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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, April 27, 2023

Date	Thursday, April 27, 2023
Place	Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length	4h 0m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1w99Zw_0fwA
- Official School Board page (FCPS): https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-04. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:06:10] - Board members, please take your seats. Board members, please take your seats.

[00:06:28] This April 27th, 2023 regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board will now come to order. Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence and a performance of the National Anthem by the Wakefield Forest Advanced Sixth Grade Orchestra with Frost Middlestool Strings

[00:06:43] under the direction of Maggie Lubinsky.

[00:08:58] That was wonderful, thank you so much, thank you.

[00:09:18] Agenda Item 3.02, Announcements. If you'd like to review a copy of the agenda and any agenda item that is being discussed tonight, that information may be found at the back of the auditorium or on the website at fcps.edu/schoolboard/boarddocs. Tonight's meeting is being broadcast on channel 99 and live streamed on the website at fcps.edu/tv/channel99.

[00:09:46] The board would like to welcome a Boy Scout from Troop 980 who is here with us this evening to earn his citizenship in the community badge. please stand up so we can recognize you. Thank you for coming.

[00:10:01] - Thank you. After reading agenda item 3.03, Internal Audit Awareness Month Proclamation. After reading tonight's proclamations, the board would like to invite each recipient to join us for a photo.

[00:10:17] I call on Ms. Darenak-Koufax for a proclamation. - Thank you, Madam Chair. Whereas May is Internal Audit Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness and recognize the Office of the Auditor General, OAG, and where the Fairfax County Public Schools OAG serves and operates at the direction of the school board as internal auditors, and whereas the school board audit committee works to promote the independence and objectivity of the OAG by ensuring board audit coverage, adequate consideration of audit reports, and appropriate action on recommendations,

[00:10:55] and whereas through their expertise, knowledge, broad perspective at the FCPS, they provide insight and assess controls. And whereas the OAG evaluates the significance of possible risks and the effectiveness of risk management efforts, communicates these to management and to the school board, and develops recommendations to improve risk management. And whereas they assess compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and contracts oag is provided access to all records as well as the authority to conduct

[00:11:33] audits and investigate possible fraudulent behavior throughout fcps now therefore be it resolved that the fairfax county school board does hereby proclaim the month of may as internal audit awareness month is there a second second ms cohen ms darinak koufax would you like to speak to your proclamation? Yes, I would. Thank you. This is my second consecutive year as serving on the Audit Committee, and I would like to take a moment to thank Esther Coe and her team for their service

[00:12:08] to Fairfax County Public Schools. I continue to be so amazed by Ms. Coe's professionalism and attention to detail. I want to thank her family who is with us tonight, her sons and her husband Terrence for coming. The role of the Auditor General is not an easy one. They have to ask the tough questions. They have to investigate our internal processes. This can be daunting to the school or office where these investigations are happening, but as a public education system it is extremely important that we have these checks and balances. Ms. Ko and her team always approach their

[00:12:45] duties and responsibilities with the most positive attitude even though it is often not easy work. I want to thank Ms. Cohen, her fabulous team, Danielle Moore, who is the Deputy Auditor General, Joni White, who is the Auditor 3, Luke Robinson, Auditor 2, Monia Chiwab is Auditor 3, Brittany Hamilton, Auditor 1, Khalid Aboudia, the Auditor of Information Technology, and Heidi Flanagan, the Executive Assistant to the team. It's been a pleasure working with

[00:13:21] with all of you. Our board so appreciates you. I would also like to mention and thank two citizen committee members, Dan Warku and John Shames, and my colleagues, Ms. Laura Jane Cohen, who will second this, Mr. Frisch and Ms. Abramish, who are currently serving on the audit committee with me. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Cohen, would you speak to your second? I'd love to. Tammy did such a beautiful job. I echo that, absolutely. And I'm so sorry that I am not there. I will say when I got the news that I was audit chair I was about as excited

[00:13:58] as a person might think I would be about being the chair of audit something I had never been on before and I have to tell you it is the best committee that I have ever been a part of and that is really truly due to Ms. Coe and the amazing team in our auditor general's office and And as Ms. Derenak-Koufax said, it is a job that is not easy, that sometimes means that you are professionally poking holes in what people are doing.

[00:14:28] And because of the way that Mrs. Coe and her staff do their job, I have never seen people more excited to be audited than the different departments that have the opportunity to have Ms. Ko and her

team come in and they've been welcomed. Our staff has been unbelievable about wanting to know what Ms. Ko and the team finds, wanting to know what they can do better. And it's just, to me, such, it really shines a light on how amazing our system is that people want to do

[00:15:04] better and that we have incredible staff who are willing to just work their tails off to make sure that they get to the bottom of each dollar of each process to make sure that we are doing things as effectively and efficiently as humanly possible and i just cannot even imagine a better team to do it with so thank you again to miss co terrence i'm so sorry that i don't get to meet you in person um we just think the world of your lovely wife and and your mom guys she is just the best and the team really mirrors that so thank you again i appreciate being able to second

[00:15:42] thank you miss marron yes i just also wanted to thank miss ko i really i just adore the specific specificity of the work and always find your professionalism just to be right on point so thank you and i know that you've brought to light some issues that we have to be aware of and i hope that we can be quick and sharing that news with the public as it you know comes ready over time with each report that you do. So thank you for for tackling that and I've certainly enjoyed trying to expand the role of audit past just the numbers but also real efficiencies and how we what we do will ultimately help our students.

[00:16:18] So thank you so much to you and your team. Thank you. Miss Toland. I spent two years on the audit committee as an MBA and a former consultant. I actually think audit is pretty exciting and asked to be on the team every year. Esther your professionalism and excellent management skills are so apparent when working with you. Your calm and methodical manner is valued by your employees and they do great work for you. Thank you to the team. I appreciate that you are a leader and an educator in the national audit community and that

[00:16:55] you readily share your expertise with many other people. Thank you for representing FCPS so well. Thank you. Ms. Corbett Sanders? Thank you, Madam Chair. Esther, I too want to thank you and your team for the amazing work you do, it's actually quite interesting because when Fairfax County Public Schools introduced or passed the policy for an Auditor General or Office of the Auditor General, we were one of the first in the country to have a public school with an independent audit function internally.

[00:17:32] And I just think that you have embraced the challenge of making sure that that organization addresses not only the financial risk associated with auditing, but also the legal and reputational risk.

[00:17:49] And oftentimes people don't think about the three buckets as being part of an audit function. They too often go back to just pure financing. And so I think your expansion of the role is so critical, and I was especially pleased when you also added in a IT audit capability within your office, which I think once again is at the forefront of how organizations are tackling these complex issues.

[00:18:21] And so I want to thank you not only for your collaborative and getting to yes spirit in approaching this difficult work, but more importantly the innovation that you bring to this function and ensuring that we continuously look at whether we're doing the right things, enough of the right things, and that the process where you will do your audit and then the system responds, and then it's almost a three-part process, and I just think it's really critical

[00:18:57] that people understand you do the audit, there's a response, and then there is a counter response were a plan going forward and a checking up to make sure that the recommendations are followed through. And so, bravo. Thank you.

[00:19:14] Thank you very much. Ms. McLaughlin. Thank you, Esther. As some may know, more than 12 years ago, it was so important to me as a candidate for School Board that Fairfax County Schools really moved toward a direction of an independent auditor.

[00:19:29] And it was a passion of mine in my first term to really, really push for this Office of the Auditor General. When you became a candidate for our consideration, I never dreamed how incredible you would be and the services that you would bring to this division.

[00:19:46] And it has personally meant so much to me knowing that not only did you bring one of my dreams come true, but I think that you have really helped this school division understand what the valuable partnership it is to have an Office of the Auditor General.

[00:20:04] independence reporting to the school board and not the superintendent is a delicate one and yet because of your incredible personality and approach to the work I know that I've had the opportunity to see as a member of the audit committee that you continue to build along with your team a culture of collaboration with our superintendents multiple superintendents and including the one we have here today that's a real gift and you've been a gift to Fairfax County Schools you and your team it's just been my my true pleasure to have you and I'm so

[00:20:39] glad your husband's here because we gratefully appreciate that he and your boys have had to sacrifice a lot for your service to the system so many thanks to them as well. Thank you Ms. Keyes-Gamara. Thank you I I had to speak I know we've had several but I had the opportunity of being the audit chair for two years with you, Ms. Cole, and it was absolutely a delight to work with you.

[00:21:08] We talked a lot about how to make sure that our community understood the importance of your role, that you allow us to fulfill our duties, to hold our system accountable. You're the hands and feet that go out there and actually find out what is happening within our system And you have always done it with great professionalism.

[00:21:32] And when we needed to evaluate our special education services without even blinking, you agreed to expand your duties to oversee that. And for that, I believe in so many people are so very grateful.

[00:21:48] So I personally wanted to thank you for being a partner, for being so easy to work with, and for making us look good. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Bukarski? Yeah, Ms. Coe, I had the pleasure of working with you not only on the audit committee, but as chair very closely.

[00:22:07] And, of course, I wanted to say you are all these wonderful things and so much more. And I want to thank you for your service and your dedication. And you've got an incredible team that works with you. And you really are, you exemplify the best of FCPS.

[00:22:25] So thank you for your service. Dr. Anderson?

[00:22:38] Thank you. I did not want to repeat what my colleagues have shared regarding how you have managed the office and the benefit that it's been to FCPS. I agree with all of that, but I also wanted to just talk a little bit in terms of how your work, personally, you are the consummate professional, and it is a pleasure to work with someone as thoughtful as you are in the completion of your duties.

[00:23:06] As you've heard, you run a very effective office, but I also do know that in order to remain at the top of your field, you also take on regular professional development activities, even though you run an effective office, an efficient office, to continue to remain current on best practices, which you bring back to

this organization, ensuring that our citizens can have comfort and security in the work that we're doing here in FCPS.

[00:23:33] I did not want to miss the opportunity to thank you and your team for all the work that you do. Thank you very much and I will not echo my colleagues. I really very much everything they say I agree with. I don't want to take the time. It's okay Ms. Amesh, go ahead. Thank you Esther and the full team. We have a big team here. Munia, Khaled, Seema, Brittany, Danielle, Luke, Joni, and Heidi, of course, who takes care of the administrative part. I'm just really grateful

[00:24:09] to all of you. And I think my colleagues have spoken to so much of it, but to the public in recognizing what the audit team has done and what they've been able to accomplish through all the personal strife and through all the challenges that life brings to everybody in their individual and personal lives, still stewarding our system. And the audit team is one of the few, the auditor general is one of the few people we get to hire as a school board. And we've been very proud of Esther, her full team's professionalism, as people have said, but the importance of their role in detecting fraud, waste, abuse, inefficiency across our system in ways that have proven value. So for

[00:24:47] example, when we received all these federal dollars for COVID in the millions, the audit team was the one that's taking a look and making sure that all of that's going through our schools in a way that meets our standards, the money is going where it's supposed to be. You know, with special education, right? We knew that there were tremendous needs and shortcomings in what our system was doing. But the audit team took it on and led the process through a special education audit that now we're looking, we're very excited to see major shifts, hopefully, in what's to come as a result of the findings that came from that. Or the IT audit that saw us through some of the

[00:25:25] challenges in COVID. Or the legal audit, which transformed some of the things we do in making sure we're saving money and using that elsewhere with which firms we work with. Or most recently, community use, right, and making sure that if a community organization like a Girl Scout troop or a local faith group wants to use one of our buildings, that those are accessible.

[00:25:50] And that's still coming, but that that technology interface is easy to use and can be accessible to everybody. And on and on succession planning and program management. So those are just some examples for our public to recognize just the tremendous value. Esther, we're so grateful for you and the full team for all that you've done for us.

[00:26:09] Thank you, Ms. Femesh. I know you turned your light on, so I didn't see it late. So having said that, I agree with everything my colleagues said and I really appreciate all the great words and I won't take up more of the time by repeating them. But Esther, please know everything they say I wholeheartedly agree with.

[00:26:24] And you've been an incredible asset to the school board and to our division. And as a former member of the Audit Committee and as chair, I've really enjoyed working with you and your professionalism and I'm sure your joy in the work is really palpable and your team is incredibly wonderful and we're just really grateful.

[00:26:43] I'm so glad Terrence could be here and your family could be here tonight to celebrate with us. Thank you for coming. And with that, I will call for the vote. All those in favor, please raise your hand. That is Ms. Keys Gamara, Ms. Marin, Ms. Omesh, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Ms. Tolan, Ms. Dernot Koufax Ms.

McLaughlin Dr. Anderson Ms. Bukarski Ms. Cohen and myself all those opposed all those abstaining that motion passes with Mr. Frisch away from the table congratulations Ms. Co if you and your family and friends like to come up and actually I apologize one

[00:27:19] more before we go I'm going to hand the gavel over to Mr. Koufax thank you and I call on Ms. Sizemore-Heiser for a proclamation. - Thank you.

[00:27:37] We're at National Library Week proclamation. Whereas National Library Week is April 23rd through April 29th and a time to celebrate our school librarians and their programs. And whereas the greatest assets to Fairfax County Public Schools library programs are the librarians themselves.

[00:27:57] And whereas librarians teach inquiry skills that encourage students to ask questions, explore and evaluate information, and demonstrate their learning, and whereas school librarians help students grow as critical thinkers, skillful researchers, and enthusiastic readers, and whereas, most importantly, they expertly curate a diverse, age-appropriate, and varied collection to provide an environment for students to be themselves, find inspiration and support, pursue their interests, and know that they belong, and whereas our school libraries are places of opportunity.

[00:28:33] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board does hereby proclaim April 23rd through 29th, 2023 as National Library Week in honor of our committed librarians. Is there a second? Ms. Corbin-Sanders, thank you for your second.

[00:28:51] Ms. Sizemore-Hiser, would you like to speak to your proclamation? Just briefly, I just wanted to first start by saying that when I was a child, books were my friends. They were my haven. I wrote a book when I was nine. It was not very good, but I wrote one. Books was where I discovered the world.

[00:29:10] Books is actually where I got my daughter's name because there were characters in books that were feisty, spunky women who I wanted my daughter to be like, and I picked her name from a character in a book. Books where I discovered what I love, and librarians and libraries is where I found my home.

[00:29:30] So what you guys do, provide those spaces for students to discover the world in the way they want to discover it, discover books that reflect themselves or bring them ideas and spaces and thoughts that they've never heard about before or just learn about history in a different way or learn about everything and anything right one of um it's it's just amazing what you guys do so i just wanted from from my heart celebrate the work you do i celebrate the amount of education you you receive right to to be able to do the work you do to actually curate the collections to understand

[00:30:07] what's going to reach the students to stay on top of what's going to reach the students right because you want to engage the students in their books you want them to be excited about what they read and you want them to learn from what they read so I am so grateful for the work you do as a parent my daughter found a whole genre of books that she loved in the library just by exploring and she still reads the science fiction books today so thank you for what you provide to our students thank you for the hard work and education it took to be able to do what you do thank you for standing up for books and knowledge and education because there is power in knowledge and there is power

[00:30:43] in having a space where you can discover knowledge for yourself and that's the library so i am so grateful and honored to be able to bring this forward today miss corbett sanders would you like to speak to your second yes thank you um i had not expected to do this tonight but then when i got the opportunity i

was thrilled because as a young girl i used to also hide in the library and librarians are often the first coach that our children face.

[00:31:13] They are the people who can help a child explore their passions, their different interests, help the child find themselves, to see themselves in the books that are pulled off of the library shelves.

[00:31:28] And never before did I ever expect that we would have such a -- you know, that our librarians would be in the limelight like they are today. and you are truly heroes as those first coaches for our students who often you're complementing the work that is going on in a classroom and so you're helping the children with research, but there are a lot of children like, it sounds like Chair Sizemore Heiser and I were, where we may not have felt as comfortable going to the cafeteria every day, but we would go and hide in a library and have some caring adult who would say, you know, what do you need?

[00:32:04] What's your interest? like to learn more about that subject? Well, here's the section in the library. And now we see that there is some controversy over our libraries. We have places that are actually considering getting rid of libraries in their school system. And I just want to say that I'm so glad that those efforts are being defeated. For one, because they are in the state code that every school shall have library and secondly librarians and the content in the libraries are so critical for achieving the portrait of the graduate skills that we have here in Fairfax County and that we've

[00:32:44] adopted at the state level and so I thank you for all that you do I thank you for identifying those kids who just want to find themselves in books and you help them find it I thank Thank you for taking them online and showing them how to use the various media resources.

[00:33:01] You truly are coaches in learning. So thank you. Thank you. And now I have a few board members who would like to speak starting with Dr. Anderson. Thank you. As an individual whose first job was shelving books in the Brooklyn Public Library system, it was not the most exciting job, but I managed to hide in between those aisles instead of of shelving the books to read the books.

[00:33:31] This was a favorite pastime of myself and my sisters. So I know firsthand the job of librarians. Also, as a former school principal who has hired and opened up a whole new library, I'm very clear on what it takes to run such an enterprise.

[00:33:47] And I also want to underscore the care that our librarians take to ensure that we have collections that are reflective of our students that are going to pike their interests, that is going to connect with them in so many ways. They're doing a huge job and as Ms. Corbett Sanders mentioned, it is a shame that currently we have such fire that is being directed at this group of wonderful professionals because any censure to the work that you're doing just robs our students of experiences just rich to take them to another world.

[00:34:22] So I'm very happy to tonight celebrate your work. So thank you to our school librarians and congratulations. Ms. Keyes-Gamara. - Thank you, I too want to thank you.

[00:34:38] And just hearing this today reminded me of how I became so excited as a child about learning and it was through books. And so I'm so grateful that you have been there for so many, including many years ago for me.

[00:34:55] I really believe the love of reading often is the needed enhancement for all learning. So I wanted to just share with you some of my perspectives on this. I think the greatest and most fulfilling

travel that a child can experience occurs when reading a book and the imagination is activated.

[00:35:16] They can explore, and it provides one with sometimes one of the highest forms of growth. I thank you very much for what you do do. I want you to know that you are appreciated. I know as you get older in high school and you're doing research papers, But I think in those younger years, when you're really activated and loving to read, it really provides the foundation for all other learning.

[00:35:40] So thank you. Ms. McLaughlin. I just want to thank the librarians who joined us here this evening to personally extend my gratitude as well with my three sons coming through the school system.

[00:35:56] I know how much they absolutely loved their time, particularly at the elementary school level, where they were first discovering the freedom and the excitement to go into a room and just see endless possibilities of books to choose from. And it really helped ignite their love of reading to this day, and now they're all in their 20s.

[00:36:17] But what you do every day to help our teachers instill and create that joy of reading and learning and discovery, it's just wonderful that you're in the profession, and I hope that you continue to feel supported and appreciated by all of us committed to public education in Fairfax County and across the nation so thank you for all that you do. Miss Mira. To our FCPS librarians thank you for what each of you does for hundreds of students every single day in our schools. I'm envious of the creativity of your

[00:36:55] work to determine how to connect with students and use new content and find that content. I was actually recalling my own school librarian Miss Manley who taught me and I still remember how to sign the alphabet in American Sign Language so what you do really sticks around for decades for students. To our FCPS librarians I want you to know that I will keep backing you up and supporting your profession and your professionalism. I will work to help the community retain trust in your work and keep building that trust of school librarians and I'd like the community to know that our school librarians are instructional staff and I want to do more to bring more funding and more positions for the work that I know some

[00:37:35] of you do sometimes so just solely on your own um at times thank you for what you do miss cohen well i think you all are hearing a common theme here dr anderson i had no idea that you um your first job and and my first job were the same thing shelving books and i agree i think i probably read more than i shelved it was a good thing i wasn't paid by the book um but i i feel like there's probably not much to add other than to say i i agree with miss maron i still miss mcnair my

[00:38:10] elementary school librarian 40 years later i could still tell you some of the books that she recommended for me this scrawny introverted nerdy kid who didn't feel like they fit in very well and then to see that reflected later with my own child mrs hammond i don't know if you're there but but you're the most amazing librarian ever at Cherry Run Elementary who helped my awkward queer kid feel like there was a safe place always for them and a whole world out there

[00:38:47] where they were not weird, where people who looked different and felt differently were the norm. And the magic that you showed both my kids, but through the books that you helped carefully curate to take them to a different world when they were feeling pretty disgruntled with this one really changed their life and i know that they would agree wholeheartedly with me so thank you for everything that you do for all of us weird kids and we also know how much you all have been

[00:39:22] called into service in the last couple years as educators as substitutes as coverage as just band-aids in a hemorrhage sometimes in an opportunity that we're having to try to put band-aids on on some big wounds in making sure that our kids are getting the education that they need and deserve so you are educators you deserve to be trusted you deserve to be lifted up and we are so grateful that you've chosen Fairfax County and as Miss Marin said we our commitment to you

[00:39:55] is that we support you, and we will continue to count on you as the experts for what our kids should and can and could be reading. So thank you so much for everything you do. Ms. Tolan. Thank you. Well, I didn't shelve books, but I did study in college way back in the stacks at the university library. I loved it back there. I do want to say, while I was working for instructional services I sat in Willow Oaks very close to the library area and

[00:40:32] so I had a first-hand view of the incredible incredible collaboration that our librarians do across every subject area in FCPS they do so much for us they run and partner with classroom teachers project-based learning lessons assist students with research provide our students with current book titles that allow our students to dream and reach far beyond the walls of our schools.

[00:40:58] Librarians are such an integral part of the school community in instruction and Miss Marin and I were just in the Carson Middle School library with the award-winning eco team there that is run by the librarians. So our librarians are doing lots of different things. Our libraries are also a place of respite in our schools. I can feel it in every single school library that I go into. The The librarians set them up so nicely and have welcoming smiles for everyone that comes in

[00:41:30] the door. Thank you so much for everything that you do. Mr. Fish. Thank you. Some of my favorite people in the world are librarians. So when I read recently that public schools across the country have banned more than 1,600 different books, I was grateful that we have banned zero in Fairfax County public schools.

[00:41:59] That's because we trust our trained professionals, our librarians, to select age-appropriate reading materials for students, to help them find themselves in the books they read, to be a safe place for students who are struggling to find their voice in a world that is too often wants them silenced, where some schools even prohibit a passing reference to their existence.

[00:42:23] Whether you know it or not, the work you do is saving lives, and for that, we cannot thank you enough. Thank you, and I'm happy to follow the sentiments of my colleagues and thinking about the one Fairfax we're trying to build and just being so grateful to our librarians for all that they've contributed to that, adding even more dimensions and layers of what libraries are able to offer, both in our schools and even in our communities.

[00:42:50] You know, just thinking of, obviously, there are places for learning, but access for everyone. People find jobs in libraries. People come to access the Internet in libraries because perhaps their family may not afford it or they don't have, you know, more than one computer at home. uh folks come for summer activities i remember being a beneficiary of a lot of that but a place really that brings friends together brings community builds that environment where you meet kids from all over the county uh coming to watch a mad science show or to learn a little bit more about the cherry blossom festival and its history things like that that our libraries host and it's funny that several of us remembered the names of our librarians i certainly i don't know

[00:43:29] know if they're in the audience i can't see too well from this far but miss rojas i know is no longer at mantua but miss powers at frost and miss scott at robinson uh certainly folks that i still remember and and and you know uh have fond memories of and libraries are also safe spaces for folks of all backgrounds and identities places where people research their genealogy learn the history of their roots places where they see narratives that affirm them and and their journeys and struggles but also places where for me as a student who had nowhere to go to pray several times a day the library was the place to do that and i remember our librarians are some of the most inclusive

[00:44:08] minded people because they're exposed to so much and narrative and ideas and and different perspectives around the world through the books that they both bring to our libraries and curate but also that i'm sure they've read and are exposed to so i'm just so grateful to this community that plays such a key role uh for our kids and in affirming them and creating spaces that support their mental health and their presence for learning and their excitement and engagement around it. So your work makes a difference and it particularly touches on the academic achievement we're all working towards. So thank you all so much.

[00:44:38] Ms. Bukarski. Yeah thank you. When I do my school visits I never leave without going to look at a school library. I always have to look and that's because I learn a lot about a school from their library. It really is where we see learning come alive. As Ms. Toland mentioned, our librarians do much more than just curate book collections. They're teaching POG skills. They are building on content area curriculum. They're teaching creativity. So I want to thank you for what you do every day. It is unfortunate that we

[00:45:18] are living in a time where you are being needlessly attacked and your professionalism is questioned. But at the end of the day, we know that books are pathways and the vessels of knowledge. And with knowledge comes freedom, and with freedom comes power.

[00:45:37] And you empower our children every single day. So thank you. I think everybody has spoken, so I will just take my turn briefly. Thank you all for what you do. We are here to celebrate you for instilling the love of reading for our students.

[00:45:56] I want you to know that we trust you here in Fairfax to make your judgment. We appreciate you. We celebrate you. And as many of my colleagues have just shared their personal stories, it is amazing to me so often I felt it myself when I was young because a lot of us think back to that elementary school library where it was the first time we went in and we could find our joy and look for our passions in books.

[00:46:25] And I was privileged to have a librarian who knew me and was able to give me the guidance and reading materials that she thought I would love. And I was fortunate enough to see that with my children as well. So thank you all for what you do, and we will continue to celebrate you.

[00:46:43] And we will let you do your jobs and allow you to continue to put the books on the shelves that you think meet the needs of each and every one of our students. So thank you. I will now call for the vote. All of those in favor, that vote is unanimous.

[00:47:06] Thank you. I would like to invite those here this evening in support of National Library Week proclamation to please join the board for a photo in the front of the dais, and I ask that my colleagues remain at the dais for the next group photo. Please come on up.

[00:47:23] Thank you.

[00:49:52] If you are here tonight in support of our great Auditor General team, please join the

[00:50:09] board for a photo agenda item 4.01 community participation the next order of business is

[00:56:56] community participation speakers must limit their remarks to no more than two minutes in length at the conclusion of two minutes the microphone or video will be turned off school board members will be listening but not responding to individual speakers the school board will not hear statements involving issues that have been scheduled for public hearings such as a capital improvement program, boundaries, and budget. Comments targeting, criticizing, or attacking individual students are not permitted during public meetings. Complaints regarding school-based employees should be directed to the appropriate school principal or other school officials. Speakers should refrain from using personally identifiable information in connection with an individual

[00:57:35] student or school-based employee. Additionally, speakers should be respectful and observe proper decorum in their statements, avoiding profanity, inappropriate gestures, shouting, and comments that run counter to the spirit and letter of the school division's non-discrimination policy.

[00:57:52] The school board welcomes community members to provide comments at its regular business meetings and public hearings on school board deliberations, school related issues, or particular topics. All statements should be directed to the school board and speakers should remain at the podium until concluding their remarks. As a reminder, speaker substitutions are not permitted.

[00:58:10] A speaker may not yield their time to another individual before or during their remarks. Shouting and outputs from the audience will not be tolerated. We are grateful for those who've come to speak to us today, and we thank you for your cooperation. Madam Clerk, please call the first speaker. Our first speaker is Michael Leaser.

[00:58:33] Good evening. My name is Michael Leaser. I am the father of four school-aged children in the Sully District of Fairfax County. I'm also the Northern Virginia representative of the Family Foundation, which advances policies that promote healthy, flourishing families in our great Commonwealth. And we do that here in Fairfax County through our grassroots network of volunteers that comprise our Speak Up Fairfax team.

[00:58:53] For those reasons, I am here this evening to ask you to adopt the Transparency on Student Achievement resolution that our Speak Up director Susan Otto has emailed to each of you individually prior to this meeting. Susan would be here herself, but she is ill this evening. Fairfax County Public School parents deserve better than a regulation that only addresses parental notification of national merit scholarships.

[00:59:14] Given the ongoing pattern of a lack of transparency, I request that you expand your existing regulation or pass a clarifying resolution that makes it very clear that you are going to more comprehensively protect transparency to taxpaying parents regarding their own children's academic performance.

[00:59:29] The school district has expressed that it has a priority of avoiding the stigmatization of any student. To that end, why would you want to continue fostering a climate that makes students who earn merit awards or other forms of academic achievement feel that their progress is something to be ashamed of, to hide, or withhold?

[00:59:44] Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that "students of parents engaged in their school lives are more likely to have higher grades and test scores better student behavior and enhanced social skills unquote if the goal really is to foster student success that is in the school district's best interest to keep parents informed that is why I'm asking you to take immediate action to expand the existing regulation or adopt the recommended resolution to demonstrate our support we have launched a petition on behalf of the transparency on student achievement resolution which will be delivered to you before a forthcoming meeting thank you for your time thank you our next

[01:00:22] speaker is Susan Otto. Susan Otto, thank you. Our next speaker is Stephanie Lindquist-Aurora.

[01:00:44] Good evening. There is a transparency problem in FCPS. When I requested my son's social-emotional learning lessons, a school administrator informed me that she had been told to punt my request to the FOIA office. Two months later, and after I paid the $280 fee that FOIA charged me for the curriculum materials, I reviewed his lessons. Within those lessons, among other things, I found instruction on white privilege. These types of lessons are far outside the jurisdiction of what public schools should be teaching. Perhaps this is why FCPS makes parents jump through hoops to get access to curriculum materials. It's ironic that you are celebrating

[01:01:22] the objectivity and independence of the Office of Auditor General in your most recent resolution. In our experience, this is far from the truth. When I submitted a complaint regarding FOIA fees to access curriculum, a right guaranteed to parents under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, I wasn't surprised when the OAG did not rule in my favor. When I later convened with friends, I learned that some of them had also submitted grievances to that office, which had gone unanswered. Given that the former superintendent, Karen Garza, fired Auditor General, Goli Trump, who found evidence of corrupt contracts in FCPS

[01:01:58] and now is suing for wrongful termination, perhaps the current internal auditor doesn't feel free to be independent. It's kind of like a cigarette company funding research on lung cancer. Your passing a resolution doesn't increase objectivity. Objectivity is lost when the auditor's livelihood is contingent on your approval of his or her performance. Given that FCPS has a history of firing auditors who find issues, it seems clear that you need an external audit of that $3.5 billion dollar budget of vendor contracts and of curricula burgeoning FCPS legal fees and lawsuits are indicative of the level of corruption

[01:02:36] within FCPS and its failure to our students transparency extinguishes corruption and can rebuild trust thank you thank you our next speaker is Callie Ottinger start coughing right when you guys give me enough time to come up well like a lot of you guys I also shelved books and I also found home in the library and books have already meant a lot to me but the issue is that they don't mean a lot to a lot of kids in fact they're a place of fear libraries

[01:03:14] hurt a lot of kids because they can't read so I don't believe in censorship I don't believe in pulling anything away from kids I think they should be able to explore whatever they want to but if you can't ensure that they read all is lost what's the point of having the books in the first place to that point at the last meeting, Abra, you asked what we learned about the OCR resolution. What we learned is that Fairfax County's leadership trained an entire county of educators to deny children free appropriate education. Tamara, you made a point of saying that you thought that Fairfax County had been

[01:03:53] targeted. Fairfax County wasn't targeted. Children with special education needs were targeted. You took issue and said that something along the lines of well you know you know we can't do every little

thing why don't you substitute sexism or racism or anything related to religion into that sentence and see how that sounds would you say that you know sorry we we messed up we couldn't get every little thing related to racism or sexism or somebody's religion but when it comes to disabilities it's okay we're gonna sit there we're gonna treat them like second

[01:04:27] citizens, we're not going to do anything. Rajna, thankfully, you brought up civil rights and you brought up IDEA. And I was pleased to hear that you say that. But everybody here needs to remember that special education is a civil right. You have to do it. You can't complain if you don't get money and then spend that money on hundreds of thousands of dollars on lawyer's fees. Doesn't

[01:04:52] work. Thank you. Our next speaker is Casey Hoffman Blalock. My name is Casey and I'm the parent of two elementary students in the Braddock district I'm here to let the board and school leadership know how much I appreciate my children's school library program.

[01:05:19] My son is in kindergarten and he knows he is always going to take a book home whether I've forgotten to put some of his books in his backpack or not. I saw a list of the books he had checked out this week. He has six books out and one is overdue. He had no idea. They just keep letting him check out because that's how kids begin to love reading.

[01:05:36] My third grader has a deep love for graphic novels and nonfiction books. I have no idea what she has checked out right now, but I imagine she has about five books out about different types of cat breeds. She comments frequently about the research opportunities she receives in her school library. When I think about their library experiences, I'm amazed at how a program can provide such a high level of personalization to my kids.

[01:05:58] It isn't just my kids. It's all 900 and something. And how they do it. It's so respectful and understanding, even with all the teaching they have to do. Need some space to work? Sure. Broke your leg and can't do P.E.? Come on in.

[01:06:14] Aren't participating in a class activity? Welcome. Need some help? Maybe a book? We can do that. No pressure but personal and caring and most of all respectful to everyone. However the reason my kids library can do this is because it has an amazing librarian and a library assistant.

[01:06:32] The school doesn't qualify for a second librarian based on the SOQ, so we are very lucky to have a long-time, full-time library assistant. Without the assistant, the librarian would not be able to provide these services to my kids and teach my children important information literacy skills while collaborating with teachers to do inquiry projects aligned with SOL standards.

[01:06:54] April School Library Month. It's time to start staffing all FCPS libraries in a way that allows librarians to teach and be the instructional leaders that they are. Thank you. Thank you. Our next speaker is Christine Burden. Christine Burden.

[01:07:11] Good evening. I'm Christine Burden, and I'm a parent of two kids, both of whom attended kindergarten through high school in Fairfax County. Our son is still currently in the Braddock District, a junior. My topic this evening is equality, and I'm a nurse practitioner. My topic this evening is equality for girls. I'll start with a question. Where is the equity for our girls in the bathrooms and locker rooms.

[01:07:48] It is my opinion and thousands of other community members that the safety in the bathrooms went out the door with the adoption of regulation 2603 by this board in 2020. An example of this is our

neighboring Loudoun County where an opportunist took advantage of regulations like 2603 when a fake gender dysphoric male student sexually assaulted a cisgender girl in her gender-assigned-at-birth bathroom, is this safe? Where is the equity of understanding for that young woman and others that have not made the news but have a voice on

[01:08:26] social platforms like Shatter the Silence FCPS? Now, I completely understand that you are trying to look out for the safety, the dignity, and respect for all students, no matter what their orientation is in this world. And that's a very good deed. Regarding the current policies being developed, the draft policy of the strategic plan mentions nourishing a safe environment and pillar two. But where is the safety for our girls? The draft equity policy has no mention of our girls

[01:08:59] safety and the right to privacy by title nine. This is mind boggling that the community is looking the other way. It'll take a lot of hard work, but there are good and reasonable solutions to this problem while respecting the dignity of each person my question to you the board is how can you separate opportunists from the truly suffering gender thank you our next speaker is vanessa hall

[01:09:30] hi again pardon so few comprehend the extent of accountability and transparency in our public schools in fact we parents and guardians have a myriad of rights we just need to know what they are and how to use them. For example, we can control our child's education within the bounds of regulations and policy, communicate with staff, opt out of surveys, all are part of a curriculum, or even public school altogether. We can also opt in or out of necessary special education support. Parents can serve on

[01:10:09] citizen communities at local and state levels to provide curriculum and other input. We even get to stand here and speak at school board meetings. Woohoo! and there's so much more so FCPS regularly post communications outlining our parental rights frankly I wish more parents would use FCPS as a resource rather than going to third parties because if you've ever played a game of telephone as a kid you kind of remember how distorted messages get as they're passed through third parties and one person and another person another person so if you really want real information you should go directly to your school

[01:10:46] website or staff. That's honestly what I do. With some groups shouting about parents' rights, the rights of students and educators are getting lost in the mix. Why would you raise the rights of one group over all others, particularly when parents are not the ones being educated, nor are they the ones doing the educating? Students and teachers are in the school every day.

[01:11:05] What about their rights? It's critical that students feel safe to succeed academically, and teachers need to feel safe to teach effectively. If we don't protect the rights educators then we'll have no teachers to teach which means when parents are pitted against our schools we all lose we the parents already have extensive rights in our children's education we just need to know our rights and exercise them to support education opportunities for each and every student and i appreciate all your efforts to improve communication and promote cooperation

[01:11:39] thank you our next speaker is mike nee good evening as a father of two children in fcps system i'm deeply concerned and troubled by a few high school principals and leaderships intentionally or accidentally conceal or withhold awards rewards of our hard hard working students this lack of transparency demoralized and demotivated our high school students and their chance to get into top

[01:12:15] tier college diminished. I'm more concerned our school board a light slap on the wrist over the schools just after an intransparent investigation. I'm more concerned that we pay high property tax in this county. What we got is a degrading and downgrading education quality. Look at all the research from the public media. Favorite county students math, English, SAT are falling behind of the virginia peers i'm even more concerned that the county board of supervisors decide a massive

[01:12:51] salary increase up to 40 percent when the education quality does not match up their performance on the job school board i came to this country and this county about 20 years ago from china to pursue a better education a better life you let me down our school is failing failing our children with with so-called equality over quality.

[01:13:17] When our universities grant more than half of the STEM PhDs to foreign students, many from Asia. And with China is working on the 6G technologies, we are still crawling in the 4G. Our school's still debating to wear a skirt or shirt, to debating which bathroom to use.

[01:13:37] You let me down deeply and completely. But you still have a chance to make a change, adopt the resolution you have reached today from the concerned parents. When you cannot make the children achieve, for God's sake, consider you to leave. Thank you. Thank you.

[01:13:54] Our next speaker is Stephen Tunley. Stephen Tunley. Our next speaker is Greg Diephouse. Good evening, and I'd like to thank each of you for your work.

[01:14:16] I'm here tonight. I have two children in Glasgow Middle School, 6th and a 7th grader, and I'm here on their behalf, as well as, I guess, the other 2,000-plus students at Glasgow Middle School to ask you to do something about Glasgow Middle School. It is way too big, it is way too unmanageable, and the safety standards at the school have degraded to a point where many children are not feeling safe at school, my children included, and there are many parents that are considering other options these days. So please, I think it's the number one thing that the school system needs to

[01:14:56] address is safety in the school. And when I have a sixth grade son who said, Dad, I don't feel safe going to school anymore. You know, he used to be at Sleepy All Elementary, wonderful place to learn, felt very safe, wanted to go to school. Now he doesn't want to go to school. He doesn't feel safe in the hallway. There are daily fights at the school. I don't know if you're aware of this, but there are almost daily fighting at the school. There's a child, there's a rumor amongst the parents, at least, that a child was going to bring a gun to school. Half the students showed up that day. I ended up picking my kids up early. My son called me and said, Dad, I don't feel safe.

[01:15:35] So please just try and address this. I think the principal is trying to do his best. I'm in a lot of communication with him. I think the teachers are trying to do their best. It's just, it's unmanageable. The school's too large. Sixth graders should be back in the elementary.

[01:15:52] Please look at that. Consider doing something about Glasgow Middle School. Again, thank you for your work. But again, please consider the safety standards at this school. Thank you. Our next speaker is Marilee Goutier.

[01:16:16] I'm a little shorter. Good evening. My name is Marily Gutierrez or Marily Gutierrez if you can roll your R's but you can call me either. I am here and I run a non-profit in the Falls Church area of Mason District.

[01:16:32] And I know that FCPS has several efforts to ensure continuity of learning services and to address students' academic needs, to maintain health and safety of students, address the wellness needs of students, to include their social, emotional, mental health and other needs.

[01:16:52] Thank you for everything that you do and for the seats that you hold and the influence that you have and the resources that you steward. This evening I just wanna share a story of a young man who I'll call Mario.

[01:17:07] I met with Mario and his parents about two weeks ago and I've known Mario since he was in second grade. Mario is now in sixth grade. He is one of the brightest students in his class. He could excel in advance beyond his grade level. And Mario goes to Glasgow Middle School at 7:15 in the morning.

[01:17:28] The bell rings and he knows that he will not be using the bathroom until he gets home at 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. But Mario is not alone. There are other students that stay away from the restrooms that are afraid to go to school on a daily and weekly basis.

[01:17:46] As as Greg shared, children are afraid. And so I appeal to you this afternoon this evening to please please please do something for these children. Their parents are concerned.

[01:18:01] Their parents are looking for other options and they are very limited. But you we have the resources to be able to do something. So in the last 10 seconds I want to ask you tomorrow at 7:30 in the morning I want you to refrain from using the restroom until 3:00 PM.

[01:18:19] Thank you. agenda item 4.02 strategic plan update I call on Dr. Reed for the strategic plan update good evening

[01:18:57] madam chair members of the board we only have a couple updates left honestly for our strategic plan so this evening I'll provide a brief update as our planning process is actually wrapping up at this time we had our board retreat this week and also our core planning team met Monday for their last meeting our alignment team had their last meeting this week and our faith team also held their last convening in total there were 54 meetings across 11 different planning teams with 15 community forums held as a review and

[01:19:33] feedback opportunity and I want to thank all of the staff who supported all of these efforts as well as all of those who turned out to provide their input and I want to share that the final strategic plan survey launched today after your work during the work session where we again fine-tuned the goals as well as measurements.

[01:19:55] This is going back to the community and will be open until May 17th. And we really encourage community members, parents, students, staff to take a look at that one last time and provide our feedback as we come down to the close of this strategic planning effort.

[01:20:13] I want to share that we've had over a hundred and eight thousand students staff parent caregiver and community members provide input to this and that's a tremendous amount of feedback so I hope that we'll continue to share feedback in the coming days and continue to check our website for planning updates as we move forward and that is the strategic planning update this evening.

[01:20:38] Thank you Dr. Reed I see a few lights up Ms. Omish. Apologies those from before. No problem. I think the other two lights are also from before because they're not at the board table. So with that, I will say thank you very much. I'm really excited to see this. Dr. Anderson. Did you wish? Oh, thank you. Thank

you for that help. Dr. Anderson. I just want to say thank you very much for this hard work and to your team for working very, very hard, especially I see Marcy Neil and Dr. Ivy and Dustin and the other parts. And I think George Becerra, the parts of the core planning team. It's really great to see this work coming together. And I want to thank our

[01:21:16] community because you know we've had hundreds of people in the community from participating on our teams to come into community forums and the surveys and giving this and every voice every input has been taken into developing this plan and I want to thank you Dr. Reed for shepherding it I'm very excited to see it come to fruition in just a couple months so with that thank you very much and I will go on to agenda item 4.0 to 3 excuse me which is academic matters and I'll call on you Dr. Reed yeah thank you madam chair this evening we're I I wanted to take a look at our no cost mental health teletherapy that we have begun this month.

[01:21:53] We felt it was very important that we talk about this publicly as we are partnering with our staff, our students and our families to provide this service. There's been a lot of discussion around the accessibility of resources for mental health in our community.

[01:22:09] And I'm really proud to say that our staff has worked so very hard to construct a contract that we believe is supporting our students moving forward so I want to provide a few highlights so that we can recall what these therapists are able to do and again remembering that these are real people in real-time appointments for our students there's a variety of options for our students but essentially the services include behavioral health assessments identifying short-term needs, short-term evidence-based counseling, access to family resource

[01:22:47] management, and also direction for further resources if necessary. One of the things that we're especially proud of is the accessibility with nearly 40% of our providers being bilingual speaking over 15 languages in our community. So that's really providing accessibility to a wider variety of students than traditionally we've been able to do. One of the things that we're What we're really excited about is the opportunity for parents to partner with us on this, and they do provide permission by an opt-in form for us to provide basic demographic participation

[01:23:26] -- excuse me -- information with the Hazel Health Services. They also are available -- excuse me -- to continue care for up to six months. So it's really short-term counseling support and also transition to longer-term resources should those be requested or required we do have our high school counselors and school psychologists as well as school social workers that have been trained to submit these Hazel Health referrals Dr. Reed like some water I do have some water thank you these are several quotes from one of our counselors at West

[01:24:06] Potomac High School and we're very excited about the opportunities that have been provided do you want to go back to the slide right before for me Laura thank you I just wanted to share some data that as of the 19th which was last week we did have 442 families that have opted in and as you can see 54 of those referrals have been made by school and staff and we've currently we're across 20 schools and these are our high schools currently the service is a high

[01:24:42] school only program and you can see also the primary reasons for referral thanks Laura at this time I'd be happy to answer any questions thank you Dr. Reid I call miss Corbett Sanders thank you madam chair and thank you Dr.

[01:25:02] Reid I actually have just a very small question we know that we are seeing increased absenteeism chronic absenteeism at all of the schools in the county and frankly it's a problem across the nation and if you can put chart five I believe it was for then I'm sorry one back I believe Laura primary reason for referral you have a pretty significant list there but the question I have is that we know that one of the reasons kids don't come to school is because they

[01:25:40] are feeling either you know despondent or they're feeling disengaged and so is there any part of this referral process where if a child is showing increased absenteeism that they might be that their parents and then would talk with a counselor and perhaps be referred for counts for these type of services I think that's an outstanding observation Miss Corbett Sanders I think often attendance is an outcome or a symptom of perhaps a more significant issue or an underlying

[01:26:15] concern so absolutely we would want to have particularly our students who have excessive attendance challenges, this would be a really natural recommendation. So I would ask that when you are having conversations with building leaders and subject matter leaders that we actually talk about that because, as you know, across the state of Virginia we're seeing increased absenteeism at the same time that the state decided not to give another

[01:26:51] waiver for this year on absenteeism, and I think that it's I understand where the state was coming from, but I really think it's so critical to address those social, emotional, mental health needs, and this is a great service at a time where in speaking with friends when they're in search of services, they're either not available, have long wait lists, or they don't

[01:27:17] TAKE INSURANCE. RIGHT THANK YOU MS CORBETT SANDERS I WILL MAKE SURE WE PASS THAT INFORMATION ALONG. THANK YOU. THANK YOU MS. MARIN. YES DR. REED I WAS MEETING WITH SEVERAL PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO WERE EXCITED TO HAVE THIS OPTION FOR THEIR STUDENTS. ONE QUESTION THAT CAME UP OR CHALLENGE IS THAT THE STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO USE THE SERVICE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS THAT SEEM VALID BUT IT ALSO THEN LIMITS THE AVAILABILITY OF PROVIDERS IN THE NON-SCHOOL TIME HOURS.

[01:27:51] and then students are on waiting lists. So the questions they raised were, could there be a space, a private space for students? But thinking about that, it's got to be monitored, it's got to be private. And then what liability must the school have if a student's having medical services there?

[01:28:07] So I just wanted to raise that to see if there's something that could be done to expand the availability of hours outside of the school day, because it seems like it's a really useful tool. Yes, that was-- - I will look into that. That's a great question, and we'll get back to you on that because we're the hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

[01:28:25] So yeah, let me get back to you on that pretty limiting for our high school students. The other thing that I want to elevate that I hear again and again is the community asking what the school is doing. What is the school doing to combat mental health, to provide services to staff to help students in crisis?

[01:28:43] And what I don't hear enough of is the data on what the other our counterparts in county government are providing. What is our county government public health department providing in terms of increased access and family service our community service board what funding is the county providing to provide health services for students and staff as well as the state and I just think that we need to keep as

part of the conversation for all of us and in the community say we are not the first stop for health services and we're not the only stop and our mission is to educate children we can't do that if our children are not safe and well but I think we really

[01:29:22] NEED TO PUSH BACK ON THIS NARRATIVE THAT IT'S ALL ON US TO HELP THE KIDS AND THE STAFF. OF COURSE WE WILL, BUT I DON'T HEAR ENOUGH WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IN THE COMMUNITY IS DOING TO HELP PARENTS AND ALSO THE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS.

[01:29:38] WELL, THANK YOU, MISS MARIN. I KNOW WE DO CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH OUR COUNTY. THERE WAS SOME GOOD NEWS IN OUR RECENT OPIOID AWARENESS NIGHT. OUR COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD HAS MADE PROGRESS ON ADDING MORE SERVICES, BUT WE WE CERTAINLY HAVE A WAY TO GO, BUT I APPRECIATE THE SUGGESTION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTNERING.

[01:30:00] AND TO THAT, I KNOW YOU HOSTED TWO COMMUNITY MEETINGS ABOUT FENTANYL USE. THE FIRST ONE, OUR COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICES WERE NOT THERE EXCEPT FOR OUR POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT. SO AGAIN, I HAVE JUST SEEN A PATTERN OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES NOT SHOWING UP.

[01:30:16] AND IT REALLY, YOU KNOW, IT'S BEEN A FEW YEARS NOW THAT THE SCHOOLS HAVE TRIED TO WORK CLOSELY with the public health department, but this onslaught of mental health requests, we cannot bear this alone, just like we could not bear COVID alone. - Thank you, Ms. Mayor. And I do know that our public health department is partnering with our staff at the central office to do a number of webinars, I know by pyramid.

[01:30:39] And the DEA actually joined us for that first awareness night. And the public, the community services board did work with our counseling staff to support the second opioid night. So we're working on those partnerships.

[01:30:55] And I think your point is well taken. We need to continue to strengthen those. Well, and again, it's not we need to do it. We're trying. I'm saying this publicly that the other agencies need to. And we do, of course, have the staff member who was hired in the midst of COVID to help be a liaison for our public health work.

[01:31:12] So she has a very full plate. But that is one staff member in a school division. And again, that's because our county counterparts need to meet us THOSE SERVICES FOR OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. DR. ANDERSON. THANK YOU. JUST A COUPLE OF THINGS. VERY EXCITED ABOUT THIS. I KNOW THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT MS. HOMESH HAS CHAMPIONED SINCE HER TIME ON THE BOARD. TO SEE IT COME TO PARISION IS SATISFYING. BUT I WANT TO BE SURE THAT THIS THAT THE PUBLIC KNOWS THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT.

[01:31:45] IT'S A NECESSARY INVESTMENT BUT IT IS A SIGNIFICANT ONE SO WE WANT TO BE SURE THAT WE ARE TAKING full advantage of it similar to tutor.com which is also another significant investment that we have made in our students I don't think the word has been out enough in terms of how powerful this kind of resource can be had it not been Mr. Joash Chung who came out and I think he's been peddling his presentation throughout the division to really help parents understand the power of tutor.com

[01:32:18] I don't think we've we had as much access until then so bring it to this how are we making sure that this is out in our community that people understand it how are we ensuring that this is being communicated in PTA meetings that we have people that are in our central office who are going out and teaching parents in terms of what this can be so that we can take full advantage of this really outstanding resource yeah um I think that your point is well taken I know our staff they are excited about it and the fact that we have students across 20 of our high schools that have signed up says that we certainly have gotten the

[01:32:57] message out broadly but how we might deepen the message Dr. Presidio do you want to share what the push from your department is on that please well I think it's a multi-departmental effort right so we've been partnering with the communications department to put together an outreach plan and Dr.

[01:33:13] Anderson you make some really good suggestions about how we could do that and why we need to do that. So we certainly are going to be working very hard to get the message out. One thing I would just remind all the folks that might be listening at home about this, as well, is this service just started on April 10th.

[01:33:30] So we really -- the data that you're looking here is only a week old, right? So there's going to take some time to scale things up and scaffold things up, but you're 100% right. In a big system like ours where people are inundated with information, it's really difficult, I think, for some of the really important and key resources key resources that we have to get through to folks so it you know it's going to be a multi-departmental effort to be able to do that and we're definitely committed to doing that work thank you um the second question that i have is do we have a maximum in terms of how many students can access

[01:34:03] this support so we're currently uh funded in this particular work for 63 000 and above um at which covers our high school students only at this time. So 63,000 and above. Is that in perpetuity?

[01:34:21] It's through March 15th of 2024. I mean the above. Is it just 63,000 plus? So it can encompass at some point all 186,000 of our students? Well, at this point, no, it's just our high school students.

[01:34:38] We only the program right now is only for high school students. If we want to add our middle school students, that's another 28,000 students. and we're exploring that possibility right now but we have not made a decision to move forward on middle school at this time we're working with the 63 000 high school students okay i think i misunderstood i thought the contract was for 63 000 students and above well there's a little carrot that says up and it says any students above the cap are covered at no additional cost so we um how do i want to say we plan the program around the metric of 63 000 but if there's another

[01:35:13] 500 that want to sign up or whatever they will be covered at no cost but that's where we set our bar can you speak a little bit more in terms of why middle school students are not included because i was certain that i read somewhere that it was secondary and in my mind that also included the middle school well we're thinking about adding middle school what we wanted to do is roll it out to our high school students first because they tend to have more access and we were seeing a greater need at the high school level to begin if we see a greater need at the middle school after we've gotten our process moving then we I think we're definitely working on whether or not to add it at middle school I certainly think

[01:35:53] that there is significant need at our middle school so I would encourage for staff to take that under great consideration yes and I also want to make sure that to underscore students cannot access this without parents providing permission that's correct so is it possible for parents to go into parent view and

provide permission if they wanted their students to access it later on or does the student have to initiate it first if they were going to self-refer to kind of kick the parent permission process dr. Presidio do you

[01:36:29] want to comment on the more direct process yeah right right now the service does require parents first to opt-in to the system and then it does require parents to give permission to schedule the session so the parents are the ones who initiate the scheduling of the sessions right now so you know that could be something we could look at in the future but right now this is really directed by the parent I see okay thank you thank you miss keys Gamara yes thank you I'm I'm very excited about this and dr. Anderson took

[01:37:08] SOME OF MY QUESTIONS WITH RESPECT TO GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT OF THIS AVAILABILITY, I'M WONDERING HAVE WE CONSIDERED ANOTHER LAYER, AND THAT IS HELPING PARENTS UNDERSTAND HOW THE NEED FOR THIS SERVICE OVER THE YEARS WE'VE NOTICED AN INCREASED NEED AND MAKING SURE THAT WHEN WE'RE TELLING OUR COMMUNITY THAT THIS IS AVAILABLE, PERHAPS ALSO SOME OF THE UNDERLYING REASONS WHY WE'RE MAKING IT AVAILABLE. BECAUSE I DO THINK IN MY WORK, depending on the community, there can be a stigma attached to seeking mental health services.

[01:37:47] Thank you, Ms. Kees-Gumar. I think that's a really fair point. And I think we could take that under advisement and go back and meet with OCCR. What you're essentially explaining is making clear the why for these services. And I think just in general, our need to de-stigmatize conversations around mental health is tremendous so anytime we can talk about normalizing getting help or accessing resources for mental health that's important so thank you for raising that i would love to see something just available on the website explaining to parents how they can

[01:38:26] get engaged but also the why some of the trends as to what has been occurring i know in my work I'VE SEEN MUCH MORE SOCIAL ANXIETY AMONGST OUR STUDENTS. AND THIS TYPE OF SUPPORT IS REALLY THE ONLY WAY, SIGNIFICANT WAY THAT WE CAN ADDRESS IT.

[01:38:46] FAMILIES ARE A BIG PART OF THAT AS WELL. THE SECOND QUESTION I HAVE IS, DO WE HAVE ANY TYPE OF MONITORING THAT IS OCCURRING? SO LET'S SAY, FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE A PARTICULAR SCHOOL OR A PYRAMID WHERE WE'RE RECEIVING MORE REQUESTS THAN OTHERS.

[01:39:06] DO WE HAVE A WAY OF KNOWING THAT? YES, WE DO, BECAUSE WE HAVE A WAY OF TRACKING THAT. CURRENTLY WE HAVE STUDENTS FROM 20 DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING. OKAY. OKAY. SO OBVIOUSLY WHAT BEGS THE QUESTION IS, ONCE WE HAVE THAT INFORMATION, ARE WE ABLE -- AND I KNOW THIS IS ALL IN PROCESS, RIGHT?

[01:39:28] I'M NOT EXPECTING THIS TO BE DONE, BUT THESE ARE JUST IDEAS TO THINK ABOUT BECAUSE IF WE DO NOTICE THAT IT SEEMS THAT THERE WOULD BE IF WE NOTICED A TREND RIGHT WE WOULD HAVE A WAY OF MONITORING THAT OR NOT JUST MONITORING IT BUT HAVING A RESPONSE TO TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHY ARE WE GETTING MORE REFERRALS FROM A PARTICULAR PYRAMID SCHOOL OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT YEAH I THINK THE EXCITING THING ABOUT COLLECTING DATA IS IT RAISES MORE QUESTIONS. RIGHT. NOW WE HAD A QUESTION EARLIER AND THIS DOESN'T EXACTLY QUITE

[01:40:06] FIT THIS BUT I KNOW WE'VE HAD A LOT OF DISCUSSION ABOUT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND THIS OF COURSE IS PERHAPS EVEN AN EXTENSION OF THAT RIGHT WE ARE

WORKING WITH OUR STUDENTS WITH THE SEL TO MAKE SURE OUR STUDENTS CAN HANDLE THE DAY AND ACCESS LEARNING QUICKLY IF YOU I KNOW I FELT like I heard some inaccurate information earlier would those lessons ever include things that like we heard today the social emotional learning lessons

[01:40:40] developed by our central office staff have been fully vetted by our counseling staff and are actually available on our website I believe we've made those public immediately after spring break but dr. Presidio do you want to share a a little more about those centrally designed curriculum materials yeah so the the posting of those is still in process everything is not there we did make the decision as dr. Reed said very soon after posting all of our curriculum materials for k-12 in our core academic subjects we also wanted to make

[01:41:18] available and make transparent the social emotional lessons so we're in the process still of completing that but it's definitely our intention to have all of the division social emotional curriculum listed there and it really is getting at many of the things that you know we're talking about when we talk about the types of services students are seeking through telemental health right it's building resilience in students it's helping students learn to manage stress and anxiety right i mean that's the type of work that we're really doing through that program i fully agree with it i just want our community to understand and when we hear things that aren't exactly lined up with what i believe we're actually doing

[01:41:55] I think we have a responsibility to have that available and so I just want our parents to understand we're really addressing a number of concerns just to try to make sure education is fully accessible to every student so thank you thank you Ms. Omeish yeah thank you so much Dr.

[01:42:13] Reed I'm really excited that you chose to share this today for the update and thank you Dr. Anderson for the shout out I do want to thank Dr. Boyd who I know I gave a lot of headaches to in getting us here um so just all all around really exciting and and most importantly i want to credit the students because you know this was something that came a few years back when i heard of some severe student cases and and to the to the students it was obvious like tele-mental health resource or something that addressed mental health was such an important you know top priority but perhaps to the division it wasn't that high on the list at the time and covet of course woke us all up

[01:42:51] But I really commend them and being future thinking and speaking up for what their needs were. It ultimately was, you know, a team of kids from every high school that were lobbying and pushing as we had internal conversations with staff about trying to get it to happen.

[01:43:07] And here we are. So thank you for all that work. I also am really, you know, inspired by actually the success so far. So if we look at the short period of time we've had, it's been over 55 kids every day that have signed up. and i'm hoping that that continues and even picks up so really great to see how effectively the publicity has been going so far and hopefully uh only more towards that direction um i know you know in our country obviously since covid at least 25 percent of higher anxiety rates even potentially tripled so this is hopefully a great tool a couple of things i did want to highlight

[01:43:45] though um one i know that you mentioned the language accessibility and availability of these providers i know that it was a priority for us to make sure that they're diverse reflective of backgrounds because it is a reality that sometimes therapy can do more harm than good if they're you know if there's not an understanding of where a child is coming from um but i wanted to give you the chance to just speak to that opt-in opt-out piece because i want to make sure for the public there's a really you know clear

understanding of what it requires to be able to access this kind of resource for now so for now it's an opt-in which means it has to be an active opt-in not a

[01:44:21] passive opt-in. Right. The goal hopefully is eventually to perhaps work towards, yeah, go ahead. Well, I think what we're, we're trying to make sure we walk into this in a really thoughtful way and partner with our families, caregivers, and parents. And right now we believe, and the Hazel Telemental Health contract requires the opt-in of a parent ahead of time. And then obviously the student has access once the parent opts in absolutely so we want to make sure our families are aware that they're a key partner in this process and that they

[01:44:58] should seek out where to opt in for this if they want their child to access it the second piece was just in terms of moving towards potentially 24/7 access down the line I know we're not quite there yet but I know it's a successful thing in colleges but hopefully we can think our way towards that I don't know there's anything you want to say about it but I actually would I think in particular if the school hours are restricted I think we want to expand those hours and we'll have to look at the cost ratio for doing that but I think that's truly a next step I think as we roll this out I think we're in our

[01:45:36] first month and staff have done a fabulous job of supporting this I think we will see incremental expansions to that work and I'm excited about those possibilities and the young people we can meet and meet needs as well so we can access teaching and learning more effectively yeah absolutely I mean there certainly will be some troubleshooting involved this is historic it's the first time you know in Virginia and so I'm looking forward to seeing where those tweaks are going to be necessary and responding accordingly my final question is just whether or not I know this has been publicized widely whether or not there was perhaps a division-wide email to students and families to make

[01:46:13] sure that they're aware of this resource specifically i'm going to ask dr presidio to speak directly to that i believe this has been done in a variety of modalities but i know that uh your department your office uh yeah the communication office did uh do some division-wide communication but again like you know they always tell us you don't just do one communication it takes multiple different approaches and streams so so we're going to continue to message this out awesome thank you so

[01:46:38] so much for all your work on this it's very exciting thank you Ms. McLaughlin thank you as I believe many of us on the board certainly during my tenure as well as some with a specialty in mental health as a social worker very mindful that if we want to close opportunity gaps and achievement gaps then we have to be looking at how we meet the needs of the whole child and so you know there's a lot of challenges we have faced through the pandemic

[01:47:13] But one of them certainly has been putting a spotlight on to what you said earlier, Dr. Reed, you know, meeting children where they are. And if we don't meet their Maslow's hierarchy of need, they're not in a place to academically excel.

[01:47:29] So a couple of things I sighed a little bit because I say over and over again that the school board is a valuable communications partner. And so what I would hope is for your team to take tomorrow to send us the exact promotional materials so that we can all put them into our newsletters.

[01:47:52] I will personally spotlight this as a specific subject header, which I found very effective in the Braddock District, to really help people truly understand that this is new, it is historic, and they have to know about it in order to access it. So I want to be part of that effort.

[01:48:09] Um, the other thing that I think I want to emphasize because I appreciate what my colleague Ms. Marin was saying is that another thing I've been championing is community schools for a reason. Ms. Marin's right. We get funded for K-12 education and instruction, but what we are finding, and even here in Fairfax County, is when your poverty rates are now, you know, closing in at 35% in this county alone opportunity gaps again persist on which parents have health insurance mental health

[01:48:43] coverage can get them to those appointments and when we co-locate services that is the magic of how a village raises a child so i know we're as a board and as a school division looking at best practices on how we really advance community schools but you know i wanted to sort of say to what Ms. Marin's concerns are she's right we cannot shoulder it alone we really can't but I passionately believe that through community schools co-location of county services and other you know outside organizations including services like this after hours

[01:49:21] evenings and weekends that has been a proven model of success and I look forward to us doing this with the mental health supports and services and I just want to echo my enthusiasm and an appreciation, Dr. Reed, for you, your administration, for taking this very seriously.

[01:49:38] We can talk until, you know, the day is done, but it's the actions that matter. Oh, and then can we somehow get your presentation posted for the public to see in the board, like the PowerPoint? Yes. Okay. Yes, ma'am.

[01:49:54] That'd be great. Thank you. I'm sorry? Thank you. Yes. Ms. Tolan? Yes, thank you for the presentation. And just a couple of things very quickly. I'm so excited to have this resource and yes, I want to thank Ms. LaMais for her constant advocacy for this.

[01:50:12] You know, we keep hearing from our counterparts at the county, you know, particularly at our skipped meetings and our experts here in the school district how short we are on professionals that can help our students. And, you know, some of our skipped colleagues were saying that part of the reason, you know, it doesn't matter how much money we throw at this, there is no one out there to hire because a lot of these professionals want to do telework and, you know, not be actually inside a school.

[01:50:45] So this is a great opportunity for us to take advantage of, you know, all aspects of ways we can help our students. One question that I had is, and we talked a little bit about it, you know, WE HAVE OUR CELL SCREENERS, WE HAVE A HOTLINE, WE HAVE A NUMBER OF WAYS FOR PEOPLE TO EITHER REACH OUT OR FOR OUR COUNSELORS TO HIGHLIGHT STUDENTS THAT NEED HELP.

[01:51:11] I FORGET THE PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL REFERRED STUDENTS IN THE PRESENTATION, BUT I'M JUST HOPING THAT OUR PERSONAL REALLY FOCUSING ON MAKING THOSE REFERRALS AND USING THESE KINDS of tools that we have available and that everyone knows watching the hotline or looking at our you know the students that we're identifying for needs who are cell screeners that they're made aware of this resource yes I think we're going to do continuous communication and to Ms. McLaughlin's point we'll make sure you have something for each of your newsletters as well and I don't think we

[01:51:50] have a percentage yet we have the primary reason for referral and percentages but we have 442 families that have opted in so far which is incredible yeah I do know my elementary school principals right away were like when are we gonna get it well you know I think we think it might be a little unusual but for many of our students the tele conversations are actually quite natural and it's a resource availability

that we just as you've mentioned don't have available locally. Yeah. Thank you. I'm excited. Thank you very much.

[01:52:28] I agree with my colleagues. I think this is a wonderful this with tutor dot com. And I know people have been there's been conversation about tutor dot com. But I think the more we can provide for everybody and I know this is just high school right now. But what we can provide for people to utilize I know with for example tutor dot com was told when I were talking about how it has SAT and ACT prep and kids have learned to code using that in the same way students who don't have access to mental health care but who need it, and you can't access learning if you're not mentally well, or it's harder to access learning if you're not mentally well.

[01:53:02] This is just incredible, and I do appreciate Ms. Omesh for lifting this up, and I appreciate all of us and your team for making this happen. And I think just the fact that we've had so many families use it just in the short week is a sign of the need and the importance.

[01:53:19] And I think we've all gotten a little used to talking virtually, and while it's still not to me as as you know i think there's a our students are used to it and also we i think we don't talk about the access point right like we don't need to have somebody drive somebody somewhere or have a car to get somebody somewhere or have access to transportation our students have laptops we have one-to-one devices in high school we give students wi-fi's wi-fi devices who can't access them so this helps with that access component to mental health as well so i'm very very excited

[01:53:54] about this so thank you very much um and i don't see anybody else who wishes to speak so thank you to you and your staff for making this happen it's really really appreciated and i know um very well needed so thank you dr reed agenda item 4.04 student representative matters i see miss togby has joined us virtually i believe miss togby can we do a quick mic check hello hello welcome welcome i will call on you for student representative matters miss togby thank you so much madam chair good evening and happy thursday everyone very sad to be missing out on all the joy in person but i'm actually representing our student equity ambassador leaders at the

[01:54:33] princeton prize and racial relations conference this weekend um speaking of which they had their very last meeting this past wednesday um and they pretty much wrapped up all their final projects and discussed what they want to continue on next year i really want to talk about this amazing and special group of students i've been lucky enough to work with them for the past three years the amount of work we've gotten done, just being started off as kind of like a brainstorm idea. So I'm really proud of everything we've been able to do together. So it was a little bittersweet to kind of pass on the torch, but I'm so very excited for all the things they're able to do

[01:55:08] next year. And speaking on passing on the torch, this past week, we elected our new student representative to the school board. Rita is hailing from Woodson, and I cannot wait to see all of her ideas and essentially just pass on the ropes and talk a little bit about the transition process with her. And this past week, I was also able to attend the global classroom project presentation that was at Luther Jackson, actually. And I just absolutely love the idea of this project. I mean, we have students taking what they learn inside the classroom and in a sense, kind of implementing them outside the classroom. And they're showing what they learn to other

[01:55:45] students and what other students are learning inside their classrooms are also bringing on to our students, so I think that's absolutely amazing, and I wish this was a program that we saw in every

classroom, and I know for sure it's something I would have loved doing. I want to speak a little bit about my own personal experiences with my own librarians, whether it's leaving the cafeteria because I just felt too surrounded by so many people, or if I needed help on my first research paper, they have had my back quite literally, and I don't think they get enough praise and attention for all the work they do because they help our students with whatever content they might learn

[01:56:23] in the classroom and they teach them how to master it and how to demonstrate those learning capabilities and seek those additional skills outside the classroom but in the sense also inside the classroom because of course the library is one of the greatest resources we have in our buildings um this past week weekend i got to spend earth day with board member corbett sanders at fort hut park at the annual earth day celebration hosted by a supervisor stork i had a blast there were a lot of booths there that i got to visit and learn a little bit more about organizations and also just community groups um and then yesterday was the like i mentioned the final

[01:57:02] student equity ambassador leaders meeting which i mean again i'm just really grateful that i got to be there because it's a great group of students and then i have to make a comment about the strategic planning process, before this experience, I had no idea what a strategic planning process was. So just learning the vocab word alone was something new for me. And getting to include students on that journey with me has been such a large learning curve and just lesson in general.

[01:57:31] So seeing how much of an impact what our students have said in surveys, what our students have said in student groups in our final work as we reach the end has been really, really important to me. and i'm super glad to see how it's working out and then on the note of hazel health i recently met with a couple students that i work with just to get my connections from different pyramids on different sides of the county that i might not be frequent to and something that i was kind of hearing a lot was just more clarification on how this process works so i know it's fresh we started at what like a little over a week ago um and just kind of echoing what dr anderson said just making

[01:58:09] sure that the platform is being communicated equally and just accurately across the county in the sense where if a student is hearing about it at Edison, the information that they're hearing is also the same as a student that's hearing it from McLean, things like that. Again, it was kind of like the note of tutor.com, just as long as we have the execution right, the access should be equal all the same. And then also earlier this week, I got to attend the opioid and fentanyl awareness event and everything that was said was just incredibly heavy hitting. I know that this was an event that I wish every parent, staff member, adult,

[01:58:48] trusted adult was able to attend at the same time. But just really being there and soaking up all that information from people who were presenting really, really struck me on a different different note. I know that this is an epidemic that we are facing, not just in our county, but also across the nation. And I just wanted to also give a shout out to Maya Martinos from South County, who volunteered to speak about the student perspective, and just how much of an impact this is having on just the student culture around. And yeah, that is all I have for you all

[01:59:23] today. As always, thank you for your time. Thank you, Ms. Togby, and it's great to see you. And I'm also very excited about our new student representative, although we will miss you very, very much. So thank you very much. Agenda item 4.05, Superintendent Matters, and I want to call on Dr. Reid.

[01:59:41] Thank you, Madam Chair. So it's been an exciting couple weeks. Last week in this very room, I had the opportunity to join the Global Classroom Project Showcase, which was really impressive. We had students partnering with schools on different topics around clean water, sanitation, sustainability, zero hunger, clean energy, and a lot of other topics.

[02:00:06] It was just exciting to see their presentations and also the teacher panels with international teachers. It's really just amazing the work that's going on. It's very inspiring. I was also able to get out and watch the Robinson Rams play softball.

[02:00:23] they did win 8-0 against Alexandria City that night but more importantly they were hosting an awareness about mental health and suicide prevention and they started the game with candle lighting and between innings the student-athletes shared their thoughts around suicide and just was a really it was the third year of this event and I was very impressed with their thoughtfulness and care about That's such a really important topic.

[02:00:54] Last Thursday, I also had the privilege of attending the Colin Powell Elementary 20th anniversary celebration along school board member Pikarski. We were there to enjoy the Pumas and the military band that was playing. It was just a festive time.

[02:01:10] There was a tremendous amount of feline energy in the gym. The Pumas were really excited and had a lot to listen to that day. Friday evening I attended the Herndon High School Hornet production of Kiss Me Kate and I know Ms. Toland attended it the next night, what a show, it was fabulous.

[02:01:32] All of our Cappy judges were there Friday night so there was a lot of writing on notepads and so forth but my husband and I very much enjoyed the play or the show. saturday as it was earth day i had a chance to visit with the mount eagle elementary students staff and community and i was really moved by a former mount eagle student who's now a senior at hayfield secondary school nora nalbrook and she during covet painted these four by eight foot

[02:02:07] murals with different people who have made such a difference in our country and kind of a famous quote and so it's my understanding her family was grateful that those four by eight plywood paintings were moved out of their home and actually posted on the walls and Mount Eagle but when she spoke about why she did it about just giving back to the school again I just continue to be inspired by our students and their acts of incredible talent and she's only taken maybe one art class like this is She's actually an opera singer.

[02:02:46] Anyhow, we have amazing students, and lots of work going on there. Also, the Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge that was at Robinson Secondary School. I think I ate more than I should, but our students were creating cuisine that exceeded my capacity.

[02:03:03] Also since last we met, I've hosted four teacher and classroom instructional assistant staff town halls about various topics of interest and have heard a lot of feedback and taken a lot of notes that we're bringing back that staff is working on in terms of making some adjustments. The Educate Fairfax Hall of Fame induction ceremony has also been an inspiring event that really showcased twelve of our graduates and their amazing work. Last evening I spent time at the Jewish Community Conversation in of the northern

[02:03:39] of Northern Virginia, the Hebrew congregation in Reston, and had an opportunity to visit with our Jewish neighbors and hear concerns about increased anti-Semitic activity and behavior and it's

definitely a topic that we need to address here in our county as well as across the country.

[02:03:58] Today I had a chance to be at Aldrin Elementary School and visit with their fourth grade green team and look at their rain gardens and there's just a lot going on. And tomorrow, or on Saturday actually, Dr. Boyd and her staff are hosting the Special Education Conference, which will be held from 9:00 in the morning until 12:15.

[02:04:20] And it's my understanding it's a virtual conference. So that should be a lot of excitement and a lot of community building. And then on Monday evening, May 8th, mark your calendar because we're going to have a community conversation on school safety and security.

[02:04:36] So we're looking forward to joining with our community and talking about those topics. So that would be Superintendent matters this evening. Wonderful. Thank you, dr. Reed There's a lot going on and a lot of great things happening in our schools. Thank you Agenda item 4.06 s or three. I will call on dr. Reed for the introduction. Thank you, madam chair Dr. Presidio our chief academic officer will present our ESSA report. Thank you. Dr. Presidio. All right Thank you, Dr. Reid, and good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[02:05:10] We're excited to have this opportunity to provide the board and the community with an update on our proposed spending plan for ESSER III and FY24. And as you know, of course, the board does need to approve the ESSER budget. So this evening, we're going to be providing our recommendations about how we think we can best maximize our remaining ESSER dollars in FY24.

[02:05:31] I do want to start, actually, by acknowledging the important role that community input has played in this process, the ESSER initiative, and continues to play in both all of our planning processes as well as our budgeting process. Throughout the ESSER process, we've had a number of opportunities for community input, including public forums, surveys that we've done with our community focus groups, and that input has really helped us, I think, maximize and target our spending in ways that are most important to the community.

[02:06:01] and of course most importantly to our students and with that in mind I do want to thank the folks that are continuing to stay engaged in this process and give us feedback and we had several members of the community here with us this evening and I just want to thank them for their continued engagement and collaboration so to start I do just want to remind everybody that of course the ESSER budget is separate from our FCPS operating funds our ESSER funds are those supplemental funds that we received from the federal government in order to really make sure that schools were able to reopen safely after covid and to sustain the safe operations of schools during the lingering

[02:06:39] effects of the pandemic it was also i think really important to note that the federal government when they gave us these funds expressly allocated the funds on a multi-year basis with the recognition that we would not be able to meet the needs of students academically and students social emotional wellness needs in one year. So we actually were fortunate enough to receive $188 million in ESSER funds. We received those funds in December of 2021, which is only a year and a half ago, but it sure seems a lot longer to me than that. But we all have a million jokes about COVID years, I'm sure.

[02:07:17] So we received those funds in December of 2021, and we now have until September of 2024 to fully expand all of our remaining funds. So essentially what that means is the upcoming SCHOOL YEAR IN FY24 IS OUR FINAL YEAR TO SPEND ALL OF OUR ESSER FUNDING.

[02:07:33] AND WITH THAT IN MIND, I WOULD JUST SAY THAT TONIGHT'S PROPOSED BUDGET REALLY IS LOOKING AT WHAT WE BELIEVE FROM THE STAFF PERSPECTIVE IS THE MOST IMPACTFUL WAY THAT WE CAN MAXIMIZE ALL OF OUR REMAINING FUNDING. SO ON THE NEXT SLIDE, I JUST WANTED TO REMIND EVERYBODY, PARTICULARLY IN THE COMMUNITY, THAT THE ESSER GRANT, OF COURSE, DOES HAVE REQUIREMENTS ALONG WITH IT.

[02:07:54] AND FIRST AND FOREMOST IS THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE SPENDING PLAN REALLY BE ALIGNED to four major categories, and the first category is unfinished learning, and the ESSER grant actually requires that 20 percent of the grant award be allocated to unfinished learning. And in FCPS, funds in this category were used to provide services like expanded summer learning.

[02:08:14] Over the last two years, we've had over 30,000 students participate in our summer school programs, and we've also provided direct services like tutoring services to students with the greatest academic needs. The second category of funding requirements is around academic, social, emotional, and mental wellness.

[02:08:32] So in this category, we've expended funds to really provide those direct supports to students in those areas. And again, of course, we had a great, I think, presentation on academic matters tonight, looking at how we're continuing to expand those services with telemental health. That third category, of course, is COVID prevention and mitigation strategies.

[02:08:51] So here you'll recall, we spent funding in this category on things like our mitigation support teams that went out and helped schools make sure that they had safe practices in place when we welcomed students back into our schools. And then that last category, the other use of funds, we've allocated funding in that area to really enhance our technology infrastructure and to also make sure that we have appropriate multilingual communications in place.

[02:09:16] So on the next slide, we wanted to just highlight the funding status of some of our projects. We're, of course, about halfway into the ESSER III project at this point. And we've provided on the left-hand side of the slide, essentially projects that are being discontinued in the proposed FY24 budget.

[02:09:33] So for example, you can see things like, again, our technology, infrastructure upgrades with bandwidth and Zoom license fees. Those are things that we've completed, we've paid for those things, we've done those things. We no longer need to budget for them in FY24.

[02:09:48] And then on the right-hand side of the slide, you'll see that we're recommending some projects to end after this year, FY23, as well. So, for example, we're going to continue to make sure that our schools receive funding to provide those school-based academic supports and wellness.

[02:10:04] When they have hired staff to provide those direct services to students, they'll be able to continue with those positions in their budget. However, I do want to note that the hourly-based funds that schools had received to provide additional supports, we're going to strategically reinvest that money in centrally provided and coordinated services.

[02:10:25] So for those schools that demonstrate the greatest academic needs based on end of the year data, we're going to make sure that those schools receive centrally hired tutors and supports to provide those direct services to students. Because one of the challenges that we've had this year is making sure that all of our schools were able to equitably access those additional academic supports for students.

[02:10:47] So that's one shift. So schools will retain the staffing, but we're going to centralize the hourly intervention tutoring supports. On the next slide, what we've essentially done here is provided you with the major project funding adjustments for FY24 that are really important, I think, to call out and highlight.

[02:11:06] And the first is that we're proposing a continuation of the special education teacher contracts. As we know, our special education students were some of the students most impacted during the pandemic and as a result our special education teachers workload is significantly increased as they really work very hard to meet the needs of those students so we're recommending continuation of those extended contracts for another year. Project two our wellness project again we're recommending continuation of those school-based staff resources when schools hired social workers or counselors to make sure that there was appropriate support for students wellness needs

[02:11:45] within the school for project nine the academic interventions as i mentioned schools will retain those intervention positions that they hired and we will also be assigning tutors centrally to make sure that schools that need additional support have them as well and then for project 10 we're going to continue to have an enhanced and expanded summer learning program in the summer of 2023 we're also in project 29 going to retain our school health coordinator position who we also mentioned earlier this evening, the importance of that position. And then finally I call your attention to two new projects that we're proposing to be funded. The first is an update essentially

[02:12:22] to our website infrastructure to really make them more user-friendly, be able to have more multilingual capabilities within the website, and to be able to do some things to really target specific audiences with information that they might be most interested in receiving. And then And then Project 31 is looking at providing some additional supports for students who have ongoing attendance needs and challenges and issues by providing them with some mentors and some coaches to help them successfully be able to attend school on a regular basis.

[02:12:54] On this slide, we've provided essentially a summary of the entire ESSER budget for the three years of the project. So if we could make that just a little bit bigger full screen because it's really tiny. YOU'LL NOTE ON HERE IS THAT WE'VE PROVIDED, FIRST OF ALL, EACH OF THE 31 PROJECTS, AND WE'VE PROVIDED THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING THAT WE'VE INVESTED IN THOSE PROJECTS FOR EACH OF THE FISCAL YEARS. SO IN FY22, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THAT COLUMN, YOU'LL NOTE THAT WE SPENT A TOTAL OF $53 MILLION OF OUR ESSER FUNDS IN THE FY22 FISCAL YEAR. IN FY23, OUR CURRENT

[02:13:31] FISCAL YEAR, WE'RE PROJECTED TO SPEND ABOUT AN ADDITIONAL $77 MILLION OF OUR ESSER FUNDS. And then there's two columns for FY24. The first was the original FY24 budget when we developed this grant budget essentially a year and a half ago.

[02:13:48] And then the second column for FY24 is what we're proposing to adjust in the FY24 budget. So for example, you'll note on line one, project one, originally we were not intending to continue to fund the special education teacher contracts, but we are now proposing to continue those contracts.

[02:14:07] SO YOU WILL SEE AS A RESULT OF SOME OF THOSE ADJUSTMENTS HOW THE OVERALL FY24 BUDGET HAS CHANGED. AND THEN IN THE LAST COLUMN ESSENTIALLY WHAT YOU HAVE IS THE AGREGATION OF THOSE THREE BUDGET YEARS WHICH ESSENTIALLY RESULTS IN AN EXPENDITURE OF $188 MILLION WHEN OUR GRANT FUNDING RUNS OUT IN SEPTEMBER OF '24.

[02:14:29] JUST A COUPLE MORE SLIDES WE WOULD LIKE TO COVER. FIRST BY SUMMARY, I JUST WANTED TO HIGHLIGHT THAT THAT $188 MILLION WHEN YOU THINK OF it on a percentage basis that we've budgeted almost 40% of the ESSER funds for unfinished learning and an additional 46% for those direct student, academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

[02:14:50] So over 80% of our budget is really going to fund direct services and supports for students. And again, the guideline was spend 20%, but we're really spending over 80% of our funds on that. So with that in mind, as we move to the next slide, I just want to remind folks of the timeline that we're on.

[02:15:08] First, I think, and most importantly, is the fact that there continues to be opportunities for public input into this process. Any of our stakeholders are welcome to submit their comments and suggestions via a web form that we have on our website. That's open now, and it closes on May 5th, and we definitely will be using that information, reflecting on that information as we continue our ESSER initiative.

[02:15:30] And then the board is scheduled to vote on May 11th on the budget, which then will go to VDOE for approval. And we believe that we'll probably get approval of the budget by the end of May or early June. So with that, I just want to say thank you for all the work and support that the board members have done on this ESSER project as well.

[02:15:48] And certainly happy to address any questions that you might have. Thank you very much, Dr. Presidio. Ms. Toland? Ms. Corbett-Sanders? Thank you so much, Dr. Presidio.

[02:16:06] This was a very helpful presentation, and I know that there is a lot of interest in how we have spent these funds and how we will continue to spend them. And it's actually quite interesting because at $188 million over three years, do we have a general idea?

[02:16:23] I think I'm running the numbers in my head, and it's less than 2.5%, 3% of the total budget? About 2% of the total budget. 2% of the total budget. But it's actually very helpful for us to see how closely we are monitoring and how closely we are managing this money because that's really what we should be doing with our overall budget.

[02:16:49] So I appreciate that. I do have two questions. One is on one of the charts, and I forget which one it is, you recommend or you're saying that we are going to have a centralization of our tutors, which makes a lot of sense.

[02:17:08] I would also like to understand how we are using organizations like EduTutor and how our tutor.com comes together. So those are really three strands and then probably brand involved you could add into that.

[02:17:24] You don't have to answer it tonight, but if you could kind of think through how they all knit together for those cohesive services. The second thing is I very much appreciate the concept of the centralization of the tutoring. And I'm wondering, why don't we use a similar concept for the centralization of substitute teachers?

[02:17:48] Because we know that we have a challenge all the time with substitutes now as people find other work. And if we had a centralized center for that or even a core group that we keep on our payroll and then send them to each of the different schools when they're needed, have you explored that at all well

I would defer to Mr. Smith and Dr. Wilson on the substitutes because I know they're doing a lot of innovation work in HR but I would say with the centralization

[02:18:22] for the tutors we found that or first I would say we believe that we can be more efficient in the actual matching of the need in the school with the resources and supports at central office but it's operationally quite complex um so it's it's not a you know a process that's easy to implement there's been growing pains with that but we have been able to hire over 100 tutors already and we've placed many tutors in schools this spring as well so we're going to build on that success for the fall and we'll be hiring quite a few more how that that model could apply to substitutes we haven't explored that yet but i think it's a good suggestion for us to look at

[02:18:59] excellent thank you and then the only other question is kind of builds on what i talked about a little earlier this evening which is the chronic absenteeism piece could you flesh that out a little bit more so we understand it yeah so what we're proposing in in this esser budget is to work with some outside agencies and we'll have to go through the contracting process to to identify who those partners are and we do have some partnerships in place already right now but essentially we're you know identifying individuals that can connect with the student and connect with the family understand the root causes of why that student is not able to attend

[02:19:37] school it might be a health issue it might be a transportation issue it might be a work issue and a scheduling issue and really help to really you know try to resolve those for the student and family as best as possible we've had quite a bit of success so far this year but again that's very labor intensive it involves you know obviously lengthy home visits social services being coordinated and supported to the student and family. So, you know, we believe a strategic investment of ESSER funds there is really important as we continue to see the need to get our students to be able to attend school on a regular basis, which, of course, is showing up in our data

[02:20:16] not just here in Fairfax, but around the state and around the country. So are you seeing the attendance support liaison, for want of a better term, that would be available to go out to children's homes would they be coordinating the services that the child needs to to be a to be more confident in going to school or do you see that as the role of the school counselor who then would call in centrally and say we need the resources from and I've just made up the term the ASL yeah I think

[02:20:54] it's a team effort. You know, it's the counselor, it's the social worker oftentimes within the school, it's classroom teachers that are partnering with families, it's administrators who are supporting students. But we need somebody who's able to actually do those home visits and really coordinate and kind of case manage the services for the student and to be able to spend the time with the family and the student to understand what the root causes and needs really are. So we do need some additional human capacity to be able to do that. But it's really a team EFFORT IN TERMS OF THE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS WE PROVIDE TO STUDENTS.

[02:21:27] THIS BOARD MEMBER WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE UPDATES ON THIS AS YOU CONTINUE TO EXPLORE IT, DEPLOY IT. THANK YOU. MS.

[02:21:43] MAYOR. YES. SO, DR. PRESIDIO, IS IT -- HAS THIS INFORMATION ABOUT THE UPDATES IN THE BUDGET, HAS THAT BEEN COMMUNICATED TO STAFF? ARE PRINCIPALS AWARE OF THE CHANGES? PRINCIPALS ARE AWARE. YES. So are these going to be just, are we going to have to amend, how is that going to work with the actual budget and getting it approved, you know, amended or what?

[02:22:05] Yeah, so the budget approval process is a multi-step process. The first step is for the board to approve the proposed budget. The next step then is for us to do all of the technical submissions to VDOE and get VDOE approval, and then we receive the funds and disperse those funds accordingly to the proposed budget.

[02:22:22] So, you know, it's a multi-step process, but principals are aware of the process. One of the things that, you know, we need to continue to do in terms of the matching of those centrally accessed academic supports, there's going to be a lot of data analysis that's going to be done this spring to identify the individual students at each school that really are, you know, continuing to demonstrate that academic need and make sure that we can prioritize the schools for centralized support that have the greatest need.

[02:22:52] AND THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT'S BEEN DIFFICULT THROUGHOUT THIS WHOLE PROCESS. SO THERE'S GOING TO BE QUITE A BIT OF WORK THAT WE'RE GOING TO BE DOING WITH THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT TO DO THAT DATA ANALYSIS AND THEN TO DO THAT CENTRAL MATCHING. OKAY. YEAH. SO, DR. REED, ONE OF THE THINGS THAT I HAD BEEN INTERESTED IN FROM THE GET-GO WAS HOW ARE THE ESSER FUNDS -- WHAT IS BEING FUNDED THAT IS EFFECTIVE? AND WHEN I TALK WITH STAFF AND MR. GREENFELDER SHOP, YOU KNOW, HOW ARE THEY SYNTHESIZING WHAT THINGS WE COULD REPLICATE so we would know what to fund so is this list part of that synthesis it is it is and you you

[02:23:29] get so many reports i know it's difficult to recall but the office of research and strategic improvement has actually done two accountability reports on the esser budget and they're tracking really the efficacy of the spending that we've been doing the audit office is also auditing the esser budget so there's a lot of additional you know objective views of what we've been doing with our funds the most recent report that the board received back in the fall one of the things that that report noted was the efficacy of high impact tutoring a tutor working with small groups of students over a prolonged period of time and that was one of the things that was making the most difference in terms of

[02:24:07] academic growth for students and we were able to move a significant proportion of students in just one year's period of time out of that tier three intervention need within a year. We moved about 40 percent of our students out of tier three interventions with those supports in just one year period of time. Well thank you. So looking at this list of things I counted about eight different things related to family engagement. So I could name up the numbers but you know family number three family liaison. Number seven family school partnership specialist which sounds similar to me what a family liaison might do. Number 17 was translators.

[02:24:46] 18 is intercultural engagement communicators which sounds really interesting but it also sounds like things that our family liaisons do so and I know some of these things had already have already happened and been budgeted and you know I'm supportive of these supports but it seems like a lot of separate things um I don't know can we speak more to how we're integrating all these different things together sure and one thing I was I apologize I was remiss in not mentioning posted on board docs this evening is a much more comprehensive spending narrative that gives you detailed information on what each of those project initiatives are and many of the ones that you

[02:25:23] mentioned really do fall into that bucket of family engagement and family communication and that was one of the things that we found during the pandemic and post-pandemic was a really big need there were certain communities within our overall community that were continuing to be disengaged and

disenfranchised, I think, and not able to access some of the supports that we were providing in the community. So that's the intent and the purpose of those additional family resource supports, is to work, you know, very specifically with those target populations to make sure that they have equitable access and opportunities to receive the services and supports that are available. Okay, thank you. Yes, I did look through that, but thank you.

[02:26:02] Yeah. It's a good companion. The one final thing I'll mention is something that I hear from parents especially those going uh having students in middle school and then high school is the transitions and i don't know if there's anything in here that's really targeting the executive functioning skills that students really have to have once they get into secondary school where they're juggling multiple courses or iep transitions and that kind of thing you know how does it i think some of our students lost or didn't have the opportunity to have that capability you know teaching them schoology and where does that fit in to here well that's another great question and there's not a lot of money in here for that but there are there is funding in here for that

[02:26:41] and that kind of falls actually under the social emotional wellness bucket a number of the things that we've done the advisory program at the secondary level responsive classroom at the elementary level really are about building those successful academic habits for students so at the secondary level really making sure that students you know are organized are able to access academic supports, be good self-advocates, right? At the elementary level, we're working on a lot of things like executive functioning skills, like you mentioned, self-regulation. So a lot of those things are built into our social-emotional learning curriculum, and it looks different, of course, at the grade levels

[02:27:18] because it's, you know, age-appropriate, but a lot of that is built into the social-emotional component. Well, I would suggest that we lift out some of these executive functioning skills that are really core to academic success while they are core for social emotional learning I think you know people think of them as these soft skills and such but really if you can't organize your papers and your courses you are not going to succeed academically so I would like to see that you know I think that should be and we should be talking about it more academically. It's a great comment and I was actually looking at Dr. Reed because we had the opportunity to visit an AVID school at Gunston Elementary which is an elementary demonstration site for AVID and they were teaching those skills

[02:27:57] I THINK AVID FOR A LOT OF KIDS WOULD BE REALLY HELPFUL. ABSOLUTELY. SO WHAT WE'VE DONE AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, WE HAVEN'T DONE THIS AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL YET, IS WE'VE BUILT IN A LOT OF THOSE AVID STRATEGIES INTO OUR ADVISORY PROGRAM SO THAT ALL STUDENTS ARE GETTING EXPOSURE TO THEM, ACCESS TO THEM, NOTETAKING SKILLS, ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS, STUDY SKILLS, RIGHT?

[02:28:16] WE'VE DONE THAT AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL. OUR NEXT STEP IS TO TAKE THAT DOWN TO THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL. THANK YOU. GREAT QUESTIONS. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. MS. I guess I'm going to just go to macro level, Dr. Reed.

[02:28:35] I have some real concerns about this. I have no doubt that you and your team have the very best intentions with this. It's all about serving students. But what's worrisome to me that we've always known about one-time funding or limited funding is that you do not create positions because the money is going to go away.

[02:28:55] And when I went through all of these, and we can talk more, the two of us, on the touching basis, but, I mean, I'm going at items 7, 18, 25, 29. I mean, there's just position after position after position. And what is going to happen when, you know, the Esther money's gone?

[02:29:18] I mean, there are a lot of positions here. one of them including that I really want to better understand is number seven executive principal I understand involves benefits as well but it's $270,000 line item you know there's another one on here that school-based FTEs on number seven was going to be five hundred five point five million dollars so Dr. Presidio I totally appreciate what you put in front of us but I mean Dr. Reed I've reviewed it there is no way as one board member that the information here that especially because unlike the board of

[02:29:56] supervisors where when they have a position they just list the pay and then they end up saying of course then there's benefits attached i would rather we list this is the cost this is the salary for the position from a transparency standpoint and then we can say at the end of the chart now when we add in all those positions at a x percent cost out i don't know if it's 0.5 NOW OR 0.4 BUT THIS I WOULD ASK MY COLLEAGUES TO REALLY LOOK AT THIS PRETTY DEEPLY BECAUSE IT'S A LOT OF POSITIONS AND THERE'S THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS THAT JUST AREN'T EXPLAINED

[02:30:33] THERE'S A SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM AT 7 MILLION DOLLARS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES LIKE THE HOW CAN THE PUBLIC WEIGH IN WHEN THE INFORMATION IS NOT THERE AND I THINK HONESTLY I MEAN BEEN A PARENT FOR 18 YEARS IN SCHOOL DIVISION THERE'S NO WAY I WOULD DRILL DOWN TO THIS BUT I WOULD EXPECT MY ELECTED SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS TO DO IT AND I THINK THAT WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW ON EARTH WE WITH YOU KNOW FIDELITY TO OUR OVERSIGHT CAN APPROVE SOMETHING

[02:31:10] LIKE THIS BECAUSE THERE'S JUST NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION HERE AT ALL AND MY COLLEAGUES I MEAN this is the core of what we do here so while the intent and these line items look good really drill down to the positions the cost to these positions and where are they going to go because good quality people aren't going to just sign on and take a job for a year at you know 150 200 000 and then walk away so i think there's a lot here we have to talk about well i think those are excellent questions and i definitely appreciate you raising them a couple

[02:31:48] of things I would say first of course Dr. Reed wasn't here when we built our ESSER budget and pretty much the majority of things that are in this budget are legacy things from FY22 and FY23 in terms of positions right like we're not adding a lot of new positions in FY24 those are things that we had already funded one big thing that we're continuing that it's kind of position central is the continuation of those special ed contracts in FY24 so that's one of the biggest cost drivers in in the FY24 budget. Most of those other things are positions that we're continuing until

[02:32:23] we run out of funding in September of 2024. And you're 100 percent right. The money will run out and at some point we're going to have to make that decision about can we afford to retain any of these positions or do we lose them all. And that was a decision that you know we made when we proposed the original budget to the board you know a year and a half ago. So you're asking really good questions. I know that there's a lot of information here IN THE BUDGET. I'M HAPPY TO MEET INDIVIDUALLY WITH ANY BOARD MEMBER TO DRILL DOWN MUCH MORE DEEPLY.

[02:32:54] OUR TEAM IS HERE. THE EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL POSITION THAT YOU MENTIONED IS DR. PETRICH. SHE'S OUR ESSER DIRECTOR AND OUR ENTIRE FINANCIAL TEAM. WE'D BE HAPPY TO MEET

WITH ANY BOARD MEMBERS AND DRILL DOWN IN THIS BECAUSE I KNOW THERE'S A LOT HERE. I WOULD JUST SAY THAT I THINK WE MAY NEED A LITTLE MORE CLARITY ABOUT BECAUSE I EVEN LOOKED AT THE CHART AND IT IS HARD TO READ WHAT'S FY24 BUDGET AND WHAT'S NEW and what's ESSER and so yeah.

[02:33:23] - No, I totally get it, it's a lot of information. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Toland. - Yes, thank you for the presentation. I just wanted to ask a couple questions on your list on slide four, the completed projects.

[02:33:42] And it maybe gets a little bit to some of the things that Ms. McLaughlin was asking about. So for example, on the list for projects that ended in FY22, we have, Additional ESOL staffing, family liaisons, the bus driver compensation, I noticed there as well.

[02:34:00] I mean, I don't think, and correct me if I'm wrong, have we lessened the number of family liaisons or we picked that up already in our recurring budgets? So I'm going to ask... Dr. Presidio, this is Alice.

[02:34:18] Hi, Alice. Hi, Ms. Dolan. So some of the projects that you mentioned, Ms. Dolan, I just want to make sure that I am repeating them all. But nearly all of them that you said are all incorporated into our baseline budget. So the family liaisons was about $3.2 million. The recurring cost of that was picked up in our current year's budget. So we expanded the number of family liaisons that we had in our division.

[02:34:48] The next one was bus drivers compensation and stipends. That was an action that the board took to increase bus driver pay. And that is also incorporated in the current year's budget. And I'm sorry, Ms. Tholen, I think you said a third one. And I'm not recall.

[02:35:04] oh i said esal staffing esal staffing also was picked up in this year's current budget so the three things that you mentioned it was in our first year um it was it was picked up in fy 23 um and presented to the board as part of the adoption of the 23 budget thank you that's what i thought i recalled and i guess that those are examples of things that we adopted we were able to adopt with that esser money family liaisons is a prime example of how we just found out you know through covid how important those connections were and made sure that we had those types of

[02:35:41] people in every single one of our schools and then you know I'm worried that some people will look at this column and think oh my gosh you know we're getting rid of the family liaisons we're not we have already incorporated that that is you know something we monitored and looked at and then decided that that was important enough that we have already incorporated into our other budgets AND YOU KNOW CONTINUING THAT SO I THINK MAYBE SOME OF THE POSITIONS AND WE CAN LOOK AT THAT VERY CLOSELY SOME OF THOSE POSITIONS ARE PROBABLY ALREADY ROLLED OVER INTO OUR RECURRING BUDGET

[02:36:23] SO THAT BRINGS UP MY OTHER QUESTION I JUST WANTED TO HEAR A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT THE SIPP PROCESS AND THE QUARTERLY REVIEWS OF THE PLANS THAT THE SCHOOLS ARE DOING I THINK THAT'S STILL CONTINUING HOW IS THAT THAT WORKING AND WHAT KINDS OF THINGS ARE WE learning um from going through that process with the schools well that's a great question that's a big question so i'll try to be brief but we did implement um a new school improvement planning process when we rolled out the esser funding directly to schools and we did that for a number

[02:37:00] of reasons one for accountability so that we could track how the money was being spent at schools and we could measure the impact of that funding at our schools but also because we knew that we we were going to need to provide a lot of centralized supports to schools using evidence based strategies to make sure that we were maximizing the teaching and learning practices that we were using in schools.

[02:37:20] So that process started with a lot of data analysis and root cause analysis with schools and central office teams working together in the summer. It continued throughout the fall as schools finalized their school improvement plans. RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS WERE PROVIDED TO SCHOOLS. COACHING WAS PROVIDED TO SCHOOLS IN DEVELOPING THEIR PLANS, THEIR ACTIONS AND THEIR STRATEGIES ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR GOALS. AND THEN WE RUN A QUARTERLY REVIEW PROCESS TO LOOK AT THE DATA AT EACH QUARTER TO SEE IF THE PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES ARE HAVING THE DESIRED EFFECT. AND IF THEY'RE NOT, THEN WE DO ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS THAT WE'RE TAKING FOR THE NEXT QUARTER.

[02:38:00] IT'S A LOT OF WORK. IT'S A LOT MORE WORK, I THINK, THAN SOME OF OUR SCHOOLS WERE DOING. been doing something similar in the past others hadn't but it really is a lot more work and our schools have been very positive about the process they've taken that work on and I think we're finding we actually just did some focus groups interviews with principals because we're planning our process for next year and we got a lot of really good feedback about the process we also got some really good requests for some modifications to some of the resources and supports that they need and we're in the process of developing our plan for next year right now which we hope to roll out to schools at the end of the

[02:38:34] end of May. So do you see that process continuing? Yeah. Even after ESSER? Yeah, that's exactly right. So that's what we're in the process of doing now is kind of building on that. One of the big things that we need to do in the process this year is the alignment to the new division strategic plan because the alignment that we did in the school improvement plan for this year was really around the work that was in ESSER. As ESSER sunsets and we adopt a new strategic plan, we're going to go through a process to make sure that the school improvement plans are aligned to the measures and outcomes in the division plan. Excellent. That sounds great. Yeah, I was excited about that new

[02:39:12] process. And I've heard good things from principals. But I'm glad you're talking to them because they do have comments, you know, ways to tweak things. Yeah. But that's exciting. And I think you mentioned too in your discussion that sharing of what's working across the division, which I think is so important. Yeah, that's one of the things I think that's been real powerful is bringing the principals together to share their plans and to develop activities and strategies together. That's been really helpful, I think. Great. Thanks. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Frisch. Thanks. I think like

[02:39:50] my colleagues, I would normally object to using one-time funds for staffing positions. But when it comes to closing the gaps from COVID, I feel like that's what the ESSER money is for, right?

[02:40:06] I'm more interested in having a dramatic impact on those gaps and staffing is necessary, even if it is temporary. Also, the money that we're using here to fund the extra SPED dollars for our SPED teachers, especially with all the extra compensatory services work, it's been a game changer. And I think we'd have a mutiny on our hands if if we pulled that back and so I'm grateful to see it included. On another note I over the last few weeks as the board's federal liaison I've met with

[02:40:41] Congressman Connolly, Congressman Beyer, and Congressman Wexton to talk with them about our federal priorities including thanking them for our ESSER funds because while it may be small in

comparison to our, our larger budget, it was a hugely necessary cash infusion when we needed it most. And it's had a transformative impact on our ability to meet the needs of students post COVID.

[02:41:09] So I told them how much we appreciate it, how much we'd like more if they're willing to offer it. And I'm curious, it leads me to a question. As we use up the rest of these funds in the year ahead, what steps are we doing to consider how this work can continue? Because I can't help but think that if these targeted interventions and these best practices being instilled across the school division are having an impact in closing COVID learning gaps, they must have the ability to

[02:41:43] close the persistent gaps that existed long before COVID, decades before COVID. I would hate to walk away from something that has the ability to move the needle. Well, that's a great question. I would say I think that you know post ESSER funding planning process really is going to begin in earnest this year as we think about having essentially a year and a half to September 24 to expend the funds so part of that will be looking at building the FY25 budget analyzing what really had the greatest impact in terms of student outcomes and trying to make some recommendations of things that we

[02:42:19] might be able to include in the FY25 budget the other thing is continuing to look for external funding sources. So, you know, we were successful in getting that mental health services grant recently, which was a big infusion of support to the counseling services and psychology services we're providing to students. We're looking at a tutoring grant right now that might be able to provide some supplemental assistance. We were able to get a grant about a year ago to support some additional services and supports directly from the state. So we need to continue to look at those external funding sources and also think about the things that have had the greatest impact

[02:42:56] and think about what we might be able to incorporate in future budgets operating budgets moving forward well i'm just speaking for myself i'm sure my colleagues may agree with me but we very much want to be part of that conversation absolutely thank you thank you thank you dr anderson thank you just a few questions um going back to slide four and i apologize if you shared

[02:43:23] this and I missed it. The completed projects, the projects that ended in FY22, and on that list is the multilingual texting service. That means this is no longer available to our families. Is that correct? So I apologize. I think I probably should have gone through slide four a little bit more slowly. So the details on some of these things are in that spending narrative that's posted online, but even that's not entirely comprehensive. So we found an additional internal funding sources to pick that up and continue that service in FY23 and moving into

[02:44:01] FY24 will do the same thing. So we initiated that service using ESSER funding and then we were able to find internal funds in our operating fund to be able to do that. Thank you for that. That's very helpful. So maybe this is a better question to ask. On the items on chart 14, slide 14, what are the things that the division is no longer doing because there's not another funding stream so on slide four what are the things that were no longer that's okay so without having the complete spending narrative in front of me i'm going to

[02:44:37] confer with our experts over here uh and see if is there anything on that list that is no longer funded the mitigation measures team is no longer funded i had mentioned that one in my earlier REMARKS BECAUSE WE DON'T NEED TO DO THE CONTACT TRACING.

[02:44:57] YEAH. SURE. WE MIGHT NEED TO GO BACK ON THAT ONE AS WE JUST DOUBLE CHECK THE DATA. MAYBE AS I GO THROUGH THE REST OF MY QUESTIONS SOMEBODY CAN COME UP WITH THAT.

[02:45:14] ONE OF THE OTHER QUESTIONS THAT I HAD WAS REGARDING THE ALLOCATION. IF YOU REMEMBER MULTIPLE YEARS AGO NOW BEFORE DR. REED CAME ON BOARD MY CONSIDERATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE SCHOOLS were being allocated their funding by some sort of criteria and I asked that to be needs based and I know that some of the funding was being doled out in that way.

[02:45:41] Is that continuing even with the new expenditures that you have outlined on chart, I'm sorry slide six, particularly the line item which is what $15 million for academic intervention? Yeah, so the academic intervention funding in prior fiscal years was based on a needs-based formula.

[02:46:04] So we looked not at student demographics. We looked at actual student data, assessment data that we had both from the state assessments as well as internal assessments like our iReady assessment, math inventory, reading inventory. So we were really able to pinpoint the number of students that would fall into that Tier 3 level need because Tier 1 and Tier 2 were going to meet in, you know, regular operational ways within our school budgets.

[02:46:30] But we developed a formula for that. I say we, but the Office of Research and Strategic Improvement did that research and helped us come up with that funding formula. There was a wide variance in what schools received. So, like on the one end, like on the low end, a school might have received $20,000, and on the high end, they might have received several hundred thousand dollars just based on the level of need that they had in their school.

[02:46:54] What we're doing now for FY24 is we are allowing those schools that spent their school-based funds on staff. So they might have hired, for example, at a secondary school, they might have hired somebody an additional period of time to provide intervention services before school or after school.

[02:47:13] They're going to be able to continue to do that because they had the funding based on the need. They're going to be able to continue to do that for next year. what they're not going to get is additional allocations of funds to spend on an hourly basis to provide additional supports so any additional needs that schools have for tutoring will be met centrally we're going to do the same analysis that we did over the last two years we're going to look at our data this spring we're going to work with the office of research and strategic improvement and we'll look at the schools that have the highest level of need based on the number of students that they have to serve, and we will centrally staff tutors in those schools

[02:47:52] to make sure that those students get that additional academic support. So it's going to maximize a smaller pot of resources than what we had in FY22 and FY23, because obviously we've spent down over $120 million of our budget, and we didn't budget in the original FY24 budget when you look at that chart.

[02:48:10] We never planned and budgeted for continuing academic interventions and supports in FY24. I think I got a little bit confused. One of the things you said that if they hired staff, they're going to be able to continue with that staff, but they're not going to get an allocation?

[02:48:30] So they're not going to get a central allocation of funds like they received in FY22 and FY23. That's correct. That money is going to be shifted centrally because it's going to be a smaller pot of money

now, And we want to make sure that we're maximizing those resources and targeting those limited resources to the schools that have the largest number of students in need.

[02:48:50] So is this, if they hired staff, which we are now going to support centrally, I guess I'm asking, is the need still present? Which leads me to my next question a little bit. So allow me to just forecast a little.

[02:49:06] How are we continuing to evaluate? Because if I hired staff, and I'm just throwing random numbers. If I hired staff, you know, the first year to meet the needs that I had at the school, but now my circumstances have changed. Let's say everybody in the school is flying high and the staff is still being taken care of centrally.

[02:49:25] Is that a good way to use our resources? Well, how are we continuing to monitor, one, that the impact of whatever has been put in place is working, and two, that the needs continue? Yeah, so the first piece is how we're actually, you know, measuring and monitoring the needs for FY24, right?

[02:49:47] So the Office of Research and Strategic Improvement has done two evaluation reports. They will be doing a third evaluation report and working with us to look at the end-of-the-year data after we get our spring testing data back to make sure that we understand which schools have the greatest number of students in need.

[02:50:06] And we're going to target those funds again that we have centrally now to those schools. The schools that did invest in the staffing, those were pretty minor in terms of the amount of staffing, like they might have hired a 0.17 position to work in that particular school.

[02:50:23] Any of the schools that hired those additional staff positions were the schools that had pretty much the schools that had the highest level of need to begin with, right, the largest number of students. And we know that we haven't closed the gap for all of the students across the division. So we can project right now that those schools are gonna continue to have academic need.

[02:50:43] And I think strategically it makes the most sense to allow them to continue and have some continuity of services that they've been providing to students next year. The schools that had a smaller amount of money because they didn't have as many students in need, that money is gonna be swept up centrally and reallocated back out to the schools based on ongoing need.

[02:51:04] Can you speak a little bit to the tools that are going to be used to monitor, well, rather to evaluate for need? You mentioned something with iReady. Is that what the office is using? Yeah, so it's external assessments, external state assessments, like the SOLs is the primary measure there, and then internal assessments.

[02:51:23] So we use the iReady assessment for reading. We use the iReady assessment for math at the elementary level. AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL, WE HAVE A READING INVENTORY MEASURE AND A MATH INVENTORY MEASURE THAT WE USE. THOSE ARE THE PRIMARY, YOU KNOW, ASSESSMENTS THAT WE USE AS PART OF THAT NEED DETERMINATION.

[02:51:42] OKAY, THANK YOU. COUPLE MORE QUESTIONS. I'M VERY CURIOUS ABOUT SOME OF THE NEW PROJECTS. PROJECT 31, THE CHRONIC ABSENTEESM PROVIDER. I SEE THAT THERE IS A REFERENCE TO PAGE 14, WHICH I HAVE NOT OPENED because I did not see that document there.

[02:52:00] What would be the role and job of that individual? Yeah, I think it was Ms. Tolan that was asking some questions about that. I can't remember. It might have been Ms. Corbett Sanders. But

essentially what that role is is to make sure that we're connecting on a personal basis with students that have repeated attendance issues and problems in understanding the root causes of those issues because it could be a number of different things.

[02:52:25] As we discussed earlier with the telemental health, THERE MIGHT BE STRESS ISSUES, ANXIETY ISSUES, MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. THERE MIGHT BE ISSUES RELATED TO FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES, HEALTH ISSUES. THERE MIGHT BE ECONOMIC ISSUES THAT ARE PREVENTING THEM FROM ATTENDING SCHOOL ON A REGULAR BASIS.

[02:52:42] IT'S REALLY HARD FOR OUR EXISTING STAFF TO GO OUT AND DO THE HOME VISITS, MAKE THOSE CONNECTIONS WITH KIDS, MAKE THOSE CONNECTIONS WITH FAMILIES AND GET AT THE ROOT CAUSE OF WHAT'S PREVENTING THEM FROM COMING TO SCHOOL ON A REGULAR BASIS. SO THIS CONTRACT WILL PROVIDE THOSE TYPES OF SUPPORT SERVICES TO DO THAT INITIAL CONNECTION, THAT INITIAL EVALUATION AND DEVELOP A SUPPORT PLAN FOR THOSE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES.

[02:53:07] AND THEN WE'LL HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE TEAM INCLUDING OUR COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND OTHER SCHOOL-BASED STAFF MEMBERS THAT WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THOSE SUPPORTS TO TRY TO HELP OUR STUDENTS ATTEND ON A REGULAR BASIS. AND THAT SHOWS UP ON SLIDE 6 FOR $250,000.

[02:53:23] does that mean there would be two individuals in this position? So, again, we have to be careful because we haven't gone through the contractual process. But likely what that's going to mean is that's going to be working with a nonprofit organization that will use a number of people kind of on an hourly basis that will have small caseloads of students and families that they work with.

[02:53:44] It wouldn't be just like one individual. And I definitely think there's some benefits there because I was concerned in terms of how one individual would be able to meet the needs of a system this large. RIGHT. THANK YOU. THE OTHER QUESTION THAT I HAVE HERE, THERE WAS -- I'M SO SORRY, I MISSED THE PAGE -- WHERE IT TALKED ABOUT REALIZING -- I CANNOT FIND WHERE I LISTED THAT.

[02:54:13] I THINK THAT'S IT FOR ME FOR RIGHT NOW. I MAY CONNECT WITH YOU LATER ON. YEAH, ABSOLUTELY. I KNOW THERE'S A LOT OF QUESTIONS. I'M HAPPY TO CONNECT WITH THE PORT MEMBERS INDIVIDUALLY. THANK YOU. MS. AMESH. THANK YOU. I'M HAPPY TO FOLLOW SOME OF THAT. I APPRECIATE THE RESPONSES AROUND HOW THE MONEY WAS FOLDED INTO THE CURRENT BUDGET I CERTAINLY WAS READY TO BE DISAPPOINTED AT FIRST SEEING THE LONG LIST OF LANGUAGE SUPPORTS THAT ARE IN THE LIST OF WHAT TO REMOVE BUT I DID WANT TO JUST ASK I DON'T KNOW IF THERE'S AN ANSWER MAYBE TO DR. ANDERSON'S QUESTION AT THIS POINT IF WE

[02:54:49] KNOW WHAT OF THOSE THINGS IS ACTUALLY REMOVED OR NOT MS. ALICE DR. PRESIDIO SO WHAT IF I MAY get back to the board on specific to the interpretation services and supports what is embedded in the budget on that list is the bandwidth and zoom license fees we we did continue that and then the last three and then dr presidio mentioned that we don't have the mitigation measures teams anymore and then i had mentioned earlier the last three items on that list which

[02:55:29] which is the bus driver compensation, ESOL staffing and family liaisons, that was also picked up in the current year's budget. So I will have to follow up with the board specifically on some of the interpretation services and compensation. That's the one thing I don't have readily available.

[02:55:45] - And I told Ms. Wigington that she didn't need to come this evening, that I had all the information, but clearly I was wrong. - No, I was checking the line items with the bigger packet you guys offered us. So most of it's there. I just wanna be mindful if I'm missing anything or maybe if some of the amounts are different too, that's still noteworthy.

[02:56:03] Just because I think, I mean, in COVID, we learned the extent of the need, certainly don't wanna be declining in what we have to offer when the need is still great. I wanted to ask about the compensatory services piece. Is that referring to OCR stuff?

[02:56:18] - Yeah, so that's essentially kind of a placeholder amount. We know that that amount is not enough to provide funding for all the compensatory services, but we acknowledge that we're going to need to, know use funding from a variety of different uh funding sources to be able to meet that need so that's kind of a placeholder here it's a small amount um but it does allow us to at least make an initial investment in some of those services okay i think i i don't know where my colleagues are on that i i just don't i just remember us having um some discussions around what is

[02:56:53] appropriate or not appropriate to use for that and i don't know that esser was amongst the appropriate at least what we we saw to be the right source so i don't know i think i don't want to say more uh but dr reed maybe we can look at that i i don't because this was something like we're trying to clean something up right so i don't want to use resources that could be put elsewhere rightfully to clean up effectively something yeah we can take it back and look at it um it is i mean the YESTER DOLLARS WERE ABOUT LEARNING LOSS, AND SO I THINK THAT JUST AS WE'RE SUPPORTING

[02:57:30] OUR OTHER TUTORING AND SMALL GROUP WORK, BUT WE'LL TAKE THAT BACK AND MAKE SURE WE'VE CONFIRMED THAT. THANK YOU. I MEAN, I COULD BE WRONG. I JUST WANT TO BE MINDFUL THAT -- WE ACTUALLY -- I MEAN, JUST TO CONFIRM THAT THAT'S AN ALLOWABLE EXPENSE, WE DID CHECK WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AND THAT WOULD BE an allowable expense.

[02:57:53] Okay. And the OCR folks are comfortable with us using ESSER money. Yes. It's an allowable expense. Okay. All right. That's helpful. I wanted to ask for the online translation piece. I noticed it was actually never put to use, it looks like, right?

[02:58:10] We never ended up spending, not now nor in like a future budget for that specifically, but I do know it's something that came up with the special ed enhancement report when we were talking about translating IEPs and that kind of written translation.

[02:58:26] Can you just clarify that piece? Because it's just zeros across the board. Yeah, I think the team is still trying to find the right solution to that problem, and that's why that money is still budgeted for that purpose, because we know that we need to expend the money in that way. But I don't think that they've been able to really identify the right solution just yet.

[02:58:46] Okay, because I don't know that it was used either already, right? That's what you're saying? That's what I'm saying, correct, yeah. Okay. I think, you know, Dr. Reed, there's potential overlap here. That entire communications aspect of this SPED enhancement plan of, you know, wanting to translate IEPs and other information, this seems to be a great tool if we decide to move forward with it.

[02:59:08] Not necessarily budgeted just yet, it seems, but to do that, right? When you say great tool. So, go ahead. Well, I was just going to say what we're working towards is getting some additional online translation tools that we can use for multiple purposes, I think, as Ms. Elmesh's point.

[02:59:28] So, you know, if we can get a tool that's going to work on some of our website translations, some of our, you know, text message translations, we might be able to apply that to some other areas of need, like special education IEP translations and things like that. I caught what you're saying now.

[02:59:44] We absolutely need to look at, I think, a more efficient way to access translators specifically. THERE ARE TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORTS, LANGUAGE LINE, LANGUAGE LINK, THERE ARE A VARIETY OF PRODUCTS, BECAUSE RIGHT NOW I KNOW WE'RE HEARING FROM STAFF, THEY HAVE A LIST, THEY HAVE TO PERSONALLY TRY TO, IT JUST, IT'S NOT WORKABLE, SO I APPRECIATE THE NOTING OF THAT, AND WE'RE DEFINITELY ON THAT.

[03:00:08] YEAH, I MEAN, I WOULD JUST HATE FOR THE WORK TO BE DOUBLED UP, LIKE, THEY'RE GOING TO BE DOING IT FOR CERTAIN ASPECTS, DR. BOYD'S JOB IS GOING TO BE DOING IT FOR, YOU KNOW, SPECIAL ED. fair point um so that's that's great um and then i appreciated seeing kind of the the chronic absentees mps in here too obviously that's been an emerging concern but i did have a question just in terms of like where this money is coming from it's nice that we're absorbing all this great esser stuff into our actual budget but these are obviously all new expenses right well the ones again on that list and miss tolan had kind of asked that question and miss wigington had weighed

[03:00:43] IN, THOSE WERE THINGS THAT WERE BUILT INTO THE BUDGET ADOPTION PROCESS IN FY23 AND FY24, RIGHT? SO THOSE ARE ALL THINGS THAT THE BUDGET COMMITTEE WORKED ON, THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT WORKED TO PUT INTO THE PROPOSED BUDGET THAT THE BOARD ADOPTED IN FY23 AND, YOU KNOW, MAY CHOOSE TO ADOPT OR NOT ADOPT IN THE FY24 BUDGET. OKAY. THAT IS MY TIME, BUT THANK YOU.

[03:01:05] THANK YOU. MS. CORBETT SANDERS. THANK YOU VERY MUCH, DR. Dr. Presidio, I just wanted to jump in a little bit on the conversation about the funding streams and what we're funding with ESSER funds versus other. I wanted to make sure that everybody knows that funding streams differ from the actual work being done.

[03:01:28] And what we try to do is we try to grade the various funds so that we can achieve the goal. And some of the funds will be one off funds and those are the ones that we invest in things that we can -- we're testing new approaches or we are -- we know that there's a short term period in which we are investing.

[03:01:53] And so in the same way that we have our -- two weeks ago we had the IDEA report and how we spend those funds. And we've done tonight the ESSER funds. And then we also have the overall operating budget.

[03:02:11] And so as we look at these, I don't think -- I think we need to be careful in understanding that the funding piece doesn't mean that we have separate people or departments doing some of them. It's more of a focus of how do we best optimize the funds that are available to us at a given point in time.

[03:02:36] And as I almost called you Dr. Frisch, Mr. Frisch mentioned when he was talking to our congressional delegation, the funding that came through ESSER were funds that we had not seen coming into our school system for a really long time.

[03:02:56] So it was allowed -- it allows us to front load things and then also look at those items that we say okay we only needed them for a fixed period of time and those will be sunsetted and some of the new programs that we've rolled out we will actually then integrate them into our going concern budget

otherwise known as our operating budget so sometimes it's it gets a little confusing because we essentially have four to five different funding streams between IDA impact aid

[03:03:35] the ESSER funds, the funds from actually from the state, from the federal government, and from our local partners, being the board of supervisors, and which is the generosity of the taxpayers. And then finally, the last piece is grant funding that we may apply for specific funds. And so we braid it all together to achieve what we're trying to do. And I'm not sure everybody knows that because we have, and I really would like to see at some point where we provide ONE COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENT THAT SHOWS EACH OF THE FUNDING STREAMS.

[03:04:09] THANK YOU. NO, THANK YOU. I THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE COMMUNITY. HELPFUL. THANK YOU. MS. THANK YOU. AND THANK YOU, DR. PRESIDIO, FOR YOUR STAMINA BEING HERE AT THIS LATE HOUR.

[03:04:27] SO I WILL TELL YOU THAT I PERSONALLY WOULD LIKE TO JUST MEET WITH YOU ON SOME OF MY QUESTIONS. BUT I WILL TELL YOU SOME OF THE THINGS THAT I'M HEARING RIGHT NOW. I AM HEARING CONCERNS ABOUT FORMULAS, POSITIONS BEING CUT. based upon formulas, and people are already talking about the cliff that's coming.

[03:04:45] And I want to talk to you specifically about what I'm hearing. I want to talk to you more about how when you talk about overlaying, like Ms. Corbett Sanders did, braiding funds, things like that. How are these funds being used to supplement specifically project momentum efforts?

[03:05:04] And I'm going to be interested specifically in my area, my district, once that's happening. And I think, you know, this is preaching to the choir in a most obvious way. But I think because we have been fortunate enough to have a lot of these enhancements, the metrics that you are going to need to be keeping and have right now are going to need to be so on point because we are going to need to understand next year's budget.

[03:05:35] I mean, we always just exhale the budget and then we, you know, take a brief recess and start again. But I think it's going to be extremely important as we look at the, you know, the 24-25 budget and what things are working but are not going to be funded any longer with ESSER dollars.

[03:05:57] So thank you for your time tonight, and I look forward to meeting with you. No, thank you. I look forward to meeting with you as well. AND IT SOUNDS LIKE THERE MIGHT BE SOME SYNERGY WITH DIFFERENT BOARD MEMBERS, SO I'M ALWAYS HAPPY TO DO A TWO BY TWO MEETING IF THAT'S HELPFUL AS WELL, EITHER WAY IS TOTALLY FINE, SO. IT'S FUNNY YOU SAID THAT, I WAS JUST GOING TO ASK MS. JANA KOFAX IF I COULD HOP OUT OF HER MEETING BECAUSE IT IS LATE AND I'LL SAVE MY QUESTIONS FOR LATER, BUT I THINK SHE MADE THE POINT I WANTED TO MAKE AS WELL, WHICH IS WE'VE GOT AT THIS POINT CLIFFS AND OCR AND JUST WHERE WE'RE AT, WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S WORKING, WHAT'S NOT, HOW DO WE MAXIMIZE WHAT WE HAVE AND MAXIMIZE OUR POSITIONS.

[03:06:37] the schools I see some of these intervention groups that you talked about really the small groups working with students wish and freeze of our teachers to work with other students and and the efficacy of that so how do we compile the data take the data look at all our different programs look at the needs and really maximize what we have and what's been working so I think that can be a really important conversation in this upcoming year I know it's been an important conversation already this is not new but

I think this is gonna be that sort of that make or break moment right we've got to really figure it out even more urgency when the funding is running out yeah exactly and we need to be really really tight on what we keep and what we don't and why yeah right so

[03:07:16] anyway thank you so much for your time thank you for the presentation and and for all your answers I really appreciate it so with that we'll move on to the next agenda item thank you thank you very much which is agenda item 4.07 safety and security presentation and I will call on Dr. Reed for the

[03:07:33] introduction thank you madam chair and this evening as we prepare for our May 8th town hall meeting on safety and security I thought it would be helpful to have our office of safety and security put together a presentation that

[03:08:12] I'll be sharing this evening so I think mr. Smith will be forwarding that presentation to Laura so that we can begin that one of the things that's most important is a safe learning environment and that's why as we look at different aspects of safety and security this evening I want to remind the board that our safety review audit is also underway at this time that would be a third-party independent audit that we anticipate being done by the end of

[03:08:47] July and the team has active already in our schools and has made their way through a number of classrooms and learning spaces even as we speak we also want to remind our community about the why we heard a little bit about that this evening about the importance of safety and security and we know how important safety and security is to the teaching and learning environment and what our students are capable of doing and feeling centered in that do we have an ETA oh it hasn't come through

[03:09:26] but we've sent it okay good um so one of the things i'll i'll just move along i think we can do this um our safety and school operational sections i want to remind the board that we have a number of we have our administration of the school resource officer program our environmental health and safety technical security transportation is a key safety area um i'm on slide to laura when you have a minute the other piece is security planning and assessment business and emergency

[03:10:02] continuity of operations where we've added a position this year and operational security so our operational security is actually a 24 7 security operation center at gatehouse where all aspects of security throughout the division are monitored 24 7. we have 24 7 uniform school security officer patrols in marked vehicles which patrol all fairfax county buildings and respond to call out for services as well i think we're on slide two laura if you wouldn't mind

[03:10:39] going back one slide thank you um the five new proposed positions that we're looking at that come out of our office of safety and security are going to be assigned by region to support our elementary schools as well so we recognize the importance that security has as we think about our comprehensive and robust security programs it's important to note i think that we're on slide three right now that's all right it's just us we're looking at we've got significant planning

[03:11:13] and programming that goes on that's really in partnership with our county the crisis management planning staff and student training our risk and threat assessment information and data and training is significant and we really are pleased that our county is such a strong partner in this area with us you may have noticed that our elementary schools as I indicated have funded several security specialist openings in the city of Fairfax and

[03:11:49] these were funded by the city of Fairfax so some of our elementary schools will have added security as well funded by our city of Fairfax so if we move to Slide four, I want to remind the board that the physical safety measures, we are ahead of schedule on our lock implementation, which is really exciting.

[03:12:14] More than 3,000 locks have been installed and we will be, I believe, operationally complete later this summer. And it's exciting to be ahead of schedule on that. The electronic door access allows screening of visitors, honestly, at this point, which is really a -- it's -- I think a powerful deterrent our security vestibules is on a five-year completion schedule and we have nearly half of our schools that already have vestibules there's an example

[03:12:48] on the picture up here so lots of work there on technical safety measures on physical safety measures around transportation what i want to note is that each of our buses has an automated vehicle tracking so that means our area office dispatchers know where all of our buses are at all times the child check system indicates the driver has cleared the bus between routes and the bus is clear of students we're working on the crossing arm stop arm cameras in partnership

[03:13:24] with our county and we're very close to an agreement on that and want to also remind our community that we have our fairfax county a speed camera pilot program where speed cameras have been installed in eight of our school zones to really be in one construction zone on april 10th a lot of things happening this month on april 10th the county started issuing citations to drivers going 10 miles an hour and over the limit in these selected areas prior to this drivers violating

[03:13:58] the speed limit in these locations only received a warning and now they are being issued citations i can say that between february and april 10th more than 1200 warnings were issued so our schools again in this area are chesterbrook elementary irving middle key middle londontown Elementary, Sleepy Hollow Elementary, South County Middle, Terraset Elementary, and West Springfield High School.

[03:14:24] So we're adding an additional speed zone camera near Oakton High School in the very near future. Under technical safety measures, our video camera projects, a key aspect of security because we're able to identify visitors to campus.

[03:14:43] All of our high schools now have cameras, and middle school installation will be completed by the end of this school year again really proud of our it and safety and security office this will be a year and a half ahead of schedule and we're at about the halfway mark with our elementary schools at this time we're currently applying for a federal grant for exterior cameras at 10 more elementary schools and our visitor management system has resulted in several registered sex offenders being denied access to our schools. It's a very immediate ID swipe and again a really key

[03:15:20] safety measure. I want to share that we appreciate our school office staff for supporting these new measures and they are yielding safety results for us. Employee access is another key area in terms of employee badging. We're continuing to look at updating the system which will involve a reissue of all employee ids which has created quite a stir among our staff some of our veteran staff prefer pictures that were taken a while ago but we are going to be eliminating the red badges as

[03:15:56] i'm told they're called and getting to a consistent badging system i want to make sure our community understands we have an extensive intrusion alarm system that's been installed at all schools and centers that are monitored 24/7, classrooms with their phone intercoms in, our digital 3D school floor

plan mapping is underway at this time, and this is going to allow first responders to better serve our schools if we have a crisis situation.

[03:16:26] Some things that we're actually looking at right now in pilot areas is we're looking Looking at an independent third party review, which I mentioned earlier, we're evaluating a weapons screening system, which is software that would detect weapons coming onto campus.

[03:16:46] We're looking at front office panic alarms, which are being evaluated for pilot, which would provide quick and direct access to law enforcement. And we are currently piloting a vape detection program in bathrooms at several campuses.

[03:17:02] And this will immediately detect use within our schools. We're monitoring its effectiveness right now. We feel it's better, actually more prudent and responsible to pilot it to see whether or not it's able to deliver on the promises before we actually install in all schools.

[03:17:21] We're looking at open door alarms, student and staff entrance screening, the hardening of door glass and windows social media risk assessment monitoring we have a vendor that we're working on a pilot with that two-way radio communication systems and a variety of other opportunities the enhanced employee background checks i did send out that notice to principals a week ago and to all staff this week on monday evening and this is requiring

[03:17:58] enhanced background checks not just for new hires but also the national sex offender registry check for all current employees and this will be kicking off a process to actually run fingerprints on a regular basis for current employees again wanting to make sure that our teaching and learning spaces schools and departments are safe our cyber security safety measures are a part of our key security for the entire division and these measures are comprehensive in nature

[03:18:34] and really are monitoring products and access both internally and externally with regard to cyber security our crisis intervention services the red books that are in all classrooms and spaces in the division again we have response teams that our office of safety and security partners with our department of student services on risk prevention and crisis intervention we have an our handle with care program which has started this school year and it helps students and staff

[03:19:10] related to incidents in the community so when something happens in the community that is a significant traumatic incident we have a communication system where we make sure we check in on affected students so we're also looking at our stay put stay tuned protocol which will be our new update to our crisis management security plan and we continue to partner with Fairfax County agencies the incident response teams and equipment continue to have annual training and we have a new drone

[03:19:47] pilot program which is able to go to sites that may not be secure right away so we can get information back and forth to division security staff we engage in all required drills and provide students and parents information about risk assessment processes including training modules and other detailed information it is on our website regulation 7001 reporting of serious and unusual unusual incidents. And one of the things we know that we can continue to work on improving is our

[03:20:23] immediate communications. And we're really kind of referring to it as a cadence or a pulse communication throughout an incident so that our families are kept up to date and as up to date as possible. Sometimes in an active situation, it's important for law enforcement to work with our security staff and school administrators and we want their priority attention focused on handling the incident but

our principals are trained to reach out to their region office and the office of community relations and communication

[03:20:57] for support in managing threatening situations and communication and lastly just want to remind our community that we have a safety tip line and there are

[03:21:09] MULTIPLE WAYS TO ACCESS THIS IF YOU SEE SOMETHING HEAR SOMETHING OR ARE TROUBLED BY SOMETHING WE HAVE ONLINE TEXT CALL AND EMAIL WAYS TO REPORT THAT AND THAT'S OUR UPDATE ON SAFETY AND SECURITY THANK YOU VERY MUCH DR. REED I APPRECIATE IT I KNOW THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF QUESTIONS AND THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT SO I APPRECIATE YOUR STAFF PULLING THAT TOGETHER FOR US SO I WILL TURN TO MY COLLEAGUES FIRST MS. PIKARSKI THANK YOU DR. REED FOR DOING THIS AS YOU KNOW THIS IS ON THE MINDS OF

[03:21:43] Every parent and teacher and staff member. So I'm pleased that we are going to do that town hall I do believe that will be well received So we you talked about the external security review that is happening Do we have an estimated date of completion for that? I believe that we expect that to be completed by the end of July this summer Great. That's great. I'm very much looking forward to that WONDERFUL NEWS ABOUT THE SAFETY UPGRADES THAT ARE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE.

[03:22:16] I THINK THAT'S WONDERFUL. WITH REGARDS TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAMERAS, DO WE HAVE A LONG-TERM PLAN AS TO HOW TO PUT THESE IN PLACE OR ARE WE JUST KIND OF LOOKING FOR FUNDS HERE AND THERE RIGHT NOW? WE DO HAVE A LONG-TERM PLAN TO IMPLEMENT CAMERAS AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

[03:22:36] AS WE ARE ALWAYS FINANCIALLY PRUDENT, WE DEFINITELY WANT TO CONTINUE LOOKING AT GRANTS FOR FUNDING THEM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, BUT WE ALSO ARE COMMITTED TO HAVING CAMERAS AT ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. DO WE KNOW WHEN THAT WILL BE COMPLETE OR? WELL, LET ME LOOK HERE.

[03:22:53] UM, I DO NOT HAVE A COMPLETION DATE TONIGHT. YEAH, I THINK THAT WILL BE, YOU KNOW, FOR ANYONE WATCHING, I THINK THAT IS SOMETHING OF INTEREST. AND I KNOW IT'S COME UP WITH SOME PARENTS FROM SOME OF MY SCHOOLS WHERE THEY HAVE GONE AHEAD AND HAD PTA'S PURCHASE SOME OF THESE because of their concerns so I think that that would be good to know very interested in some of the pilots and things you're looking into like the weapon screening which I know came up at our town hall with our student rep the

[03:23:30] safety tip line is that posted anywhere in schools for students and staff to have access to or how do we publicize that I know it's on the website but as you pose that question it absolutely should be posted all over so and they are they are posted in schools there's one in the hallway right out in the front hallway okay they are absolutely posted thank you mr. Smith now I will go look for it because I have not noticed that and I go to many many schools so thank you for putting this together appreciate it you know now that you

[03:24:07] mention it though too we occasionally send an email to all students or certain And so it might be something that we think about developmentally appropriate, sending something like that out. Thank you. Ms. Corbett-Sanders?

[03:24:23] Yes, thank you. Thank you very much, Dr. Reed. This was a comprehensive presentation, and I look forward to the results of the audit. I do know that you have a great team that's going school to school.

So it's a pretty intensive approach so that we will get a lot of data back on that.

[03:24:46] couple of things one is have we looked at motion detector cameras for kind of like the ring video for the outside of our buildings our elementary school buildings we currently have external cameras in about 50% of our elementary schools so about 70 of our 141 with a grant hoping you'd get another 10 which have put us at 81 they're wired into a monitoring system that we monitor centrally from gatehouse whether or not ring or something like that could be

[03:25:22] cobbled together I would have to check with Tom no I'm not suggesting ring what I'm suggesting is something that immediately captures the image if after hours somebody is hanging out around the school we do have that right now but It's just not at all schools.

[03:25:41] Okay. So that was the first thing. And this was really about physical security. It would be helpful to have an update because I know you're doing lots of good things on security of personnel.

[03:25:57] So the RAMP program that we all talked about most of the fall. I know you're looking at doing additional screening or background checks. And if you could just explain to the public and to us what's happening on the HR front for security.

[03:26:17] So one of the things we're doing is we are looking at not just background checking new employees, but also current employees. And I did send a letter out this week notifying all staff that we're going to be utilizing the swipe system for the National Sex Offender Registry.

[03:26:41] as well as resubmitting fingerprints for full background checks of current employees hired since 2006. And those employees prior to 2006 will need to be making appointments to come and resubmit fingerprints. Thank you. I just thought that the community should know that and know how intentional we are about the work we're doing.

[03:27:04] We're very intentional and staff understand the reason. It's about our student and staff safety and it's important to all of us. THANK YOU. DR.

[03:27:21] ANDERSON? THANK YOU. THIS IS REALLY VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION. THE SLIDES WERE GOING BY REALLY QUICKLY. I WOULD'VE APPRECIATED IF THIS WAS POSTED SO WE CAN HAVE SOME ADVANCED NOTICE TO REALLY DIG INTO SOME OF THIS INFORMATION. SO I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT I ADVOCATE FOR THAT. JUST GETTING INTO SOME OF THE DATA THAT YOU PROVIDED, YOU TALKED JUST A LITTLE BIT TO MS.

[03:27:44] CORBETT SANDERS ABOUT ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS HAVE EXTERNAL CAMERAS. THAT'S CORRECT. NO ONE WILL BE SURPRISED IF I ASK HOW WERE THOSE DETERMINED? I DON'T KNOW AS I STAND HERE THIS EVENING HOW THOSE WERE DETERMINED BUT I COULD CERTAINLY GET AN ANSWER BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHICH ONES THEY ARE.

[03:28:02] AND I'M GOING INTO AGAIN RESPONDING TO A SPECIFIC NEED THAT OCCURS IN THE AREAS AROUND THESE SCHOOLS BECAUSE WE DO KNOW WE HAVE PLENTY OF SCHOOLS THAT ESSENTIALLY SERVE AS PLACES WHERE NEIGHBORS COME VERY OFTEN AND MAY DO THINGS THAT ARE NOT AS PRODUCTIVE ON THOSE GROUNDS AND WE HAVE SOME CAMPUSES THAT ARE WIDE OPEN WHERE PEOPLE ARE BIKING THROUGH WALKING THEIR DOGS THROUGH AGAIN NOT EVEN DURING SCHOOL HOURS SO I'M JUST REALLY CURIOUS IN TERMS OF WHAT IS THE CRITERIA THAT IS BEING UTILIZED WHEN WE'RE MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT THOSE KINDS OF

[03:28:39] placement so i don't know if anybody there dr anderson i i can i'm sorry have dr reid i can have mr vaccarello answer for me please that's what i was gonna say his hand is oh okay oh i'm sorry mr vaccarello is he here he was online he was online good evening everybody can you hear me okay yes sir hello we can yes we can hear you great and and thank you so much for the question

[03:29:11] so uh when we apply for grants for elementary school external cameras only we do not apply for internal cameras the criteria is very strictly set by either the federal government the cops program or vdoe that sets the criteria it goes along the lines of uh free and reduced lunch and don't quote me on all these uh what is your population numbers what what are the crime statistics in those areas So it's very strictly controlled.

[03:29:45] And what we try to do in the Office of Safety and Security as we work with the RAS and our leadership team is try to make a determination of spreading this wealth. Once we see the matrix of how the schools score, we try to at least do a school per region.

[03:30:02] But we always want to submit those high-scoring schools so that we are winners in this grant world because there was one year that we didn't make the cut and we lost eight or ten schools. So we do it in those terms. When we get monies that the superintendent just discussed that come up at the end of the year as we look to our projects to fund elementary school cameras out of our own budget without the grants, that is strictly a lift between my office, the RAS office, and our leadership teams to establish those criteria.

[03:30:33] It does not come up that often. It is a non-funded central program right now. We do it ad hoc as monies come around. I hope that answers your question. No, it does. THANK YOU AND I WOULD LOVE IT ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR HANDS ON THAT CRITERIA FOR YOU TO SHARE WITH ME IF POSSIBLE THE OTHER QUESTION THAT I HAVE IS THE PRESENTATION WAS QUITE COMPREHENSIVE IT HAD ALL KINDS OF THINGS AND I KNOW SOME ARE EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SOME ARE NEW I WOULD LOVE TO ONCE THIS IS POSTED MAYBE TO IDENTIFY SOME OF THE NEWER THINGS THAT ARE TAKING PLACE SO THAT THE COMMUNITY IS AWARE THAT WE ARE RESPONDING TO THE CURRENT CLIMATE IT'S NOT JUST EVERYTHING

[03:31:08] JUST ALREADY EXISTED ALSO WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT WE HEARD THIS EVENING AND THAT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT WAS REFLECTED IN THE PRESENTATION YOU KNOW WE HAVE A LOT OF SECURITY CONCERNS AND SEVERAL OF OUR SCHOOLS NOT JUST GLASCO WHERE THE BATHROOMS ARE AN ISSUE I HEARD THAT FROM THE VERY FROM THE PRINCIPAL AT THIS VERY SITE HERE WHERE THERE'S ACTIVITY THAT IS TAKING PLACE THAT THEY'RE TRYING TO MANAGE AS A SCHOOL AND STUDENTS ARE WHO DON'T WANT TO FIND THEMSELVES AND UNSAVORY POSITIONS ARE AVOIDING USING THOSE SPACES I WOULD LOVE TO HAVE THAT BE INCLUDED

[03:31:44] AS THIS PRESENTATION IS ROLLED OUT TO THE COMMUNITY BECAUSE THAT IS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT INTERNALLY AND I LOVE THE FOCUS ON ENSURING THAT WE ARE CREATING BARRIERS BETWEEN OUR SCHOOL AND THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC AND THE COMMUNITY BUT WE ALSO NEED TO HAVE THE CONVERSATION IN TERMS OF WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE OF THE BUILDING ON A GIVEN SCHOOL DAY in the bathrooms and the activities that take place in some of our buildings is key.

[03:32:14] Do you think that would be something that is possible to include? Absolutely. Currently, our regional assistant superintendents are meeting with principals to look at the staffing that are allocated to

schools at this time. As you know, hiring is really challenging at this time.

[03:32:30] So we're looking at the staffing allocation already at the school and looking at ways to deploy staff to make sure our bathrooms are safe for students to use. And we'll definitely include that. Thank you. And another component which we also heard tonight is right sizing our schools.

[03:32:46] Sometimes there are just too many kids in a building in order for the staff that is there to be in the places that they need to be for monitoring and supervision. And I think that's what you heard very clearly about Glasgow today. I have a few more questions but it seems like I've run out of time.

[03:33:04] Thank you Dr. Anderson. Ms. Amesh. Yeah thank you and thank you for this presentation. obviously our community is feeling a certain way these days rightfully I guess I wanted to just raise a couple of things one I'm glad that we included cyber security in here I think empowering students is a part of that as well so maybe thinking ever more expansively about where we're addressing that and I know that our schools do in different ways just in preparing students for what they're encountering but actually to build off of the point raised by Dr. Anderson I know we heard from two of our speakers today you know one talking about the issue of sixth

[03:33:44] grade being in middle school which is an equity problem because not all schools have that and they tend to be concentrated in her district actually so I I want to raise that because I know she's been an advocate for it for a while and I share the concern so maybe that's something we can think of especially as we're reorganizing schools etc this is an opportunity to do that as we hope to bring in new leadership.

[03:34:11] The other piece is the substance abuse component, which has posed a concern. You know, one of the speakers mentioned the kids afraid to go to the bathroom, right? And I think this is part of that, addressing this differently, thinking about how it's a behavioral support piece on our end and making sure that drugs are not easily accessible.

[03:34:30] And substances can be thought of more broadly as well, right, whether that's, I know the craze now is around the fentanyl and whatnot, But before opioids, there were all kinds of substances still being used and our kids were still being impacted. So I just want to raise that as things to bring into this conversation as well, that it's not just kind of the brick and mortar, but it's the experience in the building as well.

[03:34:52] I don't know, Dr. Reed, maybe you want to address that before I move on. Well, I think the drug issue we're working on, right, we've had several town halls in collaboration with the county and the DEA, a number of webinars, a number of other town halls.

[03:35:08] like i think we're working very diligently on that i think the the vape sensors we're trying at several of our sites right now in our restrooms we've gotten mixed results so far i'm not sure that's the answer but we're again evaluating that project so i think that um i hear what you're saying it's not just a a hardening if you will it's all the other work that we're doing so um i think that's kind of what i'm thinking along those lines right now about that yeah because i think as the community conveys urgency around the topic it's an opportunity to capture all of that

[03:35:45] for sure um the the last thing i'll say is i'm i want to also make sure we're not over correcting in ways that might disproportionately impact certain populations so one is making sure that we're following best practices around discipline and welcoming environments so as we're building out these um vestibules and making it more difficult to get into the building i know as an alum that's always felt very difficult for

me going back to Robinson and feeling like I'm an outsider and I'm gonna be treated like an alien you know unless they recognize I'm a school board member but but that aside I want to maybe while we're doing this we can also kind of develop and then train our

[03:36:23] staff in best practices around a welcoming environment what do you say when somebody walks into the secretary's office maybe or the front office maybe you know the the instinct is to kind of be nervous about who is this person especially if they look a particular way but maybe we we develop a practice of maybe it's how can I help you maybe whatever it is but but standardizing some of that and adopting it as tangible practice I think could be a step in the right direction as we move in a harsher towards you know responding to a harsher reality of what we're dealing with the second piece is just in terms of how discipline is implemented I recently had a case come where a water gun was treated just

[03:37:01] like a real gun and a kid was you know suspended for 10 days and refer to the hearings office so I think also just being mindful that kids don't bear the brunt of the anxieties the community's rightfully reflecting but that our kids are still learning along the way as well.

[03:37:17] Thank you. Ms. Tolan. Thank you. A couple of questions that I have you talked about the classroom door lock systems and that we're ahead of you know getting those installed and some of those different you know physical safety features that we have in our classrooms we have so many modulars duplexes you know outside buildings what I'm assuming all of these things are getting installed in those classrooms and those you know trailers

[03:37:54] and buildings as well I believe so but I'm gonna phone a friend here and ask Mr. Vaccarello to weigh in on that. Sure I'm glad to. So modulars and outdoor trailers they do have a different lock set because of our regulation. Those external doors to those trailers and modulars are required by a regulation to remain locked all the time. So we don't have anything on the inside that allows somebody that to twist the push button. They're always in a locked position most of them need to be used through a key way to lock so it's a different type of lock

[03:38:34] set it's another conversation when we're done with this project but because of the lock we if you opened it from the inside with our current spec lock it would automatically open the outside of that lock as well so based upon the regulation and because of where those trailers are we require them to be closed and locked at all times, unlike classroom doors where we always recommend they remain locked in the closed position, but it's not required.

[03:39:02] The inside of the classroom doors with the push button allows students and staff to look and see that it's locked or unlocked and push a button quickly. So that requirement inside the brick and mortar is not there to have them locked at all times. We leave that up to actually the principals, whether they want to close their doors during instructions and things like that i hope that answers your question so it's different but it's the safety on those buildings is even more stringent it appears so than the indoor classrooms yeah i would say this understand that those locks still have safety features on them so it's not

[03:39:42] like it's a bad lock it's a good lock it's just a matter of the locking mechanism and how the doors have to remain locked but it's a good security lock um i appreciate the conversation around the

[03:39:56] bathrooms. I've been hearing about that from a number of my schools and students and one of the things that has come up I had a discussion with Mr. Tyson about this is making sure we have security personnel in the schools. So for example in one of my high schools all the APs are male. So and all the

security personnel are male. So there's no one really to check the girl's bathroom you know throughout the day so are much less staff to check the

[03:40:33] girls bathroom so just something to pay attention to as we're looking at hiring security personnel across the schools that especially when we're trying to keep our bathroom safe that we have to pay attention to the gender of some of the staff agreed so just to note I also am really hoping and mr.

[03:40:56] Maybe you have an idea of the scope of the audit that's being done. I am really hoping that, you know, since we have security personnel and different kinds of positions within our schools and, you know, we're looking to bring on these five additional security personnel in our FY24 budget, that our audit will really look at the position descriptions of all of these people and what they're doing and the reporting structure.

[03:41:25] I know there's always some questions about, you know, should these people report to the school? Should they report to the central office? I'm wondering if that's being looked at in the audit. It is, and it's a very important part of the audit. It certainly is on all aspects of what you just said.

[03:41:42] Excellent. Thank you. I would just mention I did have the opportunity, I took advantage of attending one of the training classes that go on at the school. I went to the one at Great Falls Elementary, and I'd recommend to my colleagues if you get an opportunity to do that, it's pretty impressive.

[03:42:00] You know, the way they train our central security staff trains the school staff to respond to, you know, various situations in the school. Yeah, thank you. We've got a fabulous security staff. Thank you. Ms. McLaughlin, followed by Ms. Cohen.

[03:42:21] I know it's late, but Dr. Reid, I just want to echo what board members have said. appreciate everything that you and your team are doing, Mr. Vaccarello, continuing to enhance and increase safety and security. I want to also really reinforce what Ms. Omish said. We do want to still remember that we are a K-12 school system, and so finding that balance so that children feel like they are coming into a school and not into a locked facility. And I know that that makes it difficult. And then I would also say that I think we're going to need to continue to have dialogue

[03:42:58] with community expectations about security personnel in our elementary schools. Again, our elementary schools vary in size compared to our middle schools and high schools. And, you know, the safety and security challenges are immensely different. And the bottom line is we don't have enough social workers psychologists nurses and other support personnel to educate the whole child so I'm always cautious when we have you know things that happen out in in our nation that create a lot of concern but

[03:43:35] we've got it end up having some very holistic examinations about how best to you know staff are insecure our buildings along with all the other needs so I just wanted to kind of emphasize that before we lose sight of it yeah point taken it's kind yeah thank you you know certainly I know we've had a lot of conversations especially with everything that happened in the last couple of weeks but I thought what mr. vaccarello said is something that we

[03:44:12] really need to take a look at I would love it if the security audit would also give us best practices that then are the expectation of our principals you know that that's what they will follow I don't understand how we leave it to principal discretion about whether classroom doors are closed or locked about whether outside gates are closed or locked I think that that's really an unfair responsibility to put on

a principal of a school just having it be in their discretion if if best practices and best procedures are that we're putting those locks on

[03:44:50] the doors because they should remain locked at all times when when students are in there then i think that we need to require it at every school because parents also it's very unclear when they go to one school and one school says oh no all the locks all the doors are always locked and i think we all see it different school member school board members at different schools some classes every single classroom door is locked or some schools and some they're not so i i do think the consistency is a real issue that i would like to see us really get that a little more in

[03:45:29] line i agree um yes ma'am 100 so tom did you want to comment on that at all sure i'd be glad to and the reason I say principal discretion for the doors inside a brick and mortar building as to locking your doors and closing them. Every school, as you all know, elementary, middle and high, you're talking different learning environments. You're talking very active buildings, students going in and out of classes, doors open during instruction for airflow, things like that.

[03:46:05] But make no mistake, the primary purpose of the replacing all of our locks with the current spec lock is for all of our classes to be able to get into a lockdown protocol right here and right now without thinking about how to lock the door. All of our locks are good right now, but some of them have key ways to lock. Some of them have smooth handles on the inside. And as you look at them, you don't know whether the door is locked or not. And what we don't want is staff fumbling with keys during a situation where they've got to get in a position within literally seconds. So that's

[03:46:41] primarily what it is, but I do agree with Ms. Cohen. It is something we could perhaps bring to principal's attention as to should there be a standard inside of our classes? Is that going to restrict how they do learning and things of that nature? So I appreciate that, Tom, and what we're going to also rely on is the best practice as part of the review, and I think to Ms. Cohen's point, if it's best practice, we're going to follow it. Great, thank you. I'm glad to hear that's coming soon I know we've been talking about it for quite a while so I I will just say I really appreciate you pulling this together so quickly and we talked

[03:47:19] about our communities been talking about this issue there's there's a lot of need and angst out there and there's a lot we're doing there's a lot we're piloting and there's a lot more we're planning especially coming out of that safety and security audit so thank you for pulling this together so quickly I'm looking forward to the town hall and you know the safety and security of our students and staff is primary for all of us do you want to sorry you were not on list is key tomorrow I do not see your light up did you just put it up but go

[03:47:47] ahead miss you well thank you go ahead thank you Dr. Reed um in my travels and I get to go into schools across the region one of the questions that has come to my attention is have we considered having a person at the front perhaps using cameras to see the whole building is that part of the process part OF THIS AUDIT THAT WE'RE CONSIDERING I KNOW THERE'S A CALL BY SOME PARENTS THAT YOU KNOW

[03:48:25] THEY WANT YOU KNOW EVEN ONE PERSON SAID WE'D LIKE TO HAVE SOMEBODY AT EVERY DOOR AND THAT'S A LOT OF PERSONNEL I I SEE YOUR FACE I UNDERSTAND BUT WHAT I HAVE SEEN IS AT LEAST SOME SORT OF VISIBILITY OF THE OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING IS THAT SOMETHING THAT WE HAVE CONSIDERED OR ARE considering I think that is part of the security audit at this point as you know at all of our middle and high schools we do have school resource officers and security and certainly

one of those people could be at the entrance of the school as students arrive during the day they need to be free to move about

[03:49:05] obviously as they're needed in different parts of the campus but we definitely are going to have our security review as they're out in schools now provide us some feedback and recommendations about that. I will just say it is something that I'm seeing more and more as I, and I don't only travel in one jurisdiction. Right. And, and having perhaps a person at the front that can see what's going on around the whole building is perhaps a cost saving measure, but also allows that freedom. You know, I'm not the security expert, but I'm just letting you know that that is something that I'm seeing quite a bit of. Thank you. I appreciate

[03:49:42] I SEE MS. MCLOUGH AND DR. ANDERSON, YOUR LIGHTS ARE STILL UP. DID YOU WANT GO BACKS ON THIS OR WAS IT UP BEFORE? WE DON'T TYPICALLY DO GO BACKS ON PRESENTATIONS AND IT'S ALMOST 11 O'CLOCK. SO IF MAYBE PERHAPS WE CAN HAVE YOU CIRCLE BACK WITH DR. REED AND HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED. THAT WOULD BE GREAT. ALL RIGHT. I APPRECIATE THAT. WE'RE GOING TO MOVE ON. THANK YOU VERY MUCH, DR. REED. AGENDA ITEM 5.01, CONFIRMATION OF ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED MEETING. I CALL ON MS. AMESH FOR THE MOTION. THANK YOU. I MOVE TO

[03:50:34] excused from attendance at school certain students identified in closed meeting pursuant to virginia code section 22.1-254 b1 is there a second miss corbett sanders all those in favor please raise your hands that is miss pekarsky miss pekarsky miss dare not koufax miss tollen miss corbett sanders miss omesh miss marron all those opposed all those abstaining dr anderson mclaughlin and miss keys gamara thank you very much that motion passes agenda item miss cohen did you want to

[03:51:14] say something i was abstaining from the vote okay and abstaining also miss cohen mr frisch before i move on since the hands pop up kind of randomly wouldn't do it abstaining okay thank you agenda item five consent agenda are adopted rules of parliamentary procedure roberts rules provide for consent agenda listing several items for approval of the board by a single motion many items listed have gone through board review and documentation has been provided to all board members and the public in advance items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request

[03:51:49] of any board member prior to the meeting the consent agenda items are on the screen is there any objection to approving the consent agenda hearing and seeing no objection the consent agenda is approved the following are new business agenda items will not be a vote on these items this evening but action is scheduled at a future meeting the new business items are on the screen agenda item seven board committee reports i call on miss corbett sanders for governance committee update, Ms. McLaughlin for a report from the Public Engagement Committee, and Ms. Keyes-Gamara for a report from the CPDC. Ms. Corbett Sanders. Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. The Governance

[03:52:26] Committee met on the 19th of April, and we had a very robust discussion of all of the policies that had been sent to governance for no change or minor change, and realized that there was a need to make changes to them and send them back to staff so that we could affirm the approach that we suggested.

[03:52:48] We also came to the realization -- two realizations. One is that we haven't necessarily relied on the model policy database, which is available through the VSBA, and that in the future we will be pulling the model policy and comparing it to our own policy and identifying where there should be changes or not.

[03:53:11] Additionally, we realize that the rooting system for policy approval before it gets sent to the board to look at also needs some adjustments to make sure that Dr. Reed and her front, the leadership team is able to see that as well.

[03:53:30] There were two policies in particular that we felt needed a fresh look. One is on the voluntary uniforms in schools, as well as the procedures for hearings and appeals. And so those will be coming back to the board as well as a number of other ones.

[03:53:50] We're back to the governance committee. And we look to chunking the schedule for the next few months so that we are as expeditious as possible. I do want to thank Dr. Reed and her team for being so helpful in the meeting and being open to looking at some fresh, innovative ways of dealing with these policies.

[03:54:16] Thank you. Thank you. Madam Chair, may I be recognized to speak to governance? You may be recognized, Ms. Mayor, but we don't normally have a lot of questions here, but please go ahead. Thank you. Yeah, I don't feel like I've spoken too much tonight.

[03:54:33] I feel like I need to address the fact, since we're talking about governance, that our regular meetings are becoming more like work sessions, and having a seven-hour meeting for the board since we started at four is just, it's personally untenable to me, and I think it's untenable for the public.

[03:54:49] The changes of schedule, the start times, I'm also noticing we have a forum now scheduled on May 11th. We have a process for how we have forums assigned. If I had known that forums were coming onto the schedule, I might have put in something. Now it is at 4 p.m. on a Thursday, which is a very unorthodox time to have a forum.

[03:55:08] This is per your chair's notes. So I'm just concerned that I think the Governance Committee has done great work to make strides in our policies, but perhaps the Governance Committee needs to look at helping the board refresh our meeting protocols because we've gotten really far from where we were in starting at 5, getting close to finish at 10, we have one action item tonight and it's to certified closed. This content could have been a work session. I personally am going to have to leave for the evening because I just can't work seven hours nonstop, but I hope that we can have more humane approaches to our meetings in the future.

[03:55:51] Ms. McLaughlin from a public engagement committee. Okay. I didn't realize I was on for this evening because we just keep meeting all the time.

[03:56:09] So, no, I will just say that, you know, the public engagement committee is predominantly spending time focusing on how we can work with staff in understanding the plans for the strategic plan engagement, how we're going to go back out with the draft and get final feedback.

[03:56:31] And then we talked again about just at a macro level how the board can serve as a partner with OCCR in terms of getting information like we talked about tonight when we want to make sure everybody understands the new mental health services, you know, what are ways in which we can take that crucial information and as board members disseminate it further.

[03:56:59] so we're mostly just you know focused on those things at the moment thank you miss Keith's tomorrow from CPDC committee and before I start just a reminder we do have parliamentary procedure that we can always as a body and limit discussions on any topics and may take a vote on that so just as a

reminder we do have some of those procedures and call it calling the questions so miss Keith's tomorrow sure we had a very robust CPDC meeting on

[03:57:33] April 27th I'll try to summarize this since um it's getting so late um we had our meeting on April 20th and I want to thank Ms. McLaughlin for stepping in for me I had a conflict uh we been investing investing a great deal of time in talking about how we can make sure the community is um fully informed when we have uh for our capital improvement program and any other types of renovations or actions with our facilities.

[03:58:03] We've been working with the facilities team in OCCR, and we've all been working on a chart as to how we can make sure that that information is available. We have an online tool on the FCPS website that allows the community members to see a list of our current capital projects, and that queue is being revised or at least looked at for revision.

[03:58:28] This is work toward keeping the public involved and allowing them to give us feedback on the development process. In addition to the online resource, we have also standardized the way to conduct community outreach to engage FCPS families and community members.

[03:58:44] As a next step in the ongoing commitment to community engagement, the committee has been working with staff to create a document that clearly articulates and captures graphically and in narrative form both when and how members of the community can advocate during the capital development process from inception to completion.

[03:59:04] Last week, we reviewed and discussed the latest draft of that document. We also received a report on the Dunloring School. The CPDC has received a staff briefing on the Dunloring School project. It has been quite some time since we heard about it, but there were some concerns regarding whether the board has been apprised of the current status and the board members that were present i was not one of those asked to receive an additional report to make sure that the full board is aware of the status of this project and there was also some concern regarding the impact on fairfax city

[03:59:39] schools so we will have further discussions regarding that with respect to the renovation CUE, the committee also discussed this and its desire to plan and link these directions and priorities into the strategic plan, which should be completed soon.

[03:59:56] We will revisit this issue during our May meeting, and we look forward to bringing more information to the board about the CUE's current status and plans to refine and reshape its criteria. Thank you.

[04:00:12] Thank you very much. And given the late hour, and I think we have a majority of the board who'd like to skip board matters so um given that we'll skip board matters and uh this meeting is adjourned good night everybody



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