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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, May 11, 2023

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Place	Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length	4h 4m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wa3DuSiqqo
- 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 2026-11-03. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:11:42] - Board members, please take your seats. Board members, please take your seats.

[00:12:02] This May 11th, 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 Kilmer Middle School Orchestra

[00:12:15] under the direction of Robert Katz.

[00:14:31] That was wonderful. Thank you very much, bravo. Agenda item 3.02, certification of closed meeting. In order to comply with section 2.2-3712 D OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE BOARD TO CERTIFY THAT SINCE THE FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD CONVENED A CLOSED MEETING ON MAY 11, 2023 TO THE BEST OF EACH MEMBER'S KNOWLEDGE ONLY PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS LAWFULLY EXEMPTED FROM OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS AND ONLY SUCH PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS AS WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE MOTION CONVENING THE CLOSED MEETING WERE HEARD DISCUSSED OR CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD DURING THE CLOSED MEETING DO I HAVE A MOTION MS COHEN

[00:15:09] seconded by miss darrenat koufax all those in favor that is miss marron miss tolan miss corbett sanders miss darrenat koufax miss mclaughlin dr anderson mr frish miss cohen miss pokarski and myself

that motion passes thank you very much agenda item 3.03 announcements miss keys gamara miss omesh have submitted written requests to virtually attend this evening's meetings due to personal conflicts all those in favor of approving miss keys gamara's request please raise your hand miss pokarski miss cohen mr frish dr anderson miss mclaughlin

[00:15:45] Ms. Daronak-Kofax, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Ms. Tolan, Ms. Maren, myself. That motion passes. All those in favor of approving Ms. Omeish's request, please raise your hand. Ms. Maren, Ms. Tolan, Ms. Daronak-Kofax, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Ms. McLaughlin, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Bukarski, myself. That motion passes. Welcome. Ms. Keyes-Gamara, may we do a mic check to make sure your mic works? Can you hear me? We can hear you. Welcome, Ms. Keyes-Gamara. Ms. Omeish, can we do a mic check?

[00:16:13] good evening we can hear you welcome miss omesh before we begin our meeting on behalf of the school board i would like to take a few minutes to welcome the new clerk of the board miss christina setlow christina will you please stand for a second just so we can recognize you we are so excited to have christina on board the clerk is both the face of the board and the magic behind the scenes to keep the trains running smoothly juggling a multitude of items and personalities

[00:16:49] in the process. Christina has that rare combination of educational background. She's a lawyer and has experience working in a similar role to the clerk for a 12-member elected body, excuse me, 13-member elected body. She was a former high school chemistry teacher with a master's in education in a bachelor of science in biochemistry, both from UVA and graduated summa cum laude from the Catholic University Columbus School of Law. She worked with the district office of the state superintendent of education beginning as the director of policy legislative and governmental affairs and rising to interim chief of staff she also worked

[00:17:27] for the chairman of the DC Council served as a deputy committee director for the whole of the committee and as the chairman's education and labor policy expert she is also proud FCPS parent in Fairfax County residents so we're very very excited on behalf of the board to welcome you Christina and we're very very excited to work with you on the board so thank you for joining us and we We also want to thank Bev Medea, our Deputy Clerk, who has been serving as our Interim Clerk for nearly two years.

[00:17:58] Thank you for your many years of service, both to the Board and to FCPS. We are so grateful and honored for all the work you've done, especially these last two years serving as our Interim Clerk. Thank you, Bev, for everything from the bottom of our heart. We wish you the best in your retirement.

[00:18:14] You will be sorely missed. Thank you, Ms. Medea.

[00:18:39] Thank you, everybody. If you would 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/Channel 99. Agenda item 3.04: Teacher, paraprofessionals, and after-school workers recognition. After reading tonight's recognitions the board would like to invite each recipient to join us for a photo. I call on Vice Chair Darnak-Houfax to read the teacher,

[00:19:18] paraprofessionals and after school workers recognition. Thank you madam chair. Fairfax County Public Schools real-life superheroes are our teachers, our paraprofessionals, and our after school workers. They create rich environments for our students to learn, be creative, encouraged, and feel

supported. These dedicated individuals are influential in fostering healthy self-concepts, a sense of civic responsibility, inspiring exploration, and a desire to never stop learning. FCPS values

[00:19:55] their skills and dedication which enrich our students and help to prepare them for the future. So please thank you all and let's take a moment to say thank you and celebrate our teachers, paraprofessionals, and after-school workers. Thank you. Agenda item 3.05, Children's Mental health and wellness month recognition i call on represent student representative togby to announce

[00:20:25] this children's mental health and wellness month recognition may oh may is children's mental health and wellness month which highlights the importance of positive mental health on a child's healthy development yet over one in five children and youth in the u.s have a mental health issue and only half of children and youth with behavioral health issues receive treatment fairfax county public schools is in partnership with county agencies and non-profit organizations to increase

[00:21:00] awareness of signs of mental health distress and to address barriers accessing services through coordination of prevention early intervention and treatment services fcps has also established no cost mental health telehealth tele tele therapy sessions for all high school students that are private and confidential thank you miss togby agenda item 3.06 asian american and pacific islanders heritage month recognition i call on superintendent reid to announce the asian american pacific

[00:21:32] islanders heritage month recognition thank you madam chair may is asian american pacific islander heritage month and a time to recognize the people who are a vital piece of our diverse ethnic and social fabric whose languages and cultures have enriched our community asian american and pacific Islanders have made valuable contributions to all areas of Fairfax County, including schools, businesses, arts, sciences, medicine, law enforcement, and the military.

[00:22:05] Through their love of family and community, hard work and ingenuity, our Asian American and Pacific Islander students and community members make our schools a better place to learn. This year's theme, Advancing Leaders Through Opportunity, encourages everyone to study, observe, and celebrate the Asian American Pacific Islander today and every day in support recognition of the history and culture of this community thank you dr reed agenda item 3.07 muslim american heritage month proclamation i call on dr anderson for proclamation thank you

[00:22:41] whereas from our nation's beginning islam and muslims have been woven into the american fabric and story from muslim explorers like estavanico who landed in today's florida texas and new mexico starting in 1527 to upwards of one-third of enslaved Muslim Africans like Yarrow Mamout and Omar Ibn Saeed, who brought their beliefs and traditions to the Americas.

[00:23:10] And since the late 1800s, when Muslims have immigrated to pursue the American Dream, such that today, Virginia has the seventh largest population of Muslims in the United States, and Fairfax County is home to the highest number of its congregations, over 35 mosques.

[00:23:31] And whereas 1.8 billion people, nearly one-fourth of the world's population, share a common Muslim heritage and traditions spanning from Southeast Asia to North America, yet Muslim Americans are one of the most racially diverse faith groups in the nation, a diversity reflected in the student body of Fairfax County Public Schools where three of our 10 most widely spoken languages are Muslim majority languages. And whereas for ages, Muslim

[00:24:05] Americans have greatly contributed to every facet of American life, including the fields of technology, science, music, art, athletics, education, business, government, medicine, and numerous others. And we celebrate this rich heritage and recognize that throughout our nation's history, Muslim Americans like Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, Ibtihaj Muhammad, Samantha Eloff, and many more have worked to strengthen civil rights, uphold social justice, and ensure

[00:24:41] religious freedoms by joining people of all backgrounds to embrace tolerance, understanding, and kindness and to stand against hatred wherever it exists and whereas muslims muslim students experience ostracization and bullying because of their faith in 2022 polls by the institute for social policy and understanding found nearly half of muslim school-age students face religious-based bullying and in the past year furthermore the council on american islamic relations reports that

[00:25:17] islamophobic school curriculum and anti-muslim bullying increased by 55 percent over 2020 alone and whereas fairfax county public schools is enriched by a united and pluralistic community where we are committed to treat every individual fairly and with respect such that fairfax county public schools has an obligation to combat anti-muslim bigotry and islamophobia in all its many forms wherever it exists as one of its one fairfax commitments now therefore be be it resolved that the fairfax

[00:25:52] county school board joins the 25 active high high school muslim student association clubs in the various chapters in middle schools to celebrate april 2023 as muslim american heritage month that she says it was last month i'm so sorry i will be changing that to may because we're in May as Muslim American Heritage Month.

[00:26:21] Go ahead, you can clap again. - Is there a second? Ms. Tolan? Dr. Anderson, would you like to speak to your proclamation? - Yes, I've said a lot, so I will speak to it briefly.

[00:26:38] Muslim Americans are part of the tapestry of this nation and of Fairfax County. The Pew Research Center estimates that over 3.4 million Muslims live in the United States. Early immigrants came to Virginia, arrived in the 1920s.

[00:26:54] The community has developed, building mosques, schools, and cultural institutions around the state. Today, the Muslim population of Virginia is approximately 200,000 strong, the seventh largest population in the United States. I wanna be sure that we're celebrating this rich heritage and traditions of Muslim Americans in our county and to recognize their important contributions.

[00:27:16] We also wanna make sure that we are honoring our own Muslim American among us, although she's not among us this evening, she's with us virtually, Ms. Omash, for her contributions to Fairfax County through her service to the school board. One of the pieces of this recognition that I read earlier was about the rich tapestry, also about the traditions and how Muslim Americans embrace others. I have to say, as the Magisterial member in which Dar el-Hijrah sits, I have firsthand experience with how that community

[00:27:53] has been so welcoming, so loving, so diverse. Walking into that space, I just see people of all types, all hues, all languages being spoken, and yet the community is deep and it's there and it's just something that has always sat with me every single time I've been in that space. So I'm really honored to be able to speak about um this resolution this well this proclamation this evening and i do want to say we have several people here with us um that are from bear with me i have to look my

[00:28:28] lists oh i can't find my list i've lost my way but we do have several folks from the mosques that i've shared earlier in the proclamation the 35 that are situated in fairfax county who are here with us so i

want to be sure that we honor and recognize those individuals so i'd like for you you to just quickly stand if those individuals are here. Thank you. Is Ms. Omeisha's mom here?

[00:29:03] Yes, please stand. We would have loved to have your daughter be here this evening to be in the photo with you, but we appreciate your presence. Thank you. Ms. Toland, did I just speak to you a second? Yes, thank you. Tonight, after all of those comments, what I would like to do is highlight the wonderful work of our Muslim Student Association leaders. The Muslim Student Association does a lot of work trying to connect students for the cause of diversity and affirming students identities uniting Muslim and non-Muslim

[00:29:40] students. The students meet weekly at McLean High School both after school weekly and for a midday Friday set of prayers and also at the now 25 active MSAs across our county at the high schools and some in our middle schools.

[00:29:57] Those student groups have worked together with FCPS leadership as well as members of the Jewish and Christian communities to advance reflection and mental health spaces in our schools. I am very fortunate to have met several of our McLean High School MSA leaders and know they work very independently and effectively within the school with students and administrators to make changes that benefit many, many students.

[00:30:25] I was also fortunate to meet members of the Marshall High School MSA. They were volunteering at an iftar last month that was jointly sponsored by a McLean area mosque and the Jewish Islamic Dialogue Society of Washington. That evening was a wonderful opportunity for deep discussion on the ways we can all collaborate to celebrate our differences and our similarities and our universal need for human caring and respect.

[00:30:56] I am happy to second this proclamation in the continuation of this type of work and the work of our outstanding student leaders. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Cohen. Thank you so much and thanks to everybody for being here.

[00:31:19] It's a happy accident, I guess I would say, that our Muslim American Heritage Month proclamation happens to be the same night as our Jewish American Heritage Proclamation, which is to come. I think there are an awful lot of folks who work really hard to pit our communities against one another, and sometimes because it serves their needs a lot better than it serves ours collectively.

[00:31:43] I am always fascinated by how much our religions share, how much we have in common, that we all came from the same place. And I do want to thank so much just the welcome, loving kindness that the community, especially the national arab american women's association who met with me several months ago sometimes it's hard as a jewish person to figure out how you navigate and insert yourself in a way that is respectful that isn't threatening and that kind of defies the stereotypes that we all learn about

[00:32:22] one another unfortunately as we all grow up and i just want to say from the bottom of my heart how much i appreciate um the embracing of all of us up here no matter if we share your religion or if we don't um we have learned so so much and we continue to be very enthusiastic um learners so thank you thank you miss bekarski yeah thank you i'm pleased that uh miss omesh or well dr anderson and everyone

[00:32:57] who brought this forth so that we join many other municipalities and school systems that have recognized the contributions of muslim americans um and i you know i just want to say that i hope our families and our students through this recognition but more so through our actions and our interactions

really see that we we value you we appreciate what you bring to our school system and we are better because of it um and and there's still a lot of education i know that there

[00:33:35] is as as was you know brought up stills bigotry and islamophobia um in our community and it is incumbent on us that we do everything we can to combat that and to teach our children that our differences are not to be feared but to be embraced so thank you for everyone who came for this tonight thank you miss corbett sanders thank you madam chair we often hear why do you

[00:34:10] all do proclamations why do you do recognitions why do you do resolutions and it's quite simple we have a mosaic of students who attend fairfax county public schools who uh of staff that come from various faiths, from various countries, and so it's really important to have these proclamations that recognize and celebrate different aspects of our student body.

[00:34:44] We want every child and every staff member to feel valued, heard, and seen in our schools in what we do, how we interact with each other, and in the curriculum we teach.

[00:35:00] And it is with that in mind that it is so exciting that we are honoring tonight not only Muslim American Heritage Month but also Jewish American Heritage Month and the Asian Pacific American Heritage because it actually demonstrates how beautiful it is to be part of Fairfax County public schools where people can come from a multitude of backgrounds and be welcomed into our community and along those lines I think it's really important to understand and to celebrate the critical

[00:35:35] role that many organizations play in our communities and here in my own community in Mount Vernon part of Fairfax County we have ICHNA relief Services and ICNA relief services does amazing work in support of our children with back-to-school backpack drives with food pantries with transitional housing with clothing and also has taken a major leadership role in our ventures and community which is our interfaith dialogue and action program and so I just

[00:36:14] am so pleased to be able to support this and to recognize all the amazing work that our Muslim community does here in Fairfax County. So thank you. Thank you, Ms. Corbett Sanders. Ms. McLaughlin?

[00:36:31] I too want to thank both Ms. Mish for continuing to help our board and our community understand the very special relationship that we all need to have with one another, regardless of faith and background. As a Catholic, it's still hard to believe that there was a time as recent as 1960 that our nation wasn't sure that they should elect a Catholic president. That was scary to think about someone of the Catholic faith. And so when we sit here tonight, I hope that what we are

[00:37:07] conveying to everyone in our community that our earliest times as a civilized globe is that faith and religion and customs is what have shaped our lives. And as we become a diverse society throughout the globe, one of the things that is at the root and the heart of all faiths is being able to help remind ourselves and one another how to be our very best selves and to bring kindness and love to our communities and so as we celebrate and recognize two

[00:37:44] very special faiths this evening I do want to say thank you to everyone in the audience here this evening I hope that our words will continue to reflect the best values that Fairfax County Public Schools has for when we say that we are one Fairfax so it's wonderful to be celebrating and honoring our community tonight. Thank you. Mr. Frisch? Thank you. So in June, we're going to be celebrating LGBTQ Pride

[00:38:20] Month. And as I've been working on the resolution, and as I hear the words tonight and read the words tonight for this proclamation, it's unfortunate that we live in a time when we have to justify our existence, right? It says two billion people, nearly a quarter of the world are Muslim, as if we have to, as if the numbers are what makes people worthy, right, of recognition.

[00:38:52] And I think part of what makes this work important and this resolution important, and I thank Ms. Omash for bringing it and for advocacy over the last many weeks over it, is that we still live in a time when we're being forced to justify our existence and when people are trying to erase what makes us unique and special, trying to erase not only who we are, but how we contribute to the world around us.

[00:39:23] So as long as people like that exist in this world, trying to erase us, whether we're Muslim, whether we're Jewish, whether we're LGBTQ, or anything else that makes us unique and special, these types of resolutions are going to be extremely important. Because it doesn't just remind the community at large that we exist, it reminds the community at large that we're deserving of dignity and respect just like everybody else. So thank you all for being here and thank you Ms. Omeish for your work on this. Thank you. Before I had to call Ms. Togby I want

[00:40:03] to make sure no one else wishes to speak. Ms. Omeish go ahead. Yeah thank you. I obviously wouldn't want to miss the moment. I know some were anticipating this in April and I think that was part of the confusion with Dr. Anderson's comment before it was scheduled today so I do thank you for your patience and hope that for the years to come perhaps it can be in that month.

[00:40:25] I'm happy to follow my colleagues and want to thank everybody who's been a part of bringing forward this historic moment from the organizations who coordinated the resolution, my staff aide, who I need to shout out, and my colleagues who now speak to its importance, though I know it's always nice to focus on the recognition at hand.

[00:40:46] This is the first time that a resolution like this happens, and I am hopeful that it becomes a tradition for us in FCPS. I'm especially proud to see Dr. Anderson and Ms. Tolan carrying it forward, because it's critical for us to remember that every single one of us represents every single one of our kids, our staff members.

[00:41:05] And just like I've made it a commitment to be a champion of each one of our communities, we must all take it upon ourselves to fight for all communities in our one Fairfax. We wanted to model this behavior tonight. And I know that it cannot and should not be the responsibility of those bearing a specific identity to be the lone voice for it. So I hope that my virtual participation today can be symbolic of the fact that I won't be on this board forever, but that makes it the responsibility of the system and of our entire community to see Muslim children and staff and all children and staff, no less. Just last week, Dr. Reid and I

[00:41:41] were at a community event where an FCPS alum and parent had asked us why such a resolution like this does not exist. And we were so proud to be able to tell him that it was actually slated for a future meeting, especially given the size of this community in our broader Fairfax family, as outlined in the resolution, of course, at least over 11% in the county. But then when we look at our school system, four of the 10 most widely spoken languages are Muslim-majority languages, And there's so much to think about and hopefully act upon.

[00:42:11] I know that, you know, I certainly am excited to see this manifest through action. And there are some thoughts. There's no way that I'd be able to outline every Islamophobic thing that we can try to educate folks on tonight. But I do hope that we don't lose the celebration in this moment.

[00:42:28] And we come to see the ways that, especially post 9-11, the Muslim community has turned into a national security problem or is spoken of in security terms, and that the experience of kids in our schools in learning about Islam is too often only mentioned in world history class when it has to do with war, terrorism, the oppression of women, and other themes that so wrongfully characterize the community, whether that's things like jihad and sharia being words that are so distorted from a spiritual struggle or a path towards truth and justice

[00:43:07] turned into what they are not. Or books like Persepolis that are still mandatory in our IB curriculum that I had to read and that kids, numerous kids throughout my term have brought to me in concern. One telling me that it made her cry, others really trying their best to make it at least not mandatory for kids who want to take advanced classes to read because of the ways it depicts Muslims as other, Muslims as backwards, anti-women, anti-progress, and it being the only, if not one of very few, experiences that kids have in accessing or

[00:43:45] understanding anything about Muslims. And yet, there's certainly progress. Ms. Mish, your time is up. I'll let you finish your thought. I don't know if you can hear the timer virtually. I just want to let you know. I didn't. Thank you. But the last thing I'll say is there's so much to celebrate in this community.

[00:44:03] And I do want us to make this a joyous moment. But I hope that we can all commit to the hundreds of Muslim students, young women who look like me, wearing hijab every day, or who pray five times a day and struggle to do that throughout the school day.

[00:44:18] I hope that we can make that commitment to learn more about one another and to fight for each one of us just as though it was our own.

[00:44:38] Thank you. Seeing no other hands up. I'll take a pause before I call on Ms. Togby. Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Togby. Thank you. Again, I just wanted to echo what everyone else said. It's important that this is more than just a celebration. I get to see firsthand as a student in my building, the work of our MSA students and leaders, and whether it's participating in Miss tournaments at NDC, Charity Week, just helping around in our school community, International Night, things like that.

[00:45:10] I get to see how they work to educate students in my building in South County and to also just reach out to other peers across the county and they unite students across the building, but they also do so in a way that I honestly deeply, deeply admire because, again, like it was mentioned in the resolution, it's one of the most racially diverse religions, but it's also one of the religions that I don't think we talk about enough and learn about enough.

[00:45:37] It's so important that we do more than just say we value and appreciate the work of their contributions and things like that, but we actually need to show them, and I don't think we do enough of that showing. And I'm so excited to be here celebrating this group tonight, and I could not be more proud of our county for doing so, and thank you again, Ms. Omish, for bringing it to us tonight. Thank you.

[00:46:01] Thank you. And seeing other hands up, I'll just briefly take my turn. I want to echo all the remarks of my colleagues. I am very appreciative, Dr. Anderson, Ms. Tolan for bringing this forward, Ms. Omesh for bringing this idea forward, and for your representation on this board.

[00:46:20] I've said for a long time that representation matters. We live in a multicultural community, and having representation from that community is important. So thank you for both lifting up the voices and experiences, and thank you for bringing this to the board. I am very thrilled to support it. As someone who did grow up in believing a minority religion myself, I understand that the importance of having a community that understands and embraces folks from all faiths and all experiences and backgrounds.

[00:46:49] So I understand our resolutions are an important part of that. So I'm thrilled to bring this forward today. And I know we are at FCPS committed, as we have been, to combating all forms of bigotry, including Islamophobia, and in really creating that welcoming environment where everybody can walk in as their authentic selves and be welcome and understood valued so thank you for bringing this forward I'm thrilled to support it so with that seeing no other hands up I will call for the vote all those in favor please raise your hand that is Ms. Omesh Ms. Keyes-Gamara Ms. Pekarski Ms. Cohen Mr. Frisch Dr. Anderson Ms. McLaughlin Ms. Daronak Koufax

[00:47:28] Ms. Corbett Sanders Ms. Toland Ms. Marin and myself that motion passes you know I called them first unanimously thank you very much I appreciate it I will go on to agenda item 3.08 Colvin Run elementary school 20th anniversary proclamation i call on miss tolan for proclamation thank you whereas colvin run elementary school proudly celebrates its 20th anniversary june 8th 2023 and has a reputation for providing generations of students from a richly diverse community with an excellent academic foundation and whereas for 20 years colvin run elementary school has

[00:48:07] has provided a safe, caring, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students to learn and grow through general education, advanced academics, special education, and English speakers of other languages programs.

[00:48:23] All K-6 grades continue the Portrait of a Graduate Portfolio of Learning with collaboration from FCPS Instructional Services. Teachers and staff provide project-based learning, experiences, and classroom instruction with a focus on infusion of advanced academic curriculum.

[00:48:43] And whereas the dedicated faculty of Colvin Run Elementary School has a long history of working to include all students and meet students where they are as demonstrated by their preschool autism classrooms, enhanced autism classrooms, and inclusive approach for students with disabilities.

[00:49:06] Through focus on students first, they can personalize learning experiences to ensure all students are making progress and reaching their maximum potential. And whereas Colvin Run Elementary School has a long history of learning about and celebrating cultures from around the world.

[00:49:23] With a student population representing 70 different countries speaking 42 different languages, they embrace their global diversity in and out of the classroom. And whereas Colvin Run Elementary School has a vibrant community including students, faculty, parents, and PTO members.

[00:49:43] Colvin Run focuses on its motto, Your character shapes your future to empower all learners to be curious and compassionate. Colvin Run partners with its neighbor, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, to enhance student opportunities in the performing arts and environmental stewardship.

[00:50:04] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board honors Colvin Run Elementary School on the occasion of its 20th anniversary and commends the school on its history of providing educational excellence and enrichment opportunities to the students and community.

[00:50:24] Is there a second? Second. Ms. Amesh, Ms. Tolan, would you like to speak to your proclamation? Yes, thank you. I'm actually really happy to bring this proclamation forward since it has personal meaning to my family. My younger son started at Colvin Run in the Advanced Academic Center the day the school opened.

[00:50:46] His third grade teacher is now one of our esteemed elementary school principals, Jennifer Hertzberg. Of course, with the new school came boundary changes to fill the school and lots of consternation. My Great Falls neighbors were afraid to have their kids ride a school bus across Route 7.

[00:51:06] They wanted to build the new school on the land of Great Falls National Park to avoid crossing the busy road. That aside, current families at Culver Run that moved to their neighborhood just for that school can't even believe the stories I can tell. Our house is solidly in the Great Falls Elementary boundary.

[00:51:26] So imagine my surprise when my second grader came home one day to announce that he had been redistricted and decided to go to the new school because of the cafeteria chairs and the playground at the new school looked really cool. It turns out that Culver Run staff had visited Great Falls to get the kids that were going to be going there excited, but the timing of the visit was just a little bit off because it wasn't until the next day that we got his acceptance letter to the Advanced Academic Center. My son went on to have an exceptional experience at Coven Run. I must do

[00:52:03] a shout out to the first principal, Dr. Sandy Furek, who served to bring together kids from seven different regional elementary schools. She empowered parents to play an enormous role in the success of the school. She led us all to come together with the common goal of creating a wonderful, memorable elementary school experience in Fairfax County Public Schools, and that's what we did. I'm pleased to say the current principal of 10 years, Ken Youngie, is here with us tonight along with his assistant principal and lots of staff members. Congratulations, Ken, on keeping

[00:52:39] up that Colvin Run tradition, having been principal for half of the time that Colvin Run has been open. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Toland. Ms. Amash, would you like to speak to your second? Yeah, thank you so much, and I want to thank Ms. Toland for bringing this, and you know, it's always exciting to celebrate the tremendous successes of our schools, you know, specifically with Colvin Run. Colvin Run is a community that is committed to high excellence and character, and that's important to me. You

[00:53:16] know, the school itself, Colvin Run, the name comes from a nearby stream that flows through the area where the school is located, and the elementary school is proud to bear that name of the historic and picturesque stream for its important role in the local community and it truly is symbolic of all the bounties and blessings that this school has to offer the motto of the school is you know as as said in the resolution your character shapes your future but it's broader it's the character education program that they have it's their mission statement of community that is compassionate

[00:53:51] honest respectful responsible on the run to shape the future this is a school that recognizes the importance of character building and character education through programs like environmental education initiatives where the school recycles composts donates food reduces waste uh where it partakes in peer mediation activities that uh increase the emotional intelligence capabilities of our youngest learners and how to engage with one another and this colvin run also partakes in uh uh jumping for heart which is uh an organization that seeks to to collect funds for the nation's

[00:54:30] leading cause of death which is heart disease uh so i'm really proud of this little community that has been able to uh in all its diverse facets bring people together young learners together to understand the critical importance of character building that learning is not just to get ahead and make it someday and finishing a degree right but it's about cultivating the person uh and building out uh their ethics as a person and their moral value and what their contribution will be to the community and to society so i want to commend uh the prince principal kenneth uh colvin run

[00:55:06] and the whole the entire team who continues to push forward this uh mission uh and inspire kids to recognize its importance in their earliest years so congratulations on your 20th anniversary i can't believe i'm thinking back at when i was in school it was your 10th but um looking forward to celebrating many more years and hopefully for all our schools uh as they hit these milestones thank you seeing no other hands that wish to speak i will quickly just say congratulations culver run this is an amazing anniversary and miss tollen i do love that story so thank you for

[00:55:44] bringing this miss tollen and miss omesh for bringing this and with that i will call for the vote all those in favor please raise your hand miss pekarsky miss cohen mr frisch dr anderson Ms. McLaughlin, Ms. Darenak Koufax, Ms. Corbett Sanders, Ms. Tolan, Ms. Merritt and myself, Ms. Omesh, and Ms. Keith Gamara. That motion passes. Thank you very much. We will move on and please stick around for photos. We're almost there. Agenda item 3.09, Jewish American Heritage Month Proclamation.

[00:56:13] I call on Ms. Bukarski for proclamation. Whereas in 1654 the first Jewish settlers arrived in New York City fleeing oppression and discrimination and helping to establish our nation's foundation of religious freedom for generations of Americans and whereas Jewish American Heritage Week was established in 1980 and expanded upon in 2006 when Congress ordered that the country observe annual Jewish American Heritage Month each May and celebrate the gifts of Jewish Americans and whereas American Jews have played indispensable roles making invaluable

[00:56:51] contributions to our nation in the fields of arts, business, education, entertainment, government, medicine, military service, music, philanthropy, science, sports, and more through their leadership and achievements, and Jewish American Heritage Month is an opportunity to celebrate the vibrancy and importance of Fairfax County's Jewish American citizens whose accomplishments and contributions strengthen and enrich culture, governance, the economy, education, and all aspects of community life in the county. And whereas, Jewish American Heritage Month is an

[00:57:31] annual celebration of Jewish Americans who have helped shape the story of American history, culture, and society while elevating the cause of justice, equality, and freedom for people of all faiths backgrounds and identities leading movements for social justice and working to ensure that opportunities that they have secured are extended to others and whereas fairfax county public schools commitment to providing equity and opportunity for all students staff and families in the face of continuing and re-emerging anti-semitism expressed openly and violently

[00:58:10] requires us to see that jewish americans have endured persecution and prejudice in our nation our county and our schools requires us to combat that anti-seminism anti-semitism in all of its forms and requires us to fully recognize understand and value the history heritage and culture of jewish americans now therefore be it resolved that the fairfax county school board joins the jewish community relations council of greater washington in celebrating may 2023 as

[00:58:44] jewish american heritage month in recognition of the many contributions jewish americans have made to our society is there a second second miss cohen miss pekarsky would like to speak to your proclamation sure i'd love to offer just a few words of reflection on the significance and i do so I cannot read this proclamation without of course talking about my favorite Jewish American which is my it's not large it is my husband who was

[00:59:19] born in Moscow and what is the former Soviet Union and his family who was scattered across Eastern Europe his ancestors and by extension my children's faced lifetimes of persecution and discrimination, as did my husband. He and his family were able to flee in the 80s and come here, but the things he experienced, the things he saw there, the things that were said to him are things

[00:59:55] that he has never forgotten that have impacted him in ways that are just I think not explainable but have played a very big part in in the person that he has become and when they came to this country when his family came here it was because they were looking to find a community and a home that was diverse and accepting and it's the reason why we raise our children in Fairfax County

[01:00:33] where we aim to be a community that celebrates not desecrates our religious and ethnic diversity as we've spoken today and I think my children their classmates are fortunate in many ways that they attend a school and belong to this community where we have much diversity and where we strive to live up to those values, but we cannot take it for granted.

[01:01:03] According to a recent report that I read, anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. have gone up 36 percent in 2022. It is the highest level since 1979. Those incidents have climbed almost 500% over the past decade.

[01:01:24] So work continues to be needed. We must continue to work to prevent discrimination and hate crimes. And that work often starts in our schools through education. And I will tell you an anecdote, and I know, you know, this board has worked to have more inclusive calendars and it was a struggle to get there, but we got there.

[01:01:46] I think it was an affirmation to me that it was the right thing to do when one day my youngest said, you know, I'm so excited tomorrow. We don't have school. And I said, well, why? And continued to tell me all about Eid, actually. And I wondered if we had not done that, if they would have been able to learn about their classmates' traditions and the things that are important to them and by default build tolerance and acceptance.

[01:02:19] I'm sorry, but I I'm grateful to Vicki Fishman and everyone who came from the JCRC for your help and your work with us. And we will continue to try to build accepting communities in Fairfax County. Thank you.

[01:02:36] Thank you, Miss Cohen. I don't think Stella has ever gone over, so I take that as a real win. Obviously, this is incredibly meaningful to me, and just this Sunday, my oldest child graduated from post-confirmation, which meant that they, after their bat mitzvah, decided to continue their religious education all the way through 12th grade. And as each of the students in their class certainly had dwindled down, but as each of the 10 students got up, what their

[01:03:13] speech was is what they would carry with them the metaphor of a suitcase when they went to college and they all had great stories and different memories of their years in religious school and in Hebrew school but what my child said was incredibly meaningful to me and what they said is wherever

they go they know that Judaism is their home that when they go to college the first thing that they're going to look for is the Hillel because they know that there will be people there who will just get them in the world of trying to figure out how you navigate college and

[01:03:53] friendships. And I've thought so much about our responsibility here in FCPS to make this our home. We use the word family a lot. I think all of us up here believe that immensely, that we want this to be a family. We want this to be a home. And we want when our kids leave and walk across that stage for them to always feel like they're welcome here. And as Carl said, we don't ever want them to have to feel like they have to prove their worth in any way. Not any of our kids, not our

[01:04:27] preschoolers, not our Muslim kids, not our Jewish kids, not our gay kids, not any of our kids. And resolutions like this, the calendar, I completely agree. We're making steps. I know they are incremental. I know we're not there yet, but I am proud. I'm proud to be here tonight. I'm proud that we're having this opportunity to get to shed a little light on something that is incredibly meaningful to our family. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Toland? Yes, I just wanted to say a few words.

[01:05:06] As we said, the proclamation honors the 368-year history of Jewish contributions to American culture and that's very important i understand in 1654 23 jewish refugees sailed into the current stay in new york city in a small ship the courageous women and men fled discrimination and oppression to come here and and face some of the same we do tonight honor the contributions timeless traditions and the heritage of jewish americans and we want to do that each and every

[01:05:42] day. Our colleagues, JCRC, states that education about Jewish identity and the contributions of Jewish Americans is a critical antidote to the rampant anti-Semitism the Jewish community is experiencing today. I just want to give a huge thank you to Ms. Franklin Siegel, Rabbi Jeffrey Sachs, Vicki Fishman, and the organizations you represent for working with me to share your guidance to deal with incidents of anti-Semitism in our Drainsville community and your willingness

[01:06:17] to communicate with our students and families and the broader interfaith community to better understand the Jewish faith and the heritage and to appreciate all of the contributions that have been made to our country. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Amesh? Thank you. I'm actually happy to follow Ms. Tolan because we were both at the Jewish Muslim Interfaith Society dinner the other day

[01:06:47] And I was reflecting on the fact that the best of what I had to learn about Jewish heritage came from opportunities that were outside of FCPS and how I'm hopeful that that can change over time. There's no doubt we've seen a rise in hate speech and violence. And as I've spoken to earlier, an attack on one of us is an attack on all of us.

[01:07:07] And I commit myself to standing shoulder to shoulder and condemning anti-Jewish sentiment and rhetoric and hate, but more than that, inhumanizing Jews in our curriculum and in the ways that we teach our kids. But I also want to remind us of the intentional work to get there.

[01:07:24] When I think back at the experiences that were most impactful, you know, I know that some of the Orthodox Jews that I met and worked side by side with in scouting in the Muslim Jewish camporee that we learned about the experiences of having a tough time in undergraduate dorm housing, for example, or not having kosher accommodations, that those were things that perhaps our kids in school now, FCPS, and I certainly have heard from the community about these concerns, that that's an area where more work can be done. And I know we're headed in that

[01:08:00] direction, but there's still more to do. Or I even think back at, you know, set airs with the challah bread and Shabbat dinners and opportunities that brought community together and that were a celebration of the Jewish heritage that many I grew up with and that are part of our community and that have been a part of our community for a long time have experiences that are central to their heritage, but that, you know, we can go through schooling from K to 12 and have no exposure otherwise to something like that, but something so deeply important to members of our community.

[01:08:36] And so it's really important to me that we recommit to that. Or even historical figures like Maimonides, right, who is a Jewish philosopher who became one of the most influential Torah scholars, as Jews themselves know better than I do, but who rose in a time of interfaith collaboration and, you know, in a civilization that was not led by Jews, in fact, was led by Muslims, but I say that because it's so empowering to think of figures like that in history that we can learn about and see to be role models for ourselves, even if not necessarily identical to our own backgrounds or identities, right?

[01:09:15] But to see the collective heritage, that Jewish heritage can be something we can identify with as well, and that we continue to recommit ourselves to speaking up against injustice and anti-Semitism where we see it, despite the politics of it all, because I think that that is what many seek to divide us through, but that we have to elevate the importance of, again, seeing our collective humanity and speaking against hate that's directed towards Jews by learning their history and by having opportunities where we do speak about perhaps tough conversations,

[01:09:52] but connect around those experiences that are most meaningful to our Jewish community and continuing to provide accommodations and prioritizing their visibility in the narratives that we learn, whether in English or history class or wherever those might be.

[01:10:09] So happy Jewish Heritage Month to everybody. Thank you. Ms. McLaughlin? I want to thank Ms. Pekarski and Ms. Laura Jane Cohen for bringing this forward tonight as well.

[01:10:25] Your remarks, in particular, the personal ones, were very touching, and I think it helps personalize why this is so meaningful this evening. I just want to elevate that PBS, about two weeks ago, had a really wonderful story that was on 10 Jewish Americans who have changed history.

[01:10:44] And they elevated Albert Einstein. They elevated Gloria Steinem, who has been an incredible champion for the women's movement. they elevated Irving Berlin who as we all know brought wonderful musicals to our American culture and world. Jerry Lee Lewis and Elizabeth Taylor, that beauty with the violet eyes,

[01:11:16] famed artist Mark Rothko, as well as Stan Lee, also known aka the creator of the Marvel comics. And then we have Eli Wiesel, a famed Holocaust survivor, and helping to maintain and bring history so it continues to live on today so we will never forget.

[01:11:38] And then we have Stephen Sondheim, another critically acclaimed lyricist. And then we have, finally, Ruth Bader Ginsburg. And so I just encourage all of you that, again, when we think about these celebrations that recognizing that some of the most incredible contributors to our our United States it's it's great to be able to spotlight that on events like this evening and the fact that we have five members

[01:12:12] of our board who their families share in and observe the Jewish faith to all of you thank you for continuing to enrich my understanding and appreciation for such a beautiful faith thank you

[01:12:27] Ms. Corbett Sanders. Yes, thank you, Madam Chair, and I'm pleased to follow my colleague, Ms. McLaughlin. As many of you know, I am married to the son of Holocaust survivors, and it impacts the way that you approach every day of your life because of the destruction and trauma of wondering if your loved ones are going to return home.

[01:13:06] And so when I look at a proclamation such as this, I think about it from the standpoint of the teaching moment, the importance of ensuring that we never forget. Because when we forget our history, we are at risk of repeating it.

[01:13:26] And as Ms. Bukarski mentioned, we have had an increase in hate crimes, rise of anti-Semitism, and acts of violence at our religious seats, our synagogues, against individuals, and also against our Muslim places of worship as well.

[01:13:50] And so when I look at these recognitions tonight, I look at this as a mechanism for teaching and remembering and ensuring that we never forget. But I also look at it in the placement of our calendar.

[01:14:09] And I think that it is not accidental. It is intentional that all of these proclamations and recognitions are done in the month of May. And the reason they're done in the month of May and not earlier is because we want to raise up the opportunity and celebrate the recognitions while also not perhaps inadvertently slighting one religion or another.

[01:14:41] And so I am very pleased that you caught yourself, Dr. Anderson, and that the earlier one will be changed to be May. And I am also pleased that these should be part of our recognitions every May.

[01:15:00] There's another reason for it, too, which is that at the end of May and into June, we begin the process of commencement exercises. And what greater way of really sending our children off into the world with their suitcase, as you mentioned, Ms. Cohen, than making sure that they are armed with the confidence and support of this school system in who they are as individuals.

[01:15:32] And so thank you very much for the makers of the motion, and I will happily support this. Thank you. Ms. Marin?

[01:15:44] Yes, good evening. I really wanted to point out the theme of this evening that Mr. Frisch put so poignantly but about removing any disdain and misunderstanding of one another's cultures because they're really the common thing we have is that too often any of us are discriminated against whether it's for beliefs or abilities and we need to stop trying to label everyone and really just look at what we can do to help one another.

[01:16:12] you know the actions taken by this school division that really resonate with me are of course our calendar which you've heard a lot about but that is what's making a difference in you know in having our students appreciate that other students have different beliefs and different customs as staff as well but also I really appreciate that superintendent Reed has been having regular meetings with community leaders of faith organizations and you know as a school division I think we have to be very careful of course we would never want to teach religion, teach a child what to think about that, but it's so important to teach children that other beliefs and experiences exist.

[01:16:48] And we cannot deny the role of faith in so many members of our community and to have our school superintendent meeting regularly with those central community members is just such a lovely and wise and needed thing, so I really appreciated that. And finally, when we think about how to extinguish

prejudice and bias and bullying in our schools, It's we adults that have to do the extinguishing because the children are watching.

[01:17:13] So I'm glad that we can elevate that we are more alike than not and appreciate the time to recognize that we have an amazing community. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Frisch. Thank you.

[01:17:29] And thank you, Ms. Bukarski and Ms. Cohen, for bringing this proclamation forward. I also want to thank Vicki Fishman and Sarah Winkleman from the JCRC who are here with us tonight for their advocacy over these years that I've been on the board. It's been mentioned, you know, our work on the calendar, our work on these proclamations, our work to make sure that our history doesn't erase the experiences of marginalized communities.

[01:17:57] But when you talk to our students, they will tell you that they experience anti-Semitism, that they experience Islamophobia, that they experience racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia. and we're fooling ourselves if we don't think it's happening in our classrooms and in our hallways and so as long as we're on this board it's our responsibility to continue to push to address these issues in meaningful ways right bullying prevention cannot be done just by telling

[01:18:29] people to be nice you have to explain why certain behavior is wrong why it's inappropriate and so i know the superintendent has led on those issues previously in her other school divisions and i And I look forward to this board working with her to make sure that none of our students are made to feel different or othered just because of who they are, who they love, what they believe in, whatever.

[01:18:55] So thank you everybody for being here tonight for this resolution, the previous resolution. It means a lot to have you here. And please hold us accountable.

[01:19:12] - Thank you, Mr. Frisch. Seeing no one else who wishes to speak in other hands have just gone up in that last minute. I will take a just a brief turn before we go. and I don't want to take up too much more time. I echo the sentiments of all my colleagues.

[01:19:27] I thank Ms. Cohen and Ms. Bukarski for bringing this forward. And I just want to say I thank the JCRC for their very thoughtful conversations over the years. I think what's been really wonderful about being on the school board, one of the many wonderful things, is being welcomed in so many spaces that I had not been in before.

[01:19:45] And I did not have the opportunity or a reason to go in before that maybe I should have been. But I've been welcomed very warmly into several mosques in our community, and I really appreciate that. I've been welcomed warmly into the Jewish temples, and everywhere, in all of the spaces, I've had such amazing, thoughtful conversations that have really helped me expand my worldview and my own thinking, and really had me reflected on my own experiences.

[01:20:11] So I just want to thank our community. I personally have experienced that living in this community with different faiths and people of different backgrounds, multicultural rich community and diversity has made my own thinking and my own experiences so much better and i think i thank you for that i thank our communities for having the um the strength and the courage to speak to others to try to convince them try to help them educate them because it's through education it's through conversations that we build acceptance right and we build love for each other so thank you for that and with that i will call for the vote

[01:20:49] all those in favor please raise your hand since pekarsky miss cohen mr frisch dr anderson mclaughlin mr koufax miss keith kamara miss omesh miss corbett sanders miss tolan miss maren and myself that motion passes congratulations thank you very much everybody thank you we'll be taking some photos now so i'd like to invite those here first in support of the jewish american heritage month proclamation to please join the board for a photo in the front of the dais and i ask my colleagues remain at the dais for the next four group photos which will be called up in turn. So please, those here in support of the Jewish American Heritage

[01:21:26] Month, please join us. I would like to invite all those here in support of the teacher,

[01:23:42] paraprofessionals, and after-school workers' recognition to please join the board for a photo. I would like to invite all those here in support of the teacher, paraprofessionals, and after-school

[01:24:08] workers' recognition to please join the board for a photo. I would like to invite all those here

[01:25:42] in support of the Muslim American Heritage Month proclamation to please join the board for a photo.

[01:25:53] i would like to invite all those here in support of the colvin run elementary school proclamation

[01:27:33] to please join the board for a photo they're coming the next order of business is community

[01:30:34] participation speakers must limit the 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, budget, and boundaries. 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

[01:31:11] personally identifiable information in connection with an individual student or school-based employee. Additionally, speakers should be respectful and observe proper decorum in their statements, avoiding profanity, inappropriate gestures, shouting in comments that run counter to the spirit and letter of the school division's non-discrimination policy. 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

[01:31:50] substitutions are not permitted. A speaker may not yield their time to individual before or during their remarks. Shouting and outbursts from the audience will not be tolerated. We are grateful for those who have come to speak to us today and thank you for your cooperation. Madam Clerk, please call the

[01:32:08] first speaker. Student number one. Student number two. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak today. My name is Angelina Richter and I am a junior at the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. At TJ I am on my school's Honor Council and I'm especially trained in the practice of restorative justice, a transformative approach to discipline and conflict resolution, which

[01:32:46] I am here today to advocate for. This approach seeks to repair the harm caused by wrongdoing, promote healing, and foster understanding among all parties involved. By embracing restorative justice, FCPS can cultivate a more inclusive, empathetic, and supportive learning environment for all students.

[01:33:02] There are many reasons why restorative justice should be implemented in FCPS. The traditional punitive route often isolates the offender and fails to address the root problem. Justice, on the other hand, emphasizes collective problem solving to create long-lasting and positive change. It promotes the idea that integrity violations harm people and relationships rather than just violating the rules.

[01:33:22] The process encourages honesty and truth-telling instead of defensiveness. It encourages taking accountability over blaming. Finally, it is oriented towards the future instead of the past, with one of the questions being what can be done to make things right. Studies show that restorative justice significantly reduces suspensions, expulsions, and recidivism rates by fostering empathy and understanding restorative justice contributes to a more positive school environment where both students and teachers feel safe respected and valued with a mutual trust in fcps tj stands out as one of the few schools in the county that maintains an active honor council furthermore it is one of a few across the nation where a high school council is led by

[01:33:59] students over the past two weeks we over the past two summers we have participated in a restore schools project which worked to train dozens of teachers from various schools across the county Adopting restorative justice and FCPS is an investment in the community's well-being and future success and I hope that restorative justice can make a long-lasting difference in this community. Thank you for your time.

[01:34:19] Katie Acor. I'm speaking tonight on behalf of several parents who have preschool-aged children with Down syndrome and feel that our children have been siloed into segregated classrooms and denied the related services that are critical components to their early education.

[01:34:49] My son is three years old, uses 70 signs and other gestures to communicate. When we attended his first IEP, it was paused because we requested speech therapy. At the next meeting, the speech therapist asked me how many words does he say and said she couldn't work with him until he said more words.

[01:35:05] When asked, she could not quantify what that looked like. So I was shocked to hear Dr. Boyd state at the April 13th school board meeting that only about a quarter of children who are screened for speech services receive evaluations, which is based on the IEP team. I have three neurotypical nieces and nephews in Fairfax County, aged 4 to 8, who receive speech services.

[01:35:27] My husband and I are part of my son's IEP team, and we sat through multiple meetings fighting to get him speech. I can only say that this feels like discrimination when it's the same story for multiple families with preschool-aged children with Down syndrome. After four IEP meetings, phone calls with the Coordinator for Early Childhood Identification and Services, and our Procedural Support Liaison, I believe there is a systemically flawed approach in Fairfax County's early education services.

[01:35:55] We were repeatedly told the preschool is a language-rich learning environment and that these teachers have postgraduate degrees and they're highly trained. I'm not here to discount teachers at all, but I am here to say that teachers can't do it all. My son has a pediatrician and a cardiologist because together they take care of his body, just like teachers, IAs, and speech therapists should work together for his communication goals.

[01:36:19] Finally, the fact that Fairfax County is not providing inclusive class-based preschool options portends low expectations for my son's future. Six years ago, the Office of Special Education Programs announced that, quote, all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive, high-quality early childhood programs where they are providing...

[01:36:41] Stacy Langdon. For tonight's porn book story hour, I brought a selection from my son's school, Fairfax High School.

[01:37:14] Let's see what it's teaching our kids. The book, called Queer: A Graphic History by author Meg John Barker, is indeed graphic. It has illustrations of sex acts, some of which are deviant, but this book teaches that there is no good or bad kinds of sex, only a diverse range of practices and attractions.

[01:37:35] Page 158 says, "It ain't what you do, it's how you do it." This panel is of mom and dad having sex, except in this case the dad is on all fours on the bed while mom is wearing a strap-on dildo and is screwing dad anally from behind. What the hell?

[01:37:56] So kids are supposed to think that this is normal and what parents are doing in private? It says heterosexuality is unfair and oppressive, and if it was natural, it wouldn't have to work so hard to defend itself. Look, if it weren't for heterosexuality, none of us would be here. You guys won't remove this stuff, and the assistant superintendent said these books are bedtime stories for her children.

[01:38:20] I am calling on Governor Yunkin and A.G. Meares to do something. This was your platform for the last five weeks of your campaign, and we the parents put you in office largely to go and fix this. It's been 18 months. It's time. This filth is patently offensive.

[01:38:36] We have laws against this. It is not legal to have sex acts depicted for minors, not even in a library. Maybe the AG can find some time when he's not wasting $200,000 of taxpayer money chasing imagined racism at TJ and trashing reputations to investigate how these books got into our libraries.

[01:39:00] There's a worthwhile investigation. Until then, the kids are looking at this. Robert Rigby.

[01:39:16] Evening all. My topic is censorship. I'm representing no organization tonight. I say that the battle may be over. I say this in part because an innocent basal Latin textbook was rejected by FCPS, and no one can figure out why.

[01:39:40] Those who would diminish our SCPS curriculum beyond any value have won. Those who would ban books can now write the histories as winners. Those who would force already marginalized communities further into the shadows can declare victory.

[01:40:02] How is it? Because we censor ourselves. Here in Fairfax, we stop before we write, speak, buy a book. We pause before we teach a lesson and wonder, what will the curriculum destroyers and book banners say?

[01:40:24] And we're stuck. Take a look at the proposed strategic plan and ask yourself, what is in this that shows clearly that it was written in Fairfax County and not in Florida?

[01:40:41] Thank you very much for all that you've done over the years. I'm afraid we have not succeeded unless we end and reverse the systemic censorship that we ourselves do. Thank you for listening. I will say I did have a more upbeat conversation with someone this evening. So there's a little hope in my heart. So there, thank you for listening.

[01:41:14] Sherry Koppel. Good evening, Dr. Reed and school board. Yesterday, I spent several hours reviewing books in the Chantilly High School Library, which is accessible and available to 14 to 18 year olds.

[01:41:38] I would like to read an excerpt from one of these books called Court of Thorns and Roses. I raised my nightgown over my head and tossed it to the floor. Utterly naked before him, I watched his gaze travel to my bare breast, peeked against the chill night, and to my abdomen, to between my thighs. A ravenous, unyielding sort of hunger passed over his face. I bent a leg and slid it to the side. A silent invitation. He let out a low growl and slowly with predatory intent raised his gaze to the full force and to mine. The full force of that wild unrelenting power

[01:42:18] focused solely on me. I tore at my clothes and they were on the floor and then his skin was marked down his back with my fingernails. His claws were out but devastatingly gentle on my hips and slid between my thighs and feasted on me, stopping only after I shuddered and fractured.

[01:42:41] I was moaning his name when he sheathed himself inside me in a powerful slow thrust that had me splintering around him. We moved together, unending, wild and burning. And then when I went over the edge, he went and roared and went with me.

[01:42:58] Are you guys uncomfortable? I'm very uncomfortable right now reading this. I read so many things like this yesterday. And this is available to 14-year-olds. Why is there a sexy, hot scene between adults and our high schools?

[01:43:15] What educational value is there except to expose our kids to sexually explicit material? This book, which is a part of a series, should be removed from our schools. Thank you. Brian Ruauer.

[01:43:34] Hello, and thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening. I'm here on behalf of my family to discuss the Early Childhood Special Education Program.

[01:43:53] While our home elementary school is Hunters Woods in Reston, my son is enrolled four days a week in the program at Oak Hill. I would be remiss during Teacher Appreciation Week not to recognize our son's teachers, Ms. Samita, Ms. Sahira, and Ms. Ellen, who have worked with our son and have helped him meet many of his milestones and helped him blossom.

[01:44:15] Our son was diagnosed at birth with Down syndrome, which aside from giving us a wonderful little boy, has also introduced us into a world of doctors, therapists, and IEPs. Our son was approaching his second year in the Fairfax County Early Intervention Program when we learned that he was eligible for the Early Childhood Special Education Program.

[01:44:37] And we jumped at the opportunity because we felt the structure and the therapeutic services would be better for his development. We were right. His communication, fine and gross motor skills have advanced significantly, and we owe a lot of that to this program.

[01:44:55] You're hearing tonight about an inclusive approach to pre-kidding garden for children with special needs. And I do support this concept, but not at the expense of this program. My family supports inclusive education. In fact, we send our son to an inclusive classroom setting in the afternoons after his school program so that he can be around other kids and benefit from peer modeling.

[01:45:18] However, we believe that this program is the right path for our son to prepare for a fully integrated environment when he starts kindergarten and beyond. If you do decide to move forward with

this more inclusive program, please do not do it at the expense of the early childhood special education program.

[01:45:37] Thank you. Monica Fevella: Good evening, school board members.

[01:45:54] I'm here to speak to the need for an inclusive preschool option. When we looked for a preschool for my son, we encountered rejection from local private schools due to his disabilities. Our only choice was FCPS-contained classroom, consisting of nine other children, all with IEPs.

[01:46:11] The staff did their best, but my son, like most children, is an imitative learner. What he really needed was the example of walking, talking, neurotypical peers to model social interactions and behaviors. My son was able to attend a play care facility for one month during the two summers in between his three years of FCPS preschool.

[01:46:30] He picked up more age-appropriate language and behaviors from those combined eight weeks of exposure to his typical peers than he did from three years of FCPS special ed. Fast forward to his kindergarten placement. My son still spends the majority of his day in a special ed classroom.

[01:46:46] The justification for this placement stems from his segregated preschool experience. Remarkably, Leo is the first child with Down syndrome to attend our local elementary school in 20 years. All the other public school students with DS are being bused to another school with segregated classrooms.

[01:47:03] By only offering contained classrooms for preschoolers with IEPs, FCPS is siloing many disabled children into special ed for the rest of their academic careers. There is also a systemic denial of services for our preschool population with IEPs.

[01:47:18] Our son's lack of communication skills were painfully clear, yet our requests for speech services were continuously ignored or denied. When FCPS finally conducted the evaluation prerequisite to receiving speech services, they found my son with the communication skills of a 21-month-old.

[01:47:34] He had just turned five. They finally gave him speech therapy and he responded immediately. While I cannot alter my son's past, you have the ability to reshape the future for our disabled community by implementing a county-wide inclusive preschool option and increasing the availability of related services thank you Kelsey Lyle

[01:48:02] hello I'm a mother of a preschool aged child with a disability first I applaud the board's efforts to place equity and diversity at the heart of the district's mission and I also want to express gratitude for your commitment to inclusion also thank you for being the first district in the nation to hire a a neurodiversity specialist. This is who we are in Fairfax County. We embrace and celebrate differences. My fellow advocates and I have two requests for the school board. First, we are asking

[01:48:41] Fairfax County Public Schools to abide by the Individuals with Disabilities Act by providing our early childhood students with a general education setting. Currently, students found eligible for early childhood services are only offered three options: a one-hour resource teacher, A CONTAINED CLASS SETTING OR THE PRESCHOOL AUTISM CLASS.

[01:49:03] I WANT TO BE CLEAR HAVING A REGULAR PRESCHOOL OPTION DOES NOT TAKE AWAY FROM ANY OF THOSE OTHER PLACEMENT OPTIONS. WE ARE SIMPLY REQUESTING THAT FCPS

PROVIDE THE CONTINUUM OF SERVICE OPTIONS. Our second request is for FCPS to provide resource -- I'm sorry, to provide -- to expand resources for special needs students.

[01:49:32] We ask that when our children are evaluated and found eligible based on the area of need that speech occupational or physical therapists implement these services and not on our already overworked early childhood educators.

[01:49:48] EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRESCHOOL PROGRAMMING IS THE BEST INVESTMENT OUR COMMUNITY CAN MAKE. STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS WHO RECEIVED EARLY INTERVENTION DID NOT -- I'M SORRY, 46% OF THOSE CHILDREN DID NOT REQUIRE AN IEP IN KINDERGARTEN.

[01:50:07] AND SO IN CLOSING, WE ASKED FCPS TO PROVIDE -- JOANNA LEE. HELLO, FAIR FAST COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD, I'M HERE TO SHARE OUR EXPERIENCE REGARDING RELATED SERVICES FROM MY DAUGHTER WHO IS IN THE PRESCHOOL CLASS-BASED SERVICE PROGRAM.

[01:50:35] WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT RELATED SERVICES, I WAS TOLD THAT IDEA RELATED SERVICES MEANS TRANSPORTATION AND SUCH DEVELOPMENTAL CORRECTIVE AND OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES ARE AS REQUIRED TO ASSIST A CHILD WITH DISABILITY TO BENEFIT FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION, INCLUDING SPEECH, OTPT, JUST TO NAME A FEW.

[01:50:55] When I asked the school for speech therapy, I was told that the classroom is a language-rich environment and the teachers will communicate with my daughter all day so she doesn't need speech therapy. I said, okay, but later thought to myself, then who can get speech therapy if they're attending school?

[01:51:12] I know for sure there are families who are receiving speech therapy services. So what is the standard of speech delay a student needs to demonstrate to get speech therapy? I was confused. There is a huge discrepancy in the standard of special needs families receiving services when asking for PT because my daughter was still not walking past age two.

[01:51:32] I was told again that the school is a motor rich environment. We had to fight so hard for this one. And thankfully in the end, we did get PT services, but it shouldn't have been that hard. Currently, the school is proposing to reduce vision services and drop her vision goals from the IEP, despite doctor reports and parent input regarding her visual challenges and continued need for services.

[01:51:53] It is truly exhausting, but I can't give up. My daughter doesn't have a voice yet and I have to be that voice for her, to fight the fight for her. But why does it always have to feel like a fight? I know we are on the same team. Please make related services more easily available to your students with IEP.

[01:52:12] Thank you for listening and for your time. I really appreciate it. - David Hatcher.

[01:52:29] - Minutes of meetings under Robert's rules Start with old business first and then new business. With this school board, it's almost continuing business marked by profligate spending, courtesy of the superintendent.

[01:52:46] To wit, $450,000 in a sole source contract to Dr. Reed's former colleague, M.T. Fagbay, for an equity-centered strategic seminar. A yearly salary of well over $100,000 to a female colleague who followed Dr. Reed from Washington State, hired here as chief experience and engagement officer.

[01:53:07] A tangential payment supported by Carla Bruce, our county's one Fairfax lady, more than $40,000 to the fraudulent and divisive 1619 Project founder who demagogued the entire McLean Community Center audience, me included, but refused to answer any questions.

[01:53:28] A charade. No laughter, please. Finally, the lawsuit in April to release the findings behind the National Merit Commended Student scandal payment to an outside law firm of almost $200,000.

[01:53:45] The superintendent has refused to produce the report or any part of it. Apparently, her in-house lawyer is fighting to keep the report secret. What is the school system trying to hide? All this taxpayer money floating around, our money, while overall school enrollment has not improved since pre-2020, down more than 5%, SAT scores have yet to recover from pre-COVID lockdown.

[01:54:13] New business, maybe the school board should call for what I did 10 weeks ago here, Dr. Reed's resignation, before she throws a lot more money at her mantra of equal outcomes for every student without exception. That's code for critical race theory, cultural Marxism, and that is no joke.

[01:54:35] Michelle Whitecar. Hi. Good evening. I'm here to talk about overcrowding at Glasgow Middle School.

[01:54:55] My name is Michelle Whitaker, and I have a daughter who is in ninth grade at Justice High School, and I have a son who was in sixth grade at Glasgow until February when we made the difficult decision to pull him out of the school. I was utterly flabbergasted when a parent told me that their child did not want to go to the bathroom at school because of all the fights they didn't want to get hurt and they didn't want to get pulled into the trouble sadly I have heard this story from several other parents recently to his credit principal Powell took action he asked for a parent and teacher volunteers to help monitor the bathrooms and the halls it simply

[01:55:33] was not enough Glasgow has too many students almost 2,000 and it also has sixth grade why are Glasgow Poe and home homes run still sixth through eighth grade schools. They are not consistent with the rest of the pyramids, excuse me, with the rest of the schools in our pyramid. If you modify the population of these three schools to align with the rest of the pyramid where they only have seventh and eighth, it would instantly and drastically reduce overall school size. Our incredibly dedicated teachers and our children are placed

[01:56:09] in a sub-optimal environment for learning. Our children cannot concentrate and absorb new information when they don't feel fully safe. Teachers have way too many students in their classes. They are forced to spend too much time disciplining children and there's not enough time left for teaching. I know that we can do better. In fact we owe it to our children to do better. Thank you very much for your time and for allowing me to speak.

[01:56:35] Have a good evening. Rachel Herndon. My name is Rachel Herndon. My daughter who has Down syndrome is currently enrolled in the preschool class-based program. She does not have any meaningful access to non-disabled peers during her FCPS school day. I'm here tonight again speaking about the need for an inclusive preschool option within FCPS. The benefits of inclusion in

[01:57:14] the early childhood education setting are foundational. More inclusion in preschool leads to more inclusion and less supports required in kindergarten and beyond. Kids who are included in school expect to be included in their community after school, which leads to better post-secondary options and better access to competitive employment. I want to emphasize that this is not a complaint of the teachers,

IAs, or related service providers. However, their quality instruction cannot replace learning from non-disabled peer models. We are not asking FCPS to reinvent the wheel or diminish

[01:57:50] existing programs. We are asking for FCPS to provide the least restrictive environment of a regular early childhood classroom when appropriate. VDOE has put out guidelines for how to establish inclusive preschools all of our surrounding divisions have already done it at our iep meetings we are told that inclusion will come in kindergarten our kids cannot afford to wait or that we should seek a private community inclusive preschool and this is simply not equitable i urge you all to advocate for an actionable plan to bring inclusion to the fcps preschool program thank you for your

[01:58:27] time thoria hussein annie santi good evening my name is annie santi everyone always tries to make to make my last name a little fancier than it is.

[01:58:57] I'm here along with many others that are requesting a radical program shift to our special education preschool services. I'm a mother of a spicy four-year-old little girl with Down syndrome. We all need a little more spice in the world, so I expect her to do great things. Preschool services within FCPS continue to move backwards and what services are being offered to students with disabilities.

[01:59:18] In this short time, I'm hoping we can focus directly on the data and the special education performance report that was completed in 2022. This evening, I'm going to speak directly to the data. So indicator six compares state expectations with current data in Fairfax County Public Schools.

[01:59:34] I'm also comparing the same data with surrounding counties. Fairfax County Public Schools is providing very minimal resource level services to preschool age students. Resource level services are considered the least restrictive environment to our preschool age students.

[01:59:50] Compared to surrounding counties and state standards, FCPS is currently providing the most restrictive environment all special education preschool age children. We have an incredible high percentage of students accessing the non-categorical classroom-based services. This setting does not allow our children to access typical developing peers. FCPS is excelling in so many ways, but not in the area with our preschool non-categorical classes. We need a full continuum of services. Our preschool age children require the same don't require the same level of services but these continued trends

[02:00:30] are not looking good and it's really similar to the data that was once held in 1967 we need to stop moving backwards and start moving forward to give our children access so they require less services and support as they get older thank you so much assam omesh good evening everybody

[02:01:09] My name is Asam Amesh. On behalf of the Muslim American community, I wanted to extend my most heartfelt gratitude and thanks for the resolution. I'm very proud to see Abraar, my daughter, do the work, but certainly without the support and the leadership of all the board, such resolutions wouldn't be possible. When Tom Jelton wrote his book, A Nation of Nations, trying to reflect on Fairfax County as he told the story of immigration 50 years after the 1965

[02:01:44] Immigration Act. He chose few families to try to speak their story and reflect on that, and my family was one of them. I came to this country in '82, spoke no word of English, had to go through high school, and I went to Justice High School, learned the English.

[02:02:01] I'm ever so grateful to my ESL teachers, grew up to finish up at Georgetown and become a surgeon and I have Abraar, who is my pride and joy, and three others who went all through public school.

And two of them ended up at Harvard, and two ended up at Yale.

[02:02:16] I think it's a testament of your leadership. It's a testament of the system. But it's things like these events that recognizes who we are as one Fairfax and who brings about the best in all of us is the kind of things that will move our county forward.

[02:02:33] So thank you for your leadership. And may God bless our county and bless everybody who's been part of it. Thank you. Madam Chair, that was our final speaker. Please play the video now. Fairfax County Public School Board, Dr. Reed, staff, students, and parents. As-salamu alaykum.

[02:03:03] Peace be unto you. My name is Shelly McKinney, founder of Mom Network and a mother of a graduate of FCPS. Unfortunately, I can't join you all this evening, but I didn't want this opportunity to pass without recognizing your efforts. On behalf of the United Muslim Network, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who worked diligently over the last six years on the calendar, which better reflects our community's richness and diversity. A few weeks ago, Muslim students and staff didn't have to decide between either their faith, work, or school. As Muslims

[02:03:39] and community organizers, I cannot overstate how much this decision means to us. For the first time every student and staff member who observes Eat All Fitter had the opportunity to fully celebrate this important holiday with their families and loved ones. Students didn't have to worry about infringing on their perfect attendance or missing necessary tests or assignments. The decision to include Eat All Fitter as a recognized holiday in FCPS calendar sends a powerful message of inclusivity and acceptance and shows you value and respect the

[02:04:16] diversity of communities you serve. We would also like to thank FCPS administrators and teachers who went above and beyond to accommodate our students during Ramadan. As a result we've heard from many children and parents in the community and for the first time many have felt seen. This has positively impacted countless families and will help foster a more inclusive and welcoming community. We look forward to working with you all to continue what

[02:04:46] we started thank you thank you everybody for coming to speak to us agenda item 4.02 strategic

[02:05:00] plan update i call on dr reed for the strategic plan update good evening madam chair and it's uh we're getting right down to the wire here on our strategic plan um we'll take a look at our key milestones and essentially we are finishing with the final feedback survey which will be closing

[02:05:39] May 17th. It was launched on April 27th and so far we've had 114,693 online surveys submitted throughout this planning process. I want to thank our board for their hard work this week and in all the prior sessions. The discussions all day this week represented the deep commitments I know that each and every one of you have to our students, staff, and families here in the community. It's really exciting to see this work come together. The final strategic plan feedback survey will stay open as I mentioned till May 17th.

[02:06:18] Current parents, caregivers, staff and students should check their email for their secure link and the link to the survey is also on our website for community members if they would like to weigh in and we're getting very close to the final vote on this so we really encourage our students, staff and community to weigh in to stay connected with this important strategic planning work we invite our community to tune in to the following meetings and make sure that as we think about the three upcoming meetings we're going to be really looking at pillars I believe at our next work session opportunity and

[02:06:54] then the plan will be presented as new business on May 25th with a board vote on June 15 that will set our course till 2030 so that is the report on strategic planning madam chair thank you very much dr. Reed miss Cohen sorry um I just wanted to mention that last night at ACSD I had an opportunity to mention some of the changes that you had suggested and one thing I wanted to highlight for a very special contingency in our in our audience was your

[02:07:30] FOR INCLUDING INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOLS IN OUR GOAL NUMBER ONE MODEL. SO I JUST WANTED TO HIGHLIGHT, I KNOW YOU ALL HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT, BUT I DID WANT TO HIGHLIGHT THAT THAT WAS ADDED AND THE BOARD APPROVED THAT CHANGE.

[02:07:53] THANK YOU, MS. COHEN. PAUSE TO MAKE SURE NO ONE ELSE WISHES TO SPEAK BEFORE I TAKE MY TURN. THANK YOU. AND I WILL JUST BRIEFLY SAY ONE, WHAT MS. COHEN SAID, I WAS VERY EXCITED AT OUR LAST RETREAT THAT WE DID ADD INCLUSIVE IN OUR goal one around preschools I will just say it is something I've been advocating for since my son was in a special education preschool and the second year ever I believe the preschool autism class so it is a long time coming and thank you for your advocacy on that piece of it and I wanted to thank you Dr. Reed I want to thank your staff for all the work on the strategic plan I

[02:08:32] believe if I may ask a question it's over a hundred thousand touch points is that correct in terms of the strategic plan well over a hundred and twenty thousand actually 120,000 touch points on the strategic plan so we as a board committed very strongly back in September we start our first retreat in August and committed in September that we really wanted the strategic plan to be a place an avenue for bringing the community together and hearing the community's voices and getting the community and our schools and our students and our staff to come together on what our vision for the future of public schools are so I'm really excited to see this work come to fruition I

[02:09:11] I THANK YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR ALL THE HARD WORK AND I THANK THE COMMUNITY FOR ALL THE VOICES IN GETTING US HERE. SO WITH THAT I WILL MOVE ON TO AGENDA ITEM 4.03 WHICH IS ACADEMIC MATTERS AND I'LL CALL ON YOU DR. REED FOR ACADEMIC MATTERS. THANK YOU MADAM CHAIR AND I APPRECIATE THE GRATITUDE FOR OUR STAFF.

[02:09:29] FOLKS HAVE WORKED REALLY HARD TO CREATE A REALLY ROBUST ITERATIVE PROCESS WITH OUR STRATEGIC PLAN. SO I AM THRILLED AS ALWAYS TO PRESENT ACADEMIC MATTERS. And this evening, I want to share with you a report on Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and our PSAT/SAT testing because there are some updates.

[02:09:52] So one of the things I want to make sure that our community knows is that students who enroll in these classes, AP or IB, and those that participate in the program exams are more likely to graduate high school on time, enroll in post-secondary programs at higher rates, also are able to matriculate through post-secondary education in a more efficient manner so there are really a number of compelling reasons why our students take ap or ib courses and exams one of

[02:10:25] the things i wanted to share was some data from 2019 through 2022 to look at essentially our numbers based on ap programs and the pandemic impact as well as our rebounding efforts the graph that you'll have an opportunity to look at takes us from 2019 through last spring in 2022 and we have moved from providing 37 000 exams to just over 35 000 exams and so the mean score

[02:10:59] has moved from a 3.47 to a 3.32. We are proud that we have improved from 2021 and certainly to a 72% passing rate, which we're feeling very strong, very good about. However, we have work to do because in 2019 we're at 77% and of course we'd like to be closer to 100% in terms of numbers of three fours and fives on our AP exams our international baccalaureate exams as we look at you can see some similar data in 2019 we had

[02:11:39] 9000 exams provided and in 2022 last spring about 8800 so again we're rebounding since the 2021 year and it's at this point our 4.23 mean score is very close to the 4.22 in 2019 again 73% of our students are passing we do have work to do in that area but we're considering as we rebound post pandemic that this is really strong progress coming back want to remind our community

[02:12:15] that our board is committed to excellence equity and opportunity and therefore we do invest in these opportunities the first six AP and IB exams are funded for any student enrolled in an AP or IB course here in Fairfax County, and if our students are qualified for free and reduced meals, they don't pay any exam fees for additional exams beyond the first six. Interestingly, the College Board is starting to offer digital exam administration for certain tests, and FCPS is going to be piloting these uses this month. This is going to actually

[02:12:53] be a fairly significant shift in practice and so we're really having an opportunity to share with our community earlier and earlier about what might be a good preparation for that I also want to share that the commitment that our board our elected board has made to equitable access to PSAT and SAT school day testing has been really a critical feature of planning for post-secondary Secondary and one of the things not only does our division pay for the exams, but because we hold them during the school day

[02:13:30] Transportation is not a barrier to students who wish to take these exams What I want to share this year is that the 10th and 11th grade exams for the first time will be digital this year For the PSAT exam and one of the things that's going to be very important For our students to understand is that for accommodations We want to make sure students who are having IEP conversations this spring or who anticipate wanting accommodations in their PSAT exam make sure they get those accommodations put in this spring as we prepare for registration for next

[02:14:08] fall's digital exam. One of the reasons we chose this for academic matters this evening is to make sure we have broad community conversation around the importance of making sure we attend to these accommodations this spring so that we're able to implement those accommodations in a digital format in the fall our 12th graders of course will continue with the SAT school day which remains paper and pencil this year but we are told we'll be moving to digital in the coming years so big changes on the assessment front want to remind

[02:14:43] families students and staff also that are watching this evening that we do have PSAT and SAT resources for families these are no-cost resources and they are linked to the presentation which will which will be posted on our school board site and these resources many students use to support planning even over the summer if we want to spend a beautiful summer day taking a walk a hike getting out in nature and then logging in and thinking about your PSAT or SAT prep

[02:15:20] Ms. Togby I know that that's something that we might do I know I see that well that's because you've graduated you're not taking them again so coming soon we want to provide communication around the process and timeline again another point about applying for accommodations for the high schools for rising 10th through 12th grade students to make sure that those are available for these key exams and that

is academic matters for this evening thank you dr reed mr frisch thank you um i guess it's logical that as we continue to invest

[02:15:57] in our uh you know paying for the psat that we have a vested interest in in making sure that we recognize the achievement of our students one of the things that is apparent in the data tonight in your presentation is that we're working hard to expand access to these tests and opportunities for all of our students I'm curious particularly when it comes to the SAT how are we working to make sure that as we do expand access to the SAT in particular that we are better preparing all students with test taking skills and strategies to make sure that they have everything they

[02:16:34] need to take advantage of these post-secondary opportunities that are intrinsic in the exam. Thank you Mr. Frisch and I think what what you're asking I think is you're affirming that we are committed to providing these exams which are so critical for post-secondary matriculation in many cases. What we also know is that there have been inequitable opportunities for students to access test prep programs, which often exist in the community, and are a pay-for prep program. One of the reasons I shared all the options on the screen that are a no-charge

[02:17:10] preparation program would be for families to realize that students have options. I do think, though, as you're making mention of that, there's really probably no substitute for that face-to-face tutoring and support around the algorithms and strategies for the PSAT or SAT exam.

[02:17:29] And we're currently exploring what those more intensive, intentional preparatory programs might look like and how do we make sure that students across the division have access to those. So I appreciate you raising that up. Well, I appreciate the presentation tonight. Thank you.

[02:17:47] Thank you. Dr. Anderson? Thank you. Just kind of along the lines of some of Mr. Fisher's questioning, I'M LOOKING AT I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE SLIDE NUMBER IS BUT THE ONE WITH THE AP PLACEMENT EXAM INFORMATION WHERE OBVIOUSLY WE ARE INCREASING NUMBER OF EXAMS THAT ARE BEING TAKEN FROM LAST YEAR PARTICULARLY FROM 21 BUT NOT YET AT THE PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS BUT WE ALSO SEE AN INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS THAT ARE PASSING MY QUESTION IS DO WE HAVE A GOAL IT'S FINE TO SEE THESE NUMBERS BUT I'M WONDERING WHAT IS THAT DOES

[02:18:25] Does a division have a goal that will have x percentage because it's hard to give it, I think, an exact number. But do we have a target that we're trying to to reach in terms of the number of exams and the percentage of students passing those exams? So thank you, Dr. Anderson.

[02:18:42] I don't believe we have a target at the moment. Of course, we always want to see as many students passing the exams as possible. And I think we're currently involved in the assessment of where do these AP courses live, where are they offered, because we can't increase the number of students taking the exams if we're not offering the courses.

[02:19:04] So there's a great deal of discussion, particularly connected to our new strategic plan, around looking at course taking patterns across our secondary schools throughout the division. No, thank you for that. actually forecasted my next question which is how do we increase the opportunity so thank you you also talked about the exams that are going to be now virtually not virtually digitally administered does that provide a savings to us if that is the format I'm not aware of that providing a savings to

[02:19:40] us in fact it's the only way they're going to offer it so it's really if our our students are going to participate in the PSAT exam that's the exclusive manner in which they'll be able to take it. What I will say is we have been told that the turnaround for scoring will be more efficient on a digital platform so perhaps we may move into a different type of layered notification strategy as well. I definitely remembered when the SOLs went digital and how quickly you can get the assessments teachers were literally lining up at the door after school to KNOW HOW THEIR CLASSES DID SO I THINK WE'LL GET THE SAME HERE AND AS

[02:20:18] SOMEONE WHO'S ADMINISTERED THE AB AND IB TESTS AND THE MANPOWER THAT IT REQUIRES TO REALLY ADDRESS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ARE TAKING THIS HAVING A AN ELECTRONIC ADMINISTRATION WILL BE VERY HELPFUL AND WILL REDUCE I THINK THE THE BURDEN ON OUR SCHOOLS TO PRODUCE PROCTORS ET CETERA SO VERY EXCITED TO HEAR THAT THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU DR. ANDERSON MISS COHEN I JUST WANT TO TAKE A QUICK second to thank our staff we had the first AP exam ever in our home this week

[02:20:54] and I was beyond impressed at the staff who ran reviews at night and had the kids long log on ran some during the weekend I mean really went out of their way in times when I know they have to be exhausted to make sure that every kid in their class this was AP world felt like they were prepared for the test and as a parent I I just I can't say enough about how much we appreciate it because we would have been very poor preparers for our son's AP world history test so thank

[02:21:29] you thank you staff thank you miss Cohen thank you miss Corbett Sanders thank you madam chair and thank you Dr. Reed this was a very informative presentation have a couple of questions first I was pleased to see the AP and IB but what's missing here is the dual enrollment and we know that for many of our students dual enrollment is a guaranteed college credit and we know that we are working towards trying to make sure that if that they can get as much as an

[02:22:06] associate's degree while they're in high school and so I would hope at some point in the future you would come back and give a focus on the dual enrollment. Secondly, I'm very pleased to hear about the digital administration of the test, but I do have a concern, and I don't think you're going to have the answer tonight, but I'm just going to put it out there.

[02:22:30] We have many children with IEPs and 504s and accommodations for test taking, and I would like to understand what we're going to do to ensure that as we migrate to a digital environment that those accommodations are provided oftentimes there is a different impact on how students process information based on it being on a on a screen versus in by hand and I don't know are you planning on having any accommodations where a student could take

[02:23:08] it purely by hand or is that not an option anymore? I'm not sure that we know but these things will be probably dictated by College Board and we'll work with them closely once we get the list of accommodations. There will probably be some accommodations that are more easy for staff to meet with digital but you YOU ARE CORRECT, THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN DIFFERENT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PAPER AND PENCIL HAVE BEEN NEEDED.

[02:23:37] SO WE'LL HAVE TO GET BACK TO YOU ON IT. THANK YOU, MS. I WOULD ALSO INDICATE THAT DR. BOYD HAS ALERTED ALL OF OUR CASE MANAGERS, IEP CASE MANAGERS, TO MAKE SURE THIS IS A TOPIC IN IEPs FOR THOSE STUDENTS WHO WILL BE TAKING THE EXAM.

[02:23:54] I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THAT, DR. BOYD, IN TERMS OF OUR PLAN TO COMMUNICATE THAT TO IEP CASE MANAGERS AND 504 CASE MANAGERS. We're going to be working through our special ed department chairs to make sure that information gets out not only to case managers, but to department chairs that support them and our APs and our PSLs that support schools.

[02:24:16] So again, that multi-level layer, given, as Ms. Clamenco said, accommodations requested through the college board, that process oftentimes is much different than accommodations for SOLs and things like that. So making sure that everybody understands the process and also the timing for applying for those accommodations to ensure timely application.

[02:24:40] Thank you, Dr. Boyd. Given that these tests are usually administered in October and it takes sometimes a couple of months to get the accommodations, I would ask that prior to students going home over the summer that there be a notice provided to families of ninth graders as well as the information posted on every one of our high school websites so that they're aware of the change to digital and they can make the appropriate planning or do the appropriate planning.

[02:25:14] And before I let you go, I do want to just celebrate that one of our students from West Potomac, Sarah Nagda, did receive a National Merit Scholarship just yesterday. SO THANK YOU FOR THE HARD WORK OF THE STAFF AND TEACHERS AND EVERYBODY IN REALLY SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS AND THEIR SUCCESSES.

[02:25:38] THANK YOU. MS. CURBET SANDERS. THANK YOU. BEFORE I TAKE MY TURN, I'LL LET MS. TAUGHBY SPEAK. I SEE YOUR LIGHT IS ON. SO PLEASE GO AHEAD. THANK YOU. SO MY QUESTION WAS BASED OFF OF THE CHANGES TO THE ASSESSMENT FRONT AND I GUESS MY CONCERN was kind of will we will we have some sort of uh testing way to see if all of our schools can handle that type of testing power i mean you're going to need laptops and rooms you're going to need outlets are we going to have enough sources things like that i mean at my school even when we

[02:26:13] took the sat uh which was paper and pencil we had students in almost every classroom so it's like how are we how are we going to ensure that we can support as much as that many students online on the wi-fi and things like that great question Ms. Togby and our IT uh chief information officer uh Gotham Sethi is working with the technical department and their load testing even this spring to make sure this is going to be possible awesome okay good to hear and then Corbett Sanders beat me to my question about DE courses but yeah I definitely want to see those

[02:26:50] numbers or at least next year and how they're included and compared to AP and IB courses as a DE loving student myself so we do have a dual enrollment presentation teed up uh what we don't have are like exams for those that are calibrated beyond the division so uh that is a separate report but stay tuned it's coming thank you to take a pause to make sure no one wishes to speak before i take my turn all right seeing no other lights or hands up i will briefly take my turn

[02:27:27] And I will say, as the parent of a child who did take a walk in the summer and come home and hop on Khan Academy to teach herself coding and take an SAT prep, I think it's really important to, I did not have anything to do with that, but I think it's really important to highlight all of these free amazing resources that we have for students.

[02:27:46] I've heard from students here that they've learned the code on tutor.com I've learned students have learned to Many many items on Khan Academy and it's all free So I'm really glad that we highlighted

that I wanted to bring up in terms of the IEP five or accommodations I'm really glad miss Corbett Sanders brought that up and I wanted to piggyback I didn't hear and and I apologize if I missed it Counselors in that list of people being notified but counselors I think are the ones in charge of 504s So if I missed it my apologies, but I wanted to make sure that was included my apologies I omitted them in the list, please forgive me. No, no, it's okay

[02:28:22] I just wanted to make sure that that information got to counselors as well for the five reports and and I can't lift up How important that is because some of these IEPs are already done, right? Right because we start the IEPs in January So some of these are done and we may have to go back and add an addendum if now we need to talk about What accommodate because often the testing accommodations Depending on the conversation, they may not be done for digital exams, right?

[02:28:49] They may be, and also we probably, I would advocate some sort of advocacy with College Board around students who do need paper, pencil for an accommodation. I don't know if those conversations with College Board have been happening, but I do know there are students who have paper and pencil as their accommodations for SOL.

[02:29:07] So I didn't, I just want to ask that question to see if we're advocating there. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I know Dr. Presidio and his team have been in connection with the College Board about those possibilities, and those are still under discussion, but that outreach has occurred.

[02:29:23] And the reason I'm bringing this up this evening is because we have a plan to push this information out this spring with the understanding that a number of IEP conferences, as they're done annually, have already occurred, so we want to make sure that we don't miss anyone. So I I understand the the ask and we'll work on it.

[02:29:41] I think just to be explicit like and that, you know, this not just for IEPs that are coming up, but take a look at those. And the other piece is to be explicit that to the teams that we don't know if College Board is going to allow paper and pencil accommodations. And so they need to consider that as they're looking at accommodations on the IEP that they may have to figure out accommodations for digital.

[02:30:00] So just a couple of things to put out there. I won't tell you how to do your job anymore, but, you know, just a couple of things. So I appreciate all of this. This is really, really wonderful. Thank you, Dr. Reid, for your presentation. Thank you to staff as well for the information. Thank you. With that, we'll move on to agenda item 4.04, Student Representative Matters.

[02:30:18] And I'll call on Ms. Togby. Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening and happy Thursday, everyone. This past weekend, I got to attend the Special Education PTA Awards, and I have to say that was an absolutely beautiful ceremony. I went with one of my peers and there was a moment where we both teared up. It was truly just a beautiful moment. Listening to the impacts and contribution from APs and instructors and educators was just a critical experience for myself personally, and I think we all just had a wonderful time together. We also got to hear a couple highlighted lines from nominations that came from the people who

[02:30:57] submitted the nominations, and they really did just warm my heart. Last week I got to attend the all-star Lake Braddock girls soccer team senior night and I have to say it it was an honor to watch them run out of the very very large inflatable bear that they sprinted out of definitely an experience of the light

time and they went on to beat the Robinson Rams so horns were down sorry robo tonight I wanted to talk a little bit more about the mental health and and wellness aspect within our school communities.

[02:31:32] I know we recently launched our collaboration with Hazel Health, and I wanted to highlight the wellness aspect more specifically. Wellness can look like a multitude of things. It can look like having class periods outside to ensuring that the food and lunch lines are not only filling, but nutritious for students.

[02:31:50] And these small things all play a role in emotional, psychological, social well-being, And that affects how we think, how we feel, how we act. And it's so important that you all, as a board, support a culture of wellness within our schools.

[02:32:07] I don't need to go over the numbers and rehash the data to you all, because I know you guys know this. And I know you're all also working hard to promote that environment of well-being. But as someone who's getting ready to leave a building that I was in for four years, I can't emphasize it enough that there needs to be a cultural shift within the environments.

[02:32:30] I also recently got to have a reflection-based meeting with all the students that were chosen to serve on the advisory committees for this school year. I got to hear some amazing notes about how students felt as though they were actually in a space where their day-to-day experiences within the classroom, within the hallways, were actually seen as a critical point of view, but also welcomed, which is, to be completely frank, does not happen very often, and it's incredibly disappointing that it doesn't.

[02:32:58] But this year, I took a different approach than the other student representatives before me when it came to applications, because I really wanted to focus on finding students that I knew would have a unique and important perspective to bring to each committee. And I felt as though I did exactly that.

[02:33:13] So I'm super proud of all the work that they've done, and I know that they are too. And I'm very, very excited to just gotten to have known each and every one of them. And lastly, I know that it is production season for spring shows, so I will be at Woodson this weekend to watch "Little Shop of Horrors."

[02:33:31] So please check out your local school's website to support their theater departments. - Thank you, Ms. Togby, and I see as busy as ever. Thank you very much. I will move on to agenda item 4.05, superintendent matters, and I will call on Dr. Reed.

[02:33:48] - Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanna start by sharing that recently, since last we met, I attended the annual Hoop It Up night basketball competition at Glasgow Middle School. And I must say, Principal Powell has moves.

[02:34:05] He actually, the students versus staff games, the games were incredibly exciting. And the Glasgow gym was rocking that evening. To the theater point, I've had a chance to see Mama Mia at Madison High School.

[02:34:23] Frozen at Langston Hughes Middle School, The Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe at Falls Church, and then Southlakes High School put on Bright Star, and I had a chance to be there last Friday evening, and they're all amazing shows. So I'm actually kind of excited that Little Shop of Horrors is at Woodson.

[02:34:40] That should be a fabulous show. Last Saturday I had a chance to go out on the Occoquan, I think I'm pronouncing that correctly, For the Sandy Run Regional Park to watch our VSRA rowers for the

regatta and had a great time.

[02:34:58] Met with the Justice High School crew team as well as the McLean team. In terms of getting ready, I got to carry some oars for the McLean team. It was a great day on the water, very calm, and just a beautiful, beautiful scene.

[02:35:14] Had a chance to spend some time at the Nike Invitational Track Meet as well. that afternoon at South Lakes High School before going to the Special Education Awards put on by SEPTA, which as I agree with Ms. Togby, was a very inspirational evening.

[02:35:30] Also had a chance to be at Fairhill Elementary School recently to plant several trees, although I must say I didn't do much planting, Mr. Frisch and I, and a number of families were there. Big thank you to Principal Ted Cooper for the invitation.

[02:35:46] We had a great time. Last Saturday, I had a chance to visit Park Lawn Elementary and Bailey's Elementary with board member Dr. Anderson. And we had a great time watching work in classrooms and just seeing what kids were up to.

[02:36:04] Just some amazing work. And at Gunston Elementary School, recently we had a chance to attend an AVID showcase. and students were so excited to share with us how organized they were and how important that organization was, so that was a big excitement.

[02:36:22] On Saturday, April 29th, our Department of Special Services hosted their 18th Annual Special Education Conference with the theme of unity within our FCPS community, every student, every educator, every family. It was a fabulous day of learning.

[02:36:37] And then I recently had an opportunity to attend the Open Door Presbyterian Church International Festival, which is an event held annually in Herndon. And there were thousands of people at that event as well and had a chance to provide some art awards for a number of young students who produced some incredible art with the theme being empathy.

[02:36:58] So finally, just want to share that this past Monday we had a community conversation at South Lakes on safety and security. And I really want to thank Tom Vaccarello, our director of safety and security, and staff, and those that attended.

[02:37:13] I think it was a really thoughtful conversation. And lastly, this past Wednesday, I had the opportunity to join the We Honor You retirement celebration for all of our employees that were retiring with over 3,000 years of experience.

[02:37:30] Pretty epic event, and just had an opportunity to meet a number of amazing people committed to this community. so that is my report madam chair thank you very much dr reed i appreciate it and like i said to miss togby busy as ever so um we will move on then to agenda item 4.06 fiscal year 24 budget and just as a reminder to my colleagues and to the public we will be having a public hearing on the fiscal year 2024 budget on may 16th 2023 and a work session on may 18th 2023 if you'd like

[02:38:04] like to sign up to testify at the May 16th public hearing, you may do so at www.fcps.edu backslash school dashboard. I will now call on you, Dr. Reed, for an introduction. Thank you, Madam Chair. Ms. Burden and I are going to tag team the budget, so I'll step up and Ms. Burden

[02:38:22] and I will respond to questions. So good evening, and early today as I was turning the corner to go

[02:38:57] to a meeting I ran into several staff members who were really excited and said well this is a really big day and I said well it's Thursday I know and they said no it's the budget day so they were really excited so I became obviously much more animated about this topic and really excited to have the opportunity to present to you this evening our approved budget for fiscal year 2024 I I want to begin by thanking our budget chair, Ms. Tolan, for her leadership and steady guidance

[02:39:32] through this process this year, and her assistants, Ms. Stella Pekarski, who helped with the budget this year, and just really, this is just a huge task and really appreciate the steady leadership. I want to thank Lee Burden and Matthew Norton, as well as Alice Woodington and Marty Smith For their leadership from the staff side and if Brian's watching I want to thank our chief executive Brian Hill Who's worked closely with me and it really supported?

[02:40:04] Our budget process so this evening. I'm pleased to present this We are continuing the journey of ensuring that every student receives an equitable education That's both excellent inclusive and respectful where Our students again can achieve the vision and mission of our division. So as I begin, I want to share the Funds available summary we have had to make some adjustments in the way of our Budget ask in the sense that we've had County transfer somewhat of a reduction

[02:40:43] And this is we do have a fully funded budget for those continuing items for our budget But we are still looking at several, because of our skinny budget from the state, we are not entirely sure of our state revenues at this time, which I understand is a bit unusual in the Commonwealth.

[02:41:02] So, one of the things we're having to make up for as well is the funding for, to cover the current, what do I want to call, error, the state calculation error, which is something that we have to account for because we're not yet sure how the state will make that up or if they will this summer.

[02:41:24] So we're hopeful, of course, that they will, but we have to make plans in the event that they might not. So I want to be clear that these items have been adjusted to account for that. In terms of the reducing of the retention bonus of the $19 million, I do know that our county partners are committed to taking another look at that ONCE WE KNOW WHAT THE STATE IS PLANNING TO PROVIDE TO ATTEND TO THAT AND AGAIN WE HAVE NOT SEEN THOSE STATE NUMBERS YET BUT WE APPRECIATE THE COUNTY SUPPORT IN TAKING A LOOK AT THAT AND

[02:42:01] COMMITTING TO SUPPORTING THAT OPTION POTENTIALLY WITH YEAR-END FUNDS SO THE APPROVED BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS THIS WOULD BE CHANGED FROM FISCAL YEAR 23 APPROVED BUDGET IN MILLIONS BUT IT again it's been rounded but it focuses our efforts to continue to close achievement gaps for all students particularly those that widened during the pandemic additional investments have been included to give our youngest learners a strong start as well as investments for students whose learning was impacted by the pandemic while continuing to attract and maintain teachers

[02:42:40] and staff who are the backbone of this organization we it's very important both to our school division and the county to offer market competitive compensation because we know at this time we have unfilled positions and know that we need to meet market rate to have the best staff and educators working with our students so additional investments addressed in this budget include but are not limited to the safety and supervision of students, special education, salary supports, equitable access to literacy, accelerating math achievement, our lighthouse model innovation

[02:43:18] program, and get to green initiatives. Our revenue overview for fiscal year 24 reflects a county transfer increase of 144.1 million or 6.3 percent. This is primarily to fund the step increase for all eligible employees, a 3% market scale adjustment for all employees and comprehensive benefits.

[02:43:45] So I would also say that sort of as a reference note, the FY23 county transfer was 102.6 million or 4.7% of FY22. The state revenue is projected to increase by 65.5 million or 7.5%, however, due to technical updates for re-benchmarking, a 5% compensation supplement for SOQ-funded instructional and support personnel hold harmless funding for re-benchmarking and the elimination of the grocery tax based on the substitute budget. Our federal aid is projected to increase by 1.6

[02:44:23] million or 3.4% based on the current federal awards for Carl Perkins and IDEA grant awards, and the beginning balance and other revenue represent a net increase of 10.4 million due to a projected increase of $3.2 million in out-of-county tuition revenue from participating divisions for Thomas Jefferson High School, a projected increase of $1 million in Fairfax City tuition, and an increase of $6.2 million in the budget of beginning balance to partially mitigate the state aid shortfall.

[02:44:55] Again, I want to reiterate, we expect the state to make those calculation corrections as they have indicated they plan to, but we have to make sure that our budget is conservative in the sense in the, you know, the rare possibility that they don't.

[02:45:12] So the FY24 summary, again, our approved budget totals 3.5 billion and it's an increase of 221.7 million or 6.7% over our FY23 approved budget, primarily, again, remaining focused on compensation investments in early literacy and pre-k expansion as well as critical operational needs the county transfer increase will help sustain fcps as one of the nation's premier school divisions and a strong economic driver here in our northern virginia area our preliminary

[02:45:50] year-end recommendations again we remain committed to prioritizing investments in the achievement gap strategies and funding to support special education compensatory services additionally through the budget process as part of concerns raised at public hearings we support additional investments in the fine arts staff stipends a multi-year plan to add additional certificated athletic trainers for our secondary schools and an enhancement to administrators and schedule C salary scales to retain our administrators and provide competitive

[02:46:28] compensation unfortunately due to the state budget shortfall we're not able to include these priorities in the approved budget recommendations however we are working to utilize these as a follow-on motion as part of the approved budget adoption to prioritize your end funding to support these initiatives so the budget calendar just a reminder that we are doing the approved budget being presented to the school board this evening the board as madam chair indicated on May 16th will hold their public hearing on the budget the 18th

[02:47:07] the work session and again I think we'll have a chance to get into more of the details in that work session format for questions and then on May 25th the school board will approve the budget or adopt the approved budget in July 1 FY 24 begins that is the budget presentation and miss Burton and I stand ready to respond to questions thank you I look forward to really digging into this at the work session but in the meantime I'll turn to mr. thank you dr.

[02:47:46] Reid for taking us through this and for all your work on this I did want to take another opportunity just to thank our counterparts at the county our board of READVISORS AND BRIAN HILL AT

THE COUNTY FOR BEING GENEROUS WITH US AND CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION AS WE LOOK AT YEAR-END FUNDS AT THE COUNTY LEVEL AND WITH OUR FUNDS AS WELL.

[02:48:13] AND JUST WAITING TO SEE WHAT THE STATE IS UP TO. APPRECIATE THEIR PARTNERSHIP FOR SURE. I DO WANT TO THANK YOU FOR LOOKING AT SOME OF THESE PRELIMINARY YEAR-END RECOMMENDATIONS

[02:48:27] BASED ON ALL OF THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WE'VE BEEN HAVING AROUND FINE ARTS STIPENDS THE ATHLETIC TRAINERS AND DOING SOMETHING FOR ADMINISTRATORS SO I THINK IT'S NICE THAT THAT'S IN THERE AND YOU KNOW WE CAN CONTINUE CONVERSATIONS ON YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE MIGHT END UP IN YOUR END I KNOW PERHAPS WITH YOUR CONVERSATIONS EARLIER THIS WEEK AROUND SAFETY AND SECURITY THAT MIGHT BE SOMETHING WE COULD LOOK AT TOO WITH OUR AUDIT COMING IN THE AUDIT RESULTS COMING IN THE FALL.

[02:48:59] but anyway thank you so much thank you to our budget staff for all the work that you've done on this and i look forward to having our work session with my colleagues to see um you know what the further discussions will be thank you miss tollen and i again want to reiterate our appreciation for our county partners for fully funding our ongoing expenses we really appreciate that thank you miss corbett sanders yes thank you and thank you miss tollen uh miss burden And the whole team, it has been a tougher budget year than I think anybody could have expected.

[02:49:38] I was talking to some policymakers at the county level today, and it has only been one other time in the past 23 years where we were not likely to have a fully budget from the state by the time that we start our new fiscal year.

[02:50:01] And so these are unprecedented times, and I know that's frustrating and challenging, but I am impressed with your ability to navigate this and looking at chunking it a bit. I am concerned that we still do not know how we will be made whole as a result of the accounting error.

[02:50:26] And so I guess that's what you call the accounting error at the Department of Ed, for want of a better term. And I just am optimistic. But the last thing I would like to do is personally thank the Board of Supervisors and the taxpayers of Fairfax County.

[02:50:46] Because the taxpayers of Fairfax County are the ones who cover, what is it, 73% of the cost of Fairfax County public schools because of the generosity. AND I WAS VERY PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE COUNTY SUPPORTED OUR OPERATIONAL NEEDS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME WERE ABLE TO LOWER THE PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR PEOPLE THAT WERE CONCERNED ABOUT IT.

[02:51:13] AND SO IT'S A GOOD PARTNERSHIP AND I APPRECIATE IT. THANK YOU. MS. BAKARSKI? YEAH, I'LL JUST SAY THANK YOU, DR. REED, AND TO OUR STAFF. IT IS FRUSTRATING THAT WE FIND OURSELVES HERE. I was actually recently at a public meeting where one of the budget, the state budget conferees was there and commented that he personally felt no pressure to get a state budget passed or put together.

[02:51:43] So it is unfortunate that our state folks don't understand the impact that it has on local schools and the work we do here. SO THANK YOU FOR BEING AGILE AND TRYING TO WORK AROUND THAT. AND HOPEFULLY THINGS WILL FALL INTO PLACE.

[02:52:00] BUT I JUST WANT TO SAY THANK YOU. THANK YOU, MS. BEKARSKI. I THINK WE HAVE REALLY GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE INTERSECTION OF NOT HAVING A SECURE PREDICTABLE STATE BUDGET WITH NEEDING TO HIRE.

[02:52:16] BECAUSE WITH THIS SHORTAGE OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS AND NOT BEING REALLY CLEAR ABOUT THE REVENUE IN MANY YOU KNOW IN SOME AREAS FOR SURE IT JUST MAKES IT THAT MUCH MORE CHALLENGING I THINK TO MAKE SURE WE'RE FULLY STAFFED THANK YOU VERY MUCH AND I'LL TAKE A MINUTE TO PAUSE TO SEE MAKE SURE MY OTHER COLLEAGUES WISH TO SPEAK BEFORE I TAKE MY TURN MS. MCCLOUGHLIN GO AHEAD I JUST WANTED TO GET CLARIFICATION SO THIS YOU KNOW IS THE PRESENTATION

[02:52:52] COMPONENT OF THEN THE BOARD HAVING WORK SESSION WHERE WE CAN REALLY DIVE IN AND ASK QUESTIONS so um i would just say that things that continue to be a concern for me is that uh we know um looking at the the national economic landscape that uh this year is a really good year but um the forecast is not looking as promising for the following year as we will roll into for the very first time um collective bargaining so i i do hope dr reed because uh you haven't even been here a year yet

[02:53:32] but i think you've heard my advocacy consistently that we cannot keep looking at our budget as it's a a um sacrosanct you know entity and we'll just keep layering on however much money we can you know bring on um i think at some point um some of us have said over time that we need to to be looking at what is state and federally mandated and that's our base because that will always have to be in that budget and then we have to holistically look at all of our competing

[02:54:06] needs and I do hope that with the passing of the strategic plan that it won't be just in words but in action that that your team will really understand that we can't just keep getting the same budget year after year and just layer on new money I just I do think that we would benefit from looking at where we are having the best return on investment to help our students and compensate our valuable staff but I I don't think in my time that I've really seen intentionality there and I'm hoping we will

[02:54:46] it'll be really my last time voting voting in May on this budget and then it's gonna be the next board carry on the work thank you thank you miss McLaughlin and thank you for all the work you've done for 12 years so again seeing no other hands that wish to speak I will go ahead and take my turn and I just wanted to say I know we have a work session so save most of my thoughts and comments there but I wanted to thank you and your staff and for our budget

[02:55:22] Chair and Vice Chair, Ms. Toll and Ms. Vekarski for all the hard work to get us to this point. And I do want to thank the Board of Supervisors for their strong support. It is unprecedented and difficult time. I'm very impressed at your team's nimbleness in adapting and adapting again with our budget without knowing full numbers.

[02:55:40] But I appreciate the Board of Supervisors for expressing a strong support for our schools and a strong support for our teachers, understanding that they really are the backbone. We can't have an excellent education without supporting excellent teachers. And so I appreciate that they're really supportive of our schools and our staff.

[02:55:56] So with that, I thank you very much for the presentation, Dr. Reid, and thank you. Thank you. You may not want to go too far. We're going to go to agenda item 4.07. If you have information to bring, it's regulation two point two six zero one students rights and responsibilities, SRNR.

[02:56:15] And just also a reminder, we'll have a work session on the proposed changes to the students' rights and responsibilities on May 23, 2023. For more information on the changes to date, I will call on Dr. Reed for the introduction. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[02:56:30] I'll be introducing Dr. Boyd, who's going to come up and provide the presentation. I want to share with the board that, as is our tradition, this is the first presentation of the student rights and responsibilities. We do have several meetings scheduled to continue our work on this and our principals will be continuing to provide feedback.

[02:56:53] So this is our first iteration. And we also have a work work session scheduled on this topic. So Dr. Boyd is going to be fairly succinct in this presentation, because as it's been noted, we do have a work session opportunity to review in more detail the student rights and responsibilities.

[02:57:14] I also want to share that I know we had a meeting even this morning where we're really looking at likely as response to conversations and concerns around discipline. We really are looking at working with our principals to be more clear about what the expectations are around behavior, clear around our consequences, because the consequences are only going to be effective if the behavior changes.

[02:57:41] And we're realizing that we have some work to do, so there will be some adjustments, I believe, that you'll see after this evening and after we continue our work and at our work session. So I'd like to introduce Dr. Boyd. Thank you, Dr. Reed, and good evening.

[02:57:59] Again, as Dr. Reed shared, I will be brief, fairly brief this evening. So if we'll move to the first slide, you see that we have a number of outlines that, again, we're just going to touch on very quickly. as we go to our first slide we do review our SRNR in an annual process in accordance with the model guidance and during that annual review process we look at legislative updates the model guidance and engage with a variety of stakeholders you can move forward to the next screen yes thank you and now moving on to slide four the review of the SRNR begins shortly after the start of the school

[02:58:35] year to ensure there is ample opportunity to engage with a variety of stakeholders to look at data and to have the legislative updates, as Dr. Reed shared, illustrated on the screen. We will have a work session on May 23rd.

[02:58:50] On our next slide, it shows the seven areas that we're going to review during this year. Moving forward to look at our first area of beliefs, belief statement. Ultimately, we've incorporated a belief statement that includes language at the beginning of the SRNR to really set a positive tone and really focuses on the fact that students can achieve their best in a positive and inclusive environment and that teaching is central to discipline really in ensuring that our students have the skills needed to make responsible decisions and problem solve.

[02:59:22] On the next slide, in addition to the belief statement, we have included seven values and those values include collective responsibility to model desired behaviors, respectful and restorative discipline practices, implementation of discipline in a differentiated and equitable manner and on the next slide explicitly condemning all forms of hate speech harassment hostility and marginalization and implementing discipline in a manner that's enforceable and effective finally in looking at our values we plan on implementing interventions that support accountability and restorative practices and implementing practices that foster mutual respect for all stakeholders

[03:00:01] our next area that we are proposing to revise is address code you'll see on the following slide we've highlighted some information from the Virginia code that we've really used to ground our thinking around the dress code and on the next slide we highlight some important areas in our revised dress code we highlight four categories required attire optional attire prohibited accessories and attire and dress code enforcement stakeholder responsibilities the detailed dress code can be found on board docs and is available for stakeholder consumption the next category that

[03:00:36] we have proposed revisions is within substance misuse and generally speaking there are two revisions the first is the addition of language that requires students to provide parental consent for the participation aod intervention within three school days to have a lesser consequence for first violations of substances excluding distribution the second area within substance misuse is that we have revised our minimum behavior response level to be similar to that and align with the minimum response level in the Virginia guidance and looking at discrimination and bias we have a couple of items here

[03:01:15] first we have revised the definition of discriminatory harassment to provide more specificity to ensure all stakeholders understand and have a clear understanding of what discriminatory harassment is similarly speaking the team is also establishing systems and processes on our next slide for students and families to report concerns relative to allegations of staff harassment or bias to students to ensure their systematic process and a documentation and follow-up process that is again implemented with fidelity the next area is hazing and bullying hazing ultimately we have aligned and revised

[03:01:52] our minimum SBAR level to reflect a level 5 only to be in alignment with the Virginia code and looking at our next slide on bullying we have provided some updates and it really talks about timelines and communication one to ensure that we are in alignment with some new legislation and certainly you'll see the details regarding reporting and parent notification outlined on the screen and looking at our next slide we've included some examples of definitions around power imbalance to again ensure all of our stakeholders have a better understanding and clarity around what bullying is and what it is not and our last piece within our

[03:02:31] substantive areas is hate speech we have included a requirement for intervention for first time hate speech violations where there will be that culturally responsive if we move to the next slide culturally responsive intervention so i know i've gone quickly through those major pieces here and then very quickly at the end we have highlighted some other proposed revisions if If we move to the next slide, we're going to first look at we've included a definition of the administrative response process in the SRNR to include all stakeholders understand.

[03:03:04] And we've also highlighted that this is a local voluntary process and is not a prerequisite to any dispute resolution options under the VDOE. We've also on the next slide made a clarification to ensure an alignment in our student administrative response table and our narrative narrative regarding the using of marijuana or THC oil to ensure that it allows for a level four response.

[03:03:29] And then finally a listing of other proposed revisions that are in our existing SRNR that are relatively minor in nature. On the next slide we've hyperlinked for your review and again for the community consumption. THE COMMUNITY SRNR SURVEY RESULTS AND AGAIN WE HAD APPROXIMATELY 13,000 PERSONS TO RESPOND TO THAT AND LAST WE HAVE A LISTING OF ALL OF THE SRNR DOCUMENTS THAT WE'VE SHARED WITH BOTH YOU AND THE PUBLIC ON TODAY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

[03:04:03] THANK YOU DR. BOYD. MS. MARIN. THANK YOU. I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST DR. REED AND DR. BOYD AT THE WORK SESSION THAT WE'RE GOING TO BE HAVING CAN YOU PLEASE PREPARE FOR THE BOARD THE INTERSECTION OF THE REGULATION WITH THE POLICY THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD HAS IT'S POLICY 2613 THAT DIRECTS THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ESTABLISH A DRESS CODE POLICY IT WAS LAST UPDATED IN 2016 WHICH UNFORTUNATELY IS MORE THAN THE FIVE YEARS THAT THE BOARD STRIVES TO REVIEW BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY THIS IS A DISCUSSION THAT WE'VE HAD ON

[03:04:38] THE BOARD FOR SOME TIME WHERE DOES THE LINE OF THE BOARD'S POLICY AND THE INTERPRETATION THE REGULATION GO IN TERMS OF THE BOARD SETTING THE VALUES BEHIND WHAT THEN DRIVE THE REGULATION you know given that it hasn't been reviewed in a while I have not experienced an SRNR regulation review process that ever speaks to the policy and so whether that's something that goes through governance or just something for your team to review really when I think of the conversations that governance has had I think that would benefit the conversation if you could please and I'm happy to hear other colleagues thoughts on that the other question I had or request is

[03:05:16] And I will, of course, review all the materials, Dr. Boyd, but, you know, in SRNR addressing student when students make poor choices and make threats, particularly threats of gun violence or violence in their schools, I don't know if that's explicit, but just given the caliber of everything lately, it just seems like we need to be more explicit about what happens in those instances.

[03:05:42] where does that fall on the discipline matrix and one other thing is there's been discussions around you know just hearings process and ensuring that's all you know shored up and serving our students in the best way I don't know if that comes during this part if it's related to when we update the SRNR but do we also review hearings processes and make changes and strengthen them depending on what comes forth in the regulation so those are my questions or my comments for your consideration, please, for the work session. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you,

[03:06:17] Ms. Marin. Ms. Omesh? Yeah, thank you. And thank you, Dr. Boyd, for some of the thoughtful changes here or proposed changes. I did want to ask about a couple of things. One, and I know I brought this up before, but maybe in advance of the work session, some time can be spent on it or some thought can be given to it um specifically on differentiating explicitly the differences in how we discipline uh possession of like a gun if it's not an actual firearm like if it's a bb gun or if

[03:06:54] it's a water gun or whatever it might be obviously there's a range of of types yes ma'am we'll be sure to have that prepared for you okay thank you so much and then the other p the other piece i I wanted to ask about was my understanding. So just to refresh my memory in terms of when a child is brought into the office or whatever for a certain accusation incident, our current policy is such that the administrator can speak to the child unless they're a special needs child,

[03:07:33] even if the parent is not first brought in, right? Correct. So yeah, that's another area that I really want to look into, like the possibility that we make that universal. I know we have the MOU, where, you know, for special ed kids specifically, that we have to contact their parents before we talk to them. But kids can be incriminating themselves for all kinds of things.

[03:07:57] They can be nervous, scared, whatever. They can say things. And we've certainly seen that in some cases. So that's one. Just in terms of bolstering student rights, at the end of the day, it is their parent

or guardian. And they're under 18, you know, potentially signing themselves up for a disciplinary procedure they might not even understand, or they might not know their rights.

[03:08:17] So that's one. And two, I'd love to hear your thoughts on is strengthening student rights again in saying that if we find a clear violation of our commitment on the on the part to the child's due process, then the charge the charge is dropped.

[03:08:38] And I'm thinking of three cases that I've come across, some of which the entire board has seen, where a special ed kid, the MOU was not honored and the parents were not notified, but they received the discipline anyway.

[03:08:55] So in that case, to me, it should be dropped, but that's not the case currently. So can you comment on the possibility of those two things? We'll certainly look at that. I want to make sure that I'm thoughtful on my statements, reflect our collaborative thinking. So, if it's okay, if we can follow up and provide that feedback at the work session, that would be preferable, if that's okay with you, Ms. Amesh.

[03:09:16] Would that be all right? Yeah, I guess just to be efficient, it would be useful if you could maybe give it some thought in advance of that, so that I'm not asking the same question and we're at the same stage right now. Yes, ma'am. I would certainly follow up.

[03:09:35] Do you have, okay, I don't know if you have any thoughts right now. So we'll definitely follow up. I do hear your concern that if there's procedural areas in the handling of conduct, can there be pretty much a waiver, if you will, for disciplinary consequence for students?

[03:09:55] I'll say that, again, and this is prior to consulting with our collaborative team, I think that in some instances that might put a greater safety risk for students, so we probably would not want to make that a blanketed statement, but we can certainly interrogate the process and be reflective and think on that before.

[03:10:11] our work session and follow-up. Can you just help me understand the safety risk? So, for example, if somebody did not have a parent available or parent present when they questioned the student, but the student had a weapon, dismissing or not providing disciplinary consequences if the student, for example, had a handgun, I'm not sure that we would want to do that, or some of the other severe infractions. But again, we want to have the opportunity to take the time to come back, collaborate, and just reflect on that process and be thoughtful about it. Yeah, I mean, I can imagine certain, you know, levels of that, right? And then those could be

[03:10:50] accepted if it's a safety issue. But I mean, a gun can be taken before the child is interrogated though, right? That's typically what would happen that the interrogation of the child or the writing the kind of witness statement, that kind of thing is separate from actually seizing the weapon, right? Ms. Amesh, that was your time. I'll let Dr. Boyd answer that question.

[03:11:09] Yes, yes, I certainly understand that we certainly would take those immediate precautions, but I think I initially heard you to say if there are procedural areas errors, excuse me, that we will dismiss the infraction or waive the infraction. And so, again, in those serious infractions, I don't know that we would want to do that, but I do hear you and we want to make sure that we're honoring students' rights and families' rights.

[03:11:31] And so, again, we'll continue to think about that and follow up with you. Certainly. Thank you. Ms. Keys-Gamara. Thank you. - I actually have one comment, but I'll follow up on my colleagues, just because I know I've had to go through some training regarding these type of cases.

[03:11:52] And I know that there's case law covering what guides the school system in their decisions and safety is, you know, the overriding concern. So perhaps that is something that can be, our council can help make sure that we understand or that we can understand where the balance is taking place in these decisions.

[03:12:20] I did want to talk a little bit about bullying because in a number of my conversations, I do hear parents trying to understand what is happening in terms of their understanding of bullying and what we're reporting and how we're investigating that.

[03:12:40] And so I'm wondering if perhaps we can talk a little bit about how we might enhance a parent's understanding. I know that it has certain requirements, it's repeated and et cetera. But I'm also wondering if we can tie that to our surveys in terms of how parents, as kids are perceiving it.

[03:13:04] So I'm just wondering how we can enhance that conversation, one, in hopes of educating our students eliminating bullying but also when parents are not understanding that we have some way for some guidance as to helping them understand why it fell in that category and why it didn't absolutely and actually we were speaking today when we met with MSPA about this very topic we know that bullying is an area of concern and any type of really conflict that might adversely impact school climate so we want to make sure that students understand what bullying is what conflict is how we're going to respond because whether it constitutes

[03:13:42] bullying or peer conflict or other things none of those are supportive to a positive learning environment and so we talked about developing videos or other materials that might be user-friendly around bullying because that has been an area that we know that we've had some concerns from families and trying to understand why something was or was not classified as bullying and then what is our responsibility as a school division so yes absolutely i i i would actually love um if we had the not only the videos but exercises where um you know kids are encouraged to put themselves

[03:14:19] in the position of the other person hearing what um how they might feel if it was them so i look forward to that development because i i feel as though in this age of us using devices and having less interaction we perhaps um have to work a little more on empathy and um so i look forward to hearing about those developments thank you i just hope we can enhance that conversation because i do think parents get frustrated uh when they see something that appears

[03:14:53] to be and is obviously harmful to their child but it doesn't fall in the definition of what bullying WOULD BE. THANK YOU. THANK YOU, MS. KEEZ-GAMARA. MS. CORBETT SANDERS. YES, THANK YOU.

[03:15:10] I TOO WAS INTERESTED IN THE DEFINITION OF BULLYING AND THE -- THERE'S SOME LANGUAGE ABOUT THE POWER BALANCE BETWEEN THOSE THAT ARE BULLYED AND THOSE THAT ARE BULLYING AND HOW THAT'S CONSTRUED AND I KNOW THAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT THAT AND SO I HOPE THAT WE CAN TALK ABOUT THAT IN MORE DETAIL AT THE WORK SESSION.

[03:15:34] The other piece that I wanted to talk a little bit about and -- or tee up for our work session is we have an expectation for students to attend school, but there's really nothing in our SRNR about the impact

of absenteeism, and especially given the changes made at the state level in addressing absenteeism and the accreditation of schools, I think it's really important for that shared responsibility and accountability model

[03:16:10] because most people think well if I miss school it only impacts me but the reality is that if you are chronically absent you not only put yourself and your ability to attain knowledge at risk but you put the accreditation of the school at risk and so if we could talk a little bit about that at the work session I think that's going to be really important for us to address that

[03:16:38] And then the third area, and you and I have gone back and forth as well as Dr. Reed, I think you know what I'm going to say, and that is that with the increase in the number of fights where instead of seeking help, the go-to is, oh, let me take a picture, let me videotape this, or I don't even think they call it videotaping anymore, sorry, just stated myself.

[03:17:08] Let me film this and put it out there, which I understand the excitement of being able to do that, but really if we're part of a civil society, we need to be part of the solution of going and getting help.

[03:17:26] AND SO I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME EXPECTATIONS ON SEEKING, YOU KNOW, ADVICE. WE HAD INTRODUCED BYSTANDER AWARENESS TRAINING A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO IN OUR CURRICULUM. WELL, NOW WE SHOULD HAVE SOME SORT OF BYSTANDER OBLIGATION OR AN ACCOUNTABILITY RATHER THAN MAKING IT ENTERTAINMENT.

[03:17:53] YES, MA'AM. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. MS. COHEN? I thank you I certainly will be looking forward to a deeper dive of this at the work session but just a couple of quick things one parents we are not banning pajama bottoms just because it is not mentioned in here I imagine they would fit in the leggings yoga pants category so everybody calm down I mean that directed to my own children who said it would be the worst thing that I'd ever done on the school board if I banned pajamas another question just this is just a

[03:18:30] weird flag for us in the proposed under the hat hair references and under attire references for some reason by yarmulke it gives a phonetics like I don't really understand that like it's not in anywhere else and any of the other so it just gives like yeah so I don't know maybe we could not do that and then the other question that a lot of parents have brought up to me and I don't know how we address it so I really put this out to you all as what do we do in this scenario but that a lot of students who've been brought in for dress code violations that the answer at the

[03:19:09] elementary school level in particular has been to call the parent and have them bring a new outfit and that there are a lot of parents who feel like they cannot come in and do that and so you know but then they want their child to be able to go back to class and so they feel like the burden on them to leave a job especially an hourly paying job to go home and get new clothes and come back and um and bring it just so their kid can go back to class so I recognize that's you're you're trying really carefully in the adult responses to give as wide a birth for principals to make good decisions

[03:19:47] here um and I really appreciate that but it is varying so widely by school that a lot of principals just say hey you know Stella maybe don't wear that again next time and send a note home but some of them are having kids sit in their office or sit in the hall in the office if their parents don't come bring them an outfit so I think just when you're able to talk about that and do a little retraining with principals of like

someone's dress should not keep them from I do appreciate here that you highlight minimizes loss of instructional time but if we could really

[03:20:23] hammer that home because it's not there's some places where that is not happening but thank you I know you're trying to address look we we've been hearing it too we see it we're in schools all day like I understand I know we're trying to thread a needle here between making sure that that kids recognize kind of appropriate dress and not I'm one of those people who I'm just so happy they're there and if they're learning I don't really care what they're wearing but I recognize that not EVERYBODY FEELS THAT WAY SO I APPRECIATE THE WORK YOU DID HERE TRYING TO REFERENCE ALL THE OTHER SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND WHAT

[03:20:58] THEY'RE DOING SO THANK YOU FOR THAT WORK THANK YOU THANK YOU MISS COHEN DR. ANDERSON THANK YOU DR. ANDERSON MISS MCLACHLAN THANK YOU I KNOW AGAIN WE ARE HAVING A WORK SESSION SO I JUST WANTED TO SORT OF DR. READ PREP MAYBE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I MIGHT BE ASKING FIRST OF ALL TO MR.

[03:21:22] FOSTER I KNOW IN THE PAST YOU AND I TALKED ABOUT NEEDING TO have more breadth of definition for sexual assault versus unwanted touching so that again if it's students who inadvertently think that they're you know teasing another student or elementary school student is you know not even mindful that their behavior might be imposing on the you know base of another student that could you refresh my memory do we did we finally

[03:22:00] delineate that unwanted touching versus sexual assault or is that something we might need to refine I would have to touch base with dr. Boyd and the rest of the team to confirm whether those changes have been made great I appreciate that I just it's something I know and I was side barring with a school board member who actually had a case with a first grader and I mean there was no intent there at all but with 150 elementary school principals alone we could have a hundred and fifty different responses to it and so you know

[03:22:38] we want to be careful with that as everybody knows huge champion of tiered approach to discipline is best the other thing is Dr. Reed you know I really APPRECIATE WHOEVER CREATED THIS 12-PAGE CROSSWALK, BUT WHAT I WOULD HOPE BY THE TIME WE GO INTO THE WORK SESSION IS THE STAFF ANALYSIS, LIKE, SO THE CROSSWALK GOT DONE, BUT THE BOARD'S WORK IS FOR OVERSIGHT, THE BOARD'S WORK IS NOT OPERATIONS.

[03:23:09] SO I DON'T HAVE THE BANDWIDTH AND THE ABILITY TO DO THIS CROSSWALK AND GOODNESS KNOWS THAT I don't expect Dr. Boyd either because she is spread as thin as they get with all her amazing responsibilities and work that she does.

[03:23:26] But I do hope that we will have somebody do the crosswalk and tell us what is it actually telling us. So this is data, but now I need the analytics of what is it telling us. And I will just say the reason is it's important that we help our families know the hard work we're doing.

[03:23:45] pages of saying we're benchmarking ourselves as a division and then I will say the macro level that we can talk about more that we do want to provide respect and dignity to each and every child but school is an opportunity for students to learn lifelong skills and one lifelong skill is you're going to leave high school and whether you go to the workplace whether you go on to college or you go into the military

there will be appropriate dress expected particularly in the workplace and in college and so if we're not helping students understand that coming to school is different from going to the

[03:24:24] gym or going to the beach then you know I don't think we're helping students and families with that and our principals are I what my conversations with principals that they're asking for help with that too thank you thank you thank you Ms. McLaughlin Mr. Frisch thank you I seem to remember that we had two by 2s for the SRNR in the past we're not doing that anymore we can certainly engage in those we're trying to fit everything in just a bit but we're happy to engage in the 2x2s with the board members

[03:24:55] well I'll keep it simple I very much appreciate the more expansive definition of discriminatory harassment used throughout I will note that and I think it's a typo or a mistake that gender IDENTITY IS IN THERE SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE DEFINITION AND SINCE THAT IS PART OF OUR NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY IT'S ALSO COVERED BY TITLE IX AND FEDERAL AND STATE LAW AT THIS POINT IT SHOULD BE INCLUDED AND IF WE NEED TO DO AN AMENDMENT OR SOMETHING WE'LL MAKE SURE WE TAKE

[03:25:32] CARE OF THAT AND THEN AS FAR AS OTHER THINGS GO I'M GUESSING THE BULK OF OUR WORK SESSION IS GOING TO BE ABOUT THIS SO I LOOK FORWARD TO THE CONVERSATION AROUND THE DRESS CODE I'M CERTAINLY HEARING FROM CONSTITUENTS ALREADY. AND AS FAR AS MS. COHEN SAYING THAT WE NEEDED A CALM APPROACH TO THE CONVERSATION, I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING MORE CALM THAN PAJAMA PANTS. SO THANK YOU.

[03:25:58] THANK YOU. MS. TOLAN. THANKS. I JUST HAVE A REALLY QUICK QUESTION. I DID NOT SEE THESE, BUT I UNDERSTAND IN SOME PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF GOING THROUGH THE SRNR, THERE WERE SOME PHOTOS OR EXAMPLES OF DRESS CODE. AND I HEARD THEY WERE REALLY HELPFUL.

[03:26:19] So yes, so this document has evolved and is very fluid. One of the things I think that we talked about during last year's annual review session as we were preparing to discuss dress code was that the text is helpful but also the visual. And so we do have plans to support the narrative with some visuals once we land in a place.

[03:26:41] Earlier on we had some visuals that reflected the earlier iteration and so we figured it might be best to pause on the visuals until we had consensus around a narrative and a content. But we do plan to supplement the visual with the narrative just for clarity. Got it. Okay, thanks.

[03:26:56] Yes, ma'am. Thank you. Take a pause. Make sure no one else wishes to speak. Thank you for turning your lights off. That's very helpful. Well, having said that, I'm going to save my questions for the work session.

[03:27:14] So I just want to appreciate your time and efforts on these. And I know we're going to have lots of questions and a great robust discussion at that work session. So thank you very much. Thank you. We will move on to agenda item 5.01, action items. There are no action items this evening. We are, but we are, just as a reminder, our consent agenda is still action that the board is taking, just in a very efficient way.

[03:27:36] So we'll move on to agenda item 6, consent agenda. Our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure, Robert's rules, provide for a 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.

[03:27:54] items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member prior to the meeting the consent agenda items are on the screen is there any objection to proving the consent agenda seeing and hearing no objection the consent agenda is approved agenda item seven new business the following are new business agenda items there 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 eight board committee reports i will call on ms cohen for audit committee update and ms mclaughlin for for Public Engagement Committee report.

[03:28:29] Ms. Cullen. - Thank you. We had audit yesterday, as we do every month, and had the status of the FY23 internal audit engagements presentation by Ms. Coe. I know none of you will be shocked that we are on time, on target, with every single audit that we are doing.

[03:28:50] The team is just unbelievable. We also talked about the FY23 business process audits and highlighted six different schools to take a closer look. And that was from Joni White and Luke Robertson.

[03:29:06] And then we did the FY24 risk assessment and proposed audit plan. So just to highlight, there's going to be a little bit different this year. Normally, we have the board presentation, then the work session, and then we vote.

[03:29:21] Because of our crazy schedule this year, we're going to have the work session first, which will be next week. The presentation will be also next week after that. And then there will be an opportunity that if in between the work session and the board presentation or after the board presentation, if folks have further questions or comments, they can come to the June audit committee meeting or if you're not able to attend, you can send your questions and comments to any audit committee member so that we can help get any of those answered.

[03:29:57] But I'm, as always, incredibly impressed with the plan that is forthcoming. I don't know how the audit team gets it done. I'm convinced that none of them sleep, and they probably haven't seen their families in months. But everything is going wonderfully and according to plan.

[03:30:14] And the amazing news was that we had our peer review. We had two folks come in, one from Knox County Schools and one from City of Nashville schools, and they were blown away. We got a full pass, absolutely no comments or questions, except to ask our team for some advice about what to do when they went back.

[03:30:39] So just so incredibly proud of that team. I know last board meeting, we highlighted them with Auditor General Month, but honestly, it's like Auditor General Month every month on the audit team.

[03:30:55] So thanks, guys. Thank you. Ms. McLaughlin. Thank you. The PEC is hard at work. We had a meeting this week for an hour and a half, and we're meeting again next week for an hour and a half, catching up on some prior meetings.

[03:31:11] But our focus has been a couple areas. One, on citizen participation during meetings, how we can help better prepare the audience for expectation. so we'll be bringing some recommendations to the board around that and then we also talked about the strategic plan and the final preparations for community engagement and then we talked about the srnr and how we also want to make sure that our community has ample time to be able to review

[03:31:51] what Dr. Reed and her team have laid out in draft form and making sure that we get input back from the community. So those were kind of the high level areas of focus that we talked about. And then there was also the question about the equity policy in terms of how that engagement process will work and the dates and times. And Dr. Reed, we did have three citizens at the PEC meeting who were expert i think quite eager to know when the draft language for the equity policy

[03:32:28] would become public we tried to explain to them that it's still being worked on and that board members had given individual draft input and one one specific question was whether we would be having alignment between how equity is defined in the strategic plan versus how equity is going to be defined in the policy and i said i would just bring forward that suggestion about alignment thank you so much mclaughlin and i'm really impressed at how busy our committees are coming up to the end of the year so thank you very much agenda item nine

[03:33:06] board matters next on the agenda is board matters and i will call first on our virtual participation to miss amesh yeah thank you um there's a bit to uh recognize this uh meeting um teacher appreciation week i just want to express my gratitude uh sincerest gratitude to our teachers it's incredible to me to see how people uh have devoted themselves so sincerely to this profession um and especially when i think back on my own teachers who have been in the system before i

[03:33:42] got there and are continuing to this day to be there so uh you know i we all know our teachers work tireless tirelessly throughout the year to educate and support students and they deserve this recognition and appreciation really throughout the year it's a small gesture that we're able to appreciate them this week and on that note similarly giving and sincere individuals mother's day is in two days obviously i was really blessed that my mom attended today i I didn't actually know she was going to be there, but we're all, I think, united in our

[03:34:16] love for our, well, appreciation for all the sacrifices that our caretakers have made. And so in having empathy for those who perhaps have lost their mothers, who have not had traditional sense of a mother, I hope that we can celebrate that day and be there for one another and see that we experience that day in so many different ways. The Baha'i faith will be celebrating also in just a week or so, one of their founding days, so I wish the community a blessed recognition and blessed time together. On the note of teacher appreciation, we have some

[03:34:56] incredible teachers in this system, so a bit of a feel-good. Our eighth grade math and special ed teacher, Herndon Middle School, Gabriel Segal, I just want to uplift the story. He chose to go out of his way, despite the workload, which is we already know is insane for our teachers, to raise more than $40,000 to cancel student meal debt at his school. We, you know, are aware that student lunch debt has, is in the millions. This is something Dr. Reed, you know, I hope that we can think about because, you know, children can't obviously show up for learning if they're not fed.

[03:35:30] And this is an academic issue, but perhaps through county partnerships and additional creative measures. And I know you have no shortage for innovation of finding the resources we need to make it happen. But this is an issue. And it's, you know, middle school lunches cost $3.50. Milk is $4.10. That's expensive for a lot of families on a daily basis.

[03:35:53] So and nearly a third of our kids received that help. So I just wanted to uplift the story and celebration of Mr. Segal. And hopefully we can make that commitment to go out of our own ways and finding creative solutions to this problem.

[03:36:11] In other good news, I also want to congratulate the TJ team who just won the prestigious MathWorks modeling competition. Not an easy thing. I do remember some of that MathWorks teams and competitions and whatnot. So I'm really excited to see them make that accomplishment.

[03:36:29] Is that my time? Yes, I just want to remind you. Okay. So, yeah, no, I appreciate that. Just finally, congratulations to Dr. Reid on completing the strategic plan conversations. It has not been easy, but I'm grateful to see where we're at and look forward to the next steps. have a good night everybody thank you miss case gamara sure um i do just in general want to i didn't comment earlier but i do celebrate the diversity of our community to um look at the contributions of our asian americans our jewish americans our muslim americans um this particular

[03:37:04] month is truly a joy and i um am grateful that right here in fairfax county we can really enjoy the cultures of the world and so i am grateful and i did want to just thank each of these communities for making our lives better i also want to say thank you to our teachers um you know i we all have our favorite teacher that we can mention it's more than one we truly make a difference our teachers make a real difference for our students we couldn't do what we do and i just want to say

[03:37:38] thank you this has been a very busy month for me um i i had an opportunity to participate in the opening ceremony for the special education conference um also attended the fea retired council annual luncheon um met some of our folks that have been supporting us for years i attended the planning commission luncheon in celebration of some retirees and was able to meet some of my colleagues and those that I've worked with as a planning commission liaison.

[03:38:13] I also attended the SEPTA awards ceremony, which was really, really cool. And it was, I don't know, it was just really a feel good moment. And I attended the community conversation on school safety. Perhaps one of the more fun moments was when I had an opportunity to go to to the Madison High School play, "Mamma Mia."

[03:38:38] That's the first time I've been able to watch it all the way through and we truly, truly enjoyed it. And also a bright star at South Lakes Theater. We have some really talented students and I enjoyed every moment.

[03:38:54] My husband is enjoying having our own version of Broadway right here in Fairfax. So thank you everyone. I hope everybody has a wonderful Mother's Day. I am looking forward to not cooking, and I look forward to joining you guys at the next meeting.

[03:39:11] Take care, thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Keyes-Gamara, Ms. Marin? - Yes, well, I'm glad that it's been a really full teacher appreciation week. I hope the teachers feel appreciated, not just this week, but every week.

[03:39:28] And I've seen lovely gestures of kindness and gratitude. So I also have to thank our parent-teacher associations parent-teacher organizations, PTSAs, PTSOs, for what they've done. Really, they've just gone all out for our teachers who deserve nothing less than the best. I also was at the Mama Mia presentation at Madison, as well as South Lakes' Bright Star musical, which I found stunning. And I was so pleased to see my family friend Abigail Jamison there in the starring role. It was very special.

[03:39:59] And Frozen Junior at Langston Hughes Middle School, for which my daughter did the makeup. That was my my first foray to being a theater mom. And Marshall Road International Night, which featured 40 different cultures being shared from that school community. It was outstanding. And also

tomorrow night I'm looking forward to the Matsuri Festival over at Fox Mill Elementary, their big annual Japanese cultural festival.

[03:40:21] It's actually gonna be though at Carson because Fox Mill is almost done with its renovation. So thanks to Carson for hosting. And also next week is Vienna Elementary's 150th celebration. on May 19, 150 years in the town of Vienna.

[03:40:37] And I do just want to reflect on this week's school board meeting where we looked at the strategic plan. Well, it's almost at completion, and I am very hopeful and expectant that it's going to really pave the way for some needed changes and innovation, and I'm very excited for the future.

[03:40:54] As I know our parents, I was talking with one today, and I happened to have my booklet that we got at the retreat, and I showed her the content, and she said, "Oh, I remember commenting on this." this was something that I wanted in there. So I think that all that community engagement really has made a difference and I'm very eager to vote that in. Thank you. Thank you. Miss Toland. Yes.

[03:41:16] First of all congratulations to our new clerk Miss Setlow. Looking forward to working with you. Welcome. Please join us at Herndon Middle School on Monday evening at 6:30. I'm hosting with supervisor john faust another meeting on a community meeting on fentanyl as dr reed said we cannot have too many meetings on this topic so please join us bring your middle school or high school students your neighbors and friends um i do have to mention we didn't know board matters

[03:41:53] at our last meeting but i was pretty excited that we passed the mclean mclean high school bathroom upgrades at the 427 meeting and those will be happening this summer um i attended the fcps retirement celebration just a huge huge thank you to all of our retirees that have shared so much of themselves and dedicating their life to working with our students happy teacher appreciation week to all of our teachers and instructional staff i was super excited to hear all the different ways that our Dranesville schools are celebrating you.

[03:42:29] I got a sneak peek of that at our last Dranesville PTSA, PTO leaders meeting. I want to thank my colleague, Ms. Corbett Sanders, for working with the VSBA. To set up the regional meeting, I was able to attend this past Monday evening to discuss teacher hiring and retention.

[03:42:49] We had some very informative discussions. And speaking of teachers, we have some amazing teachers doing amazing things. Our Haycock Elementary School teacher, Ms. Susanna Sullivan, was the top American finisher at the 2023 London Marathon with a new personal best time.

[03:43:12] So pretty exciting. And congratulations to Ms. Kathleen Jacoby, Herndon High School teacher, being the FCPS finalist for 2023 Washington Post Teacher of the Year Award. Yay. and some amazing students. Wishing students lots of success as they go through SOLs, our elementary and middle school students, and as our high school students finish the APs and IBs and go through their SOLs as well. Congratulations to McLean High School, its academic champions. Two years in a row

[03:43:49] they have been the national champions. Congratulations to Vivian Feng, a TJ senior from drainsville who won the national merit senator charles s robb scholarship and plans to study computer science cooper eighth graders brad chen and aiden thornsberry qualified for finals and scored third a third place finish in their division at the 2023 vex robotics world championship on may 2nd in dallas texas and the list goes on but i am out of time so congratulations thank you miss

[03:44:25] Corbett Sanders yes thank you madam chair I too want to join in thanking all of our staff and teachers for the amazing work that you do for our kids not only this week of the year where we recognize staff appreciation week but it's every day an act of love and so thank you thank you thank you additionally I want to bring awareness to children's mental health acceptance week which is this week we often talk about the mental health and behavioral health challenges that

[03:45:02] people are facing in a post-COVID world as well as in the as a result of social media and so i just want to bring attention to the great work that fcps is doing by providing access to the new hazel program as well as cognito training and others including mental health first aid and I encourage people to take advantage of that next few days are going to be very busy in Mount Vernon we have the opening of our new Mount Vernon trail which will allow more students to ride their bikes

[03:45:39] and walk to school on tomorrow and then we have the young entrepreneurs fair at Hayfield where students from throughout the region will be participating and the Eagle Festival at Mason Neck Park which is always a lot of fun and finally on Saturday we will also be formally renaming the softball field at Walt Whitman to the Dave Evans Field Dave Evans Memorial Field thank you thank you

[03:46:12] Ms. McLaughlin great I do want to wish all of our teachers appreciation happy appreciation week and thank you for all you do for our students and I'm sorry we weren't speaking about it individually earlier this evening but I'm glad we can acknowledge you in our in our board matters I do want to just really spotlight from what Miss Corbett Sanders said about mental health awareness for our teens I was really fortunate this past week Dr. Reed to visit Annandale

[03:46:47] High School student leadership class and one of the students who's a senior had created a podcast. The podcast is called The Brief Dive. You can find it on Spotify, iHeartRadio, and Apple Podcast. This young man's podcast got spotlighted in the student newspaper, again it's over two years in the making, and really does focus on helping students better understand mental health, to know they're not alone, and he's a remarkable young man, and I really look forward to giving giving a special spotlight in my Braddock newsletter, and I encourage all of my colleagues

[03:47:25] to tune in and listen to what he has to say. In terms of the school lunch debt that was raised by Ms. Omish, I did raise this issue with Dr. Reed and with our COO, Marty Smith, from that news article, and so I want to share with Ms. Omish and with our community that certainly without question FCPS wants to provide all the supports and nutritious meals to our families that are struggling and qualify for free and reduced meals and that the student lunch debt as was explained to me is for our

[03:48:05] non free and reduced meal families and so that doesn't mean we're insensitive to it but I do want to make clear because you know the article talks about wiping away the debt and fundraising and I I think that we need to have dr. Reed greater clarity for the community for the board for our public about what the student lunch debt is and what it is not because I think that it's going to be important that we have accuracy out in the community we certainly don't want

[03:48:41] students to ever be concerned and families as well but we also want to make sure that if this is more a matter of you know families needing to just better understand if their students account just is missing the funds but But it's the families have the ability to pay.

[03:49:02] That's a different story and I think we need to have clarity all the way around on that. And then I also wanted to spotlight that I really appreciate Dr. Reed that you and your team and in particular Dr.

Sherry Wilson in HR worked with one of our retired teachers and former president of FEA to address issues for retired teachers being able to work.

[03:49:29] And so kudos to you and your team. And Dr. Anderson, thanks for being a great partner with me. And to Leonard Bambaca, you continue to bring great gifts to this county as a retired teacher. Thank you, Ms. McLaughlin. Dr. Anderson?

[03:49:45] He's my constituent, so I get all the credit. So much to say, since we haven't had board matters in a while. But I do want to start by saying congratulations to Michelle Togby, who recently won the Princeton Club of Washington, DC, and the Princeton Peace Prize.

[03:50:02] and race relations at an award ceremony that was in DC very recently. Congratulations, you continue to amaze us. So yay! I also wanna offer congratulations to the Mason District resident, Xing Yun Jung, who is a student at TJ, who was awarded a grand prize at the Virginia Science and Engineering Fair.

[03:50:25] And now she is on her way to the International Fair next week. Last set of congratulations to the Justice High School PTSA President, Kim Lanoue, who was selected as the High School Volunteer of the Year by the FCC PTA last week.

[03:50:44] FCC PTA noted that Kim Lanoue was selected as the award winner for her work starting the Wolf Shack Pantry and her advocacy throughout the renovation and planning process and her role in starting an annual social and fundraising event, Wolves at the Lodge, in addition to all the regular duties and responsibilities of a PTSA president.

[03:51:06] And as an attendee of that inaugural event, it was quite a fun time. I'm looking forward to next year's. Super excited to announce here in this forum the newest principal in the Mason District, Ms. Manali Vega, who has been named the principal at Sleepy Hollow Elementary, effective July.

[03:51:28] She comes to us from Bailey's Elementary and has a host of fabulous experiences, and the community is so excited that she is going to bring all that experience and continue all the wonderful things that Dr. Fallon has started there. I do also want to say happy Staff Appreciation Week.

[03:51:48] Again, we want to be sure that you feel appreciated and honored and seen every week because the work is very challenging. Theater, Poe Middle School's Raven Theater presents Willy Wonka, and the show premieres tonight and continues Friday and Saturday.

[03:52:07] Woodson Drama is wrapping up their second week of A Little Shop of Horrors, which shows on Friday and Saturday. I do want to say I had the opportunity to attend Hoop It Up night, and Dr. Reed came, and she has thrown down the gauntlet to challenge Mr. Powell to a one-on-one, which we're going to charge lots of money for next year so she has the year to train because Mr.

[03:52:29] Powell does have moves. It is going to be awesome and also we've heard quite a bit both today and last time that we were here regarding the overcrowding at Glasgow. This has not been a conversation that we have not been addressed but clearly we haven't landed on the solution yet and I'm excited to share that Dr. Reed has agreed for us to come to the community to have a conversation before the end of the school year to talk about what can be done in the short term and in the longer term. I know this is a very important topic to our community and it's important

[03:53:04] one to me as a Glasgow parent now and with my 10-year-old coming in next year I know this is something that we would want to be taking care of. And just very quickly I do want to say because I missed

to say this earlier I was glad to bring the proclamation for Muslim American Heritage Month But I do want to give the credit to Ms. Omash because she has labored to bring this before us.

[03:53:28] And I'm very grateful for her continued and steadfast advocacy on that effort. Thank you. Have a good night. Happy Mother's Day. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Mr. Frisch. Thank you. I want to start by thanking the incomparable Jackie Marmel, who has dutifully served the families of Providence District for nearly three years now as my staff aide.

[03:53:50] jack jackie is no stranger to providence district she attended timberlane elementary luther jackson middle school and falls church high school before attending virginia tech and returning home monday will be her last day in my school board office as she prepares to embark on an exciting new adventure i know i'm joined by my school board colleagues and their staff aides uh in congratulating her on her new job working for senator mark warner um i know she will do amazing work for him and all virginians to the teachers i meet in schools and events around the county each

[03:54:27] week and the teacher i see every night when i get home i want to say how much i appreciate you and all you do not only this week but every week i hope my actions on this board continue to demonstrate that appreciation now and in the years ahead earlier this evening at a forum discussion the school board approved a proposal directing the superintendent to conduct a comprehensive review of all regulations, policies, practices, and curriculum to ensure that school division is adequately addressing the threat of illicit drug use and fentanyl, and meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students in recovery from substance abuse disorder.

[03:55:05] As part of the review, the board has asked the superintendent to consider the merits of various initiatives, including but not limited to creating a recovery high school, providing students and staff with access to fentanyl testing strips, placing naloxone in classrooms with appropriately trained classroom based staff, offering naloxone training to high school students, partnering with local hospitals and health agencies to increase local residential and outpatient treatment options for minors, and helping families learn how to live with and support their students in recovery. Our schools must provide students and families with the knowledge

[03:55:39] and resources they need to make healthy decisions. Education and intervention are our best weapons for combating substance abuse and the threat of fentanyl. Every student in recovery has the potential to create a future of hope and possibility. Anyone in recovery will tell you that the right support can make all the difference.

[03:55:59] I thank my colleagues for advancing this important work this evening. And since our last meeting, I've been to lots of schools. We didn't do board matters at the previous meeting, but I've been to Mosaic Elementary for reading to some first graders. It was a lot of fun. I've planted trees all over Providence District, including with the Cherry Blossom Festival Association.

[03:56:21] We planted more than a dozen cherry blossom trees in Tysons last weekend. And this weekend, I am looking forward to attending the Oakton High School production of Mean Girls. This is a musical that I know nothing about.

[03:56:36] I know the movie by heart. I have not seen the musical. I don't know the music. And so I'm very much looking forward to it and our talented kiddos at Oakton High School who always put on a good

show. So I hope everybody has, all of the mothers on this dais have a great Mother's Day and all of the mothers watching at home have a great Mother's Day as well.

[03:56:55] And my mother, happy Mother's Day. And my sisters, happy Mother's Day. - Every mother, happy Mother's Day. Ms. Cohen? - Thank you. I just wanted to say thank you to Ms. Evans, Ms. Dostal, Mrs. Pavacostas, Ms. Carter, Mr. Heil, Mr. Slater and Ms. Waller.

[03:57:15] You all had such a big impact in the human being I turned out to be. And I am forever grateful that you were my teachers. So thank you, and happy Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week. Ms. Bukarski?

[03:57:31] I also want to say happy Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week, especially to my kids, teachers. Thank you. It is a difficult job made much more difficult these days. And happy Mother's Day to all. Thank you Mr.

[03:57:48] Annette Koufax. Thank you. I will add in the accolades of thanking all of our teachers not just today but each and every day. We are thankful for the hard work that you do and to make our great our schools a great place for our children to learn.

[03:58:06] I've done some visiting lately. I have visited the new principal at Key Middle School Mr. Drew Campbell. I've also visited Springfield Estates Elementary and met with Principal Eleanor Contreras who is unfortunately leaving us and we wish her much success in her new adventure. I have visited the relatively new principal at Rose Hill Elementary, Ms. Rachel edwards and her team and was excited to talk to her about what's going on there i had i did as i

[03:58:43] shared with you i performed in the 25th annual putnam county spelling bee i spelled two very difficult words warham and cat um so but um it was great fun everyone we sat on there the first Entire first act, I want to thank Mr. Jeffrey Walker, theater arts and film studies teacher at Edison, Miss Christy Quigley Gallacher, Edison's Theater Booster President, for asking me to be part of this wonderful, and a shout out to Miss Kendria Boyd, Edison's assistant principal, and Benjamin Hemmons, an Edison math teacher,

[03:59:22] and who are the other very talented guest spellers, and really just thank you to the student cast and crew who just helped us every step of the way and made us shine we had so much fun thank you so much yesterday i did another fun thing i was able to install some native plants for a pollinator garden at bush hill elementary a special thank you to danielle winn with fairfax county watershed education and outreach office and principal duffy to get this organized and to help transform part of the bush hill landscape they told us how this

[03:59:59] will help you know with various levels of portrait of a graduate there'll be a monarch place for the monarch butterflies to gather and places to talk about how the in fourth grade history about how the Native Americans and and they had teas and from the native plants so I don't remember the names of all the plants but it is very exciting and they were very happy to have me there the best thing i heard that day was this is so fulfilling from a fourth grader so it was it was

[04:00:33] it was wonderful it was wonderful um and tomorrow i will be attending the pta meeting at twain tiger night at twain middle school so i look forward to doing that it's been a little while since i've been back there and happy mother's day to everyone thank you thank you and i will take my turn i will start also with thanking our teachers and staff and i just want to give a shout out to Mr. Rib who was both my AP English and my theater teacher for teaching me how to critically think and analyze I will never look

at a Grecian urn without thinking about you and who's also my theater teacher who taught which in that class taught me every other skill that I ever used in my life

[04:01:11] to be successful so thank you to all the great teachers out there and I didn't want to let this moment go by without recognizing it and speaking about AAPI Asian American Pacific Islander month as the currently the only Asian American on the board, and the first Indian American on this board, and I think the first Asian American woman on this board, I just wanted to recognize the importance of representation and the importance of having diverse voices at the table.

[04:01:40] When I was growing up, I didn't see anyone who came from my background or looked like me in politics, on TV, in movies, I didn't read about them in books unless it was a book about India. when I got married and had henna tattoos on my hands, as traditional in the Indian wedding, I remember going to coffee shops and everyone saying, what's wrong with your hands?

[04:02:01] What happened to you? So, you know, and none of those, they're all little, little things to remind you that are you really American, right? And so now, when I see Indian matchmaking on Netflix and watch Never Have I Ever, and I'm like, that was me growing up, you know, growing up here with, you know, heritage from India and growing up American in this country, it means a lot because it's about acceptance, right?

[04:02:32] Acceptance isn't just saying we accept you, acceptance is just showing we accept you in all fabrics of our society. So I just wanted to lift that up and say happy AAPI month to everybody out there. I've been really busy as well, safety and security town hall, FEA luncheon, our own retired award ceremony the septa awards as well as a special education conference and i've got a whole list a very scary and really incredible dracula at lake braddock which was very cool and i turned all the lights on when i got home um and i just wanted to wrap up because i know um

[04:03:09] i'm the one standing between you and bed a happy mother's day to everybody out there i will be spending my mother's day weekend helping my son move out of his dorm so um that's what moms do right so um happy mother's day to you all and with that this meeting is adjourned

