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City of Fairfax School Board Regular Meeting, Monday, April 6, 2026

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[00:00:45] evening ladies and gentlemen tonight is monday april 6 of 2026 and this is the regular meeting of the city of fairfax school board everybody please stand for the pledge of allegiance pledge allegiance to the flag of the united states of america and to the republic for which it stands one nation under god indivisible with liberty and justice for all okay we have no changes in the agenda this evening um i'd like to welcome our region five executive principals we have chad

[00:01:19] layman and gordon stoke so welcome thank you for coming this evening um our first item is the adoption of the agenda may have a motion please madam chair ms kelsey i move that the city of fairfax school board adopt the agenda as written and distributed i may have a second second okay ms kelsey moved miss sessori seconded all those in favor signify by saying aye aye none opposed so the adoption of the agenda passes unanimously we are going to begin this evening with a presentation of the donation to the all-night graduation

[00:01:58] party we are pleased we there are many members of the all-night graduation committee and students here hopefully I'll get everybody's name and I don't know if everybody's here but I'm gonna say everybody's name just in case Donna Sabo Marcy and Noel Sackey fosters in Patty Coates who's also our FHS PTA president and Christine and Casey Parker so welcome thank you for coming the city of Fairfax

School Board proudly recognizes the committee's outstanding dedication and tireless efforts in creating a safe memorable and

[00:02:35] truly exceptional celebration for every Fairfax high school graduate which I think began in 1988 the year I graduated high school in appreciation of this important tradition we are we are very excited to present a check up for two thousand dollars in support of this work if we could have everybody from the committee and school board members and dr. Wright come down for a photo

[00:03:31] okay in three two one and squeeze in a little bit on the edges in three two one awesome thank you so much

[00:03:59] okay the next item on the agenda is that I would like to ask mr. Jeff Greenfield to please come

[00:04:43] forward the school board would like to recognize mr. Greenfield and the Labor Day car show for everything they've done to support our schools. So I have a few words here written. For many years, Jeff and the Labor Day Car Show have been incredibly, incredibly generous to our students and our school community. Over the past seven years, he has helped to provide thousands of backpacks filled with school supplies to our schools. And most recently, he and the Labor Day Car Show donated \$5,000 to support our school food pantries and help students and families

[00:05:20] experiencing food insecurity providing each of our schools a check for \$1,250 to buy food for students in need. Jeff cares deeply about helping others and that has meant a great deal to our schools. We are grateful for his kindness, his generosity, and the way he continues to show up for our students. Tonight we want to thank Jeff publicly and present him with a small token of our appreciation, a Fairfax High School sweatshirt as a graduate of Fairfax High School, and a supporter now of our schools we want jeff to know he will always be part of the fairfax high school

[00:05:57] family okay next is presentations to the school board we will start with citizen participation

[00:07:28] we have ms ashley taylor signed up to speak this evening ms taylor would you like to come up to the podium okay good evening my name is ashley taylor and i'm here tonight to sincerely thank you for your leadership, your integrity, and your commitment to doing what is right for our students, teachers, and our community. As many of you know, most of you know, my son is Ben. He's a junior at

[00:08:05] Fairfax and plays on the football and lacrosse teams. Our older two children are FHS grads, all attending city schools since starting in kindergarten. My husband, Trey, is also a teacher and the football coach at Fairfax. The investigation that was opened in July of last year affected not only our family, but dozens, if not hundreds of students, their families, and the broader community.

[00:08:28] I want to thank the City School Board Chair, Carolyn Pitches, Assistant Superintendent Dan Phillips, as well as recently appointed Superintendent Dr. Dustin Wright, and of course, Fairfax Principal Dr. Georgina A., for meeting with parents on numerous occasions, responding to our emails, and doing everything they could to advocate on behalf of our children and staff.

[00:08:50] There was a steep learning curve for most of us who had no previous experience dealing with an investigation, administrative leaves, and Fairfax County public schools. At times, it was daunting, disheartening, and downright frustrating. Without your support, I'm not sure where we would be today. I'd be remiss if I didn't also mention parents who spent more time than they should have to, researching rules and policies, writing, writing, sending, and resending emails, and showing up to speak at county school

board meetings. This extends to some of our brave and well-spoken student-athletes. Your willingness to advocate for transparency and timeliness was crucial.

[00:09:29] As we move forward, my hope is that we will continue to work towards more open and direct communication, and we continue to evaluate our relationship and agreement with FCPS. I also hope this serves as a good reminder to other parents and students that our principal, our board, our city school leadership are all open and willing to work with parents and students to address concerns, and the best route forward is not social media posts griping to friends and neighbors, believing everything you read online, and what you may hear secondhand. We all share the same interest, doing what is best for our students. Our parent group found every meeting we asked for was scheduled, was held in a timely manner, and we were able to speak openly and

[00:10:07] honestly. And in turn, we were spoken to open and honestly. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support and helping us navigate a very difficult time and situation. We greatly appreciate your shared desire for not only transparency, but fairness and consistency.

[00:10:24] Because of your efforts, we are able to move forward this spring. With your help, we hope we have modeled for our own children and students integrity and good character, as well as the importance of speaking up and working together. Again, thank you on behalf of our family, as well as many other parents and students.

[00:10:41] We all thank you. Thank you, Ms. Taylor. Next, we will move on to the student representative report. Ms. Lucas. Good evening and a happy April.

[00:10:56] As spring arrives in 2026, Fairfax City schools are buzzing with energy, growth, and excitement. Their quarter is done with strong momentum, while students and staffs and families look forward to warming days, outdoor learning, and the final stretch of the school year. Here are some recaps and highlights from March 2026 across our schools.

[00:11:13] At Fairfax High School, students celebrated Women's History Month with a powerful assembly featuring student speakers, performers, and exhibits highlighting the contributions of women throughout history. Fairfax High School hosted their annual fashion show and cultural celebration for students and their families highlighting diversity and spirit. Spring sports practices officially began with baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, track and field teams hitting the fields and attending spring break tournaments. At Katherine Johnson Middle School, eighth graders participated in high school registration night and completed their course selections for the next year. Students wrapped up map testing and engaged in meaningful service projects during the National

[00:11:48] Kindness Month. A weekly newsletter kept families updated on spring events. In Daniel's Run and Providence, the Daniel's Run Springers performed at the Spring Choral Festival in mid-March. Students celebrated Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss' birthday with a leak-long literacy celebrations, costumes, and guest readers. The school hosted its annual wellness fair, focusing on healthy habits, nutrition, and emotional well-being as seasons changed.

[00:12:14] March engaged STEM activities tied to sustainability in EcoSchool USA, including a school-wide recycling drive and environmental awareness projects. Families enjoyed a multicultural night with food performances and displays celebrating the diverse cultures in our community.

[00:12:31] Wishing everyone a wonderful spring season filled with sunshine, continued academic success, and joyful moments as we close out our third quarter. Happy April, and here's to a bright and successful spring ahead. Thank you, Ms. Lucas. does anybody have any questions for miss lucas okay okay we will move on to a presentation from dr. wright um he's going to talk to us about the one percent sales tax uh that's currently being considered thank you chair pitches and good evening to the board and good evening to

[00:13:10] the members of public that are watching the presentation this evening as chair pitches introduced we're going to talk a little bit about some proposed legislation that is currently under review in richmond as a part of this legislative session so i'm going to provide some updates on house bill 334 and senate bills 66 and 607 these bills relate to how localities may fund school construction and renovation projects and again just to emphasize this is all proposed legislation at this time and we'll talk a little bit about where it is in the process

[00:13:44] so as we look at the next slide i'm going to intentionally say that there's a lot of information on here and there's no need to review it all in the moment because I'm going to try and provide a high-level overview in the next slide but what you have here is the exact language for each of the three bills that are under consideration in terms of their introductions and then there's also for members of the public hyperlinks to each of the the bills senate or house pages that tracks where they are in the process, if there are any people that want to look into a little bit more

[00:14:21] of where we are on each of those bills. If you do take some time to zoom in and look at the text, you'll see that they're very similar between each of the three bills. Not 100% identical, but very, very similar. So as we look at the next slide, we'll talk a little bit about an overview of what all three of these essentially say. So this proposed legislation would allow counties and cities throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia to consider an additional local sales and use tax of up to one percent. Any such tax would require approval by voters through a local referendum.

[00:14:57] This revenue would be restricted to school capital projects, including construction, renovation, expansion, or the repayment of related debt. So really specific in terms of the revenue that comes in from this one percent sales and use tax of how it can be utilized by cities and counties. This additional one percent, at least in the proposed form, would not apply to specific things such as groceries for food and home consumption or essential personal hygiene products.

[00:15:26] And this would represent an additional funding mechanism available to local governments separate from their existing revenue sources. The second bullet on this slide talks about one of the distinctions between some existing bills that are in place throughout Virginia. And this current version allows local governing bodies to determine whether or not to include an expiration date. So you're going to see some examples of some other bills in Virginia that, you know, when they were voted in by their residents, this sales tax will be in place to this specific date. So the referendum would, or the localities would get to choose whether there's a specific date where it

[00:16:04] ends or it's in place for longer than that. As we look at slide four, you'll see some of those localities that have received authorization from the state legislature. And there's a limited number throughout the state. These include Charlotte, Gloucester, Halifax, Henry, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Patrick, and Pennsylvania counties, and the city of Danville.

[00:16:27] This proposed legislation would extend this authority to all counties and cities in Virginia if approved by the voters. On the next slide, you're going to see where we are in the legislative process. So I'm going to do my best to channel.

[00:16:44] I'm a bill. I'm a bill on Capitol Hill. And think about how this all works. But please note that I'm not an expert in this area. But these bills were proposed, and again, if you go to some of those links, you can find who the sponsors were and how it went through the process.

[00:17:01] But all three of them have been carried over by the Senate Finance and Appropriation Committees, and any further action on them will take place through the budget process. So instead of being a bill that will go to Governor Spanberger's desk, it'll be if this comes to pass, it'll be through the budget process.

[00:17:19] It'll be an amendment in the budget process. in terms of timing that budget work will begin on april 23rd and the legislative outcome and final form of this these proposals are still pending in terms of how long that budget process can be in some years it's been it's been a one day so we might know something on april 24th or it might be several days depending on how much debate and deliberation and updates happen throughout the the budget process. On our final slide, I just want to mention that as a city of Fairfax Schools team and with our partners on the city government side, we'll continue to monitor

[00:17:57] the legislation and provide updates as additional information becomes available. I would like to thank one of my great colleagues, the city's chief financial officer, JC Martinez, who's here tonight. If there's any questions that are pertinent to his knowledge base, which are probably most of them um and um and with that chair pitches this concludes the presentation and i'm happy to answer any questions okay um ms borrow may do you have any questions um not not right now thank you ms kelsey ms hickman uh no questions just want to say um on record that i really hope that this is something that continues and goes through because it will really

[00:18:35] benefit the schools um in the city and the entire state miss sessori i'd like to echo those comments as well. I know there's a lot of conversation around diversifying our revenue sources into the city to help supplements, not just put the burden on property tax owners, property owners through their taxes. But this could very well bring in what between 10 and \$12 million toward renovating that if I did my math correctly, if I remember my numbers correctly, which is not nothing, but But definitely helping kind of chisel away at things.

[00:19:13] So, thanks. The counties that currently are authorized to impose this tax, do they currently utilize that option? Do you know? That's a great question.

[00:19:30] I'm not able to answer that with authority in terms of if any of those have expired. So, again, the reason there's that distinction in the proposed legislation is that some of them were, It was in place for the length of the repayment of a school bond or it might have been five years where they were going to have the tax and then they were going to ask for another voter referendum.

[00:19:51] So we'd have to go back and get that information to see what is the status in each of those divisions. Okay, I'd be curious to see which of those counties do impose a tax and if possible, what the tax generated for them annually, if we can.

[00:20:11] yeah and that's a that's a really important question i know that we have some resources available to us on september 2nd of 2025 there was a joint city council and city schools meeting that

provided some information publicly from the davenport group that had some of that modeling in there that's something that is publicly available and is something that we can share with the board okay thank you um and i would agree with necessity this this is an important opportunity um because it is a different um revenue source and one that extends the tax burden to people outside of our

[00:20:50] community and would help to pay for school renovations or it would lessen the burden on city residents um thank you dr wright okay um uh and the next thing is our state of the schools address. And we have Mr. Chris Smith, principal of Catherine Johnson Middle School. We are thrilled to have him here this evening. Welcome, Mr. Smith. Thank you. Dr. Wright, Madam Chair, school board

[00:21:25] members, region office, members of our community. Again, always an exciting night for me to be able to present the positives in some of the growth areas of our school. This is my eighth presentation, So I feel like maybe I'm reaching some rarefied air, at least some of the principles that I knew.

[00:21:44] I don't know, Miss Pitches, maybe you can help me figure out what the record is. I will try to beat it here. And there is a basketball game tonight, so I'll do my best to get us home before that starts. I just want to, you know, I tend to put a lot of pictures in the presentation.

[00:22:02] I think it gives you hopefully a flavor of what it's like to be at our school, even though it's 7 o'clock on a Monday night. But talk a little bit about our demographics, attendance, academics, city support, transitions, and then just some joyful things at the end.

[00:22:19] Mrs. Pitches, I will let you decide if you want me to stop at some point for questions or just go through to the end. And I tried to highlight some things based on the region presentation from a couple weeks ago and not just duplicate last year's presentation.

[00:22:37] So to give you a little bit of a look, so hovering around 1,150 students this year, that's down about 25. It's what we expected, so it wasn't a surprise in terms of staffing. Again, you see our numbers of AAP Level 4 students, our special education students, and communication languages.

[00:22:57] Right again, you see English and Spanish being the overwhelming amount there in our school. And I know these charts can be a little bit difficult to see. Again, just ethnicity, I wanted to show you, we've had a little bit of a variation this year amongst our Asian and Hispanic populations, a little bit of increase in our white population.

[00:23:23] Grade level, pretty much 50-50 between 7th and 8th grade. The next, and I think, did they get the updated that I sent? They did, okay, because I had made a mistake. And so English proficiency, again, a little bit of a dip, that kind of 2%, 3% dip that we've seen from the previous slides.

[00:23:44] This proficiency levels is one that I added this year. I did not have last year, right? Because just because you see that number of 20%, it's important, I think, to know what makes up that 20%, right? If a school has all level 3 and 4 kids, that's a different environment than a school that has more level 1s and 2s.

[00:24:04] So I know that, again, there's lots of pieces of pie in that proficiency, but looking at that dark blue and yellow, it's about 9.5% for both of those. Those are our level 1 and 2s, right, so students who tend to have come to the country more recently. And then at that wedge of level 3 of 24%, I think it's important to note not only us, but most schools countywide, right, you tend to see students plateau.

[00:24:30] And this is where we're trying to push them out of services, right, through the WIDA testing past that level four. So that's that wedge there. Attendance, and again, I put this here, right, because, you

know, nothing else comes in these later slides without attendance.

[00:24:51] So this was the Friday, March 27th, right, before the day of spring break there. So it's our most recent numbers. We're at 12.4%. Last year, we were at 13. That IP fit, I heard elementary folks refer to it as IP fit.

[00:25:08] So either one, right, it is that, I wrote it down somewhere. Maybe it's on my next sheet here. I didn't. But it's these recovery hours and days. So you see that if we did not do the IP fit hours, we'd actually be a little bit higher than last year.

[00:25:25] So we gather those after school and on Saturday. We've been running Saturday schools since January. What I would say on attendance this year, I think one thing we've tried to do is focus on some positive rewards, for lack of a better word, school-wide.

[00:25:44] So we've had competitions amongst the teams. You know, in middle school, we have four 7th-grade teams, four 8th-grade teams to try to make that transition a little easier. So we've done different attendance challenges through the course of the year.

[00:25:59] And, again, we have an attendance team, right, that's handling a lot of these individual cases, right, when it comes down to it. Many of these are individual meetings that you need to have with families and try to tackle what some of the challenges are. You see the next picture here, right, a very timely challenge.

[00:26:18] Now, this one was dealing with tardies, which doesn't exactly fall into our evaluations and things, but it's something that makes the adults in the building a little crazy at times, right? But when they're in the hallway and they shouldn't be.

[00:26:34] But so, you know, trying to get some timely things like the basketball tournament there with tardy challenges. So a bit more positive stuff as well as the meetings with families. You know, I think we want to celebrate just briefly some of the things that were brought up in the region presentation, right?

[00:26:54] Our progress of our ML students, exceeding our projected score, our reading, math, and science performance, and our advanced math as well. So I stole these slides from their presentation, but just to see, right, again, year to year, right, we had a 67.7%, right, which again is another growth from the year before.

[00:27:16] I do want to shout out to our excellent ESOL team, our students certainly with the effort that they put in when they take the WIDA test. We have an excellent ESOL team led by Mrs. Johnson. They're always willing to adapt and learn and do a great job with our ESOL students.

[00:27:35] Again, you've seen this before, lots of information. Just draw to the fact that those areas that I mentioned, when you look at what we could have gotten in math, we got a 19.45 out of 20, right? So, again, we were pretty close to getting full points there.

[00:27:54] And so many of our academic ones, you know, we did a really nice job, just 1.1 away from being distinguished. We were hoping for that. But, like I said, we exceeded our projection by 3%. So our teachers and students did a great job last year.

[00:28:12] Moving into math, again, this slide, similar to last year, we haven't really changed much in terms of structures. We've changed mostly in support, which is what we're going to get to. But again, we have our CLTs, Creating Common Experiences and Assessments.

[00:28:30] We use MathSpace, which is that FCPS-approved platform. We have tutorial learning and after-school support. I'm going to dive into that a bit more in depth here shortly. And then some of our students have access to tutors, numeracy-focused learning seminars.

[00:28:48] It's really a new name. should be tutorial learning. We have math competitions. We have partnered with Fairfax High School to have their student tutors come over and multilingual learner courses as well. So going to spend a little bit of time on next year. So this is what algebra enrollment looks like for next year. So it says our current eighth graders, it's really our current seventh graders, rising eighth graders. Just let me know if you have a question if I confuse you. But right now,

[00:29:22] right, we're at 84.5% of eighth graders for next year who will be enrolled in algebra. You see that we increased by about 10% last year and then another 10 percentage points this year. To me, it's not just enrollment, and I think to many, right, it's also we want them to be successful, right? So it's really both of those things, right? So we've made some strides in terms of enrollment and we'll talk a little bit more about success I think ultimately again we're talking a lot of numbers but it's individual kids and families right

[00:29:55] and so we recognize the need often to to talk with families right about what the best decision especially as a seventh grader the next one so speaking of our seventh graders says again current seventh graders but it's really our rising seventh graders here so this is enrollment in pre algebra or higher you see that we're at 90.5% of our seventh graders will be taking pre algebra or higher for next year I will one caveat right we still have although students

[00:30:32] have registered for classes again there are continuing to be individual conversations certainly as SOL tests come in parents may change their opinion one way or another or want some advice. So the numbers will fluctuate a little bit, but that's where they are now.

[00:30:50] I want to point out that -- and I think we said this in the -- came up in the region meeting, I think, that the current fourth graders will automatically be enrolled in pre-algebra, Math 7.

[00:31:08] So pre-algebra is math 8. Math 7 will be no longer offered for the current 4th graders. That makes sense. We have two more years of 7th graders having an option of 7th grade math or pre-algebra, which is basically the 8th grade math.

[00:31:26] And then I wanted to show you this. And, again, I apologize. I didn't stay for the elementary presentation. Maybe they had done this. But just, again, we certainly have sixth graders that are taking algebra. So you see that we have about 20 kids that will be coming to us next year that will be in geometry.

[00:31:48] Those are those sixth graders that are taking algebra now. That pre-algebra number is going to fluctuate. You know, we're going to have more kids. Our advice to rising sixth grade parents is to register pre-algebra as a default.

[00:32:03] Some of them will go in to algebra, and historically, we've waited for SOL scores to come out. There's a little different guidance, I think, coming this year where we may not have to wait as long for that decision, but just know that that number will increase in terms of algebra.

[00:32:23] So, again, students being successful, right? It's one thing to enroll in the class, but if you're not successful. So some changes that we made this year, I'm going to try to give you the quickest, cleanest version. And I'm happy to dig down into the nitty-gritty details if you want.

[00:32:39] But last year, I did a lot of listening. One of the things the teacher said, so we had learning seminar and we had TA last year, right? Learning seminar was year-long. It had some really good, cool stuff going on, right? So like one teacher literally is running paper airplane club.

[00:32:57] And then next door, English teacher is trying to deliver an intervention, right? So a couple things. Kind of hard to do the intervention when next door you've got paper airplanes and a lot of fun stuff going on. Paper airplanes don't cost a lot, but some teachers do run clubs that cost some money, right?

[00:33:14] And so they're doing that every other day over the course of the year, right? So they got a little tired, to be honest, right, of having to fund that or to ask us to fund it. And those kids that were sitting in that intervention next to the paper airplane club, they never got a chance to be in the fun stuff, right?

[00:33:33] They were always in the intervention. We took input from students. This made us change our recess as well. But bottom line is we have three things. We have learning seminar this year, Mondays only, student choice.

[00:33:49] Sorry about my hands. All the fun stuff's going on. Everybody gets a chance to do the enrichment. It's one day a week. We chose Mondays because sometimes we're off on Mondays, and we didn't want to lose days for enrichment. Then we added what's called tutorial learning.

[00:34:07] So if you don't know, the state requires intervention for certain students when it comes to literacy. That's mandated. They have to be in there based on their screener scores. We also use the MAP scores, which is our math screener, to identify students who are a couple grade levels below.

[00:34:26] And if they're not in an intervention for English, then they're in our TL math sections. The rest of the other thing last year was students didn't really have a chance to move. They, the way the system was set up, it was just really hard. Like if you just missed a day and you wanted to go make up a test or you wanted to get some extra help with some homework, right, they didn't have a chance to move.

[00:34:47] So our TL, if you're not in one of those two interventions, you do get a chance to move on those days. And then we have the same teacher advisory period every other day where we do lessons and advisory time. So that has not changed.

[00:35:02] But we have increased the support for students, in my mind, and allowed them some movement as well. Do you want to stop? Pause. I thought you wanted to pause. Yes. Happy to pause. Let's take some questions. Can I actually do one more?

[00:35:18] Is it one more slide? Because it's the same thing. And again, I just wanted some other support. So we added after school what's called our Learner's Lab. It's Monday, Wednesday, Thursday after school. We have two to three teachers who stay each day. We identified Wednesday as our math day.

[00:35:36] I will say this, it was a little sluggish at first, but the last, I'd say, right before winter break has really started to take off. So we have teachers there from 2.30 to 3.30, And then the Fairfax High School students come over from 3.30 to 4.30 every Wednesday for additional math support.

[00:35:54] And we also, this year, our AVID teacher, Mrs. Nygaard, she supports two 7th grade, they're pre-algebra classes. We identified those classes based on the number of students who were making that jump from 6th grade math to 8th grade math.

[00:36:11] Again, sorry, but math 8 and pre-algebra are basically interchangeable, right? So we put her in with two classes. They are focusing on binders and agendas. They talked about, she did a survey with the

kids, talked about some of the activities they've done.

[00:36:28] Students said, this is a couple quotes from students, keeping an organized binder and reviewing notes is not just about being tidy. It's about building a foundation for algebraic thinking. Another student said, I think reviewing your notes, keeping your binder organized, and making sure you pay attention because it really pays off when the test day comes.

[00:36:48] And you've been preparing for a while, and, like, you could even study before, and stuff in your binder is organized. So we are seeing some payoffs of that. So let's now pause, and I'll take it. Necessary. I have two questions.

[00:37:06] Could I do one and then do a go-back? Is that all right? You can ask both. Go ahead. First of all, I love the changes that you're describing about the learning seminar and bringing in that student voice and whatnot, I think it's so impactful to be able to reflect on that and make it worthwhile for students, having been at Fairfax previously when that happened.

[00:37:26] I had a question first about the math. I recognize that we no longer do the Iowa testing to determine placement for students going into algebra one, into seventh grade. And I'm curious, I was actually looking at my sixth graders, academic literacy. Is there any map testing from sixth grade that could perhaps guide that thinking rather than just solely relying on SOL scores? Because you mentioned that you use map testing for interventions during seventh and eighth grade. I'm just curious if that's used maybe for those conversations of maybe tweaking placements. Yeah, so this is the first year that

[00:38:03] elementary is using map. They had used iReady for their map screener as well. I think the key word I heard you say was guide, right? I think there are less barriers to get into algebra, but we also want to make sure we're using some data to help guide parents and families into what's best for their kids. So yes, we do anticipate that would be one of the things we would use as well. That's great to hear. And then when it comes to high impact tutors, I noticed that you have that on your list. Where does that funding come from? Is that some,

[00:38:40] is that I'm assuming that's not high school students no high impact tutors it's through Fairfax County my understanding not an expert but I think the funding is comes from the state of Virginia and they they are adults that we have hired that have been screened through our through the county's tutoring office it's not tied to ESSER funding because I know that that's kind of dried up at this point and that was tied to high impact tuning throughout the nation I believe it's been And the all-in funding, all-in Virginia funding, is my understanding, which is state-level funding.

[00:39:19] Yeah. Go ahead, Ms. Hickman. My question is actually very similar to Ms. Estre's in terms of just expanding a little more on what information is being shared with sixth-grade parents with the understanding that their seventh-graders will be taking a high school course.

[00:39:37] Is there information being provided that that will continue with them and be on their record? I just remember we've had parents confused about that and didn't realize they can expunge it later. How is that being shared? So there's buckets of kids. I just want to make sure we're talking about the right bucket, right?

[00:39:53] So we're talking about sixth graders who are in advanced math who have an option to go to pre-algebra or to algebra, right? Yes. Yes, right. I'm just making sure, right, because they're the only bucket of kids who can go to algebra, right?

[00:40:10] So we do give that information. You know, we had a parent night in a rising sixth grade elective night where me and Mrs. T do a presentation. We do a virtual presentation that we record and send to parents, right? I know that not everybody watches that, right?

[00:40:27] So, you know, when we look at some of the information that comes to us, that's why I say that that number changes because we'll make some personal phone calls to families to certainly encourage them, right, if they haven't signed up. but it looks like the data supports that. And also just to tell them, hey, this is, the data has come in and it is a high school credit class and is this what you want now, if that makes sense.

[00:40:55] Yeah, I'd be curious to see how those numbers change because you showed us, you know, the pre-algebra are higher with like about 20 signed up right now for algebra. And we didn't have access to, it was not broken down like that for us last year. We had the algebra numbers, but not necessarily. be curious how much it changes between now and the start of school just once those SOL scores do come out. Yes. Thank you. Ms. Kelsey. I watched the video. No thanks. So just letting you know. No so my question is kind of along the lines of the math as well with the numbers that you do have you have

[00:41:33] math seven as having only like 31 kids is that basically then you will just have one math seven class for the whole seventh grade yeah it might be two I mean that's stuff that we'll get to here in the in the coming months okay but yeah it is a very you know last year I had I think three teachers teaching it I think I'm down to two this year yeah that's what I was gonna say because I know it normally you have one for each team and now okay with the current fourth graders it won't even be an option yeah yeah um and then my other question is you have all these great things in

[00:42:07] place like the after school and TL and all that for the kids when they do start possibly struggling with algebra being it is made for you know high school age type kids how do how are the teachers getting the kids to realize they need that help or they need that extra support and not because it is after school yes not I mean the TL isn't but I mean most of that is after school going to the Wednesday or going to finding that extra time for the teachers. How is that being approached to

[00:42:45] the students and to the parents that this is another thing to help them because they are, you are noticing them struggling? Yeah. So I would say it's always easier to dispense advice than to be the parent and, you know, when it's your kid. So I recognize that, you know, there's layers to it right I think that the first thing you know we we have put out school-wide about the learning learners lab and what it means but I think first off that individual encouragement invite from the math teacher right you know the good thing with grades online right parents certainly know you know you don't have

[00:43:22] to wait for the first quarter grade to figure out what the grades are right so that personal invite our counselors do a great job right and so that's another layer of someone I am taking dr. Reed's advice from a from a principal meeting about a month ago I'm meeting with students next week seventh and eighth grade students teachers are giving me some recommendations of kids who they feel like can definitely pass the SOL but have their motivation is lacking so sometimes it's me or another administrator right sometimes they still don't listen right sometimes they say they're staying but you know after

[00:43:57] school again they can sometimes wiggle around so i got about seven students on a list that we just call down to the office every monday wednesday and thursday because they sometimes wiggle their way uh even if they stay after school um so there's many things to that and i think you know we don't like to see kids struggle but this is the time to do it right and so you know it's not necessarily necessarily a bad

thing right because i think what you see what the avi kids saying it goes across subjects right and that if they can figure out how to do something hard you know my first question to most of the kids are you doing homework nope okay so

[00:44:37] what's our plan there right um and then you get that extra help does that make sense yeah that does i'm just because it's in my head going how else are they because with the rolling gray book we don't always get the grades right away and stuff like that and so how do they know until it becomes too late sometimes and so that's that was my question is that people are noticing it yeah saying and calling the kids so thank you and mr. Smith would you be able to talk a little bit to miss Kelsey's question about how you and your staff use some of the information and data that you have available those map assessments or you know any type of common assessments across a grade level

[00:45:15] that might help you identify some of those kids even earlier on before that rolling grade book pops up as an actual issue yeah and again I think you're To me, it's a couple buckets of kids, right? It's kids. To me, the map is kids who are struggling with some fundamental skills, right?

[00:45:31] And again, our changes this year, we were able, we were even, we were quicker to offer math interventions. We got it up and running basically by the end of September. I think next year we can do it even sooner. So that's one bucket of kids that needs help, right?

[00:45:47] I think I was thinking your question, sometimes it's more that organization piece. It's the doing the homework. studying right they think they study but all they did was like look at their notes for a couple minutes right so so that's just another bucket of kids right that we help in a variety of ways right so for that yeah yeah I miss borrow may I think most of my math questions got answered but I did want to make a comment about the learning seminars I know some of the kids that were losing the ability to do fun activities were also the same kids that might not have a a fun elective due to support classes and so there can be a

[00:46:27] double whammy sometimes of those kids losing access to those fun activities so I really appreciate that change I think it's important for those kids. Yeah and I don't know if I said it I mean there was a group of teachers who volunteered to be on a committee we got student input right so it really was you know it was once we got through that process everyone bought in and they've done a great job.

[00:46:48] Okay I do have a math question. I know there's a lot of math passion on the board. So now that we have 6th graders taking Algebra 1, and we're going to have more 7th graders, we're increasingly more 7th graders also taking Algebra 1.

[00:47:04] Virtual Virginia offers Geometry as a summer course. So we may be seeing some of those kiddos taking that geometry during the summer. How are we, or are we planning for how we're going to address these students who will now be in Algebra 2, possibly as 7th or 8th graders?

[00:47:23] If you're talking about our hope next year is to have a section of Algebra 2. Right now, this year, we have about 10 students that we send over to Fairfax through the support of the board, right, that that section gets paid for.

[00:47:41] There's the buses take them, right? So, again, we don't anticipate a large number. Mrs. T checked on this last week. I don't think she got specific Katherine Johnson numbers, but they said the numbers right now of kids in algebra who have registered for online geometries, like single digits across the county, again, may change.

[00:48:01] So our hope this year, we know that going into 27, 28, we're definitely going to have to, right, if I go back, I'm the one with the clicker, I can go back to it. Yes, you can. Right, we know that that cohort of geometry kids for sure is going to need algebra two as eighth graders right so we know we're gonna have to you know that'll be a healthy section right next year um that section again is a lower number but we'd like to keep it in house if we can so you we would have to hire no we have three current math teachers we have nine math

[00:48:37] teachers on staff three have the uh math math mathematics certification that allows them to teach algebra two okay um and so we have yeah three that can do it so okay um that's our hope okay great um abby miss lucas sorry miss lucas uh yes um now it's on okay um yeah so i was wondering you're obviously you're making a big jump from sixth graders to seventh graders doing really advanced math um how are they gonna do in high school like obviously middle school is very

[00:49:14] different you get a lot more support more attention everything when you go to high school it's completely different you get less support your calculator is taken away from you basically how is that because I remember I was completely fine in middle school math and I was in high school math at the time and I was fine then I went to high school and my calculator was gone and I was all of a sudden failing math as someone who used to get eight so how are we i'm wondering how are you going to build it so their skills last to high school yeah so you're leading us to a future slide right which is we you know we partnered with fairfax last year right in

[00:49:52] terms of um uh math and uh again that term success right is to me just be talking as just a regular person to me i used to teach ap um government right and so i always told the kids if it's your first AP class, like, get a C, right? I felt like if you got a C, you can write in your college application about how you stretch yourself and got a C. Like, get a D. It's hard to explain a D, right? And so, you know, to your point, I think getting more on the same page with Fairfax about

[00:50:27] some things, right? The things we talked about last year, you know, what is success, right? Is it, It's, you know, is it a certain score on an SOL, right? It is a minimum kind of competency test, right? The calculator is a point of contention, right?

[00:50:43] I mean, I think basically we realized we could rely on it a bit less, and Fairfax could probably rely on it a little bit more. And so we, our teachers, have done, I think, a really nice job over the last two years of doing more paper, pencil, and in fact, right, They see when they give the performance matters assessments, which are the countywide assessments, like the students tend to do okay on the computer portion, and then we give them paper and pencil and have them work things out, and it's a little bit more of a struggle, right?

[00:51:14] So I think building some of those skills, right, the challenge of AVID is to build it across the school and those organizational skills, right? I think the teachers and staff at Fairfax still very much want to support kids. It's just the school has now doubled in size, right, when you leave middle school, right?

[00:51:34] So does that help? Yeah, okay. Mr. Murray, do you have any questions? So you mentioned that the children that are in fourth grade now are on pace to take pre-algebra for 7th grade. Is that right?

[00:51:51] Yes, that's right. So is that like, are they testing for that in fourth grade, or are they just on pace for pre-algebra? So they've changed the curriculum. The fourth graders now had a different curriculum in third grade than the previous third graders, the same in fourth grade.

[00:52:07] So that curriculum is going to continue to change fifth and sixth grade, where in theory they will have gotten all the math they've needed to then take pre-algebra as seventh graders. All right.

[00:52:24] All right. We can move on. There's also English. We teach other subjects at Pat and Johnson. Again, much like our math, right, their collaborative teams are giving common assessments. This is the first year that both 7th and 8th grade are giving the Performance Matters assessments, which is, again, the county-wide assessments using Lexia, again, tutorial learning, and our after-school support.

[00:52:48] Again, we have high-impact tutors on the literacy side as well. We have, again, I should have changed it. It's not learning seminars. It should be tutorial learning. Again, I do want to just reemphasize, literacy has to come first because it's state law, right, that if they fall below a certain threshold, right, in the I-Ready testing and then the VALS testing after that, that they have to stay in that literacy elective.

[00:53:17] Then we have, sorry, literacy TL. Some of the kids are in a literacy elective, so they don't have to also be in a TL class as well. So the biggest thing I want to focus on here, so this was our iReady performance mid-year.

[00:53:33] I want to point out, and again, I think we said this at the region meeting, but a phenomenal job that our elementary folks are doing. I say that having been there when some of that work started, right? And you can just see those first three categories of phonological awareness, phonics, high frequency words, right?

[00:53:50] There's almost no red there. And so the work they're doing is awesome. We started last year vocabulary as our focus, right? The vocabulary, if we can build that, ensure that, that's going to be the bridge to the comprehension.

[00:54:06] And so we have really focused on that the last two years. I bring this quote up. There's a lot chock full that you can read here, but I showed it to my staff simply because. So it talks about this school in Steubenville, Ohio, and basically sticking with it, right?

[00:54:22] They talk about they adopted an effective literacy program, sustained professional development, and then they stuck with it for 25 years, right? So, like, to be honest, our iReady data mid-year, it was kind of stagnant, right? We didn't see, like, this awesome growth. It wasn't, we didn't go backwards, but we didn't see a lot of growth either.

[00:54:40] But I really believe we're on the right track when it comes to vocabulary and the work that we're doing instruction-wise. And so I just wanted to make sure our staff knew that we just don't, you know, just because something happens at mid-year doesn't mean we throw out sorry my hands again all the good work that we're doing right and so we just have to stick with it I'm confident that our we'll see those results all right on to city support of course the transition counselor we spent a fair amount of time last year outlining that again we have that again this year it is a wonderful support right now she's spending most of her time with us and beginning connects even

[00:55:20] more with with our eighth graders whether it is some behavior or academic or mental health concerns that you might have for a student we have a think of it summer camp that the city supports we did it last summer we're doing it again this summer we have about 30 kids that come and we have a couple staff members who run that your some of the funds have gone to staff development professional learning we'll get into that AVID and Korean classes and then Unified Sports. So we already talked a little bit about AVID, and I've lost my paper trail here.

[00:55:59] I did want to point out that we're adding a section of AVID for next year. So right now we have one seventh, one eighth. Because of the demand, obviously with Daniels Run and Providence being schools with AVID, the demand is pretty high. So we'll be adding a seventh grade section next year. And that leaves Mrs. Nygaard with one spare section. So right now our thinking is, kind of become like an AVID coach instead of being assigned to two particular math classes, being able to give her a bit more flexibility to get into multiple classes is kind of what

[00:56:34] our thinking is. We had four math teachers attend the National AVID Summer Institute last year, and then we had four more attend training through the course of the year. And so our math teachers are doing a great job. Not to leave out other teachers in previous years, we've had social studies, English teachers. So again, just growing AVID. We have a collaboration with Fairfax in terms of a pyramid signing night and celebration. And like I said, we're adding an AVID class next year. So our Korean, we offer Korean. So we do offer four world languages, which is on the higher

[00:57:11] end for middle school, especially when I did my research, you know, it's a little easier if you are certainly if you're the south counties or hayfields of the world right and you've got the actual world language teachers in high school sitting in your building certainly a school like Hughes Middle School that shares a campus with South Lakes right they can do some well again a little easier so you know I think it's just a nice complement to city schools that we do offer four languages our Korean teacher did a great job this year she participated in this global classroom project. We participated in a Zoom. There was another number of Zoom

[00:57:51] sessions. Of course, anytime you can talk about K-pop demon hunters, it's going to be very popular. And then this next slide, right, that's the sign that is outside the school there in Korea, announcing the partnership between our students and theirs. And so again, the students had an opportunity to learn from their peers in Korea. And so we really appreciate that. Next is, if you haven't seen a unified

[00:58:26] sports event, I would encourage you to do it. This is one of the awesome things. We participate in basketball and track and field. And so last year, a former teacher of ours, he's a great photographer, and he took like some height pictures of some of the athletes that we had. And this year, we included our Unified Sports Team.

[00:58:48] So, again, the city helps with the buses, the transportation to get the students to this year. It was at Chantilly High School on a weekend, and they have an event coming up, I believe, at Madison High School for Trek. Again, I want to give a shout-out to Ashley Mies and Mike Scherkowski, two of our teachers who volunteer for this.

[00:59:08] So you see our Unified Sports Basketball Team. You have our buddies, so our students who help them. at the games and again uh just a really great event uh and i'll go through some other pictures there of our players who are very excited to have their hype pictures taken here so again we we uh last year we partnered with Fairfax uh I think the snow days kind of did this in this year last year we did a game with Fairfax as well um which is great fun uh kind of back to that quote right professional learning is really important so last year we had all of our teachers on their

[00:59:46] summative year had the teach like a champion text this year we got it for all of our teachers so this is where we're grounding ourselves in best practices and so all of our students have the book the team they've committed to at least one strategy out of the book many of them have committed to more than that

we just had clt days and so we were able to fund subs for all of our Our CLTs have a day to reflect on the teach like a champion strategies.

[01:00:19] They got to observe other classes, and they basically did. Like our algebra and geometry team went to the math 7 and pre-algebra classes. You know, civics went down and saw U.S. history, vice versa. So, again, that was really important funding, and we hope to do that multiple days next year.

[01:00:38] So we appreciate that help. Collaboration with Fairfax, Abby already led us there in terms of the math. Of course, me and Dr. I, we get along very well. We often are texting or picking up the phone. And, you know, I think any time that we can, to Abby's point earlier, I think know what the high school is doing, right, and decide whether or not it is appropriate for us at middle school, right.

[01:01:05] I think we're still middle school. We still have 13- and 14-year-olds, but certainly we want to figure out what they're doing and adopt it if we can. This year, our pyramid focus has been on our English language learners. So once every couple of months, we have a couple of our teachers.

[01:01:23] Our administrator goes over to Fairfax, and our pyramid is meeting to talk about English language learners and best practices. And this year, another focus has been our special education department, so our special education chairs. NAPs got together over the summer, actually, along with Dr. A and I over the summer, and they've continued periodic meetings, again, just back to Abby's point about even, you know, middle school, you know, high school is different, right?

[01:01:53] And what is in that IEP maybe in eighth grade isn't necessarily always appropriate for high school. On the horizon, last year this was chock full of things, right? So, you know, I think the biggest thing, just to update you on the boundary, which you may already know, we have rising 7th grade, 7 mandatory kids.

[01:02:14] So we lost 7 kids, right? They did not have an option. We had rising 8th, we had 13 who have the option, and 2 are staying with us. Again, I think certainly the vote on transportation probably had an impact on that, and we certainly understand why that vote, you know, happened.

[01:02:33] But certainly, I don't think it's necessarily a reflection of what they think of our school. And then rising ninth graders, there are eight mandatory students who need to go to Chantilly. Start time, stuff's still floating out there, right? Nothing was decided. You know, there was not a start time change.

[01:02:49] I know the school board has said that they certainly want to keep trying to figure out a way to change start times. But for next year, start time is the same. And math textbooks really hung up, I think, in the budget stuff. I know there's a, my understanding is I think a math textbook, some schools are piloting it.

[01:03:07] And there's, they want to do a full adoption of it, but it's just going to be budget dependent. Keep going. Which textbook are they? You know, I don't know. I'd have to, I'm not sure which one was finally chosen, but I could get that for you if you want. Because I know there's schools piloting it. Okay, that would be great.

[01:03:23] Thank you. Write myself a note. Does anybody have any questions up until this point? Accessory. I'm a little disappointed about the start times.

[01:03:42] just want to make sure my comments are publicly out there on that one though one thing I want to kind of go back to is you're talking about your school accountability the reading growth and going

from elementary where there's a large emphasis of science of reading and there's a lot of investment on the benchmark and benchmark curriculum which I know it's a fourth or fifth grade where the curriculum is around corn. There's a unit to traumatize students listening. So I'm curious,

[01:04:16] like, what does that look like for a sixth grader who is embracing the science of reading? I see it obviously with the phonics and whatnot, but transitioning into an English classroom. What does that look like? How do those strategies exist there for science of reading?

[01:04:35] Yeah, and I would say I am not the middle school English expert. I do supervise math this year. But what I would say is that, you know, I think historically speaking, middle school and high school teachers were not, if they had some training on how to teach kids to read, it was limited, right?

[01:04:58] um right they were used to having kids come to them knowing how to read right and so there is a learning curve right of um of uh of that aspect of it right we had a lot of training state that was mandated by the state last year i want to say it was um i think it was upwards of 40 hours of training that uh content teachers had to take um in terms of the science of reading uh so they they've gotten more of that background. There is a curriculum that we're teaching. I think,

[01:05:35] again, it's a little, I think across the board in secondary, right, is maybe a little slower for teachers to adopt just because it's such a different mindset from previous, right, where you would, you know, we would sit around and go, okay, we're going to read *The Outsiders* and we're going to teach these themes right where this is more a bit more prescriptive and so you see you know I think there was my experience in elementary early on there

[01:06:08] was some reservation about a one single curriculum but also everyone there was trained for the most part on how to teach kids to read right I think it's just a little bit slower adoption but we we have last year was a growth year of this year again we're given all the assessments teaching the curriculum um and uh you know we'll continue to improve that cycle does it does it seem like an easier time this year teachers are adopting it a little bit more um just finding it since last year was a growth year this year seems

[01:06:43] to be more okay yep um and then um just you talk about a lot of collaboration between middle and high school and this is something else i've long advocated for since being here is you know that conversation between middle and high school i love hearing about that is there ever a thought that you know creating common planning during the school day just because we're you know i recognize that there's restrictions to teacher contracts limitations to what they can do i know that some teachers used to go over to fairfax during the year to facilitate some of that conversation of planning um and just thinking about those 30 kids who will be taking out for two what next year

[01:07:21] right that you have a solid section right there for next year or two years two years two years from now you know that that's a singleton teacher at your school and to be able to have that connection with fairfax to be able to know you know every unit and planning that i'm just curious about if that's maybe on the horizon too yeah i think you know uh our our assistant principals in middle school uh are due to go to a 12-month contract starting july 1st right so i think And, like, that's one of the things I have not been able to talk to Dr. A yet about, right?

[01:07:58] But, you know, I have them now for two and a half more weeks than I did previously, right? So can we, you know, I think that's a natural starting point when it comes to some of the departments. I was, when I was previously at Katherine Johnson, you know, we would have the different teams go over.

[01:08:14] Certainly, I think we, you know, we're fortunate, right, being a city school, that we certainly could fund that, right? I think it's a matter of time. I think the school calendar as well, right, in terms of, you know, the number of days where schools have the ability to make some individual choices less than previous years.

[01:08:36] And so that's also hard, right? I think any time, I'm always a little leery of sending teachers out of the building when there's kids in their classrooms. You know, sometimes it has to get done, right? But, you know, I think we certainly want to continue the collaboration and get the teachers together to learn from each other.

[01:08:57] Ms. Heckman. I was curious if you have any updates on the after-school sports, like basketball and volleyball, that were supposed to be inter-school. And I know we had some very disappointed students and families. Any updates on that situation? Well, I'm meeting with two principals tomorrow.

[01:09:16] We have been working with central office to try to figure that out. But I do have a meeting tomorrow with two principals. I think, you know, again, I think just going back to that again, a little bit of that history, right? Some schools were doing it last year.

[01:09:32] I think when you talk about all schools, for instance, doing basketball, you know, like Braddock, for instance, or a secondary school, they just struggle for gym space for their current sports structure, right?

[01:09:47] So, you know, it's different schools have some different concerns. You have the 6th, 7th, 8th schools, right, who are like, you know, do our 6th graders get a team or do they have to compete with 8th graders, right? So I think getting our concerns as principals together earlier, I think the questions can be answered.

[01:10:04] And then it'll just come down to funding. So nothing great answer yet. Okay. Well, thank you for continuing to work on it and have it on your radar. Yes, I am on that committee. So I can give you direct updates. Ms. Kelsey. Ms. Borrone. I was just wondering if you could speak a little bit about the vocabulary focus of literacy instruction.

[01:10:29] Yeah, so we started on this last year. So we have a team of teachers that meet once a month. Our literacy committee works on different strategies in terms of teaching the vocabulary. And this is, I think our focus has been across all content areas, right?

[01:10:49] This is not an English thing. Like it's got to go beyond the English classroom, right? So again, whether it's in PE, I do supervise PE as well as like our CTE classes, right? So that's part of our SIP plan, picking specific strategies of how to teach the vocabulary to students.

[01:11:08] We have, like I said, it's part of our SIP plan. We reflect on it in our CLT days. We continue to share, you know, a variety of different strategies in terms of teaching the vocabulary. And not just, like, give a definition and take a quiz on it, right?

[01:11:26] I think building that background knowledge as well, right, is really important to the vocabulary for it to really sink in. Does that help? Okay. I'm going to go back to math. Okay. The competitions that this, is this anything different than, like, Math Counts or Math Olympiad?

[01:11:46] No. It's those things. Yes. Okay. Yep. I just wanted to see if there was something else out there I didn't know about. Okay. Dr. Wright, do you have any comments or questions for Mr. Smith? Okay. All

right. All right. Last few. So, again, this was something that came up.

[01:12:04] So, just transitions to 7th and 9th grade. We, you know, it really starts in December of that previous year, right? So, we have the 6th graders come over for their field trips. We do a curriculum night at Katherine Johnson for Katherine Johnson students. Of course, our rising 9th graders do the same in January.

[01:12:23] head over to Fairfax. We have a night in May. This year, it's May 13th, where we do a parent night for rising seventh graders, and we do tours for the students. And again, that's another place. I forget who asked the question, but about like the math, we go over a couple slides. Because again, at that point, we can still make some changes to classes. Over the summer, we do building tours and ice screen socials we have our rise program i do uh depending on how the calendar breaks out at least

[01:12:56] three or four usually it's every monday evening a virtual parent question and answer um session with parents i learned coming out of covid that uh that uh it's a lot easier to answer parent questions in july and august right than the first day of school so uh so we do that uh of course we have our eagle fest which is very popular back to school night we do parent academies during the school year this year we did a session on the parent view grade book and schoology on social media and we just did one in march on alcohol drug and tobacco awareness we're a purple star

[01:13:34] school we have we do some parent coffees for our military families the electives fair is the picture that you see there in the gym and then next week our rising ninth graders our eighth graders will head over to Fairfax for their field trip and of course we have the transition counselor which makes that transition to eighth and ninth a little bit smoother just some things you'll see around our school you know the counselors are certainly a really important aspect of middle and high school right that's a little different than you know we're lucky we have more

[01:14:08] counselors than we had an elementary you know welcoming students to KJ there see some smiling students uh that's a avid built built-in board it says turn your can'ts into can and your dreams into plans uh we love our pep rallies unfortunately we had to postpone one before spring break just because of scheduling but we have we rescheduled it for a couple weeks from now um career day you know one of the highlights whether we have the helicopter or not but we have had the helicopter for two straight years so that's always a a fun night

[01:14:44] We get a great, great support from city partners, and our counselors do a great job with that. Again, it's kind of giving you a flavor of joyful things going on. We do a staff underground spirit week, and so you're really observant students catch on pretty quickly that something's going on.

[01:15:02] Those are some science students putting together a periodic table using cereal boxes. Oh, that's such a good idea. One of the last ones here, you know, we started talking about the need to probably update our mission, our mission, probably make up a new word.

[01:15:20] That'd be good. Mission and vision also led us to like a branding conversation. So we're working with our yearbook company, which is Jostens. So we sent a survey out to family, students, staff. we got over 850 responses and that's a picture of us meeting we're in person but the person from jostens is virtual there so that was our teacher leader team along with our behavior solutions team and he basically said to sum up he goes there's like lots and lots of positives and it's kind of like splattered all over the place right there's kind of not this central thing and so what we've

[01:15:57] we haven't made any decisions but i think what we've honed in on right this idea of an eagle And at the same time, Katherine Johnson's work, right, with space and astronauts, right? And so something in there lies maybe three or four words to kind of become our brand.

[01:16:14] So we're working on that. And lastly, I just wanted to thank our custodians. So, you know, I have lived in the D.C. area for now 52 years, and that snow and ice a couple months ago, I regretted not going back out that Sunday night and shoveling the rest of it.

[01:16:32] as this pile of sleet piled up outside my door so i mean it was right i mean it was hard for us and then they came into work and just like equipment broke shovels broke uh and they don't complain um they're the first ones that have to go in when the weather's bad um and they stay there through you know and not only was the hard to remove the snow but of course the temperatures were just brutal right so again i just want to give a big shout out to our custodians uh they do a great job keeping our building clean.

[01:17:02] And that's it for tonight. Excited to be almost done here with year two. And I look forward to my ninth presentation next year. Can I ask you one more question? Yeah, I'm not going anywhere. So what is the turnout like for your parent question and answer sessions?

[01:17:21] Which ones? The virtual ones? The virtual ones. Those are pretty good. Those we get probably somewhere between 20 and 30 parents. We also, I didn't put it in there, We do a Spanish version as well, so I forget the times. I think we do, like, five to six for an English version and six to seven for a Spanish version.

[01:17:38] That's a good turnout. Yes, for those in the summer. Again, I think you have a lot of, you know, it's mostly rising seventh grade parents who just have a lot of questions, and they should have a lot of questions, right? It's a big transition. I know since the 80s we've called it alcohol, drug, and tobacco awareness.

[01:17:57] I assume vaping is somewhere in that. Yeah, vaping falls. Well, it depends what you put in your vape. It could be tobacco, it could be drugs. Yeah, right. But yes, yep. And that's the one, you know, and maybe we need to do it early in the year. You know, as a parent, I found that to be just so useful.

[01:18:14] You know, we had one person show up for that. So, again, we just need to continue to, you know, it was in person. Again, I think the power of that one is in person because he's handing out things. I think that, you know, the thing that I learned most recently, right, is some of the things, drinks that are in boxes or cans look a lot like energy drinks.

[01:18:34] You may have THC or alcohol in them, right? So, but, yeah, that one's a good one. Yeah, it just seems like vaping is so much easier to hide than it was back in the 80s when everybody was smoking cigarettes, and it was very hard to hide that. Okay, does anybody have any go-backs?

[01:18:54] miss Kelsey um I don't mind so much as a question as a suggestion maybe because I know you have the curriculum night for raising seventh graders is there something also for raising eighth graders because sometimes they don't always know you know that civics versus honor you know because it we only talk about what we have to offer in seventh grade because I know like when they did the curriculum night for high school it's you learn about everything they can't you know all the different areas but they don't always learn about honors versus regular and some

[01:19:32] of the eighth grade classes as well yeah so we don't right we have the individual um conversations that each counselor has with their students about classes right because we feel like they know the electives for the most part being in the building is why we don't do a different event and we feel like that the individual one-on-one counseling okay um covers that okay i didn't know how much that was done you know then um but i my recommendation would be for the seventh grade one maybe have two for your core classes have two classrooms because i know when we walked into the social studies it was like packed and you can't really get to the teacher or hear what

[01:20:09] they're saying because there were so many attending that night but there was only like one room for social studies um so maybe yeah that's a good problem to have if lots of people it is yes there were tons of people there yes um and then my other thing was that alcohol drug and tobacco I wonder because I think wasn't that scheduled for one night and we had bad weather or something and so we had yeah yeah I'm not if it would have been that first night how many would have it's just I think you know it's in person which I realize yes is tough right uh there's certainly obstacles just putting a plug that it's a really good one yeah I was gonna say I was planning on the first night but the second night I couldn't make it okay um Dr. Wright thank you

[01:20:48] Chair Pritches, just a few closing reflections. Big thank you to our partners on the Region 5 team, Mr. Lame and Mr. Stokes for being here tonight, Ms. Bainig, who provides great support to Chris and his staff. Chris, great job, and thank you for everything that you shared.

[01:21:04] I think in your presentation, it did a really nice job of two things. First, it showed what you saw, and he was going, you know, spent time on math slides and time on, you know, tutorial learning slides and talking about, but there's a lot of intention, a lot of discussion, a lot of the things that you see on these slides are the results of four or five, six hours of conversations amongst the staff deciding what's best for students, what's the best way, how can we put this in place?

[01:21:34] So just a lot of thought and intentionality behind the work and what he's talking about is the results of all that. So just really appreciate all that when they, you know, when you as an avid school you talk about wicker strategies you know where there's inquiry inquiry excuse me collaborate i'm inventing words tonight too um collaboration and organization your staff is doing that to figure out what is best for your students so appreciate that and then the other thing i think you see is just you know chris was talking about it but it's the representative work of the entire team at kj um from the administrators that you see here the custodians that you saw on

[01:22:11] the last slide, you know, instructional assistants, teachers, assistants, specialists, custodians, cafeteria workers, everybody does a great job to make KJ a great place for all of our students, so I appreciate that. And then I would just close with my first visit as the superintendent to Catherine Johnson Middle School was on one of the secret staff spirit days, I believe it was flannel, so Chris would introduce me, hi, this is Dr. Wright, our new superintendent, and they would be like, hi, it's nice to meet you, I don't normally dress like this.

[01:22:41] So, when I saw that slide, it was a great memory for me, but also just a great sign of the culture of the staff and the culture of the school overall, which is what you want when you send kids to a school every day. We're putting a lot of trust in all of the educators and the leaders, and I think you're doing a great job of earning that trust every day.

[01:23:00] So, thank you, Chris. Yeah, thank you for all the support. It's awesome to be in the city. Thank you. We always like seeing you. All right. Have a great night. okay we do not have any public hearings this evening so move on to our action items the first one is the approval of our march 2nd 2026 meeting minutes the clerk has provided these minutes and is there a motion madam chair um yes miss hickman i move that the city of fairfax school board approved the minutes of the march 2nd 2026 school board regular meeting as printed

[01:23:34] and distributed okay i may have a second second okay miss hickman moved miss bartle may seconded city of fairfax school board approved the meeting minutes um of the march 2nd 2026 regular school board meeting as printed and distributed are there any changes modifications or additions okay being none all those in favor signify by saying aye aye no members are opposed so the motion passes unanimously okay we will move on to superintendent matters dr. Wright thank you chair pitches and the entire school board I'm excited to share a few brief

[01:24:11] updates and reflections as we finish up our meeting this evening just a few quick plugs on some important dates for some of the budget events and capital project events that are happening in for the city of Fairback schools so for our elementary school projects we want to make sure that there's a reminder that on april 15th at daniels run they'll be in the afternoon a community engagement meeting for our staff members and then in the evening it's online for anybody connected to our daniels run community a community engagement event to provide feedback on some of the conceptual design plans the same

[01:24:47] exact schedule will happen on april 16th at providence so staff members in the afternoon and community members in the evening those community meetings are virtual to try and make it as accessible as possible for everyone involved those have been published in the school newsletters but just want to take a minute to provide the plug here and then also we're doing lots of work with our our city council partners on the budget process which will go to a vote on May 5th over the past several weeks have tried to stay focused on maintaining strong visibility and connections across our schools in the broader community spending time in our buildings attending events and engaging directly with our students

[01:25:27] staff and families has been an important part of staying grounded for me in the work and understanding what our priorities are and how that's showing up in our practices every single day so during the last few weeks i've had some great connections in our schools i went to a pta meeting at providence elementary school which was really great to reconnect with some of the board members there and then we're also in the process of setting up an end of the year opportunity for the executive boards of all four PTAs across the city to get together to just first of all just get together and talk and connect and then share ideas share contact information make sure the

[01:26:07] president elects from each board knows the president elects at their counterpart schools and so I think that'll be great at Daniel's run a big congratulations to Miss Kylie Horn who is recognized as the region five outstanding new elementary teacher and we're going to have opportunity to recognize her at our June meeting. At Fairfax High School was able to be a part of the National Honor Society induction ceremony. Ms. Lucas did a great job of describing the community cultural night and she was a great volunteer helping take tickets at the event but I continue to be thrilled at the events I get to go to in this role and this was definitely

[01:26:45] one of the highlights. Earlier in the month a big shout out to John Staley and our government partners in falls church city and the town of vienna there was an event with the girls lacrosse teams at madison high school meridian high school and fairfax high school where some professional lacrosse league players came to speak to the students and then took questions from the crowd so it was awesome to see a few professional lacrosse players they were in town for a big tournament but the most impressive part was to watch our students ask them questions and they were really

[01:27:21] thoughtful as they were talking to these players and it was really great to see what was on their mind and what they wanted to learn from other professionals it is the start of spring sports at Fairfax High School as well and I know I'm excited to be at some of those events and then additionally a big congratulations to mr. Joaquin Perez who is recognized as the region five outstanding second new secondary teacher and we hope to be able to recognize him here at the City of Fairfax in our May meeting.

[01:27:53] Three more quick updates around a focus on CTE, and I know we hear all the time how this is a big, important focus for us and a lot of support from the City of Fairfax schools. I was able to tour with Mr. Pat Marstall and Amanda Jarvis, Nova Labs on Germantown, so a big plug for anybody who is a city resident or just lives in the area of a great resource in our community.

[01:28:18] It's the coolest maker space you've ever been to. And I was there to talk about we've got some early stage partnerships with the city of Fairfax schools where we have students utilizing those. And we're trying to talk about how we can expand those partnerships, which was really I think we've got some great ideas.

[01:28:36] We have two schools where our students could walk there during the school day. And I think that provides some really unique opportunities back to the things we can do here in the city of Fairfax schools that you can't do anywhere else. And so a great conversation to get that going. The superintendents throughout the state are divided and the school districts throughout the state are divided into four or excuse me, eight regions.

[01:28:57] So region four is a lot of the northern Virginia school divisions and the superintendents get together on a regular basis to meet. And in the most recent region four superintendents meeting, we were able to speak with Jenna Conway, who's the new state superintendent with the Virginia Department of Education and Senator Barbara Favola, who's from Arlington, but a big advocate in our area, and she's also the chair of the Senate Education and Health Committee.

[01:29:22] So it was really good to have that dialogue, to ask them questions, to hear their feedback on some of the big issues that were taking place within our city, excuse me, within our area. And then finally, really, really exciting. I talked about the community and cultural night.

[01:29:38] It was great. But on March 25th, the first convening of the superintendent's advisory team took place which is a mixture of staff members community members student members chair pitches was able to attend and it was a really really powerful discussion so we had this event and then we have another meeting in may and so we did we asked some of the same questions that i've been asking lots of different groups throughout this entry plan process what makes our school strong what do you see as opportunities for growth here in the city of fairfax and what hopes do you have or the future of our schools and then one of the challenges I set forth to this team and this is

[01:30:17] what we're going to come back to discuss on May 12th and then what a member of that team will come and provide a recommendation to the school board on June 1st is what are ideas what ideas do they have for a strong inclusive community engagement process that's ongoing so kind of a regular you know if we want to be able to we heard we were talking with Mr. Smith about some of those engagement opportunities what works well what doesn't how can we have something that is a regular feature of what we do in the city of Fairfax schools that our community whether they're parents taxpayers residents students staff members know that they can engage with us and so we're

[01:30:54] going to we've got some great ideas brainstormed the next meeting we'll be talking about what are some of the nitty-gritty nuts and bolts what would work well and then they'll deliver you a recommendation on June 1st now I would like to close with just a public sharing of some of the goals that I'll try to be working on as a superintendent during this first year this is there's three of them and they're I'll stay at a pretty high level with each of these goals but try and give a few examples of what those will look like so the first goal that I have which we've talked about in several of these superintendent matters

[01:31:30] is to implement an entry plan with priorities that thought of fostering positive relationships building trust and inspiring a shared vision for the city of Fairfax schools so a lot of things of what this might look like are conducting listening learning sessions establishing structures for ongoing stakeholder engagement so you can see what we were just talking about how the work we're trying to connect that presenting to the school board and entry plan findings report and then trying to find some priority focus areas. Goal two is helping lead the strategic planning and launch of the city of Fairfax schools \$220 million school modernization and facilities

[01:32:07] investment initiative that supports future focused learning environments and long-term community investment in public education. So a lot of things that we've been doing are connected to this with the big capital projects at both of our elementary schools and there's a lot of different things we'll try and do to meet that goal. And then finally goal three is around strengthening communication and operational effectiveness to better support our schools student success in the community so this is work on the budget process providing the school board with updates throughout the year and potentially doing some long-term strategic planning so those are some of the things that I wanted to be able to not only share with this board but share

[01:32:44] with the public because it's going to help drive a lot of the work that I'm trying to do in this role so with that chair pitches that concludes the superintendent matters report. Thank you, Dr. Wright. We'll move on to board matters. Ms. Bartlemay. Dr. Wright touched on this, but I also wanted to offer congratulations to Fairfax High Schools Joaquin Perez for earning outstanding new secondary teacher for Fairfax County Region 5 and also to Daniels Runs, Kylie Horn, for earning the outstanding new elementary teacher for Fairfax

[01:33:21] Region 5. So I think that's a big accomplishment and speaks a lot to the quality of our schools. um miss uh kelsey um I echo those um sentiments as well um I'm looking forward to uh this month is full of celebrating all the hard work our kids have done um there's you know pyramid art shows there's musicals fashion show like every every day almost there is a new way to celebrate our students um so I'm looking forward to getting out there and seeing all the

[01:33:56] hard work that they've done so far this year and celebrating that as well as attending. I know Daniels Run and Providence both have community connection nights coming up and those are something that really are beneficial to our families. Ms. Hickman. I just want to thank Ms. Ashley Taylor for her comments earlier this evening. I'd like to acknowledge the parents who support our FHS football program and its head coach this past fall. I do think it's important to note that while the investigation ultimately did result in coach Taylor's reinstatement that outcome may not have been as widely communicated beyond our immediate community

[01:34:37] ensuring that final outcomes are clearly shared can help provide more complete understanding of situations such as this so we'll ask our partners at fcps to continue to communicate that and as Miss Taylor shared our focus remains on supporting our schools our families and most importantly our students. Thank you Ms. Hickman. Ms. Sessori. I echo everybody else's comments so beautifully said.

[01:34:59] I want to take a moment to highlight this Thursday evening's FCPS board meeting where the agenda includes several motions regarding our school calendar. For those who may have not seen Mount Vernon District Representative Mateo Dunn recently provided an excellent analysis of the calendar in his newsletter and while I fully recognize the importance of professional development especially for elementary school teachers I do share his concern that the balance has perhaps shifted a little too far causing disruptions to consistent student learning our community in the city is

[01:35:36] welcome to engage on this issue before the vote Thursday night by sending a message to the county school board through their online portal portal feedback is always essential especially when involving the school calendar and any concerns around student learning. And I'll piggyback on the Thursday night meeting.

[01:35:57] National board certified teachers will be recognized. I believe we have two in the city that will be recognized. I know a few of us will be there to cheer them on. I'd like to welcome students back tomorrow. I know you guys are so excited, but it's the home stretch.

[01:36:18] summer is oh yeah sorry over there Kevin um but you know what you can you could come you know we're here so yeah um I'd also like to congratulate Mr. Perez and Miss Horn Miss Horn is a 2020 graduate of Fairfax High School she graduated with my daughter um and actually they grew up TOGETHER, WENT TO SEE CD TOGETHER.

[01:36:46] SO I'VE KNOWN KYLIE SINCE SHE WAS VERY YOUNG. SO CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH OF THOSE TEACHERS. OH, AND NEXT WEEK IS -- IS IT BOOK MADNESS?

[01:37:02] BATTLE OF THE BOOKS. BATTLE OF THE BOOKS. I KNEW IT WAS SOMETHING LIKE THAT. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT AS WELL. SO IF THERE IS NOTHING ELSE BEFORE THE BOARD, I WILL ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:07.



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