent change in that dual enrollment data that you've seen? Because I wonder about the, because I know like the AP has changed.

[02:35:56] For us. For us, yeah. That's what I'm saying. Like has it changed how many people want to do it now? So we, we had, we had changed the way, but remember Jillian Ballard. I know, changed it back. That's what I'm saying. Oh, I got you. So was there more people moving into AP rather than doing one because of that?

[02:36:18] - No, I don't think so. I think it's more about student readiness, awareness, and feeling like they can do it. And actually, and then sticking with it because they can do it. - Yeah. - And I think that's the premise of this project is that if we get the kids, and they're at the school, and they're doing the dual enrollment, and then actually walk over to PVCC while they're during school hours.

[02:36:47] It's like bringing you all the way there, will that help the student get over to home to where they'll stay in the class and then make progression to the PVCC campus and then courses, so that's one piece.

[02:37:07] And then the other part was the Algebra I, know that we we have been looking at data for a few years on our dashboard of students of non-traditional students, students of color, special education students, students economically disadvantaged not enrolling in Algebra 1 in eighth grade so then you start to develop like hypotheses of well what do we need to do not just to encourage them to go into it but to support them when they get into it to see them be successful on the other side that's a that's the Rusty's

[02:37:44] you know was initially funded through this program his position was initially funded like in partnership we picked we're picking it up now because it works you know I think identifying these research projects that actually benefit our students because then we'll we'll know what the best practices for our kids It may be that there are practices in other places that you just can't grab and transport, so I think that's the power of it.

[02:38:14] Yeah. Well, I look forward to all this work. Thank you. What's the blue and the yellow about? Just this? Oh, my gosh. No, I don't know. I thought it was random. It was subtle. I don't know. That's funny. She was just trying to say something.

[02:38:32] Yeah, I didn't know if it was a scolding or I don't know. No, no. Okay. Should we get up and get on there? No, we can go on. I forgot my research question.

[02:38:48] It's okay. Okay. I was supposed to have extras to give to y'all. We can share. Yeah. So, my name is Asha Murali-Duron. I am an education researcher with the Center for Community Partnerships. So, I work with Dr. Schoonover.

[02:39:07] work with Rusty to try and figure out the problems of our local school of this school district of Charlottesville City. We have, this is Greer, they are our grad student who will be taking notes for us today. Thank you so much.

[02:39:33] - Excellent handwriting. - No, it's not, but it's nice, that's nice. - Okay, so we did this same kind of activity with our Education Community Advisory Board, which, as Nina mentioned, was made up of ACPS, teachers, caregivers, and students, as well as people from CCS and PVCC.

[02:40:04] So what we wanted to know from them was what the problems were that they saw in our community and trying to pull out from those problems potential research questions that Dr. Schoonover and I could work on answering over the course of the year. So this is a very short version of that kind of

exercise, but the hope is that we can continue to have these kinds of conversations so that we can try to build a research agenda together and help answer the questions that y'all want to answer.

[02:40:40] So I guess my first ask of you is to list some challenges that you think our schools, families, teachers, administrators, and students face in the ECPS community. You can write one on a post-it note, or one per post-it note.

[02:40:57] I'm gonna, this, depending on how much time we have, I'm gonna give you a couple of minutes. We have like nine minutes. We have, okay, a couple of minutes. You'll get, you'll get three minutes to work on this because we have other stuff to do.

[02:41:14] There's one there that goes this way and then there's one up there that goes that way.

[02:41:34] So I don't know which one is going on right there. Is there one per? Can we play some challenges? Yeah, please. Do you want me to take your ticket? Oh, you can write it down. Sure.

[02:41:49] Yeah, but those are challenges that have come up in other panels.

[02:44:19] So let's take a look at some of our challenges. I see opportunity gaps, achievement gaps, opportunity or participation differences between underserved students achievement differences between black and white students that seems to indicate this this broader idea of opportunity gaps and achievement gaps um why do you think that is a problem in our community I mean there are so many so many factors I mean I think it's a national issue that is not

[02:44:55] different here I think having a high-powered university nearby doesn't help us I was going to say I don't know if it's a global issue but I don't know if it's a global issue I think for a long time a lot of school divisions were kept back by not doing evidence-based reading instruction - Oh, that's absolutely true.

[02:45:30] - And we're doing more of that now, and we're doing more evidence-based math instruction. But again, I do think that's nationwide. And I think that the experiences that kids have before they get to us is why we're very advanced.

[02:45:49] Also there, I mean, all kinds of others. - Yeah. - I mean, first there's a gap, and then there's the, what has always troubled me, is that some of our minority students,

[02:46:07] We perform below the state average, but there's no, I don't have any understanding of my, I mean, the gap, you can say some of the gap is because we have such a huge population, super high performers, and of course there's a gap, but still that doesn't explain why the bottom is buried here, but part of me wonders if we're even asking the right questions.

[02:46:33] Is that the real issue or should we be, how can we really focus on well-rounded, confident students and get them across the finish line rather than chastise the school division or teachers because of a reading gap in third grade when they come two years behind.

[02:46:59] So it has certainly captured the conversations on our school board and division, but I'm not sure that that focus has helped, actually, at all. And in fact, the more we talk about it, the more negative a community perception of the school division becomes.

[02:47:23] I think representation in licensed staff is another reason, and there are, again, a lot of nationwide reasons that go into that.

[02:47:43] I mean, people who are going to education schools get a certain background by and large, and then I don't know about the curriculums at those schools, and, you know, how much cultural responsiveness they need.

[02:47:56] Right. I would also say that there's this kind of cultural issue where teachers are not valued and when teachers are not valued and are not paid appropriately across the country, then that kind of leads to an idea that high achievers across the racial spectrum will not go into that work because it's not going to be sustainable.

[02:48:29] for them long term especially as the old days where women were trapped as nurses and teachers are gone right um which is really too bad because we need very highly competent nurses and we need very highly competent teachers and we have shortages in both exactly um all right so i guess is that all of them system differences across schools integration of cte with other

[02:48:58] academic uh math english etc um lack of representation in people who speak up yeah like a lot of voices yeah um i wonder if that's a confidence thing i mean it could be a lot of things could be a lot of things i mean i also wonder if there was like a cultural thing like i'm the only person i'm the only asian person i know that's a small number of people but who is involved in representation

[02:49:31] Because in my family, that wasn't like, no one had the idea that you'd do that, so I don't, I think there are a million things that go into it, honestly, and I don't know what they are. My mom was the school board rep at her school, and she was maybe the only school board rep in the entire state that was an Indian woman, so that I relate.

[02:49:58] yeah so from here the um the hope is to take these challenges and kind of bring them into uh actionable questions that uh we as uh the center for community partnerships education research team as well as dr carloff can try to answer so um we can't necessarily say like on a broad base what is causing the opportunity gap in our region, we can say, like, can we look to see

[02:50:38] if this opportunity gap is exacerbated by particular things, right? So I guess the question is, like, we'll know our problems are getting better when what is happening, when what change? Can you flip that, though, and ask, of the many things that we're doing, What is the relative benefit of reading interventionists or math interventionists or culturally responsive education training or a new literacy curriculum, a new math curriculum, a new science curriculum. We've done all of these things.

[02:51:20] increasing, I know teacher pay is still way too low, but increasing teacher pay by 30% in the past. How many years, Matt? - Six. - Six years. - What is the benefit of the intervention?

[02:51:36] - Or pushing eighth grade, you know, algebra to eighth grade, and providing ABID, whatever. It's like, when you're doing 20 things at once, how can you tease out the relative?

[02:51:53] What kind of multiple regressions do you have to do to be able to figure that one out? I don't know. - Sometimes. - Sometimes. - They're too interlinked and it's impossible. - Right, right. - But we can see what we can do, right? So, Capit, eighth grade algebra, teacher pay.

[02:52:15] We're adding math and data interventions this year. - I saw that. - That sounds very exciting. - We've been wanting to do that so good. - Yeah. I mean, even stuff like recruiting more representative teachers.

[02:52:31] I mean, we have a big effort and we have that for several years to go out to HCDU universities and recruit and do a better job retaining. Well, I think that's a big part of it, too, is their attention. Like, do people feel comfortable being themselves here and then they stay and then they, you know, talk to them.

[02:52:50] Going out to Ivy Creek where they're the only black teacher. When I think about how you know things are getting better, I always look at this and I'm like, you know, it's so defined by the boy-advantaged culture to begin with, so standardized testing, all of that.

[02:53:16] So I recently, a few of us did a principal supervision program through the Wallace Foundation. They kept talking about students feeling happy and proud when they're in school. And really, when you think about those two ingredients, it's not just like, I'm happy and I'm proud because, you know, something meaningless, it's because they have management progress with their learning.

[02:53:43] And their teachers are happy and proud. That sounds great. They're really successful with the students, and it builds, and the whole school community feels that way. I feel that the measurements that we have aren't, however, I think we forget.

[02:53:59] It's only one way of looking at the school. I think we've boiled it all down. And we want to remember, we really have a sense of celebration and recognition.

[02:54:17] what public schools are really accomplishing. - Like the fifth grade graduation I went to today, I mean, those kids were excited about being there. - They were happy, they were happy, they were proud. - And why aren't our 11th graders feeling happy?

[02:54:33] - That's right, what causes them to lose engagement? - Right, right, right. - So I think you'll, I think that, and we can measure those things too, you know? - Yeah. - Okay, good. - You're right.

[02:54:48] It's a bigger matter question. - No, no, no! - How do you create-- - How do you strike that balance of accountability for making sure that all kids are, that we have high expectations, academic expectations for kids, but at the same time, we value all the things that kids bring to the table and what they're capable of learning and doing so it doesn't just become, you know, everybody trying to ride a bicycle, you know?

[02:55:18] Right, so high academic expectations and accountability versus, like, a whole child, understanding a whole child. Understanding a whole child. I mean, the other thing that we've done is, like, the mental health piece, which the students were talking about, we were pushing that strongly well before COVID.

[02:55:37] And I'm amazed at how much our own students talk about mental health. I mean, every single, not every, almost 70% of the applications were submitted. All right, well, thank you so much for your time and I hope we'll get to work together again in the future.

[02:56:08] Well, thank you all so much for participating in those discussions to learn more about research practice partnerships.

[02:56:28] I am hopeful that you gained a lot of information and maybe had some new ideas as a result of that process. We're going to do a short, a brief reflection where you all can share with each other what you heard, what you learned. But prior to that, I did want to make a proposal based on some of what Dr. Schoonover said earlier about what we know about research practice partnerships and what has worked well for those school divisions and university partners that have been doing this for a long time.

[02:56:54] And this proposal is that the board identifies three to five research priority areas annually. annually. It could be less starting out, but that we have clear research priorities that are connected to what our strategic plan is and what goals the board has. And then we can get a cross-institutional team. We can really leverage our research partners at the University to start to investigate things that are important to our students, our community, to you all, to begin to be able to put the metrics in place to understand what's happening in our schools from the perspective of the people that are experiencing the decisions that we're making as we're making them. And part of that would be to

[02:57:33] be able to get the data back at a shorter time period so that we're not just waiting until the end of the school year to get SOLs back. And then also leveraging qualitative data. One of the themes that I've heard is the importance of listening to the community. And I want to stress that qualitative research is a fantastic way to do that. To do really rigorous interviews, focus groups, is a great way to truly listen to what people have to say and make sure that that's incorporated into decision-making. That could be that could include regular meetings with the board so that we can provide the findings and recommendations based on the the rigorous research that's done and then the board can use that information to make those policy decisions and then ask

[02:58:12] new questions based on the findings that are presented. So now I want to move towards the three reflection questions. We have maybe 10 minutes or so just to talk about so and feel free to move outside of these as you share with each other, but how can we more strongly align our research evaluation priorities so that the findings are more responsive to the needs of the district? And what structures can we put in place to amplify the voices of students, families, teachers, counselors, administrators, and all other groups in our research projects? And what opportunities exist for a stronger cross-institutional collaboration in our local region, including with UVA and our other partners like PVCC and even Charlottesville City Public Schools?

[02:58:52] So I'll open it up now for you all just to share with each other what you heard and what you learned from this and any ideas about the next steps to deepen our cross-institutional partnerships. One thing that did not, it didn't come up today, but when the Equity Center put out, I don't know, three years ago, I think, the equity report for the region, it noted that Charlottesville and Albemarle have basically the same data.

[02:59:19] So I'm very interested in cross-institutional collaboration with them and understanding what they're trying to do, what we're trying to do, what works for them, might it work for us, vice versa. I agree, Judy. I mean, I think there's been this divide before all of us were here.

[02:59:40] And I think the more we can find, Alice and I were actually talking, one of the students, or multiple students earlier during public comment who talked about recycling programs, Like, what are these small things we can do together? And so is this a place where, like, maybe our questions don't all align, but two of them align, and we can learn from each other and what their data says and our data says and other places that we can work together.

[03:00:05] So, because I would really like it, as well as Louisa, Green, other places that you begin to partner with. Like, how do we really learn from others in the regions of what they're doing? One of the things we heard from the students is the importance of having the opportunity to gather honest feedback.

[03:00:29] And there was a hesitation from them. You heard them say, you know, when we are interviewed, our surveys from adults are essentially meaningless. This is their words, not mine. And so

we've got to design a better mousetrap, mousetrap, a better system to pull from students, and I suspect that the same may be true of other groups of people, that we've got to do a better job of just instead of sending

[03:01:05] out a survey, because we all get tired of surveys, how can we elicit greater, honest feedback? I don't know the answer to it, but I think... I thought it was interesting when a student said, you're hearing us, but you're not listening to us.

[03:01:24] And I thought that that was a really important distinction. How do we, how do we up that? How do we not just take the information, but actually absorb it, listen to what the community is saying? And then how do we, I think Rusty, you touched on this, not just take it, but then how do we put it back out there that we've heard, that we have listened, and these are the actions that we're taking. And it's because of what we listen to in a survey or in a small group or whatever. So it's not just the receiving of the information, but how we're putting it back out into the community as well, I think has a really big impact on the bigger picture.

[03:02:04] The other thing I think about is kind of to this first part about aligning the research and evaluation, you know, priorities. Like in the small groups, we talked a lot about it's both like what are the questions of the system, what is like pushing them like pulling them through the community as well as what is the expertise that's out there and so I kind of hear you say like there's almost this like three to five priorities but it might be that the three to five priority or questions some of those you could say we could answer right now we could answer within six months others of those like so that we can begin to almost take this list and

[03:02:43] prioritize based upon funding, based upon, as well as something of like when we could actually act on it. Because sometimes you do research but like we actually then can't make changes in budget or a certain school structure for two years and so that's when like students and teachers and others don't see that change. So it's not just the questions but kind of I'm a timeline person so think about the timeline when it makes the most sense based on a decision that could be made, a funding that could do, a policy that could be changed. So as we think about it, that's a part that I would love for us to be a part of, have that be a piece of it as then as well as, you know, here are the

[03:03:21] questions, here's the matrix of who are the people that should be included as part of that conversation. Because I think also making sure like the community says, we says like making sure every piece of it was like in a 360 review of like? Where do all those voices need to come from? I just want to say I think that's an excellent point Dr. Brillen because often there are certain decisions that are timeline based that the board has to make and thinking ahead of when those decisions are happening and how research can play into that process makes a lot of sense. Leveraging the existing timeline as it is trying to start

[03:04:00] something new. Well thank you all so much for participating in these conversations and continuing this work of developing our research practice partnership with the University of Virginia and our institutional partners across the region. Thank you and thank you to the students for coming tonight, staying late. Yes, a huge thank you from all the students from Monticello and AHS and all the people from UVA. We so appreciate and look forward to partnering with you even more. You guys are great, thank you. Any other business by school

[03:04:35] board members or the superintendent or cabinet members? Seeing no other business and hearing no objections, I call the Albemarle County School Board meeting adjourned. Thank you so much

and enjoy your last day of school.



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