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Fairfax County School Board Governance Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 3, 2024

Date	Tuesday, September 3, 2024
Place	Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length	1h 41m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W7xzszBaX0
- 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 2026-10-31. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:05] seema can you hear us seema can you repeat people in the conference room are they speaking to me no we haven't started meeting yet let's start uh shortly so they're gonna have to use the microphones in order for you to be able to hear them but they are yet so they're not doing that

[00:00:43] okay sure that's fine all right good afternoon folks we're gonna uh start our uh first government's meeting of the year we have uh two people who requested to be participants virtually uh that being sema dixit um so we will vote on allowing uh sema dixit to participate virtually all those in

[00:01:21] favor okay miss marin we just need to note that miss dixit is virtual due to medical reasons and she's currently in the sully district thank you for that detail um and it was unanimous for those of us here miss anderson miss marron and myself we also request for virtual from miss sizemore hyzer who is i believe in boston and uh oh sorry my apologies she's running late here she's on her

[00:01:53] way all right so we will get started um so um i'm pulling up the agenda friends my plan so we have a lot of work to do as a committee this year last year governance and for good reason

[00:02:26] spent a significant amount of time talking about boundary policy and therefore didn't necessarily get to those policies that we need to be routinely reviewing it's also my understanding the prior year there was a lot of rollover of policies that did that folks did not get to so in our priority right now

because of the final motion that was uh at our july meeting is for us to um work on the grading policy review it revise it um so i'll just read that for folks who might be watching and they're

[00:03:02] not familiar with that i further move that the school board direct the superintendent to suspend the work of the secondary grading advisory committee temporarily and pause in the adoption of additional recommendations regarding grading and develop a clear charge for the secondary grading advisory committee to update its recommendations for secondary grading practices to align with the revised policy 2418 and the 2023-2030 strategic plan and communicate to staff that the grading changes distributed to middle secondary and high school principals and teachers on June 10, 2024 will be implemented for one year only pending the revision of policy 2418

[00:03:39] by the school board and subsequent updated recommendations from the secondary grading Advisory Committee, and present the Secondary Grading Advisory Committee's updated recommendations to the school board in a public meeting earlier than May 1, 2025, in time for implementation in the, for the school year 2025-26. And I also believe that in order for the superintendent to sort of operationalize the policy, update the regulation, that we need to get a new policy to her in early November so we I don't want to fast-track something and not do it

[00:04:17] well because we can always adapt but we will be meeting more frequently early on so that we can we can get that work done what I have distributed and I hope the clerk will be posting momentarily to board docs is a list of policies that we need to consider um at some point um i also on my way into this meeting was handed another list of policies that i'm not sure are incorporated into what is currently being posted i was just

[00:04:54] handed an email um that had some other policies right so what i've handed out to you in the meeting is what's being posted um and these and i want to first of all i should have done this up front um to thank rajna uh for size marheiser for helping me um get organized and also miss marron for helping me uh put together a viable agenda uh as a as someone who was not on governments and now is a chair for the first time of any committee um i hope it goes well for all of us but thank you miss marron um so the other thing is um so we want to sort of discuss and establish the priorities

[00:05:33] for this year um and our in our meeting protocols like i said um i'm not sure whether or not we might need to add some meetings between now and november i know we prefer not to meet on the weeks that we have school board meetings but we might have to just look at that to ensure we get the work done so um the other thing i wanted to touch on wait for miss swismore heiser to get here. So at any rate, I think that what I would like you to do, and this is sort of my purpose in

[00:06:12] distributing these policies, what I will do is take this email and incorporate it into these and revise the documents so that these other policies, I guess, that are of high priority and will be highlighted for people to know that they've been added. I'm thinking, because one of the documents that you're going to see is where do the policies fall under do they fall under instructional services special services chief equity officer because i think we need to enlist staff to review policies and give us recommendations in terms of recommendations for edits uh recommendations for

[00:06:51] no change because as the policy is written it actually still uh is appropriate even though time has passed um and or some that we might have to have you know more further discussion around to make sure they're updated appropriately.

[00:07:07] So a couple of thoughts is amongst the committee members, we might sort of distribute certain ones or assign certain policies for you to look at in more depth and work with that particular staff person so that we are all helping and we're not trying to do two by twos or whatever, but it's us with a one staff member.

[00:07:32] So, again, our priority is the grading policy, which we're going to dig deep into today. So, are we sure Rachna's on her way here? We were just informed that she is going to be virtual, so we're working to get her a link.

[00:07:50] We did not get the form, so we did not know. Yeah, I thought she was supposed to be virtual. Okay. All right. So, we'll wait on that. So, really today, I think I want to hear from, you know, folks.

[00:08:08] We did a work session on the grading policy, and I think that what we need to do is take a look at it, review it.

[00:08:26] What's not on the agenda for today, but eventually, is the six focal points that were touched on in that meeting, which were part of the June 10 email that was sent out to all teachers and administrators which are the six focal points of reassessment, category weighting, minimum number of assignments, gradebook type, use of letter grades versus percentage grades and use of zero. But before we get to that I think I just want to hear from folks where they sort of philosophically live around this

[00:09:02] grading policy. You know I'm more of a less is more type person in terms of what might be included as in the policy to allow for um instructional staff who are who are experts um to operationalize so i'm going to stop talking um and i'll open it up to folks for for comment um dr anderson just very quickly i was trying to say are we going to go through some of the things

[00:09:38] that you have established in the agenda yes for some reason i did not even think we would get to to the conversation of that policy's content because as the agenda is for, are you just looking for, I think I'm unclear.

[00:09:55] Yeah, thank you for that. I skipped ahead because I was waiting for Ms. Sizemore-Eiser to be present when we talk about some of the meeting protocols. Since then that would have all five of us present. But we can, in theory, talk about our priorities for the year and see if, you know, folks are, what your thoughts are around, you know, attacking the work.

[00:10:28] I would be happy to give some feedback to that when you're ready for it. For? The priorities for the year. Yeah, we can talk about that. Well, first of all, I do appreciate how you have outlined or whomever outlined this by area.

[00:10:46] I wonder. That is Rachna, so give... Okay, so she gets all of that credit. Is this inclusive of this blue and white sheet, or are these two separate sets of information? She can answer that question, but my understanding is yes. It's supposed to be inclusive.

[00:11:03] It's supposed to be inclusive. My other wondering is, is this prioritized in terms of what each of these departments feel that must happen right away? I know everything is kind of overdue, But if they are prioritizing some versus others, I would say that that should become our priority.

[00:11:23] So, for example, for the chief academic officer, there's like, what, nine things there? If two are high priority, I'd like for that to be a little bit earlier on our agenda, and maybe the other seven will fall in

later on. But if there's some space for them to just star, which ones are more urgent, then that would be helpful.

[00:11:46] In addition, I'd like for us to, in looking at the number of meetings that we have from now until November 1 for this committee, we have four meetings between now and November 1.

[00:12:03] And I think we need to ensure that we're prioritizing the grading committee meetings. It doesn't have to be the only thing that we do. Obviously, we need to walk and chew gum. But we need to prioritize that. If we have, you know, two-hour meetings, however you want to organize it, I think those four meetings should get us to the November 1st, to the November 1st timetable.

[00:12:28] So you're thinking four is enough? I'm thinking four is enough. If, you know, if that's our priority, it may be the, again, it may be the only thing that we get done. Maybe I'm being a little bit too assertive.

[00:12:43] My assumption is it's going to be the only thing we get done. So I agree with your suggestion and I tried to articulate that is that we will look to staff to prioritize the thing that fall under their area and then do recommendations regarding no change or edits.

[00:12:59] And then for those where they're recommending some changes, there will be sort of assigned one of us from this committee to dialogue around that and then, you know, sort of bring thoughts to the future meetings.

[00:13:18] But, yeah, I don't see us tackling those things until after we meet the November 1 deadline for grading. Okay, Ms. Marin. Yeah, thanks. Thanks for kicking us off, Ms. Leidy.

[00:13:32] So I am I think it would be helpful to talk about what we want to tackle to get this policy to the board for the November 1st right remember first deadline and even for this conversation today rather than talking through our understandings of you know well I think this grading should be this way and I think it should be that way talking about maybe it's those six things and coming to the next well I don't know maybe coming to the next one with more

[00:14:08] content that we can discuss and whether we need to ask the superintendent to come back and bring more content. I am hesitant to say this is the only thing we're going to focus on and I'm not saying we have to do everything. However, the reason that we have this list of delayed policies is because it hasn't been kept up. So what I'd like to do is can we plan out a timeline either that some stuff is going to get done this fall or we know after November what's going to continue with policy governance you know there's this matter of even renumbering the policies so that they get back on that cycle and I could see that waiting until

[00:14:48] after November but I also want to be clear about this November first work session of the board is I mean what is we can talk here like what's the expectation for what we're going to bring that day is it our best thinking plus like hey here's the questions that we are undecided on and board members what do you think rather than and and then we have because what's going to happen to November 1 and when may isn't that when this I mean when we look at the language it's that there's going to be a policy delivered well then what's happening is that all staff work does it come back to governance like I don't

[00:15:24] understand that and I wonder maybe if the superintendent can speak to you know what does this work look like what if we set up parameters for the policy to be created for November 1st I mean I

think that we had great intentions for this follow on and we're doing it right but now we're here we've heard a presentation from the grading committee last week we're now in the you know 0 to 100 scale or 50 to 100 scale right so things some things have changed so what's going to be most helpful to not make this rushed and make it you know something that's going to impact every single student in the school division so

[00:16:02] remembering the we're really talking about secondary grading so essentially credit-bearing coursework but my understanding is we were to pause the grading committee and all grading conversations period until the board came back with a revised policy secondly we were to make clear that the june memo that went out to principals was a one-year only endeavor so i think we're waiting to hear what you all want in the policy before i set the charge to the grading committee to go to work um so i don't know i think what we're having a

[00:16:42] conversation about is chicken or egg right um so i think the grading committee put forward their recommendations um i think the board has a different direction perhaps they want to explore from those recommendations so i think however you come to the policy i had thought we were you were coming back as a policy governor as a governance committee with a policy to take to the work session for the board to say yep we think this is a grand policy or not and then i would set the committee up with the charge based on that policy to deliver what would the regulation look

[00:17:21] like that would implement that policy and that would be accomplished by may one and it can't really be later because people need time to transition if there's a transition for any particular group so that's kind of what i thought how you get to what you think is going to be the policy you take back to the work session i'm open to whatever input uh you would like in whatever fashion you would prefer i'm sorry oh i'm just mostly talking to myself okay it's not my turn

[00:17:56] melanie well so thank you and i agree and i just i'm glad we clarified can we work forward then So if 11-1 is the work session, then we need to vote on a policy. Like, have we mapped all that out so that the charge can go forward? Or is 11-1 when it comes to the board for a vote?

[00:18:13] Are we all clear about that? Yeah, I thought 11-1 was a work session, so... I just want to clarify. Yeah. I'm looking at it. Madam Clerk, do you know if that's just a work session, or are we supposed to...

[00:18:31] Do we have a timeline for voting on the policy? So I don't know that we've actually assigned it to a work session. believe it's based off of the motion that the board made is that it would come back to the board by 11-1 so I think from my understanding from the chair and vice-chair we're waiting for it to come back and they're planning on scheduling but I don't know that we have a specific work session set out yet okay so I'm gonna pause for a second miss Sizemore Heiser will be joining us virtually as she's caregiving for someone with a disability under the new Virginia code statute we do not need to vote her in and she will be counted for

[00:19:07] in-person quorum so my apologies my headspace is a lot of places right now trying to try to follow how you do these kind of meanings miss slides more

[00:19:25] TRIES YOUR HAND UP YES ONE OF MY COMMENTS ON KIND OF THE TIMELINE OKAY GO AHEAD I WASN'T SURE I WAS NEXT GO AHEAD I'M SORRY I SAY YES I APOLOGIZE YES OKAY THANK YOU UM YEAH I TOTALLY YOU KNOW APPRECIATE THAT MY UNDERSTANDING I THINK WE TALKED

TO THIS WHEN WE PASSED THE MOTION IS THAT SINCE THE GRABING COMMITTEE'S WORK IS CAUSED UNTIL WE COME UP WITH THE POLICY THAT THE GOVERNMENT

[00:20:01] she was directed to come up with a policy by november 1st which would then get to a work session and then boarded on i think by january's the calls that we talked about so then the grading committee could come back into formation and then work on the um you know implementing a policy where regulations guidelines etc they needed to do so um i i don't i guess for me because we've had you know the first work session on grading was in 2022 we had another one recently i don't think this is that different from when we did the boundary policy i think we can um and i had a lot of faith in our chair and our committee to be able to get the work done by november i think

[00:20:39] that's what the board had directed so that was just my understanding i just wanted to show that thank you and i also um thank uh miss marron who's working on our agenda uh we do have those holds on some evening work sessions and that might be an appropriate place um for this conversation to take place because i do think we have a hold um on october 22nd uh so that's certainly before november 1 and we have a regular school we're meeting on october 24th um so we'll see where we are i want to i want to pause for a second and talk quickly about sort of like some meeting

[00:21:18] protocols um because we have a lot of work to do and this can be i mean honestly there's parts of me that think that there's no way we're going to get this work done by number one because there's too many differing perspectives and opinions and at the same time i also think that we can break it down and probably get a policy done having said that i just want to you know try to make sure when when we are meeting that people are you know focused in terms of and we we sort of try to stay

[00:21:53] aware of how much time we're spending on the same idea where we find ourselves repeating ourselves versus actually taking action or moving to a different idea um we kind of have to i don't want to cut people off but i do know that in my six months on the board or more that there's sometimes where i feel like we're it's groundhog day and we're circling you know um again and kind of saying the same things um so that so anyone who want to offer thoughts on on that idea for me

[00:22:30] As chair? Oh, Ms. Marron. Yeah, thank you. I appreciate your commitment to keeping us on time. I know today was the first day of committees, but I feel like they've been off to a rough start, late starts, people here, not there. You know, I just, it's hard. We're all busy. If we're going to commit, we've got to be here and move forward.

[00:22:51] The thing that I'd really like to commit to and what I'm going to personally commit to is doing the work in the committee meeting. I am not interested in having external conversations, the two-by-twos as we call them, since more than two people together is not allowed by Virginia law for school board members.

[00:23:07] So I'd really like to come to these meetings prepared with work to discuss and debate and not leave ideas for language and amendments to some off conversation. I also think that helps it to be really transparent. I do wonder, you know, in terms of the policy, something we can keep in mind is that the policy is supposed to set the tone and the values.

[00:23:28] And so how can we stay in that higher level? And there might be some spaces where we want to be specific. But generally, how do we keep it at that higher level to let that grading committee and the

superintendent really get into the weeds, which we can still be involved with, but maybe it helps us to focus on our limited time frame.

[00:23:45] So for your consideration, everyone. Yes, thank you for that. I do agree. But the only thought I have is that while folks can watch this back, I feel like it's going to be appropriate for us at times to connect with our other board members just to give them a briefing, but not to be wordsmithing and not to be, you know, I agree, I want to do the work in the room.

[00:24:12] I actually did have a question, Dr. Reed. I found it interesting that this entire policy is under special services and not under instruction. Can you help me understand that? I don't know that I can help you understand.

[00:24:33] I think there are a lot of policies that, I wouldn't say unique locations, but I think we talk about the knowledge management architecture within the division, and I think part of perhaps our work is to make sure they're in the right, or what you would see is a maybe more intuitive location.

[00:24:57] I think we moved a long way towards that a year ago when we subscribed to the VSBA model policies for the Commonwealth, which have model numberings and model placements, and it's been my experience that those are often very helpful because if people move from division to division within the same state or Commonwealth, They're used to looking at certain numbers for certain policies, and uniquely, we are not necessarily aligned with that, but that would be a very simple move.

[00:25:29] But is that something that we can move? Well, the board can move. It's not something staff can move. Correct. So would you agree that it probably is more appropriate in instruction services versus special services? It would seem like it would, the regulation I have, well, it does sit under special services, but I would say that there's probably a part of it that should sit within special services.

[00:25:57] And in general, because special services sits under instructional services, yes, I think it should sit in instructional services. I think there are aspects of it that are unique to special services around modifying courses, implementation of IEP for purposes of grading, and so forth.

[00:26:22] But the overarching would put it in instructional services, I think, most logically. Ms. Barron, are you done? Well, just to that, like, so I just wrote down, like, one topic that we can discuss perhaps at the next meeting is do we recommend, you know, because what we're doing is we're recommending or we're making the changes that we're going to then inform our other colleagues about, right, to vote on.

[00:26:46] So one of them could be, you know, do we agree, right? So I wonder if we could start making some of those, and you outlined them, Ms. Lady, as part of the grading, you know, the six things. Like, I wonder if we could put that out there and be like, okay, these are the things, and, like, is the next meeting the time to come back with all of that?

[00:27:03] Or I guess I'm being a little more, like, logistical, how are we going to churn through this in a meaningful, thoughtful way? I mean, it's an excellent question, and I'm looking at them, you know, they could be, take up an entire meeting in isolation. I think it'd be aspirational of us to try to tackle three in one meeting and three in another, knowing it might be two, two, and two.

[00:27:26] But we could get to a point where we are having a dialogue hypothetically, and we say that actually reassessment should not be in the policy. Or we should say, you know, we might not get to that

place. So with some of them, we could get there more quickly. And then those that we think belong in the policy, I think are gonna take a lot more time to discuss in regard to how they'll be worded in the policy.

[00:27:50] So, all right, Dr. Anderson. - Thank you. Just kind of going back to the question that you asked a little while ago, how to help organize the work in an effort to not be repetitive, but just to show concurrence. I do agree with Ms. Marin in terms of avoiding repetition in the room, or maybe it's something that you said.

[00:28:10] I don't remember who said it. And I fully do agree with doing the work in the room because that's the only way that our public sees what is it that we're producing. But I do want to ask, what do you anticipate will be the protocol for us to gather input from the board members?

[00:28:28] Because one of the things that I think we want to avoid is we sit here, we try to come up with something that we are all happy with, but let's be clear, it's five of us. The majority of our board is not here. I would hate for the work session to be an entire do-over because it's so far off the mark from where people are heading that we end up having to go back to governance and to redo. I'd rather that we kind of build the structure with the feedback initially and then figure out how to slot it. So I'm just wondering in terms of how can we get the feedback from what is important to our board members and I

[00:29:08] think that's probably easier with this policy than it would be with others because we had the work session so we have information that is fresh and I don't know if anybody had written anything in the next steps or that document Ms. Sutlow that we had from that work session that Ms. Seismalizer and I managed if anybody provided any feedback but I think it's important to gather and build from there. So, yeah, I mean, I agree. I mean, the only thing I'm familiar with is what happened with governance last year, which was a member of the governance committee reaching

[00:29:42] out to me incrementally and asking me specific questions related to the aspects of the policy that were being revised. And I would think that I thought that was a sort of a model way to engage those that are not here. And what I don't know, because I couldn't attend that many meetings, is were those questions established, which I would assume they would have been at a committee meeting that we're going to go back to our other board members and we're each going to ask these five things.

[00:30:07] Or if that was, you know, we'll have to figure out how we're going to break that down. I have to answer that question. Okay. Yeah, that's what we did in the founded policies. We discussed section by section of the policy.

[00:30:23] And then when we had those open questions on each one, we had those specific questions we decided in the committee meeting to take out the colleagues. us from there's always a generic and just give us feedback or missing anything is anything you want to see added and that was each round of updates so if there were good questions were decided within the government's meetings and it was sort of exact purpose about the anderson bunch we wanted to make sure that as we went through sort of overarching around the boundary policy in each section that we had the discussion in the room in a transparent manner but we also brought feedback along the way

[00:31:02] so when they got to the work session they weren't way out of the box for the rest of our college we're interested in okay thank you um so any more comments on sort of uh establishing priorities or sort of protocols for meetings um dr anderson um as we were talking about having staff review their list if

there are um if there are policies on which they are recommending no change And there might be a great number of those.

[00:31:40] I wonder if we can set aside one meeting where all we do is review the no change memos so that we can knock out 20, 30, 40 at a time. No, I think that's an excellent idea. I think that the goal here is to narrow down the number which next year's committee would have to review.

[00:32:00] So the way we can do that most efficiently, I think we will absolutely try to do. So any more comments before we start to maybe, I mean, I think personally the next steps could be to start to look at the policy as it's written now.

[00:32:19] And anyone who's been on the board, provide some context to changes that may have happened during your tenure. And then, you know, try to sort of have a conversation about, at its face value, things that we most feel need to be updated with the way it's currently written.

[00:32:40] So, Ms. Marin? Well, I certainly would love to hear your input, Ms. Lady, given your experience and today's timing of the meeting. And again, you already helped set this up from the grading report, so I'm putting you on the spot.

[00:32:59] But I want to hear. I mean, I've been waiting for this because you... So, yeah, I mean, I'll say some things about grading as someone who was a director of student services. And in that role, worked with counselors and department chairs, built the master schedule, really was responsible to making sure every student got to graduation, and being creative along the way.

[00:33:23] If we need to triage cases, and a lot of things that what happens in schools to help students get to a finish line might be hypothetically, you know, a student has Ms. Smith for English 12, and they're not succeeding. they've got an elective that they don't need towards their requirements for graduation.

[00:33:42] And so we put that student in Ms. Smith twice. So they're with her every day, right, to get reinforced so they can be catching up and then also continue with what they need to do. But sort of, you know, the interesting thing about what's happening with grading is that I think a lot of our parents and oftentimes folks our age think about how we were graded in a more traditional sense where there were people who didn't succeed and there were people who did.

[00:34:13] And oftentimes, the people who did succeed were naturally gifted, knew how to play school well, had supportive parents, also came into school already reading at an appropriate grade level because they had preschool.

[00:34:34] This is a multi-layered thing, right? So where we've arrived is that time is the variable in learning. And while it might take me not that long to learn math concepts, I had a real reading disability. So for me to tackle literature, I had to read it and read it, reread it.

[00:34:50] So when I was in school, that meant I had to figure that out in my week. You know, I had to figure out in my week how often I could reread and reread. And then I'd have to go seek out my teacher because I had a set deadline when I was getting tests on a piece of literature. And what we're looking at today is the reality that for some kids, they can't do that.

[00:35:09] but also with reassessment that gives them an opportunity to have more time. Also, there's a lot of research around standards-based instruction. And I'm actually anxious, and this might be something that Dr. Reed's shop can help get to us, but the schools that are doing standards-based instruction,

[00:35:34] I'm sort of interested in seeing how their SOL and AP or IB scores were or how they've been each year since implementing that to see if learning the standards in that detail is also in turn providing greater success on traditional assessments.

[00:35:58] Now, what we got, the standards-based instruction rule doesn't grade formative assessments. But what we have now with the email from June 10 is that formative assessments will be 30% of the grade. So they're now being graded. And I think the benefit to that is that parents, because of the way the new grade book has been designed, parents can see in real time how their students are performing on formative things.

[00:36:22] And I think that was a disconnect where parents felt like they didn't know where their kids stood, sometimes in a rolling gray book or standards-based instruction environment whereas now that they're required to put formative scores in they can see that their student is doing really well or is not doing well at all prior to when that formative that summative assessment takes place so you know I think the other thing is we've talked a lot about executive functioning skills we've talked a lot about non-cognitive skills and, you know, to what extent are students learning those in the

[00:36:59] current environment? I will share that I was at my own physical therapy department today and had a couple people who were in the Chantilly community who knew me from my prior time at Chantilly High school stopped me and just you know keeping up how your kids you know and one was JMU and one was Christopher Newport and and they they both reported that their kids are struggling because they have deadlines you know they have to know it by a certain time they don't get any reassessments or retakes and things like that so that doesn't mean I don't think we should continue doing what

[00:37:37] we're doing but you just kind of asked me to pontificate a little bit about grading so I try to do that. Do you have any specific questions? Well I mean as you're talking I'm wondering a few things. One is that you know we represent parents and families. I would actually like to see what they see and I'm also wondering you know we hear things like well if parents can see how their kids are doing is that really making sense or like what are the examples where students are like you know what this grading doesn't work for me because it's not fair because of this and I wonder if we looked at some actual report cards like at the meeting and if staff could bring to us and show

[00:38:15] us or maybe you know the specific examples or someone else I mean Dr. Anderson also of course has been in school but like what's happening now and what's the problem with it and then the other side is what aren't we doing for students so that they they're you know we want them to be paired in college and after. And I think, I know this topic of mastery of content compared with mastery of skills or however you want to talk about that, I think that deserves a conversation. I know that's something a lot of people have, you know, opinions on, but like you just said, if a student can't study and have the executive functioning, they're not going to succeed. So are we measuring that or

[00:38:52] not? I think that's a big thing. Well, and I think a piece of that too is the neurology of the brain, right? The brain development, the maturity. So some kids sort of naturally grow into that as they as they get older. But no, I think that those are all important things. I would love to have maybe, you know, somebody from instructional services come in and do us a show us a demo of a grade book. And I went to a grading meeting at one of my schools. And so I saw a demo of the grade book, which is very helpful to me to understand why the grading committee made that

[00:39:28] decision to require 30 percent formative to be 30 percent of the grade because it forced them to show parents how the student was doing. We could still have the gradebook set up that way and it doesn't count right but because that's the other piece of this we've got a in many ways we've got an interesting experiment if you want to say going on this year because we've been so much a system of schools when it came to grading instead of a school system that everyone has the directive to do this the same way this year and I think consistency is one of the number one things our parents want and I think that's what's going to make this work a little bit of a struggle because we don't we won't even have first quarter

[00:40:05] grades by the time we've got to make some decisions related to this policy so but I mean I think those are those are great points you know when you look at the title of this policy it's promotion retention grading and graduation requirements it's not just grading and so when we think about promotion and attention I mean I'll just put this out there given the changes to what the state is doing for accreditation and really really putting our multi-language learners in a really tough spot to become fluent in three semesters it begs the question to me do we do we retain any of them in

[00:40:42] middle school because it's once they start ninth grade that that clock starts you know socially I understand why we've never done those things but again sometimes you have to be outside the box and creative around you know what's going to happen I mean there was a time when we did more retention for a variety of reasons and I think for the most part you know the economics are we really can't afford to school students for 14 or 15 years so we're trying to make sure that it's only done at 13 but I think it begs some questions and also the graduation requirements you know I think that from my perspective we need to talk about that which is interesting because they're not really

[00:41:20] in here there's nothing in here about graduation requirements it really is just making sure that parents are informed of how their students are performing incrementally and then the an a is a 93 to 100 a minus just that grading scale that's really that's all in this policy and i think that what we're talking about is putting more in the policy so i'll stop talking for a second i think Ms. Sizemore-Hyser, you've had your hand up for a bit, and then Ms. Anderson.

[00:41:49] Ms. Yes, thank you, and I appreciate the conversation, and I know, I think we were talking about sort of how to structure the work, perhaps, and again, I know we were talking about grading philosophy, so I just wanted to kind of back up a little bit to how to structure the work around the policy itself.

[00:42:07] I did want to mention, I feel like someone was talking about me in terms of coming late. I was always trying to be virtual. I'm out-of-town caregiving for a person with disabilities, so I'm not sure where the confusion was. So I kind of heard something that I just wanted to clarify for the public that's watching that I'm out-of-town caregiving.

[00:42:27] So I don't know if you guys can still hear me. But what I did want to say is I wanted to talk a little bit about the sort of how to break this down with some of my suggestions. I think we, to your point, we need to talk about the philosophy of grading, that content and skills, and what is our philosophy.

[00:42:47] I think the difficulty part about this work is going to be differentiating between what should be in policy and what should be regulation versus what should be guidelines, right? And our policy should be the philosophy that guides our work.

[00:43:03] I can't hear if the mic's not on set. I can't hear anything. You're breaking up a lot. if you're talking i can't hear you let me turn my camera off and see if that helps is that better i think so is that better yes i think so okay sorry okay um if you can hear me is that can you hear me better now yes my connection isn't great i'm hot spotting to my phone so i apologize go ahead okay sorry about that so i guess what i was saying is i think we need to really figure out what a philosophy of grading that we want to present and get feedback from colleagues on

[00:43:43] around knowledge as well as skills and then figure out from there how to maybe talk about the most components of grading that was presented at the work session or others to figure out what we can give guidance on from a policy perspective and what we should then leave for operational and i think that's what i think i'm struggling maybe others are as well that it's how do we do a policy that doesn't cross into operations right and i think that's the difficult part about this but i would recommend we figure out our purpose of grading and maybe for each section grading retention promotion and graduation and then break it into the specific

[00:44:22] sections from the work section and talk about philosophical or policy level statement around reassessments around grade books around standards or all of it and then kind of craft the policy around each section that would be my suggestion how to kind of break the work down and i'm happy to kind of put that in an email if that's helpful i know it may be breaking up i'll pause there and see what you think i think all that makes sense we discussed before you were connected virtually that we were going to look at the six focus focus areas of the work that was done by the grading

[00:44:57] committee and also were the focal points of the work session so we were we're going to get there sorry i didn't mean to cut you off but it's struggling to hear i i just want to what i was just going to say is i think the difficult part is going to be when we discuss those six sections right how do we keep that in the full software guideline in the policy right again as opposed to regulation right like what's our philosophy around reassessment what's our philosophy the people in the policy right i think we need to do that because that'll help us determine

[00:45:32] if we are going to put anything in policy around reassessment and i think that it how we feel philosophically about it um and where we believe it lives is going to be part of the conversation okay uh miss dixit thank you i appreciate that hi i just wanted to just ask about our meeting i I know the schedule and all we haven't decided, and there was many emails as well.

[00:46:02] Could we just add, like, do we have a time specific to this? Is it every time, every Monday, I think it's two Mondays a month? Is it going to be 3 p.m.? It's Tuesdays at 3 p.m.

[00:46:19] Oh, sorry, it's Tuesday. I forgot it was a long weekend. So it's going to be Tuesdays at 3 p.m., the days where it will alternate with the work session, right? Yes, but what we might need to do, depending on how we progress, is add, have, you know, two or three a month around the work session, if we can.

[00:46:42] So after the work session? I mean, right now we have four meetings before November 1. We're hoping we can get the work done. Okay. Okay? I know governance matter much more like times last time, so I don't know if 4 is going to be enough, but like you said, I'm fine.

[00:47:04] I just wanted to say that, you know, for people with like day jobs, it's, you know, it's hard to do 3 p.m. every time, every other week. I would say if you're adding additional sessions, I would like it to be considered for an afternoon or like 4 o'clock after that.

[00:47:23] Okay. Thank you for that. I will take that into account. Do you have any comments on what we've discussed so far in terms of policy and just what you've heard? I do. Yeah, I've been listening. I had my son just graduated from FCPS, so I'm very familiar with the grading and all because he was going through that till this year.

[00:47:48] And the comment, I'm going to obviously see what we discuss as a goal, but I do want to say that our students need to be more prepared for college. And giving them that additional support that retakes and retakes can actually be detrimental for them because college don't give that extra, you know, time and they don't give that extra time to accommodate these testing and assignments in special needs and IEP cases.

[00:48:16] so i'm just saying in general so i would like to see that and also there is like i understand the new standardized testing is you know there's changing or grading grading but i i do want to say that um if somebody is not going doing good in any class um there is a very it's hard for me to like understand how they get get to the next class and the next class and next class and then finally they are out of FCPS as a graduate but or any school as a graduate but they haven't

[00:48:51] you know horned in all the skills that they have not learned a lot of these topics or subjects so i don't know if we can discuss that as a part of our policy no i think those are very valid points and i think that we do need to take into account that our goal is that we ensure our graduates are workplace ready or our college ready or our military ready or our gap year ready we have to be focused on those outcome goals with some specificity not just I'm going to college but like which one right not just I'm going but are you starting the two-year you know have you already

[00:49:27] enrolled do you have your classes like we need to get them to that starting line after we've got them to have been as we get them to the finish line we need to ensure the starting line of the next phase so I think it's a great point I don't know who's next Miss Marin. Thank you. So I'm you know, I'm craving trying to put this all in some kind of order But I'm also liking how we're kind of meandering and trying to figure it out So what I like to do is kind of theme things and organize. So what I'm hearing are like two big buckets of things One are these philosophical topics things like content mastery and skill mastery and ability How do we reconcile those the standard based instruction retakes?

[00:50:09] Promotion as miss Dixit just said you know do we want to have a statement about You know students being promoted when they don't have the skills, and how is a grading policy going to ensure that students are promoted because they have the skills And then also and this is really from our strategic plan defining the kinds of readiness We want the grading policy to be Promoting and then we have the technical things so like when we talked about the title of this policy It's got promotion retention grading and graduation requirements could we change the title of this policy to just be grading and you know reporting or you know report cards but i would want to know from staff do we talk

[00:50:48] about promotion retention and graduation requirements in a different policy right because we could very easily change the title but is this supposed to be the bucket where all four of those things live but we could and then also in this you know it talks about formal reporting as a progress report like let's just name it it is a report card you know let's be clear on the words so that's like a technical thing and maybe the numbers and that it's in special services or isd that's a technical thing so maybe that's a way and because i'm also getting a little anxious knowing miss lady you're you're stepping out for a few minutes and

i'm trying to figure out how to set us up to continue to whittle down you know what the big topics are so i don't know for

[00:51:28] consideration there no i i like those buckets i think that you've uh captured what people have have been saying, and I think that provides a pretty strategic direction around how to tackle this. I'm going to throw one thing out there because I do have to step out, and hopefully the virtual meeting I need to attend will be quick, but I will throw this out there because it's been in my brain a lot because I hear a lot from people like Ms. Dixit who have high-achieving children, children with strong academic aspirations who want to be intellectually challenged every day they walk into their class. And I'm not saying that that's not happening,

[00:52:08] but I have wondered, can we have two grading policies? Can we have a grading policy for those students who embark on honors, AP, IB, and DE courses, and then one for standard courses required for graduation? And again, I say that also realizing that we have students who are taking AB, IP, honors, and DE courses, who also are working two jobs. And for the same reasons that we have, you know, how we're doing grading this year, you know, in terms of time being available,

[00:52:48] I think helps support those students. It's clear that if you take an IB, a DE, or an AP course, because that's college level work, you're better prepared for college. but i'm throwing that out there not that i could 100 agree with my idea i just thought i'd throw it on the table dr anderson thank you i also want to kind of start to get some big ideas on the table one of the things that i think is at least it's clear to me this policy as we have there's nothing

[00:53:23] here it is insufficient as being way too generous it really needs to be fleshed out because the job of the board is to give guidance I couldn't pick this up and create anything which makes sense because the entire time we've been on the board the board members have said how is it that staff has this guideline which no one understands where it came from it's because this is too thin in order to provide those parameters as dr. Reed likes to say provides a swim lanes so I think we need to be super clear I have a huge interest in grading from my work at

[00:54:01] the elementary and middle school level from my being a parent at the middle school and high school level now i i see the grade book um and i i i have lots of questions very often so i will have lots of very specific thoughts to share here but i think one of the overarching things that we have to give to our parents and to our students is the idea of consistency it does not make sense that a student can potentially have seven teachers and have seven different expectations so that consistency has to be part of the conversation and do i see some space for there

[00:54:37] to be maybe a core content um set of guidelines versus performing arts like you know ceramics and those kinds of classes i do see that but that will still be consistent and be consistently consistently applied across the division i've had parents who have been literally screaming for two years because their school did 90 10 and other schools were 60 40 in terms of summative and formative that is not a school system that is just way too individualized um one of the things that

[00:55:14] i i also want to put on the table and you mentioned this when you first started the research is not in support of the traditional way of doing things it's just isn't i will put it on the table because i as i shared before half of the texts that have been re that were referenced here are in my house because i've done some of this work so the research does not tell us that if you don't learn it by tuesday you're done and also that is not the reality and i want us to be mindful of when we're

[00:55:46] saying secondary we're saying 6 through 12. 6 through 12 is secondary for the people who live in Mason District. So the expectations that we may have of a sixth of a 12th grader should not be the expectation that we have of a sixth grader who is still very much in their formative years but are impacted by this grading. I agree but I think that Dr. Reed clarified this is credit bearing classes. High school credit bearing classes which no sixth grader takes and I I mean, well, it can, we do have sixth graders, but if you're taking algebra one and sixth grade, you're getting a grade in it.

[00:56:24] Right. So, but it's not every course seven to 12. Right. And that is a big disparity. I know we want to ensure that students are workforce ready. I definitely, I'm college ready and workforce ready, but we also have to be mindful that in the real world, when you hand your boss a report and it doesn't meet standard, you're not, it's not done.

[00:56:47] you don't get an f grade and robin is done robin goes and does it again so we have to prepare our kids for that type of environment as well i appreciate that i'm going to pass the baton here to ms marin ms seismor heiser you had your hand up yes thank you i appreciate it i just want to say i um i think it's intriguing your idea in this lady about having different classes different grading philosophies but i worry about the biggest thing i hear from folks is around consistency and And I worry that takes her from the consistency aspect of grading.

[00:57:30] I understand. I agree. Yeah, and I also think that it might, I think that, you know, when we look at skills versus knowledge, I think even if you're taking an advanced class, you know, you may not have the strongest executive functioning skills.

[00:57:45] And in the standard class, you may have stronger executive functioning skills. So I think we really should figure out the philosophy of grading and then try to have a consistent system And maybe how it's implemented in terms of the types of assignments would be different for a class, right? Maybe in terms of a surroundings class versus an algebra class, obviously the types of assessments would be different, but the philosophy I think should be the same.

[00:58:06] So I just wanted to kind of put that out there regarding that. And I don't know if I would necessarily fully agree that the research shows that traditional grading doesn't work. I've seen research that kind of shows aspects of standard-based grading is good, and aspects of traditional grading is good, so I think that's the tension that's happening right now.

[00:58:26] And I've seen some research that kind of poses a question in some of these other things. But to me, it goes back to that philosophy. If we're just looking to assess knowledge without worrying about sort of skills, then it makes sense. If we're looking at skills as well, then I think we need to kind of look beyond just do you know the knowledge of the standard.

[00:58:44] So just our two senses of kind of looking for these great concepts. Thank you. Yes. It sounds like the, again, content mastery and then the skill mastery and ability is really something to be focused on. And maybe the policy doesn't need to say if it's either or how it's put together, but it does sound like the policy needs to recognize that those are two distinct, you know, things that could be, you know, assessed.

[00:59:15] So I am going to go back to, you know, helping us try and figure out what is our logistical plan here, because that's where I keep going to. And I did share the dates for the remainder of the committee meetings. And so there are four. There's one later this month, September 24th, and one right after that on October 1st, then October 15th, October 29th.

[00:59:40] So, and in between that, oh, and then a regular meeting, we have a work session already scheduled for the budget, actually, on November 12th, but perhaps, I don't know if we need the whole time, but that is scheduled, and then we have the next work session on December 3rd, and we heard Dr. Reed say the sooner we can get it done, the better.

[00:59:58] So if we were going toward, I wonder if we could see if on November 12th, we can get some time on that work session in addition to the budget and maybe Ms. Sizemore-Heiser, you could speak to your thoughts on that as vice chair, or we could just table that. Or we'd be looking at then really, really trying to get this wrapped up by...

[01:00:20] Do you want to answer now? I'm sorry. Yeah, sure. Yeah, let me chat with the budget show. We haven't gotten into that level of detail. We and I are meeting on Friday, so I can get back to you on that. Okay, great. And I think that's like a good six-hour, you know, meeting time saved. So it seems possible that we could shave off a little bit of time at least. Well, the right amount of time.

[01:00:40] I'm sure it will be. I just want to check with him, but I'm sure that six hours will have plenty of time. Thank you both. You know, something I'm wondering is, are there things that members here on the committee want to learn more about between now and September 24th?

[01:00:55] I'm wondering about other school divisions grading policies, both nearby and other, you know, good policies elsewhere, so that'd be something that I would like to look up and see, and then I have been, again, keeping a list of things that the board would want to hear from staff, and so giving that list to the superintendent at the end of this meeting, so that on September 24th we can come with that information, or, you know, she can come with that information so we could discuss.

[01:01:24] Well, the things that I had, do you want to go ahead, Dr. Anderson? No? It's very loud. The things that I have written down that I heard voiced by members were walking us through, this is mine, walking us through challenges faced by student at this time, you know, what we hear from students, what parents and families see, the grade book demo, and I know I have seen one version that a school's been doing, but I think that would be really helpful

[01:02:04] for us to understand what is happening now. And then my question about other places in the policy, can we remove the promotion, retention, and graduation requirements, at least very deeply, from the creation of this policy? And maybe that's more of a philosophical question.

[01:02:20] How much are those things integrated into the grading policy? And then a question I have is, how does grading work on a single report card when a student has a credit-bearing course and a non-credit-bearing course? And I don't know the answer to that. and how does that get worked out?

[01:02:36] So Ms. Seema, Ms. Dixit, and then Ms. Seema Heiser. Thank you, Ms. Barron. I actually was taking, you know, listening to that last comment and from everyone.

[01:02:53] And I really want to discuss more in the breadth of the subject and then go into depth. And the reason I say is, like, we need to listen to a lot of stakeholders. And we are, you mentioned the staff, and you mentioned maybe we talked to our colleagues also.

[01:03:13] And is there a way we could do a survey for our parents too? Because I know the parents really want to be heard on this topic. They, me as a parent also, or like anybody who's had a kid at FCPS at some

point now, currently, there's a way we can take their input also because it really matters a lot to them and their kids.

[01:03:36] gone to next phase of their life um their association with the school ends but the parents and the students relationships uh their children relationship is lifelong um i really want their their voice in this uh that's what i wanted to say okay thank you miss dixit miss seismar heiser cool thank you and i apologize just to have my camera off and it sounds like the connection was better um i think as we look into this work i'm wondering if generally at least in my sorry in my

[01:04:13] past experience um we can ask staff to come back with kind of a draft of a policy based on some of the things they heard about and that way it keeps it as a policy versus operation level and then we can use that as a starting point for our work given that this policy is so as i think dr innocence and so bare bones i don't know um dr reed do you feel like we even have enough direction for staff to do that or not but i wanted to put that out there as a thought i do want staff to come back with a sort of bare bones outline the policy that at least looks at some of these different buckets and then we can take that as a place to start so i don't know what we can put

[01:04:51] i mean i think i could ask staff to take a stab at it current recommendations the board is uh most interested in or the direction the board would like staff to go so that you know they don't come back with something that we then again rewrite at the table here so i think having a really clear sense these are the five things we want staff to

[01:05:28] address when they do a rewrite draft would i think be perhaps more efficient but either way i'm happy to go back to staff and ask them to add more to the policy again i don't know if you're asking us to make the regulation a policy or to make the policy more regulation like or it's a little unclear how in the weeds the board wants to get on this topic so i think if you want to provide some clear direction around that then I can go back to staff and say this is how these are the topics the board wants addressed in the policy not the regulation not the guidance documents

[01:06:05] Ms. Sizemoreheiser want to continue sorry Ms. Sizemoreheiser I think you need to unmute we muted you while Dr. Reed was answering oh I apologize I didn't realize I was muted um can you hear me now can you answer me okay we can okay perfect um i appreciate that and i and i think we're in some ways in this with patch 22 where understandably staff brought more directions to where the board's going but i think at least for all of you for myself what i'm struggling with is how do we

[01:06:45] encapsulate policy that gives clear direction better guidance or philosophy to your staff to then create regulations without going into regulation or operational i don't know necessarily that somebody wants to have it or a policy that looks like a regulation but i i think that at least my goal is i'd like to have a clear enough philosophical policy direction that we don't then leave the door open as i think this current draft of the policy or the current version of the policy is done which is we leave the door open for people to do kind of whatever folks want to do around

[01:07:21] grading right because there really is no direction in the current draft of the policy or very little direction so i don't know if i have a good answer for you i think we need a draft or a policy that gives a overarching direction to staff and the way we want to go without in my opinion going into regulation and i i think i'm struggling to wrap my head on what that would look like unless i guess what i was asking from you and staff to see if you could figure out what that would look like from your expertise um but also i understand you're saying that you want to know which direction

[01:07:55] going and maybe it's putting out like different if you want to go this direction here what that might look like i just don't want to write a policy at the table here okay okay i think i think this is just i just got a lot of talking going on so i think part of the challenge is we don't have absolutely sorry go ahead go ahead well i was just going to say i don't think we have agreement right like i think there's not a um i think there and we also currently have staff

[01:08:31] doing a variety of things we have we don't have a consistent approach to grading for whatever reason in the county and haven't for the last 10 or 12 years by all accounts so what we do have right now is a common grading scale and an expectation that students have to make a good faith effort not to get a zero because we've reinstated zeros when there's been no effort those two are consistent those two topics all the rest of a grading policy or practice seems to be a bit at play and even the committee didn't make a recommendation to go one way or the other

[01:09:10] directly so even if i understood the topics you wanted staff to address that would be helpful because the current policy is very high level it doesn't get into the types of grading or grading practices quite honestly in reviewing it i wonder if maybe a place to start is to look at the vsba model policy on grading that would be something I think the board clerk would

[01:09:39] have access to that might be a place to start okay thank you dr. Anderson thank you I was kind of heading where dr. Reed was heading it is hard for staff to go forward to do something because they don't know where we are we have to provide some parameters and I think there are some things that at least from

[01:10:17] what I believe I heard and please jump in besides more highs if you heard it too because we were managing that meeting that seemed to be things that we could start to create a framework around for this policy because this again as it stands does not say much one we're missing we're missing the philosophy and and that may not be something that you write that may be something for us to figure out what that is as a board but at least we need to start to put together some of those um sections we are missing

[01:10:50] that part of the conversation regarding grading needs to be consistency does that consistency need to go across all disciplines i think consistency has to be part of the discussion another component that i think we need to give you some direction on is some of the same language that's in this that's in this recommendation in the secondary advisory report not the how but the what just ensuring that we are addressing reassessment will that be part of our work

[01:11:28] use of zero some of the um what will seem to be operational but we should not say what it needs to look like we just say that it has to be addressed so that gives us the long lens with giving some flexibility for the regulation which in my mind the regulation should be the guidelines that you all have rather than making that be a tertiary document we have a policy we have a guideline and we have a regulate uh we have i'm sorry we have the policy we have the regulation then we have the guidelines which i think many of us have interpreted those guidelines

[01:12:08] as optional but they're not they're mandatory and i think every employee of fcps sees the regulations as mandatory so what i would like to engage in for myself i didn't come here ready to do that is to go through this report and the recommendations to start to outline some of the things that we want to have a position on without saying how they need to be accomplished yeah i can add that you know i have a

lot of notes from when i reviewed the advisory committee the secondary grading advisory committee's report and some of those are like what i think we're calling

[01:12:47] philosophical things you know um the use of zero which effectively seems to have been set by the grading scale being zero of 50 to 100 the reassessment are we going to reassess up to 100 as it currently stands the committee says to use both gradebook types do we want to have just one that would seem to promote consistency what about waiting you know grade waiting like lifting weights and then summative versus formative and so these you know I add to the category of questions that other colleagues have outlined and I'm again wondering if maybe for the remainder of

[01:13:25] this meeting we have about 45 minutes left do we want to you know we have three weeks till the next meeting so how do we want to use this time to ask staff to do what we're going to need so that we're super you know we're moving forward at the next meeting again because when I look at the timeline right we have three weeks till the next meeting and then it's only a short time it's actually a week later that we come back right so the next meeting September 24th on a Tuesday three weeks from today then we have one week after that

[01:13:58] October 1st. So what could be helpful to hear from the staff and then I also wonder if people want to, and we've done this in other committees where each member you know writes down their list of things and then the chair you know synthesizes that and says okay a majority of us are concerned about reassessment or you know just kind of say how many of us are interested in what and then we could start to even tease out language that gives the guidance that the regulation should be specific so again my question to the colleagues is are there things that we could ask right now of the superintendent

[01:14:38] so she and her staff can use the next three weeks to return to us with information that will help her and could be list out those questions here today I am taking notes but what do what do people think of that idea I mean do we want to do that and just start I think it's a good idea I want us to maximize our time here and to be effective and to be able to give them something to walk to give Dr. Reed something to walk away with. What do our colleagues online think?

[01:15:31] Okay, I just wanted to say I like the idea. I wanted to get feedback like everybody's saying from the staff too but the questions to uh put in our feedback what what do we need from them personally i really wanted to uh get staff staff's feedback about how our current grading grading is preparing our students uh for the graduation like post-graduation uh their uh life or college or any other trade school whatever they're doing um are we are we making them ready are they they're ready

[01:16:08] with uh i don't know how to frame that question but it's more towards readiness uh after school after school yeah do you have any ideas of like what kind of data would be helpful to use and even more so like what we have i mean because the strategic plan does get to this but like thinking like what information would you want to see that would show you that students are ready more than data this this is more of a subjective question more open-ended and i i believe in uh it's i just want to be hard to get a data point on that

[01:16:44] it's more of a feedback like uh there's a there's a room of improvement here and because i know our counselors do deal with the students who are gone to college and then are gone to trade school or whatever else like associate degree and then see how they're doing it how many have completed graduation how many have uh left dropped off for whatever reason is maybe that may be helpful to know

that maybe that data point if we can figure that out yeah i captured that so what i'm doing is i'm making a list and i'm putting in who's asking for it just so we can review and maybe we

[01:17:22] could have our own next steps document for this committee meeting i don't know but um but i have that one so yeah go ahead and i have one more question how many students which do grade get less than 60 percent on any uh any like i don't know the f is as 50 60 percent right uh failed 50 percentage it's 50. i don't know 50 50 okay so how many students who have got f in say three subjects or four subjects and in many years or many subjects in a year they're

[01:18:00] getting still promoted to the next year got it thank you okay Dr. Anderson do you want to go ahead and so what we're doing Miss Lady is we've decided it would be helpful to capture our questions to give to the superintendent now because the next meeting which is three weeks away then we'll give time so that we receive the information we're seeking sure I just started typing it here but But one of the things that I'd like to know in framing of the policy is the weighting of summative and formative assessments to be consistent across schools.

[01:18:36] The type of gradebook to, again, be, to have consistent practices across schools with flexibility for certain disciplines. It doesn't mean that school A is going to have art be on a rolling gradebook and school B is going to have art be on a quarterly gradebook.

[01:18:53] It has to be, whatever art is, it has to be consistent across our schools. So those are the two things that I just started. Go ahead. But Dr. Anson, you're asking for the data about what is used now. Well, I think we have a sense of what's used now broadly.

[01:19:09] I think I'm looking at the things I'd like to be included in this draft policy that staff could be potentially working on. Because in the secondary report, there were some data that spoke to the inconsistencies, but not to that granular level.

[01:19:29] I'm not sure if it's helpful. I don't know if we should chase that data to help write this policy. That might be just work for work's sake. I'm just going to continue typing, but those are my two things for right now. Okay. Ms. Lady. Well, just real quick on that. I think that in the work session, the PowerPoint, there was a slide that broke down exactly what's going on.

[01:19:51] So are you asking for more detail than that was in that work session slide? No, I don't want any more detail. I want these. do you want to understand philosophically whether or not that should be something that's in the policy around everyone will use a rolling grade book right everyone will be okay right i don't need any additional information on that okay yeah i i agree with that with your question then ms sesmore heiser did you want to voice your questions yeah i think um i think i'd like to

[01:20:27] to get a sense of what, in terms of what we can do the bigger picture, because I appreciate those topics that came out of the work session, I feel like we need to again get the philosophy of grading and then look at how those pieces fall into the field. So I guess I would like to get some sense of what would a potential purpose or philosophy of a policy look like if we're just looking at assessing knowledge, if we're looking at assessing knowledge and As my colleague, Mr. Simpson said, how do you write a philosophy of grading that assesses ensuring our students are post-secondary ready?

[01:21:03] Right, when it's college, career, military, how do we write that philosophy of grading? And then what are the pieces into assessment that we need to look at to help ensure that we know our students or are assessing that our students are post-secondary ready?

[01:21:18] That's what I'd like to kind of get a sense of and stuff. What is a philosophy for post-secondary readiness and what is the pieces that we want to assess? Ms. Hezmerheiser, are you asking for an actual sample of what, for instance, a grading policy that recognizes content, knowledge, and mastery, and then another policy that recognizes content, knowledge, and mastery plus the skills piece? Is that what you're asking for?

[01:21:46] Yeah, maybe. I mean, I don't know if I'm looking at quite that specifically. I would like to see what a philosophy looks like that goes to recognizing post-secondary success, whatever that means, right?

[01:22:04] I mean, I have my ideas and thoughts around that, but at the end of the day, I think we all are trying to graduate students who are ready to be successful at the next path. And so how do we assess for that and what that philosophy looks like? I mean, it sounds like a strategic plan.

[01:22:21] Like, how does this tie to the strategic plan when we talk about every student ready, you know, graduating ready to succeed? And so whether that's grading policy and other things, that just keeps coming up for me for whatever that's worth to colleagues. Yeah, and that's, I would agree with that.

[01:22:37] Like, how do we assess that and then how do we ensure that assessment is both consistent in its implementation, but also flexible enough to be able to be applied in a ceramics class versus an algebra class, like how can we find that balance?

[01:22:55] That's what I'd like to kind of see in the philosophy. And I think then the conversation on the specific reassessments, grade books, et cetera, will kind of fall into place after we sort of get that big piece done. So that's what I'm interested in. Yeah, and that really ties with what Ms. Dixit had said too.

[01:23:10] Yeah, and that ties with what Ms. Dixit had said too, right? How do we know that they're really ready? so I definitely see a theme there. I have a lot of things, a lot of questions, and some of them I just wonder if there are things that once we depart from the meeting I could kind of send back to the committee. That's just my own brainstorming of those, the six things in the, no, I take that back. I'm not going to, I'm not going to send my own thoughts back, but you know, in the report that we heard on Tuesday, the presentation, the work of the Secondary Grading Advisory Committee was to

[01:23:45] focus on six grading practices. And to me, each one of them seems ripe to have more information and have a conversation. Someone mentioned the gradebook tight, whether it's quarterly or rolling, the gradebook waiting, the minimum number of assignments. I know that's been a point of concern from parents and students. The reassessment, the use of letter grades, and then the use of zero. But the use of zero kind of seems moot because the grading scale's already been set with 50 as a low but i'm not sure so um yeah well the things that i would like the

[01:24:22] staff to come back with is what miss lady recommended which was a demo of the grade book and really just walking us all through what students see and what families see i mean i have a high school student and i'm not going to see her grading her grades yet but i think that would be good to know so anyway miss lady did you want to ask me um you know just want to reiterate the importance of connecting to a strong start for kids who graduate right so you know I agree with a lot of the sentiments around promotion and you know

[01:24:59] I think that I think it's it's hard for a student who's dutiful and following up and doing things to actually fail courses because it you know you only have to earn a 60% to pass and if you attempt work and get a 50 then you're gonna pass right so I you know that to to miss Dixit's port point about situations where

do we have kids are actually graduating who can't do certain things and the answer is they have to pass barrier tests to graduation right

[01:25:36] so they have to be able to pass a reading and a writing test they have to pass mathematics tests they have to pass other standards in science and social studies so I don't believe we're graduating kids who can't read or write which I think you know people could have been critical of back in you know when I was in high school I'm confident of that but the question is are our kids fully prepared who are going to a four-year institution that's not going to have the same guardrails in place I and I don't know what that means because I I it's

[01:26:12] what's hard is a one-size-fits-all policy therefore to dr. Anderson's point there certainly needs to be more in it than is in it now but at the same time I think that there's nothing wrong with allowing I mean as long as grade books are consistent and the type and whether it's a lot of people want to do a four 4.0 scale. They want to do 0 is a 0, a D is a 1, a C is a 2, a B is a 3, and a 4 is an A, because then the power of the zeros are relevant. It doesn't factor the same way as

[01:26:52] when it's done as a percentage point, you know, but you either, you know, you get one of those and then you, you know, assign grades that way. But those are the kind of things I think that we need to decide because that's the consistency our community is looking for.

[01:27:08] But in terms of questions for staff, you know, my thing is, what are we doing with Clearinghouse data that allows us to go back and see how our students who matriculated to two and four year schools, how they did.

[01:27:27] Did they come back second semester? Did they come back to the same school the next year? What's the graduation rates of four, five, and six years? are the outcome goals that we need to be evaluating and have any of those trends changed since COVID and post COVID grading changes if you will so that's would be one of my bigger questions to help us measure how what we're preparing kids to thrive in two and four year schools I guess I also have a question or a statement because I mean our institutions of higher ed are not

[01:28:02] accountable to any uniform set of standards I mean our students you know we are doing our best to get them ready, but there's no guarantee that a college has to complete educating a student in a certain amount of time.

[01:28:18] There are no standardized assessments, I mean, really other than the SAT, which is run by privately owned business. You know, and what might be successful for one student who maybe struggles in executive functions, but is a brilliant mathematician, might not be what the other student needs.

[01:28:34] And then, you know, we haven't even talked about, we're talking about grading of the core academics, but what about the arts and our students who are athletes, Like, you know, how does the grading policy do the best that we can while the students are here, and then also set them up for success for a set of measurements that we have no control over and there's no uniform standard for, and also knowing that we have a ton of career and technical fields that are vacant now that might be great matches for students.

[01:29:02] And, like, so how are we considering that and not just talking about the four-year college going? So, Ms. Lee, did you want to? No, I think those are great points. think that what colleges are battling with is return on investment. You know, what parents and potential students are asking is, where are your

graduates? Where are they going? You know, what do they get for their money? And while I don't like U.S. News World rankings, there are definitely measurements that will help a student understand, based on whatever institution they might be choosing, how well they help ensure student

[01:29:39] graduates in four years versus five or six and what other things they have in place in terms of job placements or vocational or co-op but you know I think we also and this is it's kind of an added challenge to do this work also at the same time of lighthouse schools and trying to be more innovative right I mean I know that one of my schools changed its bell schedule went back to a constant this year and they're also trying to work as a lighthouse school to get students out of the building to get hands-on work experience be it in a skills-based situation or be it in a you know an area requires a four-year degree

[01:30:18] or even more to get that exposure so again you know we can go in all different directions here but our return investment that we're being measured upon are as we get kids the finish line are they set up for the next starting line and for a strong start which also you know begs the question we talk a lot about the a lot of skills based what's going on now is in IT and I don't know if you saw but I believe the state just adopted that we have to start teaching computer science concepts starting in kindergarten well on top of it's not for

[01:30:57] this year I think it's supposed to be implemented the 25 26 school year if I read it correctly but you know talking with someone who works in elementary school, I mean, there's so much required things that are being put upon them that it's squeezing out the arts and things like that, which we don't want to do, right? But we also need to pay attention to the fact that even within the arts world, a lot of those kids are going to be successful musicians or people in theater or people in journalism. And so we need to

[01:31:30] figure out how to get them a skills-based experience as well. Thanks Miss Lady. So something I'm wondering about just to keep pushing us towards this plan right of this very interesting and amorphous in some ways content. So I've captured down what board members have asked for staff that they would like to have presented and shared in three weeks time and just like in our regular board in our work sessions that can be shared as a next step. Perhaps we can do it that way and I don't know if we want to do maybe everyone just needs their things yeah everyone needs these questions answered and it's not a huge

[01:32:10] list dr. Reed you know I think yeah so I'll share that or the chair will share that after one thing I'm wondering is if what if between now and September 24th each of us on the committee go back through the advisory committee's the grading committee's report and look at those six topical areas gradebook type gradebook waiting minimum number of assignments reassessment use of the letter grades and use of the zero and really decide if we agree where the grading committee landed or not and is there something in addition to these six

[01:32:48] main parameters you know I had questions about each of these you know like what is happening now with each of these areas what I'm also wondering like what did middle school principals think what did high school principals think because there were stakeholder groups so I'd like to see the raw data of who said what and like what's best practice what's most common in Virginia especially we're talking about helping our students you know have the path to our public institutions and then also like some modeling so if we did choose to do you

[01:33:24] know a quarterly gradebook only what would need to happen including like impact on our systems and technology would we need to you know what kind of schoology training would be needed

what kind of and then just overall I mean a big question that I had was do we agree with the grading committee's overall guiding principles which were on page six of the report you know I think we all should determine whether we each agree with those as a basic tenant so this is what I'm just to reiterate and again I'm kind of brainstorming and welcoming any input and guidance but just trying to get us to a plan so if in

[01:34:02] the next three weeks we have this list of questions we've identified for the superintendent's response to come back in three weeks so we can discuss it at the governance committee meeting in the meantime if each of us on the committee reviewed those six grading practices of the grading committee and do we agree where the grading committee you know is going or is there something you know different and then but also do we agree with the guiding principles stated on page six of the committee's report which maybe those are a good starting place for the policy even so dr anderson thank you for bringing that back one of my comments that i sent

[01:34:40] to dr reid and to staff which i cc'd the board on when i sent my original comments on this report one of my first things were regarding the principles i think they're very strong principles and i think these at least for me i don't know where we are consensus wise but for me they really lay out our essential beliefs so and in even a subsequent conversation with um dr presidio just after the work session last week i said to him these could live very they're very broad they're very high level they could live to begin our conversation our conversations on our beliefs

[01:35:19] and philosophy so i am a huge fan of how this has been outlined um but again i know we need to have more feedback. I think the principals are great. You know, I agree. I think they're, I think they capture, you know, and I will say this, and I didn't say this during the work session, but I do have a couple of former colleagues, friends who were part of the focus groups that came into different schools. And it's my understanding, anyone on faculty was invited to be a part of

[01:35:58] the focus group if they chose to and these folks having some interest did and they said they had never been asked such fantastic questions about grading in their life that for them the experience was sort of almost you know an epiphany and eye-opening around they hadn't thought from some of the perspectives that the questions challenged them or invited them to share so I think it was you know what led to this document I think they got some good information from those focus groups but I do think that the discussion of those guiding

[01:36:33] principles would be what is a great idea well cool your online colleagues have anything they'd like to add oh sure uh Miss Dixit I know I'm in agreement with everybody whatever shared Miss Lady just mentioned too and I would like to read the the reports in the next three weeks and can kind of get prepared for the next meeting

[01:37:07] um and i do want to uh just again understand this philosophically what we are trying to achieve rather than just uh going it and just looking at the measures and and and just make it uh don't i want to do it for the right reason and and understand and then do it so i will be spending my time to understand this more sounds good thank you miss heismarheiser thank you i appreciate that

[01:37:43] i'm in agreement but i think these reports and the guiding principles are good starting points i just want to maybe just put out in the air that i want to be careful not to rely too much on those because the purpose for those -- for those recruited was because the grading committee was asked to look at specific areas that were -- that had inconsistencies and causing concerns.

[01:38:06] And the purpose we were doing was to kind of back up a little bit and create a grading philosophy to help guide the committee going forward. So I don't want to create that based on the grading committee that was created, from my understanding at least, to look at specific issues and not really look on grading as a philosophical and big picture.

[01:38:23] So I think you can help definitely guide over it, but I don't think it should just be what we're looking at because the purpose of that wasn't to inform the building policy, it was to look at specific areas, my understanding of inconsistency. And if I'm in court to my understanding, I welcome other thoughts on that, but I just wanna be careful not to worry too much on something that wasn't created for this purpose.

[01:38:46] - Okay, thank you. Well, I just realized that I can turn the meeting back over to our chairperson here. So Ms. Leigh, here you go. Thank you.

[01:39:02] I'm glad my meeting went pretty quickly. So I do think that we've had a healthy dialogue here today. I think the questions that we will be sharing with the superintendent will help drive the work for the next meeting. And I agree, we do need to do our work while most of us probably read the documents for the work session.

[01:39:23] I'm not sure we printed them and digested them and made notes all over them. And I think that's sort of the next step if you haven't had a chance to do that yet. But I do agree that we have to keep as a priority that what we really have received from the public is a request for consistency school to school.

[01:39:43] And so ultimately the things that we are discussing we need to establish, determine, agree upon what needs to be tight and then what could perhaps be school-based decision or even collaborative team by collaborative team, or it could be that everyone who teaches APUS history in Fairfax County, that they as a larger collaborative team will do things the same way.

[01:40:07] I just think we need to realize also what we would be requiring of staff time to establish some of those things and how that would be created.

[01:40:23] So just some thoughts, but I think that we've done some good work. Dr. Reed, do you have anything else you want to add before we adjourn? I just have a question in terms of setting expectations or managing expectations. When will I be receiving the list that you all sort of collate or put together that you want a response to?

[01:40:43] I say today. Today? I've got it typed up. I just want to give it a once-over, and someone emailed me something. Okay. Yes. Thank you. can i just i also put together some thoughts that you know out so perhaps you can kind of combine all of that sure may i suggest robin be the keeper of those so that she is the one relaying it to the superintendent so i'll send along my things as well yes thank you both sure okay before we adjourn anyone else have any comments questions remarks miss leisemore heiser are you

[01:41:20] good all right i'll just lower my hand i'm good thank you madam chair



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