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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, December 5, 2024

Date Thursday, December 5, 2024
Place Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length 4h 33m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99mfihXfIbo>
- 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.

[00:00:06] By the way, I am one of the three Enlarge School Board members. My name is Il Young Moon, and a lot of people, I'm sure that you've been getting my newsletters on a monthly basis. My next newsletter is going to come out tomorrow night, and my first name is spelled I-L-R-Y-O-N-G.

[00:00:30] There is an R between L and Y, and a lot of times the people, you know, flip that R and and misspell it so make sure the next time you see my name and whether it's spelled correctly it's I-L-R-Y-O-N-G don't ask me why my first name is spelled so difficult it wasn't my choice when I was born you know I didn't name myself was it was my father and when I came to the US half a century ago as a teenager it was a someone who helped our immigration papers spell my first name

[00:01:08] that way so blame that person that's again public announcement and if they don't fix the bulldog in

[00:01:24] time i'm gonna have to share a few more stories so in the vein of mr moon for those you have tiny little ones robinson's having its tiny tots concert tomorrow the band is playing a bunch of holiday and other songs for the tiny little ones at 10 a.m and 7 p.m tomorrow so robinson

[00:02:01] secondary school i think i heard a hoo-hoo back there there we go proud robinson parent back there At long last, this December 5th, 2024 regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board will now

come to order.

[00:02:36] Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence and a performance of the National Anthem by the Island Creek Elementary School 5th and 6th grade chorus under the direction of Sarah Laird and Sarah Arslan. I pledge allegiance.

[00:03:34] one more round of applause for those talented kids before they leave agenda item 2.02 announcements

[00:05:14] Ms. Dixit has submitted a written request to attend tonight's meeting virtually due to a personal conflict and she has a work conflict she is located in Centerville Virginia all those in favor of approving Ms. Dixit's request Ms. Marin Mr. McElveen Dr. Anderson Mr. McDaniel Ms. Anderson Ms. Sizemoreheiser Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon Ms. St. John Cunningham and myself that is unanimous for all board members present. Ms. Dixit can you test your microphone? I can. I'm here. All right welcome.

[00:05:43] If you would like to review a copy of the meeting agenda please see the back of the auditorium to obtain copies of any items or supporting materials being presented tonight. Please reference the QR code on the agenda or visit fcps.edu/boarddocs. Tonight's meeting is being broadcast on channel 99 and live streamed on YouTube and our website fcps.edu/livestream. Agenda item 2.03 Justice High School's 70th anniversary proclamation. I call on Dr. Anderson for a proclamation.

[00:06:15] Thank you and before I get started I would like to recognize Becky Brooks Petrucci who is a Jeb Stewart Justice High School alum who was part of the first graduating class in 1961 and she's accompanied by her family and grandchildren who are current Justice High School students. Ms. Petrucci please stand. Thank you so much for being with us.

[00:06:48] Whereas, Justice High School has served as a cornerstone for education in the community in Falls Church, Virginia for 65 years, shaping generations of students into responsible, compassionate leaders and serving as a symbol of progress and inclusion.

[00:07:08] And whereas, originally founded in 1959 as Jeb Stewart High School, nearly 60 years later in 2018, recognizing the need to better reflect the values of equity, unity, and justice, the community led efforts to rename the school to Justice High School, marking a pivotal moment in its history, honoring the legacy of civil rights leaders Thurgood Marshall, Barbara Rose Johns and Colonel Louis C. Mendez Jr. And whereas Justice received national recognition

[00:07:47] in September 2001 National Geographic magazine for its culturally aware school climate, encouraging students to advocate for their nationality, culture, and identity. And again in 2005 when President George W. Bush visited to honor the school's success in raising student achievement in all demographic groups. And whereas, as the first International Baccalaureate World School in Fairfax County Public Schools, Justice High School has been a model of academic

[00:08:25] excellence, consistently preparing students to excel in higher education and in the workforce, Offering a comprehensive curriculum that include IB programs and specialized learning opportunities, including advancement via individual determination, AVID, career and technical education, and project discovery, among others.

[00:08:48] And whereas Justice High School has cultivated an exceptional tradition of extracurricular achievements with its athletics, performing arts, and academic teams regularly earning accolades at the

district, regional, and state levels, Justice High School is a proud founding member of the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association.

[00:09:12] and the 1968 crew team earned the title of world champions at the princess elizabeth cup at the henley royal regatta in england and whereas justice high school boasts an impressive roster of notable and successful alumni across an array of fields including patricia a dean the former deputy clerk of the u.s supreme court john hartman founding drummer of the Doobie Brothers,

[00:09:48] yeah, Academy Award-winning actress, Julianne Moore, NFL running back, Charlie Garner, and WNBA player, Penny Moore, and NWSL soccer player, Anna Hafferty.

[00:10:07] And whereas, the school's faculty and staff have continuously demonstrated unwavering commitment to student success, creating a nurturing and supportive educational environment with a culture of personal responsibility, integrity, critical thinking, and accountability.

[00:10:27] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board honored Justice High School on the occasion of its 65th anniversary of providing educational excellence and enrichment opportunities to students and to the community.

[00:10:45] - Is there a second? - Second. - Thank you, Mr. Moon. All those in favor of the proclamation, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemore-Hyser, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Dixit, and myself, Mr. Dunn.

[00:11:03] That is unanimous for all those at and away from this. Congratulations.

[00:11:17] Agenda Item 2.04, Inclusive Schools Week Proclamation. I call on Mr. Moon for a proclamation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Whereas, National Inclusive Schools Week aims to honor and highlight the importance of creating inclusive educational environments that welcome all students regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or challenges.

[00:11:41] Inclusive Schools Week is an annual event sponsored by the Inclusive Schools Network, ISN, and is held during the first full week of December. And whereas, since its inception in 2001, National Inclusive Schools Week has celebrated the progress that schools have made in providing a welcoming, supportive, and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, including students who are marginalized due to disability, gender, socioeconomic status, cultural heritage, language preference, and other factors.

[00:12:20] And whereas, inclusion is a foundational value that promotes diversity, equity, and respect, fostering a sense of belonging, and empowering every student to reach their full potential. And whereas, inclusive schools provide students with opportunities to engage in collaborative learning, develop mutual understanding, and participate in activities that celebrate their unique strengths and perspectives.

[00:12:49] And whereas, educators, families, students, and community members play a vital role in promoting inclusive practices and building supportive, adaptive learning environments that serve the needs of every learner.

[00:13:05] And whereas, this year's theme, Every Voice Matters, echoes the fundamental belief that every individual has a unique perspective and contributes to the rich tapestry of our school communities. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools recommits to the crucial work of fostering a culture of inclusivity,

dismantling barriers to participation, and ensuring that all our students feel valued, supported, and prepared to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

[00:13:40] Now, therefore, be reserved that the Fairfax County School Board proclaims the week of December 2 through 6, 2024 as Inclusive Schools Week and encourages the entire Fairfax County community to participate in activities that celebrate inclusion, diversity, equity, and belonging.

[00:14:00] Now, therefore, being further reserved that Fairfax County School Board reaffirms its commitment to creating an inclusive, supportive, and equitable learning community where all students are engaged, inspired, and thrive.

[00:14:16] Is there a second? I second. All right. All those in favor of the proclamation, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemoreheiser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. Seijun Cuning, Ms. Dixit, and myself. That is unanimous.

[00:14:32] Congratulations before we move on to photos I do want to recognize the chair of the City of Fairfax School Board Carolyn Pitches is with us and school board member and City Council person elect Stacey Hall is with us as well from the City of Fairfax thank you for being here we look forward to seeing you at our joint meeting soon all right I would like to invite all those in support of the Inclusive Schools Week proclamation to please join the board at

[00:15:10] the front of the dais for a photo I would like to invite all those in

[00:16:53] support of the Justice High School 65th Anniversary Proclamation to please join the board in front of the dais for a photo.

[00:19:41] Agenda Item 3.01 Community Participation. The next order of business is community participation. We welcome all community members who are here and those who signed up to speak this evening. Additional information about signing up to provide comments at school board regular business meetings and public hearings can be found on the school board's website at fcps.edu/schoolboard. During the signup process Community members acknowledge that they were informed of the school board's expectations for proper decorum when providing comments.

[00:20:09] These expectations are also available online and with the printed agenda and meeting materials in the back of the room. We ask audience members to be respectful of one another. Shouting and outbursts will not be tolerated. Please hold your applause until the conclusion of a speaker's remarks. Audience members may not join speakers at the podium and should remain at their seats, including when recording video or taking photos.

[00:20:30] We're grateful for those who have joined us today to speak to us and thank you for your cooperation. School board members will be listening but not responding. Madam Clerk please call the first speaker. - Darren Krillwitz.

[00:20:54] - Good evening. On behalf of Robinson Secondary School pertaining to the alleged violations impacting FCPS sports I ask the following of FCPS leadership. Number one, apologize for irreparably degrading the rights of passage of FCPS athletes of the class of 2025 and their loved ones.

[00:21:17] The current situation is the result of decisions, actions, or inactions of the very people entrusted to create and preserve such opportunities. This is at best a demonstration of indifference and at worst a dereliction of duty.

[00:21:33] Either way, it's a betrayal that destroyed the community's confidence in FCPS leaders and the credibility thereof. Owning the situation and apologizing is a necessary first step to demonstrating leadership and rebuilding trust with the community.

[00:21:49] Two, be clear and transparent about the goals of the proposed external review. Take appropriate steps to ensure that the review is complete, objective, and visible to the FCPS community and yields actionable findings.

[00:22:05] Three, lead FCPS out of its current posture of assigning and deflecting blame and into efforts of collaboration. BHSL says rules were broken, FCPS says they were not. Clearly, there's either a miscommunication, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the rules.

[00:22:24] Stop wasting time, excuse me, the issues that created that situation remain unresolved, and the clock is still ticking as winter sports begin. Stop wasting time and start collaborating with VHSL to address those root causes. Lastly, honor the athletes of the class of 2025 by establishing a culture of sportsmanship and integrity above all.

[00:22:46] Don't squander the opportunity to create value from this experience and take genuine accountability. Demonstrate transparency going forward and get down to the work of ensuring that this does not happen again to their younger friends and siblings.

[00:23:11] - Robert Rigby. - My name is Robert Rigby. I'm both a resident and an employee of FCPS.

[00:23:27] Yesterday I was at a rally at the steps of the US Supreme Court with a thousand plus LGBTQIA2S plus folks, and their families and friends. You should know that two dozen states have made life tremendously hard for transgender youth and in some places trans adults too.

[00:23:47] The Supreme Court heard oral arguments yesterday about stopping the laws banning healthcare for trans youth and pausing the scapegoating of this particular minority. It's not about bathrooms or sports or surgery. It's not about parental consent.

[00:24:04] about essential life-saving medical care with parental guardian. Virginia has not yet banned essential health care for trans youth. We have not gone to that low in scapegoating a particular group of children.

[00:24:20] We in Fairfax must be the bulwark against these devastating laws, a place of refuge and a place to stay. We can't sacrifice our students to legal or political expediency, not if we want to have peace of mind in us.

[00:24:37] I'll stand with you. Employees, parents, caregivers, and voters of Fairfax County will stand with you. Your part in this is to hold on to and to strengthen that bulwark, even if it means going against legal advice and making a best practices and morally right stand.

[00:24:55] Even if it means that the state will try to take over FCPS. Whatever it means, we must keep the dam firm, make it stronger with more protections. Thank you for listening. Gail Hanlon. Good evening, I'm Gail Hanlon, Fairfax County resident and mom of two FCPS students.

[00:25:33] Tonight, I must express my profound disappointment in the way that the vast majority of this board and Dr. Reed has handled this entire Hayfield football scenario. Unlike most of those speaking tonight, I am not the parent of an FCPS football player, and I don't have any connections to Hayfield. Instead, I stand there before you as a deeply concerned FCPS parent and community member

representing a coalition of hundreds of others like me who are completely dumbfounded that this scenario is and how it's played out. What should have been an opportunity for transparency,

[00:26:06] accountability, and immediate action has instead become an exercise in avoidance and has resulted in collateral damage to our student athletes, families, coaches, and boosters. An environment where young lives are being shaped our priority needs to be always to uncover the truth as expeditiously as possible even if that means admitting mistakes have been made instead for the most part your response has been completely dismissive and reactive you leave this community

[00:26:41] wondering if something at this high profile is being botched what is happening to our most vulnerable student population in scenarios where the media isn't covering what's being swept under the rug when there isn't a group of coaches standing and banding together and taking a stance.

[00:27:00] We demand better for our students, our schools, and our community. We demand an immediate, full, transparent investigation with clear communications of all the findings. We demand consequences for those that have been found to have acted improperly, as well as those who have failed to act. And most importantly, we demand reforms to ensure that such failures in leadership and accountability cannot

[00:27:26] happen again. Thank you for your time. Martha Hess. Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Martha Hess and I am the parent of a senior football player at South County High School. I am also a graduate of Fairfax County Public Schools. I come here tonight to express my utter frustration with how the situation with the Hayfield football team has been handled. It has left me left me disappointed and it has left many people not trusting the ability of the school board or the superintendent to move

[00:28:13] forward with this and other things we have lost faith in due to the lack of accountability the lack of willingness to be forthright we applaud I applaud the six football coaches many of whom risked their own careers to come forward and say that things were not being right and to act with integrity and to stand up for what's right and to show their players what they as coaches teach the players and what we as parents and a school administrators should be teaching our kids about integrity and acting with morals.

[00:28:44] I come to demand accountability for what the situation has been asking you to do an independent and fair and full investigation with minimal involvement from existing school board members. We need someone outside to really take a full look at what's been going on to demand transparency and accountability and ongoing communication.

[00:29:07] You talked about on November 11th or November 20th. having a meeting for community members to express their opinions. It's been more than two weeks. There has been no community meetings and to a commitment to address this going forward and to restore the integrity of the Fairfax County school system and to rebuild that trust with the community members because as someone else said earlier today we're already into winter sports.

[00:29:32] If the situation is not addressed and we don't look at and hold those who did things accountable it's just going to continue to happen again. Thank you. Cheryl Binkley.

[00:29:59] The title of this is Anticipating 2025. Good evening, board members and Dr. Reed and staff members. Only a month or so ago, the four public education volunteers were hoping that the chaos around our schools, the political Buddha, was getting a little better.

[00:30:22] But I'm here tonight because I need to encourage you that though politically driven law firms are determined to sue Fairfax into bankruptcy and attack our most vulnerable students. And although a wrestler who slaps her children in public is on tap to run and dismantle the U.S. Department of Ed, and though you just contracted a 7% raise and the supervisors announced a \$300 million deficit, and in spite of the governor's determination to rate one

[00:30:56] out of three of our schools as off track, and those are the least funded of our schools. And last but not least, we've just launched a boundary study which is bound to raise more stress and anxiety among families of Fairfax than any other two words I can think of. In spite of all those things, I'm here to reassure you that Fairfax County public schools are going to be more than okay. I say this because of who you are and who we are. We will come together as we always have

[00:31:36] in our dedication to provide for all of our children and to build exemplary communities for one another. Fort Public Education volunteers have already been to numerous community events as we plan to defend our children and families from all comers who would do harm, as I'm sure you have as well. So I'm here to once again say public schools are the cornerstone of our democracy.

[00:32:07] Deanna Doherty. Good evening. I'm here representing the Hayfield football parents. If you've seen Remember the Titans, ask yourself what side were you on? When the Hawk story is told, what side

[00:32:44] will you be on? The side of those who perpetrated a narrative based on rumor and innuendo full of and fueled by hatred anger and fear or the hawk side born out of facts the facts 13 african-american families moved into the hayfield district FCPS validated that all players met residency requirements VHSL verified that all but three of these players met eligibility requirements those three players never

[00:33:23] played. Two parents made allegations about the team and coaches. Two investigations produced no evidence to substantiate the allegations. A parent and a retired FCPS administrator violated FERPA to obtain addresses of players. The parent then stalked the players, following them to and from practices and publishing their names online. Hayfield players received verbal and physical threats both on and off the field. Players and families were called

[00:34:02] vile racial slurs on social media. An FCPS coach compared the players to gangbangers and likened coach Overton to a child molester. VHSL banned the Hawks from playoffs for two years without any evidence. A local newspaper knowingly

[00:34:26] published inaccuracies and lies. Three school board members. Lauren Garrity. School board members are accountable to constituents. The superintendent is accountable to the school board. Accountability supports leaders by

[00:35:05] providing an opportunity for growth and learning. Accountability prevents situations that cause embarrassment and heartache. Everyone loses without accountability and everyone has lost including the youth whose grown-ups chose to transfer their children to Hayfield including the communities those students left behind. Everyone suffers the consequences of greedy leaders who make decisions based on self-interest. The football scandal has highlighted

[00:35:41] a system that values power and winning no matter the cost. Reed has said that she will build trust with action, but the only actions we have witnessed have been self-protective, dishonest, and defensive. Instead of avoiding accountability for the current crisis, now is the time to conduct an external investigation of the events that have led to this current crisis with results available to all.

[00:36:10] We want our children to know how to own their failures and understand the importance of repairing harm when they make mistakes which we all do. A healthy community is a healing balm in a punishing world. It is a form of energizing resistance. School communities can be transformative. They can be safe places for teachers and students to think and to learn and to imagine and create but our leaders are not promoting that kind of community they are promoting

[00:36:48] communities of fear and retaliation. We are disappointed and we will hold you accountable with our votes. Jamie Maltese. Hello my name is Jamie Maltese a Fairfax High School football parent. Thank you for the time. A brief timeline. On 11-8 VHSL found Hayfield to be in violation of multiple policies and banned them from postseason play for two years. On 11-15 Hayfield parents represented by FCPS

[00:37:24] external counsel won a court ruling to lift the ban and on 1120 the community received a letter from dr reed which contained the following excerpts continued and troubling misinformation being shared regarding hayfield we want our students to have passion for their sport and to play every game with integrity and sportsmanship vhsl declared the entire team ineligible without specific evidence people are frustrated because of the ambiguities and we stand ready to improve their policies and processes upon receiving the letter many parents including myself shared the the following concerns. Why did the letter provide such a robust defense of Hayfield despite clear

[00:38:01] evidence of unprecedented number of transfers into the program? Why wasn't FCPS concerned about the unfair level of competition this created? Hayfield, which took pride in embarrassing their opponents, Hayfield by 40, did not promote integrity and sportsmanship above all else by continuing to run up the score when their opponents were clearly beaten. And regarding the incriminating text sent by Monty Fritz, how long did FCPS know about them and why did they only act when they became public.

[00:38:28] There is new reporting just today about multiple whistleblower complaints being ignored. I'd like to believe that all parties have been acting in good faith but it becomes increasingly difficult to do so as more details emerge. I make the following requests. One the board should approve the motion listed in today's new business to engage an external law firm to conduct a comprehensive independent review starting with Hayfield.

[00:38:49] Two Superintendent Reed should issue a public apology to VHSL for casting down on their processes and findings which were ultimately found to be sound incorrect and 3 Superintendent Reed should issue a public apology to everyone who participated in classics football this year including players parents coaches support staff etc. who were forced to endure unfair contests because of her failure to act against against a program in clear violation.

[00:39:10] This fostered an environment where students became demoralized and extracurricular participation was decreed. Virginia Savigny.

[00:39:27] Good evening school board members Dr. Reed.

[00:39:46] I would like to formally and on the record invite you all to a conversation with the Pine Ridge Civic Association at some time in the near future boundary adjustments can be very useful tools for fixing boundary problems such as a split feeder elementary boundary adjustments will not fix underperforming schools by ripping students out of their community in a well-performing school damaging their mental

health and bussing them to the other side of the beltway Falls Church High School is nationally ranked in the six thousands Woodson is nationally

[00:40:25] ranked in the 600s. Woodson has a robotics team and a rowing team. Falls Church has neither. My elementary age child hopes to do rowing and robotics when he is older. If he is zoned to Falls Church, he will not have an opportunity to do rowing or robotics, which neither of which receives one cent from FCPS.

[00:40:49] We will not be looking to start a rowing or robotics team. Instead, we'd probably be looking to put him in private school. And then we'd wind up supporting the folks want vouchers to pay for private school schools like falls church which are underperforming and under capacity can be helped keep it under capacity support our teachers by using that space to lower class sizes deal with problem students and providing more individual attention the woodson woodson pyramid is a community that does not have a problem and no one minds the mantua modules yogi berra once said no one goes there anymore because it's

[00:41:27] too crowded and he was right many of our homes are over 60 years old and were purchased because I've gone to Woodson for decades. We made that choice. Please respect our community. New developments you may put wherever you like. Thank you, have a great day.

[00:41:49] - Jim Hartle, Kathy Hosick, Riddicka Stober, Todd Usher, Vanessa Hall.

[00:42:23] - Hi, next year may be even scarier than predicted, so I'm thankful that we have leadership like you and Dr. Reed to support and educate our kids no matter their race, religion, gender, income, or identity. Your commitment will ensure that Fairfax students get a quality education even if the US Department of Education is destroyed by the far right. I plan to speak more on this but I learned something awful at the Westfield region boundary meeting. Someone's feeding crazy rumors to my neighbors about boundary reviews specifically that they are to redistribute students around the county to boost scores at lower performing schools to meet the new VDOE accreditation standards and that my

[00:43:03] neighborhood, specifically Winterset, would be moved in order to improve another high school's test scores. This is ludicrous. None of that makes any sense. We all know, and you guys have shared, that boundary priorities are clearly about proximity, reduced travel times, and reducing overcrowding. If my neighborhood Winterset was moved out of Mantua, there's no single nearby school to accommodate our hundreds of kids. Plus, all public education advocates worth their salt have rejected the revised Youngkin VDOE accreditation standards as transparently

[00:43:38] political efforts to undermine our public schools. Nevertheless, these rumors are spreading like wildfire because the best rumors are often the most outrageous ones. Although the roots of these rumors are unknown, they're eerily similar to those spread by voices of Fairfax PAC. It doesn't help that paid agitators have shared these unfounded rumors in Washington Times editorials without regard to the impact on our families.

[00:44:05] And obviously, a lot of our families are terrified of having their children ripped out of their schools. We cannot let misinformation from Project 2025 groups and their allies get in the way of our sense of community and common goal of education in Fairfax County.

[00:44:21] We're stronger together and will need that strength in the chaos of the upcoming year. So thank you for showing up and doing the work. - Even though it is tough as these boundary discussions and

decisions will be, we need to work together as a community and work from facts and primary documents, not random newspaper articles, while understanding the troubled history of Fairfax County School boundaries.

[00:44:45] Again, thank you guys for all your hard work. - Anna Smith. - Good evening.

[00:45:01] My name is Anna Smith and my son is on the football and baseball teams at Fairfax High School. I am here as a concerned member of our community to discuss fairness in athletics. In her November 20 email to the FCPS community, Dr. Reed stated, "We want our students to have passion for their sport and to play every game with integrity and sportsmanship above all else."

[00:45:22] There has been a demonstrable lack of integrity and sportsmanship shown at all levels across FCPS, from the school board and superintendent to the Hayfield administration and coaching staff. Athletics are a platform for sportsmanship and integrity, but the events at Hayfield, followed by insufficient action from the school board and Dr. Reed have left students, parents, and the community questioning the fairness in athletics. The lessons our student athletes learn today will shape their character tomorrow. By prioritizing integrity, we remind them that how you play the game is just as important as winning. It is critical that our schools

[00:46:00] consistently enforce policies and hold all teams and staff accountable to the same standards, creating a level playing field where every athlete can trust the system and focus on their growth. Your inaction sends a dangerous message that rules are optional and accountability is negotiable.

[00:46:17] What does that teach our students about responsibility? What does it tell the athletes who work hard and play by the rules only to see others not held to that same standard? I urge the school board to ensure that any ongoing investigations are conducted thoroughly, that outcomes are shared transparently with the community, that safeguards are in place to prevent future controversies, and that all individuals responsible for these failures face serious consequences. This is not just about a game. It's about sportsmanship, integrity, and trust. And this issue transcends athletics. It's about upholding

[00:46:53] the values we want to instill in our students. Fairness, accountability, and respect for the rules. FCPS must affirm its commitment to these values. Thank you. Virginia Savigny. Good evening.

[00:47:21] My name is Gin Savini. You may recognize me as someone who comes to every board meeting in my yellow for public education shirt. My intention is to be a sign to you that especially when you're being unfairly maligned or attacked, there are many of us who recognize and sincerely appreciate the work you are doing to provide the best education possible for all our children and fully support our dedicated teachers and school employees in accomplishing their mission.

[00:47:52] Tonight, I want to spotlight the tremendous value of the academy programs. I first became aware of them when my grandson participated in the high school fire academy during his senior year. He's now a Fairfax County firefighter, and I couldn't be prouder of him.

[00:48:10] I've since learned about many other outstanding academy programs, and my sense is that they need to be expanded. Kids these days are considering all options, and many need an alternative to immediately heading off to college.

[00:48:26] They especially need career and tech ed courses, which can provide entry into good-paying jobs. I am particularly impressed with the extraordinary course in construction taught at Edison. Working

since the 1980s in tandem with the award-winning Foundation for Applied Technical Education, FATE, students are not just building picnic tables while learning the ins and outs of the construction business including such things as engineering zoning subcontracting permitting and much more FCP students are actually building

[00:49:03] houses in McLean and now in Springfield the last house they worked on sold for 1.4 million dollars and the profit is shared with FCPS their excellent teacher Bruce Morrow wants to expand the program to reach hundreds more students and to

[00:49:22] partner with the county to build a Ford. Thank you ma'am. Jim Hartle, Kathy Hosick, Ritika Stover, Todd Usher, Holly Hazard. Chair Fresh that was our last

[00:50:01] public speaker. Thank you madam clerk. Agenda item 4.01 student representative matters. I call on Ms. Sawant. Thank you Mr. Chair. Good evening everyone. First I want to extend my congratulations to the 12 students selected for the school Board Student Leadership Development Program. I had the privilege of meeting this cohort this past Tuesday and I look forward to seeing them at meetings in the new school year. New Year, sorry. Last month I had the opportunity to attend the Virginia School Board Association Student Representative Workshop where I met with other student school board representatives from across Virginia to discuss key issues such as the cell phone policy, student advocacy, athletics

[00:50:38] and challenges faced by school boards statewide. The exchange of ideas was incredibly valuable and I'm excited to bring some of those insights from from our conversations to this meeting. Today, I'd like to share feedback, suggestions, and implementations that students would like to see in the FCPS cell phone policy.

[00:50:54] These insights come from our recent Superintendent's Advisory Council meeting and the feedback that I received from students. First, many shared positives about how the policy has helped them stay focused and on task in class. Without the constant pull of notification or temptations to scroll on their phones in their pocket, several students expressed that it's easier for them to focus on their work and engage with peers in class activities.

[00:51:17] It also plays a crucial role in preventing academic dishonesty and cheating because students no longer have their phones with them during class time. This data is also supported by studies done by Yonder Pouches, which studied over 1,200 schools that have participated in the Yonder Pouch pilot program, where 86% of those schools saw positive impact in safety and wellness of their students.

[00:51:38] However, the way this policy manifests from class to class, even at a single school looks drastically different. For example, in math class, students may be required to put their phones up in a phone caddy, but in history class, the teacher may not even verbally reinforce the policy.

[00:51:54] One student from Fairfax High School shared, it would be clearer if all teachers and admin could agree on a single way to put the phone away during class time. Another student at Mount Vernon mentioned that in her school, sometimes she couldn't even tell that there was a cell phone policy. Some teachers would enforce it verbally while other teachers would collect phones, and others would still say nothing at all.

[00:52:15] As students, we understand that where you store your phone during class may look different school to school depending on their needs. Oakton and Robinson have those phone caddies and boxes,

while Hayfield and Centerville have phone pockets, and at Chantilly, students are expected to store them in backpacks.

[00:52:30] That makes sense. However, this policy should be standardized across classes in the same school, with teachers and administration being on the same page about phone storage so that students understand that as well. Another topic that came into discussion was the use of yonder pouches, which is currently being piloted at select schools.

[00:52:49] These pouches are locked magnetically with specific magnetic keys that unlock and lock the phones when students get to school. Students in region two express concern about the lack of access to their cell phone during lockdowns, emergencies, or times where they might have to leave early or come in late to school.

[00:53:06] The FCPS current cell phone policy currently states that students are allowed to use their phone if there's a medical necessity or emergency, as well as during passing periods and lunches. But Yonder Pouches make that difficult for students to have that flexibility during critical situations.

[00:53:21] For example, I'd like to present some data that was presented to us at the Virginia School Board Association Student Representative Workshop from Culpeper County where they were talking about how they used Yonder Pouches in their county. They have a little under 5,000 students in grades eight to 12. And for them, the Yonder Pouches, along with the magnetic tools, cost \$30 each per student.

[00:53:42] If you do the simple math, 5,000 students times \$30, the Yonder Pouches cost \$138,000 for the high school and middle school students in Culpeper County. FCPS serves more than 180,000 students. We are 22 times the size of Culpeper.

[00:53:58] Is it financially feasible to really have Yonder Pouches in all schools as compared to other storage methods of cell phones? The last issue that came up was the flexibility of using phones in CTE classes like journalism, leadership, and certain electives where you need your phones to do special activities such as project documentation, photography, or school updates. Again, the current FCPS cell phone policy on the website states that with the approval of the principal or their certain designee, teachers are allowed to have students use their cell phones in the classroom and in approved instructional activities when cell phones are the most appropriate tool. However, we aren't

[00:54:37] really seeing this in classrooms right now. For example, a student who takes an Engineering Academy class at Edison mentioned how the policy gets in the way of projects they may be completing, and an engineering teacher expressed his frustration with this policy because students are now unable to use their phones to take photos of their project and document their work as they're working through a project. Another student suggested that there should be more flexibility for phone use when it could be used as a learning tool. In these cases, the strict cell phone policy that we have right now can feel more like a barrier than tools for learning. I think our revised successful cell phone policy needs to

[00:55:12] emphasize these three criteria even more. One is consistency. It should be consistent school-wide. Classroom to classroom, students should be expected the same thing of where they should store their phones and how teachers are reinforcing that. Two is flexibility. There are several elective classes and other classes as well that have unique needs and should have cell phones in the classroom when approved for certain instructional activities. And third is emergency access. If a student needs their phone during classroom time they should be able to have access to it with permission. I look forward to

continuing conversations on this policy and its mentioned use in SRNR this spring. Students do appreciate the current

[00:55:50] focus groups and community forums that provide additional feedback on this policy. Copies of my notes as well as student responses on this policy and the forum that has all of their feedback can be found on board docs after this meeting. Thank you for your time. Thank you Ms. Sawant. Agenda item 5.01 human resources EL4 monitoring report. Each year the school board assesses the superintendent in part on the basis of the school division's reasonable progress toward achieving the 2023 to 2030 strategic plan goals and adherence to a set of 13 executive limitations found

[00:56:29] on pages 14 through 31 of the board's strategic governance manual. The superintendent provides annual monitoring reports to the board for each executive limitation. The board then votes on whether the provided report is in compliance or if corrective action is needed. I call on Dr. Reed for a monitoring report on EL4 human resources.

[00:56:53] So, good morning, or good evening, Chairman Frisch and members of the board. I want to start this evening by recognizing members of our human resources team who took time this evening to join us.

[00:57:10] So, Mr. Solomon is our chief human resources officer, and you want to introduce your staff that are here, please, Mr. Solomon. Absolutely. Thank you very much, Dr. Reed. We have several team members from Human Resources here with us today. Ms. Micah Dunlap from Employee Services and Operations, Ms. Lydia Martinez, our Director of Labor Relations, Ms. Beth Boivin, our Special Projects Manager, Ms. Almona Aldecushin, Mr.

[00:57:33] Franklin Jones, our Assistant Superintendent, Mr. John Cook, Mr. Donnell Fisher, and many others. Thank you, Mr. Solomon. I really want to say that our Human Resources Department has continued to work extraordinarily hard over the last couple years we have the lowest classroom teacher absence rate or vacancy rate that we've had since COVID we've managed to hire staff both at the instructional level and operational level in a much quicker timeline and some of the data I'll be sharing this evening I think really

[00:58:09] supports an ambitious agenda that's showing great promise and great progress So I want to remind the board, Kevin, are you? Okay, thank you. I want to remind the board that the Human Resources EL definition talks about not failing to recruit, select, retrain, and appropriately compensate a highly qualified and diverse workforce, again, to deliver that world-class education.

[00:58:33] At the time of this report, to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, I've gathered information and evidence that I believe supports compliance with the board's executive limitation associated with this topic. For those watching at home, reminder that this full report is posted online on board docs with actual live links to different charts and so forth.

[00:58:54] So a reminder that there are five areas of executive limitation four, and items one and two are on the screen at this point. As we move to the next items three four and five tonight's presentation I'm going to be highlighting selected areas of EL4 to include new evidence updated evidence and newly added evidence so a reminder for those that follow this process there are a number of operations that we check in on annually because we just want to make sure they get done and this process

[00:59:30] allows us to monitor those operations much as we would if we were taking our vehicle in for regular service we just want to make sure they're done there's nothing flashy they're just how HR ought to work however the board has also asked for making sure that any new evidence or updated evidence are also included so I want to make sure this evening that's where I'll spend my time with you so thank you Kevin the first topic I'd like to highlight is our recognition programs and I think that many of you as board members have taken

[01:00:06] part in these and many of our staff have also nominated colleagues or been a part of this work we've received the FCPS CARES program has received over 1700 nominations last year and business partners also sponsored quarterly cash awards the annual excellence awards were already held this fall in October and we had a hundred and two employees recognized our affinity groups have also been strong advocates for quality work in the classroom and an operational and support activities again one of the most compelling data points just about

[01:00:45] recognition if you'll recall on day four of our school year this year where many divisions were struggling with bus routing and getting our students to school on time by day four we had 98 percent of our routes running on time and I think that's again a tribute to the hard work and passion of our particularly in this case our drivers and routers also want to say that Monday morning of this week after five days of not being driving and not having buses out because of the colder weather all of our staff came in a half hour early in transportation to make sure we were ready and many of us were up at 4:15 this morning

[01:01:24] checking weather to make sure we were prepared in case it snowed this morning so I can say with certainty at 4:15 this morning there were no flurries thank goodness anyhow next page I want to share examples of how FCPS works to establish an atmosphere of openness ability and responsiveness that supports teaching and learning and one of the things that we've really worked hard on is our staff connect portal which continues to work on improving processing time and at this point are providing 60 services available on the

[01:02:01] staff hub we're also updating that hub to be more user-friendly and we hope that staff again will have an opportunity to be able to utilize that in new ways Kevin thank you another highlight is that our HR team's been working on mapping and optimizing key processes and I really want to say that these are part of what we call our KPIs which are key performance indicators a long-term criticism I think of some of our processes is that it took forever from the time we offered employment to the time we actually put at staff under

[01:02:40] contract and this is huge and I just really am proud of mr. Solomon and his team. We've gotten 41.4 days shaved off that timeline so far. We were at I think 30 some days last spring and now we're up to 41 days. So we're really trying to be efficient and be responsive with how we're structuring processes so that we're able to hire staff in a timely fashion so that they don't make other choices. Three onboarding workflows have been optimized since March of 2024 and those are our contracted employees hourly employees and independent

[01:03:17] contractors even our hourly new hires which often include substitutes in many of our areas we've saved 9.4 days so we're continuing to improve our flows continuing on this topic I want to speak about the fully remote onboarding option for contracted employees this is huge we used to ask people

even to fly in to do part of their onboarding and then they would leave and then they would still come back later so we're actually enabling folks to onboard remotely which

[01:03:52] is particularly helpful for our military families who are transferring in and have opportunities to apply for positions and actually be interviewed online and have onboarding done prior to their arrival and we've really tried to be thoughtful about how we're working with families moving new to the area.

[01:04:13] The team has supported over 9,000 new hires through the onboarding process from January through October, 9,000 in 10 months. When you stop and think about that data, that is a lot. So 9,000 onboarding processes and shortening the time has really been, I think, something we can celebrate.

[01:04:36] So we've served by the end of the year more than 10,000 new hires by the end of December, which is a 2% increase year over year. Our Red Rover substitute management system was launched in December of 2023.

[01:04:55] We'd heard a number of concerns, particularly as I came into the division in 2022, about the substitute system and how difficult it was, in particular for some of our retired staff who would retire one month and want to come back several months later and have to go through our whole process again, and how challenging that was, as well as the system for use.

[01:05:18] So we've implemented and employed a number of new strategies, and in particular the Red Rover substitute management system, and just really proud of all of our school-based staff who are using this system, as well as our central office staff. It was used for the first time also to support summer school programs this year.

[01:05:35] we had a 93 percent fill rate for these programs that's huge because several years ago we were struggling to get summer school started on time so in the past couple years we've actually not only started on time fully staffed but had an above 90 percent fill rate for staff that had to miss school for some reason and on the screen you also will see that our current substitute fill rate for the school year has improved since the launch of Red Rover it's gone up to 86 percent so great metrics for our HR team very pleased with that and our next

[01:06:14] data point is related to our site-based substitutes and this was a new strategy actually that we created because we realized that often we would have substitutes that were perhaps neighborhood former teachers or educators or folks who had retired and so we really crafted assignments of substitutes to some of our larger schools so they would always have somebody on hand that knew the curriculum because one of the things we're concerned about is if you have substitutes in the classroom who are not aware of the curriculum it's a lost learning time for students so we're

[01:06:52] really excited about this option and we've now added we're up to 107 schools this year that have site-based substitutes we had 104 and 2324 and we didn't have them before that so the data only is two years but what we hear from principals and school staff families and parents and students honestly is there's less disruption in learning when you have the same people there regularly as substitutes.

[01:07:22] We currently have 240 of these positions in 107 schools. So I think it's been a great practice and I'm really I'm proud of our HR team and our principals and staff at the school. So we just completed our biannual employee engagement survey.

[01:07:38] These results are going to be analyzed to develop plans for addressing concerns around employee engagement. The exit surveys are also -- am I on the right slide here? Yes. Exit surveys are also done, and they've had some updates to those prior to October 2024.

[01:07:57] Employees used a paper HR2 system, which is their retirement system or separation form, and beginning in October, this process is now done electronically, and the exit survey is provided electronically. So with this change, we expect to see the response rate to the exit survey increase because we haven't traditionally over the last number of years received a lot of feedback.

[01:08:21] So we're hoping that the online will increase the number of interested folks in attending to that survey. The final item for this indicator is that the Office of Labor Relations coordinated the representational election process for our three bargaining units, which is completely new work this year and again our HR department I just again want to say that while they've made gains in every indicator area it's also as they were embarking on work we've never done really in Fairfax County which is collective bargaining so in this case two unions were selected to serve as the

[01:09:01] exclusive representatives for employees as outlined in the collective bargaining resolution just additional reminders for those watching this evening in July of 2024 the Fairfax County School Board you all certified the Fairfax Education Unions or FEU as the exclusive representative for the licensed instructional and operational bargaining units at FCPS.

[01:09:26] Then more recently in October the school board again you certified the Fairfax County Federation of principals supervisors and administrators as the exclusive representative for administrators and supervisors again seminal groundbreaking work and we're really excited around that topic I will also go on to indicator 2 which is maintaining favorable working conditions and promoting high morale one of the keys that employee conversations over the last several years continued to

[01:09:59] request was a more robust and comprehensive paid parental leave program so we're really pleased to say that through this new program eligible employees can now receive eight weeks of paid leave for childbirth adoption or foster placement of a child in their home that is huge again and it's again I feel like you as a board being responsive to our employee and staff asks I think that's really something that we continue to hear positive feedback about not only

[01:10:33] that as you recall we're also providing shared leave under circumstances which used to happen in Fairfax County Public Schools a number of years ago and then didn't for a while and we've brought that back and staff are again very grateful for that practice so to close out indicator to just want to share some examples about how we align to state and federal code our re fingerprinting efforts continue and as of October 2024 90.5 percent of all necessary fingerprints have been completed and we have plans to capture the remaining ones in the next two weeks before the end of

[01:11:14] this year throughout this school year we've updated regulations and notices related to hr and as you know this has been a huge comprehensive process several years ago as you recall we had an issue at one of our middle schools and one of the commitments we made since Virginia is not a part of the wrap back program which I believe we've now it's been approved and at some point in the next calendar year we're going to have an opportunity to decide if we're going to pay to be a part of that but many states across the country are automatically and have been part of

[01:11:51] the rat back program which enables FBI checks on a regular basis for any possible criminal behavior of any employee and as you know we have 40,000 employees so this has been a huge undertaking to fingerprint and background check again all 40,000 even recognizing that they were all originally background checked when they were hired right but in some cases people have been hired many years ago so we've done a reset in the last two years of all staff finally item three is around recruitment and retaining a

[01:12:29] highly qualified workforce I want to talk a little bit about how we're doing that current data shows the division has recovered from some of the ground loss pre-pandemic in teacher recruitment and for the first time in four years the year-to-year teacher retention rate exceeded 90 percent 2024 I want to say that again for the first time in four years the year-to-year teacher retention rate exceeded 90 percent and that's huge that means that the work that our HR

[01:13:02] teams our schools I believe people are mission-driven and one of the things I think that's most uh amazing about fairfax county public schools are the quality of the people that work within the schools and um i think that uh the world-class education we provide is second to none in this country so very proud of the work special education teacher turnover rates were the highest drawing and right after the pandemic and the turnover rate continues to decline over the last three years uh so i again feel like those are some data points for the board to celebrate

[01:13:40] Continuing in item three, one of the keys that the board has within this particular executive limitation is making sure we're recruiting, developing, and retaining a highly qualified workforce as well as a diverse workforce.

[01:13:58] This chart has been redone, I think, how many times in the last several days to hopefully make it very clear, but we want to make sure that the current employees, the 24, 25 hires, and our student body demographics, we continue to make, I believe, significant progress and are working hard in a variety of strategies.

[01:14:22] um again very proud of the efforts at this point in our work on this number three of the EL4. Thanks Kevin. Again I want to share that we've increased the number of teachers in our international partnership program. We have 101 new ambassador teachers this school year as part of participate learning as well as the 29 returning members. A reminder for the board and community this is an opportunity for teacher ambassadors on special visas through our State Department to be educators here in Fairfax County Public Schools this is a program that also Loudoun County Prince William County and

[01:15:02] other large divisions around the country are working with and we're very excited about the progress of this program want to share also a little bit about a step that we've taken which is called verifant and that helps to verify employees prior experiences and these requests and forms are something that in are done in addition to reference checks it's just another check and balance for our employees that we're hiring in Fairfax County public schools.

[01:15:40] Since implementation, we've had 531 commercial verifications have been provided through this process. Again, it's an online process and replacing a lot of paper and emails and so forth, spreadsheets. We want to keep things in a system so they're easily able to be tracked, checked and audited.

[01:16:00] So to close out the recruiting, developing and maintaining a highly qualified diverse workforce, just want to share a couple things that we were committed to doing. We did add our 2024 leadership kickoff

and included division-wide kickoff, region kickoffs, and department kickoffs.

[01:16:19] All county central office meetings and all county central office director meetings were reinstated this year. Those were meetings that I think had gone by the wayside a bit during COVID. And what we realize is that we can't stay calibrated across departments, across the division, unless we have time to get together and talk about the work people are doing together.

[01:16:43] We're also transitioning to a module-based approach for administrator induction, which aims to provide all school-based administrators with the most up-to-date and essential knowledge and skills. And those have been created around the new standards. So as we look at the next topic, we're looking at how we evaluate our employees and performance and evaluations want to remind the board that we've recently revised regulation 4440 to align our performance evaluations with state regulations and policies. HR continues to work with supervisors and has shown the rate of evaluation completion

[01:17:22] continues to rise. We also thank Miss Ko who did some work supporting our team and providing feedback so that our folks who do write evaluations understand the importance of doing that. An additional highlight is the office of employee relations has expanded their collaborator and intervention programs to offer teachers additional support in order to meet standards and goals should they require that. So conducting intervention team meetings and managing colleague assistance programs provide support throughout the school year for staff who may need

[01:18:02] support and again this support has been a 24-hour response time this year which we feel like and I know you've already connected the dots but perhaps folks who are seeing this for the first time might not have but we feel like some of this work has really helped with the lowering the turnover rate and heightening the retention rate because we're trying to provide support for teachers in real time. Again the last item in EL4 is about providing effective and efficient professional learning and training for all staff members. This year we provided opportunities for

[01:18:40] teachers to meet the state mandated and division requirements particularly around the Virginia Literacy Act and evidence-based literacy instruction and new this year we have novice teacher instructional coaches. These are coaches that are working with our teachers in their first three years of practice and one of the things we've really uh also worked hard on is creating spaces for many of our retired teachers to come back because many of them don't want to work full time that's kind of why they retired but they still want to have their hand in it and they have tremendous experience so we have quite a group of them that Noel Clemenco is working with

[01:19:18] in our literacy program and they're very excited about the opportunity to come in and work with our young readers and frankly I think are a key part of the work we're able to do in our early literacy program so having the opportunity to be coached in those first three years is really important. The last topic tonight I'm going to talk about are our required trainings and all of these that were required were made available on July 1. The completion rate for required professional development has increased from last year from 75.2 to 92.4%

[01:19:54] percent which is huge. Three years ago we weren't tracking the completion rate so I think at this point we only have last year's and this year's and our goal is to have it obviously at a hundred percent but it's important for us to track this because if it's required we need to make sure it's done so there are many annually required asynchronous trainings which include a pre-test option and the pre-test means that

sometimes they're the same training year after year after year and some folks already know all the answers and we wanted to decrease time if they just wanted

[01:20:31] to go in and take the assessment we have some senior leaders here Dr. King I think who is able to pass almost all of them anyhow the optional feedback survey again on all these required trainings has helped with the design so at this time Mr. Chairman this concludes the summary of the monitoring report for executive limitation for human resources and I'm happy to take questions. Thank you Dr. Reed. I call on Dr. Anderson. Thank you very much for this information. I'm just going to walk through this a little bit in order. Speaking to the first

[01:21:11] indicator you talked a little bit in the report on page three regarding some of the affinity groups and there are some that I don't think I've seen before. Have we had new groups because I think I was accustomed to those other groups that were part of the 4210 and I think it's a great thing I'm just wondering are these newly created such as the which slide I'm just looking at the report it's the Middle Eastern educators those were just created this year or were they always around some of

[01:21:49] these affinity groups are new mr. Solomon are you or dr. King able to speak to those some of those have not been many well some of those are new groups you're correct Dr. Reed some of the groups became new this year at the request of employees I think it's excellent I just want to kind of set the context a little bit and also you place in the new section some of the FCPS CARES activities is that also new for this year walk me through that a little bit please I think we've traditionally done the CARES activities what I wanted to make sure that I

[01:22:28] highlighted were that our business partners continue to sponsor the cash awards and just the number of nominations I know last year the board had a high interest in knowing specifically the number of nominations and recognitions and so it was a 1700 nominated and 102 recognized do we have any sense also do we disaggregate that data in terms of where the nominations are coming from because I know often school staff obviously can complete them but also parents because we routinely receive that information in the school newsletters I don't know that we disaggregated it for that I was trying

[01:23:05] to think several of the folks who received those obviously there were departments and school-based but we can certainly do that and provide that data for you just a curiosity just to see where we could actually continue to grow those recognitions one of the things that I would be remiss if I didn't share because it's something that I've articulated before as we're speaking about seeking staff participation decision-making pretty much all of the indicators of I'm sorry all of the sub bullets of indicator one I really would have liked if we had an opportunity to reimagine the HRAC because I think they

[01:23:43] would continue to be supportive in this area many of the things that you have WRITTEN HERE I THINK COULD HAVE BEEN HELPED BY A REIMAGINING OF THAT COMMITTEE I WANT TO MOVE ON TO THE NEXT SECTION WHERE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE THE STAFF CONNECT SURVEYS THE RESPONSE RATES GOING UP TO 34 PERCENT I THINK THAT IS SUCH AN EXCELLENT IDEA THANK YOU FOR HAVING THAT EXIT SURVEY DATA BE TABULATED BECAUSE IT'S BEEN AN AREA WHERE EVEN THE FORMER BOARD HAD TALKED about quite a bit where we don't know the data of the people who are exiting the

[01:24:19] system like why are they leaving are they going to the same position are they going to just retire etc so I'm glad to see that this is a point that is being calculated however my question on this this is page four where you have the number of exiting employees and the number of invitations delivered there's

a discrepancy there are we not inviting every employee who is separating from the system to complete the survey yes ma'am I see that Mr. Solomon yes Dr.

[01:24:51] Anderson only contracted employees are asked to participate in the exit survey so the discrepancy that you're seeing is between contracted and non-contracted employees thank you for sharing that one of the things that I wanted to also highlight and I will need to go back the chart that is on page six regarding the THE ONBOARDING, I KNOW THIS HAS BEEN A BIG ISSUE WITH OUR PRINCIPLES WHO HAVE REALLY ARTICULATED OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN TO US REGARDING THE LENGTH OF TIME IT TAKES TO ACTUALLY HIRE SOMEONE. SO IT'S VERY EXCITING TO SEE THAT THOSE

[01:25:30] DAYS HAVE BEEN REDUCED SO SIGNIFICANTLY. AND SO I JUST WANTED TO OFFER KUDOS THERE. AND A QUESTION THAT I ALSO HAD ON PAGE SIX, THIS IS THE BOTTOM CHART, THE ONBOARDING, THE CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES WENT UP BY 4 PERCENT BUT THE HOURLY EMPLOYEES WENT DOWN BY 14 PERCENT CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT A LITTLE BIT PLEASE YES MA'AM MR. SULLIMAN THIS INDICATES FROM THAT POINT IN TIME A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES WHO WERE HIRED SO IT WAS ESSENTIALLY THE NEEDS OF THE DIVISION OKAY SO WE'RE NOT NEEDING THE SAME NUMBER OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES WE TYPICALLY HAVE HAD

[01:26:08] AT THIS TIME THAT'S EXACTLY CORRECT OKAY THANK YOU THE OTHER QUESTION THAT I HAD WAS regarding the fill rates of the substitutes which has gone up are we also having a reduced need for substitutes because we have more teachers so one of the things that we're seeing with our substitute teachers is we hired fewer substitute teachers this year but we still have roughly 4500 to 5000 substitute teachers on our staff when we look at our fill rates for our substitutes we're seeing fill rates in the 80 to 90 percent on average each week and each day a big portion of it is also the retention of our teachers as Dr. Reid mentioned the retention rate for

[01:26:47] our teaching workforce and our educator workforce this past year was above 90 percent for the first time in four years so we're seeing fewer hires for substitutes but the number of substitutes that we have on our employee base is still 4,500 to 5,000 I think the other another factor is the Monday early release because we have those seven Mondays for our elementary staff it reduces the need to have substitute teachers to do some of that training and we really as you recall when we talked about the Monday early release one of the

[01:27:27] key I think foundational beliefs is that we wanted the classroom teachers teaching our curriculum and so I know the seven hour or the seven days it's been a challenge for some families obviously although they're able to you know have our have their students at school it also then takes care of not having the need to pull teachers out during instructional time so we don't have substitutes instructing we have classroom teachers so that's another I think reason that you see that fill rate a little bit differently thank you yes ma'am okay so I'm taking over for a brief moment and so we're gonna go in

[01:28:04] the order that I see the lights Miss Marin thank you thank you Dr. Reed and I I know I've talked with you already this week about some input but you know this report has so many huge accomplishments the number of educators hired and precisions filled outstanding introducing paid parental leave for moms and dads that is in response to board interest and employee advocacy returning teacher turnover and increasing retention in a time when there is a national teaching shortage steady substitute teachers the idea of mitigating learning loss by having regular subs in collective bargaining

[01:28:40] WHICH HAS GONE THROUGH SEEMINGLY VERY SMOOTHLY AND PRODUCED A LOT OF ABILITY FOR US TO TRY AND GIVE A FIGHTING CHANCE TO GET A RAISE FOR OUR STAFF THAT ARE CLOSER TO THEIR WORTH THE TECHNOLOGY UPDATES AND UPGRADES TO SUPPORT THE USER EXPERIENCE AND BUSINESS FUNCTIONS I MEAN MOVING US FROM A 40 YEAR OLD HR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND THAT'S LIKE ONE OF THOSE THINGS WHERE YOU KNOW MY FIRST TERM ON THE BOARD WAS DURING COVID AND WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO DO A LOT OF THOSE OPERATIONAL THINGS but man that was one that I wasn't aware of and to know that that buck had been passed for decades now we can safeguard our most valuable resource which is our people

[01:29:18] collecting and considering employee voice and the background checks again you walked in your first days in July 22 with a very severe problem it was a failure of not only FCPS but state and federal POLICIES THAT ALLOWED SOMEONE WHO IS NOT SAFE TO BE WITH KIDS TO BE WITH KIDS.

[01:29:38] AND NOW YOU RE-BACKGROUND CHECKED TENS OF THOUSANDS EMPLOYEES AND BADGED PEOPLE. AND I GOT TO MENTION THE WRAP BACK PROGRAM, THE FBI WRAP BACK PROGRAM, I MEAN WE HAVE NO DEDICATED FUNDING FOR SECURITY IN FCPS. ANY SECURITY MEASURES SUCH AS CAMERAS, BUILDING REINFORCEMENTS PERSONNEL ARE BUDGETED FROM OUR ANNUAL BUDGET TO INSTRUCT OUR CHILDREN.

[01:29:59] Any security money that we have comes from federal and state grants, which are measly. We just got \$250,000 to cover four schools. We have 200 schools. The Rat Back program, last time I had an estimate in 2022, was going to be \$400,000 a year for FCPS to run to make sure that nobody is with our children who isn't safe.

[01:30:23] So these are real issues that we are trying to mitigate, at least by having background CHECKS AND BADGES BUT THESE LAW ENFORCEMENT MATTERS COME RIGHT INTO OUR LAB WITH REALLY NO STATE OR FEDERAL FUNDING SO I'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT AND THANK YOU FOR MAKING TREMENDOUS PROGRESS TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM IT'S REALLY QUITE A SEA CHANGE FROM WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED IN 2020 THANK YOU THANK YOU MS. MARIN MR. DUNN UH DR. REED WHEN I SEARCH UM FCPS CODE OF ETHICS

[01:31:01] there's a code of ethics that comes up for county employees and there's one for the virginia department of education but nothing comes up on the fcps website can you share if there is a code of ethics for fcps employees great question mr solomon do we have i know we have um sign-on documents as part of onboarding i don't know that it's titled that but um there is a an ethics requirement to be certificated in the Commonwealth so anyone that at least is certificated which would be a teaching license for example or an administrative

[01:31:37] license has to commit to an ethics statement but do we have something that's separate from that I am not aware at this time and may need to defer to a colleague so we can get that back for you it may be connected to the certification that occurs is that something you would support the development of if we don't have a code of ethics to develop one well I believe that would be correct I'm wondering if it's called something else mr. done but yes of course we would in terms of training I there's a lot of discussion

[01:32:13] of training for educators but what about people involved in extracurricular activities do we provide training to them as well there are VHSL required trainings are you talking about like coaches yes we do have VHSL required training for coaches and I believe mr. Horn is here this evening Tom do you want to share or maybe join mr. Solomon's we can hear you would you like those enumerated mr. done

yeah what yeah I would like to know if there is one about ethical conduct good sportsmanship things like that in compliance with the

[01:32:53] rules yes sir mr. horn good evening thank you the Virginia high school league coaches education program includes a mandatory course and what has been phrases coaching principles that's offered through the 3d Institute that is the course that we recommend for our courses there are also National Federation courses and coaching principles which cover coaches ethics and integrity we also have a local component called coaches orientation where we cover FCPS policies Virginia high school league policies for new

[01:33:25] coaches and then the additional courses are in sport first aid CPR mental health awareness for our coaches and then of course in student rights and responsibilities awareness that covers the mandatory list of coaching requirements and do we track completion on an individual level we do requirements we do on an annual basis on an annual basis yes we have a we maintain a database of all active coaches and their completion dates and then several of our courses like an annual re-up in the concussion education program, a regular

[01:34:00] re-up in the SRNR program as we amend our SRNR, and coaches have one year from the date of hire or their first season working with us to complete all of those courses. And I appreciate the presentation and the report. For the first goal, establishing an atmosphere of openness, civility, and responsiveness, from a strategic perspective, how do you how do you achieve that? Well, I think that let me go back to report I think we documented a variety of ways that we measure that and so I think one of the things human resources again has

[01:34:40] developed their key performance indicators along those lines we keep data dashboards around data that HR collects the Office of Labor Relations coordinates work around that topic this is the newly or updated evidence you're talking about 1.0 the first part of the right where it says establish an atmosphere of openness civility and responsiveness and I just you know from a from a from just where you sit right like how do you personally seek to

[01:35:16] promote that and inculcate that within the FCPS culture I think that I think think our HR department continues to work on strategies for that so mr. Solomon do you want to elaborate I know you provided several data points for that absolutely so just a couple of things to talk through when we look at our staff connect portal which allows us to solicit additional feedback from employees address concerns that they have ensure that we're tracking them in real time ensure that they understand what the status is that's one of the ways that we make sure that we're maintaining that culture of openness One of the components Dr. Reid mentioned as well is our KPI dashboard.

[01:35:55] This was something that was critical for me coming in because I realized that we were very data rich, but it took quite a bit to access those data. So one of the components of the report includes an up-to-date, up-to-the-minute KPI dashboard for all human resources, senior managers and above, to track things such as vacancies, track the time it takes to complete onboarding and to track a variety of other key performance indicators to make sure that we can respond to the needs of our candidates and respond to the needs of our employees, hiring managers, and others in a real-time, rapid way so that ultimately we can make sure that our students have access to the high-quality, high-impact

[01:36:33] educators and other professionals that they need to be successful. I also, Mr. Dunn, we hold employee conversations, you asked about me personally, we do employee conversations fall and spring

cycles in each region where I'm actually personally their staff are invited at different times we do early and late after school I conduct roundtables with our administrative staff pretty much weekly from 7:30 to 8:30 we broke those groups up into principals with four or more years of experience principals with three or less so we create a number of

[01:37:11] pathways I go out and meet with the advisory committees and try to be in schools at least every Tuesday morning if I can and try to attend events also outside the school day so for me personally trying to be present in conversations with staff is important as well as making sure that our HR team is being responsive to staff concerns as they arise we've also provided increased access into EAP services and wanting to make sure that you know we're supportive of staff at all levels. Thank you. Can I ask about participate learning. So I believe it's increased significantly

[01:37:49] from last year. Can you just share what it was last year in terms of total number of teachers and FCPS where it is this year and where you project it going in the future. Yes sir. I believe WE HAD A CHART ON THAT BUT I BELIEVE WE WERE AT 29 LAST YEAR 29 MEMBERS WE ADDED A HUNDRED THIS YEAR WE'RE PLANNING TO ADD ANOTHER HUNDRED NEXT YEAR AND WE JUST STARTED A PILOT PROGRAM ACTUALLY TO LOOK AT SECONDARY MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHERS IN PARTICULAR FROM

[01:38:22] SOUTH KOREA WE'RE WORKING WITH THE EMBASSY AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON ADDING VISA TO SUPPORT math and science at secondary. So we're looking at, and if you recall last year, I mentioned that we had in participate learning that over 20,000 applications from global teachers for 750 positions in the United States. So we're really having an opportunity to hire some of the best of the best teachers around the globe for our county here. If we're going to hire another 100

[01:38:58] next year then we're going to be at 229 229 so if we're at 229 out of i think you said 750 total in the u.s then we'll be at around a third of the total number are other are any comparable school divisions in our region or nationally using it to such an extent they're actually expanding each year so while we expand participate learning is also expanding it's my understanding that loudon I think had 45 or 50 and loudness less than half our size right so I think it was 45 or 50 mr. Solomon do you have that correct that's exactly right and

[01:39:36] just to clarify participate learning had about 750 visas available or has about 750 visas available we would be getting a hundred of those this year thank you yes sir thank you mr. Don mr. moon thank you mr. chairman thank you the presentation i have just a few questions to ask i'm glad to see a our retention rate or attrition rate decreasing retention rate increasing but that is still 9.5 percent if

[01:40:14] you do over five year period could be as high as 40 percent which is a lot however at the same time i mean i i'm gonna have to assume that out of those 9.5 percent who left us some of them might have left because they moved out of the area is there a way for you to provide us what part of the 9.5% is actually due to the fact that they have to move out of area as opposed to they just wanted to quit teaching so let me check we might have that this evening do you mr. Solomon have a sense of the 9.5% not

[01:40:53] readily available this evening however one of the things I want to underscore is that because we've moved to a digital resignation process or a digital retirement process, and because as part of that process, the exit survey is now required and all of the exit survey questions are now required, we'll be able to present significantly more robust data over time.

[01:41:14] Okay, I look forward to seeing such additional data maybe in the future. Another question that I have is with hiring percentage. I think I saw this on, let me go to the slide number.

[01:41:30] Slide number 16. I'm assuming that what I see, the graphs on slide number 16 are just for teachers, correct? Not all the employees. That is correct. And I am really glad to see the percentage of Asian teachers being 7.7%.

[01:41:52] We still have a long way to go, but compared to three decades ago, I think it has tripled, which is, you know, I should not be too unhappy about it. But at the same time, when you actually go to the report itself and look at similar data related to administrators, assistant principals and principals, just for the public, that for assistant principals, percentage of Asians who are APs in FCPS are only 3.4%.

[01:42:29] For Hispanic, it's 3.9%. For principals, Asians, it's 3.1% and Hispanic is 4.6%. I think that's an area, in addition to teaching force, that's an area that we have a lot of work to do.

[01:42:46] Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Moon. Mr. McIntyre. Thank you. I'm following my other at-large colleague. I'll just foot stomp what he said about our workforce diversity.

[01:43:02] We have made progress, but there's much more to do. So I just have, I think, two points I want to make. BOTH OF WHICH PERTAIN TO BACKGROUND CHECKS IN SOME FORM. SO THE FIRST IS ON PARTICIPATE LEARNING AND TO FOLLOW THE TRAIN OF THOUGHT OF MR.

[01:43:20] DUNN. YOU KNOW, I VIEW THIS AS A GREAT CONCEPT. FOR MANY YEARS WE'VE WORKED TO GET VISA PROCESSES IN PLACE TO GET STAFF FROM ABROAD. SO IT'S REALLY A POSITIVE STEP FOR THE DISTRICT.

[01:43:37] However, as folks know, there are several situations that have come to our attention where concerns about competence have risen up. So can you give us a sense of how we are responding and doing our own internal checks on what Participate Learning sends to us just so that we can ensure that this won't be an ongoing problem?

[01:44:03] Yes, sir. The situations you mentioned were unacceptable and I know I went out and met with families in both cases and one of the things they had a new participate learning I spoke with their CEO David Young and they had a new recruiting team that no longer works for participate learning and we have an understanding moving forward that if there is a concern a phone call will take care of that in terms of remedying the situation now having said

[01:44:39] that our Fairfax County Public School administrative staff need to be part of the interview process so we still participate learning provides a slate of candidates that our staff still needs to interview before we place them in our schools so just wanting to make sure that we have that filter and that diligence around the same interview process we would have for any teacher for coming to Fairfax County Public Schools is in place for our participate learning candidates moving forward and thank you for that and the the second thing I just want to touch on briefly is you know what we might refer to as bad

[01:45:18] apples right we've had what I view you know having been here for a while an increasing number of cases where employees have been abusing our children right and that's happened there have been significant cases in my OWN PYRAMID AT MY OWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE HIGH SCHOOL THAT WE FEED INTO WHETHER IT'S COACHES IAS TEACHERS OR OTHER OTHER STAFF SO THESE ARE FOLKS THAT MAKE IT THROUGH BACKGROUND CHECKS YOU KNOW THEY THEY MAKE IT THROUGH

THE STATE POLICE BACKGROUND CHECK WE HAVE WRAP BACK COMING A LOT OF THESE PEOPLE AREN'T OUT IN THE COMMUNITY MAKE DOING CRIMES BUT THEY'RE IN OUR SCHOOLS DOING CRIMES

[01:45:57] And so Rat Back isn't going to catch them. So beyond Rat Back, what are we doing to address this? So it is so important, right? The safety of our children comes first.

[01:46:13] And obviously background checks can only check for what previously has happened or what someone's previously been caught doing. It doesn't mean they haven't ever done things that were illegal, but it means they were caught. And you're absolutely correct. It feels like some days I don't want to be sending you all the email that I have to send about a particular situation, right?

[01:46:38] So I think that we continue to be mindful of hiring practices, trying to make sure that our interview process would find any kind of concern that there might be around performance.

[01:46:55] Certainly background checks, we've added Verifant, which is another layer on top of background checks this fall. Mr. Solomon, do you feel like you want to add anything to that? The other thing we're working really hard on with our chief in our safety and security office is making sure that we have constant communication with both CPS and law enforcement so that we get immediate information if that does exist.

[01:47:25] those partnerships continue to be very strong as well as the chief and I I feel like the chief and I have a text whenever there's a situation that even kind of as a any kind of a concern that we might have but mr. Solomon just to add to that ensuring that we're working with our hiring managers our principals and our program managers so that they understand best practices and hiring so that they can be best equipped as they're making their selections to your Your point also I think one of the things and I know we're going to be talking about that is I think there needs to be a lot of hiring traditionally has occurred here in

[01:48:04] Fairfax County at the school level that hasn't necessarily had the oversight traditionally of any kind of centralized checks and balance at times. And I think that's something that is long overdue.

[01:48:19] We've talked a lot about a school system versus a system of schools and I believe that level OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN THAT TYPE OF STRUCTURED SYSTEM IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR US TO EVEN TAKE ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS ENSURING THAT THOSE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DON'T HAPPEN IN OUR SCHOOLS. WELL I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS AND I DO I WOULD ALSO COMMEND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT I THINK THEY'VE WORKED WELL WITH US AND THEY'VE BEEN GOOD PARTNERS. I WILL SAY THAT I HOPE WE CONTINUE AND I KNOW WE WILL CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION AS PART OF BUDGET SEASON just in terms of what infrastructure we improvements we can make to stop these

[01:48:59] incidents in our schools yes sir thank you mr. Lambert did you want to add anything to that mr. Lambert's new I don't know if the community but thank you dr. Reed I would also add that we've provided the opportunity through the tip line and so we do see frequent usage of the tip line and so each of those opportunities which may give somebody a more anonymous ability to present something that they find troubling is being ingested and either handled or passed to the police department the principal or the administrative staff so the more we advertise that and it's been more advertised as I understand it we

[01:49:36] continue to receive sometimes upwards of 20 25 tips a day on a variety of matters but it's a good avenue of approach that lets people live communicate live chat with us or send a message or voicemail to us thank you and JUST END BY SAYING THAT WE DON'T LIKE TO RECEIVE THE EMAILS FROM YOU BUT WE APPRECIATE THE COMMUNICATION AND BECAUSE WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF EVERYBODY.

[01:50:00] THANK YOU. THANK YOU MR. MCELVEEN. DR. ANDERSON. THANK YOU. AND I THINK BOTH MR. MCELVEEN AND MR. DUNN TOUCHED UPON MY NEXT POINT.

[01:50:16] THE EFFORTS THAT ARE OUTLINED ON PAGE 11 WHERE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT FINDING OTHER WAYS to grow our workforce using international teachers and being more flexible in terms of the requirements for licensure I think that those are needed in the space that we're in with teacher shortages but I'd like to also hear how we are ensuring that we are still putting forward in front of our students the most highly qualified person available because as you just described just now and we talked about yesterday was it just yesterday I don't know it was it was just yesterday where the incidents where we've had some of

[01:50:55] our international teachers not being successful with our students because of you know language issues and these would have been picked up in the interviews that should have been that well from what you shared with me would have happened either at the school level or at the central level but still we're in that space how are we tightening the reins to ensure that we don't have those gaps in that even with this flexibility we continue to have highly qualified and prepared individuals in front of kids right the flexibility is not connected to participate learning they have to have a teaching certificate there is no

[01:51:34] flexibility there and they have to have had teaching experience in their home country that was rated effective to even be considered as an applicant for participate learning so there's there's no flexibility in that licensing now that is a separate situation than what you and I talked about yesterday that that language barrier in a couple cases should have been picked up in the interview and wasn't and should have been picked up prior to recruitment and wasn't so we've addressed the recruitment piece from the participate learning side and the interview process is going to be revisited probably already

[01:52:13] has been I think mr. Solomon do you want to comment on that please that is exactly correct we're continuing to review our interview process to make sure that things like that are picked up on the front end so that we don't have to handle the effects on the back end I will also say that it is possible that people are interviewed and have a great interview and then once they're in the classroom we're not able to perform in a way that we would expect even when they're not part of participate learning right so I just want to clarify that not a hundred percent of our hired staff in every category actually remain in that position however

[01:52:47] we are going to strengthen have strengthened our interview process and selection process for our ambassador teachers I think the flexibility that I was speaking to is on page 11 where we're talking about the local the one-year local teaching licenses yes ma'am Mr. Solomon absolutely uh the one-year local license is a new license that became available to school divisions through Virginia Department of Education it is something that is not the right option for everybody but it's the right option for certain groups of teachers for those of you who may not be familiar the one-year local license allows the superintendent and the chair of the board to allow a high potential teacher

[01:53:27] candidate who has a bachelor's degree to teach in the state of Virginia as a teacher until June 30th of the academic year it is a license again that's only been available to us as of recent and it's

something that we've begun exploring as a school division one of the benefits of it is if you have somebody who has extensive experience imagine somebody who's taught at private school or in the charter school space or in another space who is an excellent teacher who has experience but who may not have the license they need yet we can use that one-year local provision to allow them to teach remain in compliance and then give them time to complete a program such as I teach or

[01:54:06] another alternative route to licensure to come into compliance before the expiration of the of that one your local license it's a great option to ensure that our students have access to those high quality educators of course that we maintain compliance and that we give them the time that they need to become fully licensed in the state of Virginia or provisionally licensed in the state of Virginia thank you for that that's very helpful if you could also speak to how's that different from the teacher trainees well there it's I'll share a couple things one of the benefits of this new flexibility has been with our

[01:54:39] early childhood educators because we've really been challenged to find our early childhood as we're trying to rapidly expand an inclusive preschool but it's a pay differential between teacher trainees and this licensing so mr. Solomon that's that's exactly right so the teacher trainees are paid about fifty two thousand dollars flat versus our teachers who are paid on our teacher scale fifty eight thousand dollars plus depending on experience degree level and things of that nature.

[01:55:09] As it relates to the differences between the two, somebody who's on a one-year local license, the license that we've just discussed, the new one, they are licensed in the state of Virginia, and they can teach in compliance for that entire school year. Somebody who's a teacher trainee is somebody who is under the guidance of another teacher, somebody who is essentially getting the additional support they need from a master educator while they're continuing to meet the requirements to become an educator.

[01:55:37] Teacher trainees, typically we would think of them as being in that role for one year or two before becoming teachers. - And is that local license transferable within divisions? - It is not transferable. It's only valid in the division in which it's issued.

[01:55:52] - Thank you. I heard a ring, but I don't think that was mine since it happened while he was speaking. Just wanted to confirm I can continue. Couple more questions regarding buses as we talk about that part of the workforce. What is our vacancy rate currently for buses, for bus drivers?

[01:56:11] Yes, ma'am. Mr. Mewick? Yes, ma'am. The vacancy rate, we have 115 vacancies right now, so I'm not good at public math, so it's 115 out of the 1625.

[01:56:28] It's fine. That number's good. The question that I wanted to also ask is, how does that impact the double-run buses that we have through many of our schools? And do we have double-run buses at every school? we don't have double run buses at every school but if you look at our organizational structure we have the bus drivers and then we have the first level of supervision above them which is about a hundred bus driver supervisors and then a level of supervision above them transportation supervisors about 20 so that group ends up filling those 120 vacancy and call-out positions so what

[01:57:06] it essentially does to us is any of the other projects we're working on really fall to the you know to the back because they're out there actually driving routes instead of performing the leadership functions thank you can you also speak a little bit to has to as to how double run buses are determined because i have a couple of schools two of the middle schools that we represent that have had this chronically well one of them holmes middle school i think you were there during one of the conversations

with them since last year and the advocacy of the parents is yes we have a shortage but can we spread the wealth a little bit maybe one quarter this school

[01:57:43] has a double run next quarter it's another school rather than having it be one site the entire year you know that's a great question i don't have an answer for you on how we determine what the which schools get the double run buses i can get back to you all though yes i would love for that to be um something that we get and for in some consideration for also just spreading that wealth around a little bit yes ma'am you also talked about the novice teacher instructional coaches that's new because I knew we the passport funded well rather returned funding for the novice

[01:58:18] special education teacher support so now we've expanded it to all brand new teachers yes ma'am and that's also where we're really trying to utilize rather than pulling more teachers out of the classroom to teach teachers we're trying to utilize more of our retired teachers who want to work but not full-time I don't think one of work maybe that's I hope no one's listening and that was the point but they really want to give back and they have such a wealth of experience and such a deep love and passion for Fairfax and they've done some tremendous work particularly supporting our early literacy our teachers in our elementary that are you know engaged in this really

[01:58:57] heavy lift of this new basal curriculum sorry before I move on to the next I'd like to recognize former school board member from Braddock district Megan McLaughlin is with us. Hello Miss St. John Cuning.

[01:59:17] So yes I just want to ask if you could let us know what steps you're taking to increase the diversity of our staff from within our county and you know externally to reflect the demographics of our student population as well as to promote either from within or externally to to leadership positions so that those positions are also reflective of our demographics.

[01:59:46] So the chart on I guess chart 16 sort of has the outcome for that and I will say that I'll turn that back over to Mr. Solomon because we are doing a lot of work Dr. Ponce a Dr.

[02:00:03] King and Mr. Solomon have done a tremendous amount of work on that Mr. Solomon you want to enumerate several of those strategies please absolutely and miss Marcia thank you very much for the question we all know that students benefit from educators who look like them have had similar experiences to them all of those things and in FCPS it's important for us to make sure that we're employing every strategy to diversify our workforce just to name a few there is one that was released today called Avanza teach forward FCPS we as a division are going to be paying for 100 underemployed staff members to complete the requirements to become licensed in

[02:00:39] the state of Virginia through the I teach program and when I say underemployed think of people who have bachelor's degrees but who aren't working in teaching positions according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics about 7.9 percent of the US workforce is considered underemployed and as a school division this is our way of contributing and our way of ensuring that folks within our school division are being given access to these transformative life-changing programs so that they have the opportunity to be the amazing educators that they can be and are in front of our kids outside of that we of

[02:01:14] course attend colleges universities and professional organizations all over the country and throughout the region to make sure that we're actively recruiting students graduates and folks who have

gone back for postgraduate work we EMPLORE A NUMBER OF STRATEGIES TO DIVERSIFY OUR EDUCATOR WORKFORCE, AND I'M EXCITED TO CONTINUE THAT WORK.

[02:01:37] I WILL SAY, MS. ST. JOHN CUNNING, THE I TEACH PROGRAM THAT MR. SOLOMON IS TALKING ABOUT, EVEN THOUGH WE ARE FUNDING IT, WE DO ASK FOR A TWO-YEAR COMMITMENT TO THE DIVISION AS ONE OF THE OUTCOMES. THANK YOU. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE DATA ON THAT AFTER IT COMES THROUGH.

[02:01:56] I JUST DO WANT TO, YOU KNOW, SINCE WE WERE DISCUSSING TEACHERS THAT COME IN AND CANDIDATES THAT COME IN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, I HAVE PERSONALLY HAD SOME GOOD EXPERIENCES IN SOME OF THE SCHOOLS THAT I'VE GONE TO AND HAVE SEEN SOME OF THOSE TEACHERS ALREADY ESTABLISHING PEN PAL PROGRAMS WITH CLASSROOMS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. AND I JUST WANT TO LIFT AND CELEBRATE THAT BECAUSE THAT GOES TO OUR CREATING A GLOBAL CITIZEN AND STARTING THAT EARLY. SO I RECOGNIZE I said sometimes there are problems, but I also want to lift up and celebrate the fact that there are some really nice successes.

[02:02:30] - Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. St. John Cunning. Ms. Marin. - Yes, just a few, two points, questions. One question is regarding participate learning teachers, which are a sizable chunk that we're talking about.

[02:02:47] Do you expect that this program will be negatively impacted by the incoming presidential administration stance on immigration? Because if I recall in 2017, the administration limited J-1 visas for a time, which was for child care providers from abroad. And the child care program is technically an education program and while we're investing a lot in this program I think we need to be aware that that might be yanked out from underneath us.

[02:03:13] So thank you for raising the question Miss Marin. I I want to believe that we're going to maintain a focus on what's best for our young people in this country. And I I want to believe that excellence and opportunity will still guide our decision making and still be a North Star for this country and I think this program with the H1 visas that bring some of the best teachers from around the world to Fairfax County and other divisions in this country I believe I want to continue to believe that that's going to be a program we support Mr. Solomon do you want

[02:03:52] to do you have any comment about the visa types because I I believe that that might be part of the answer, Ms. Marin. Absolutely. The J-1 visa program has been widely available in the United States for decades, and it is a program and a visa type that has been used by school divisions throughout the country.

[02:04:12] For those of you who may not be familiar, the J-1 exchange visitor visa for the education field allows folks from outside of the U.S. who are high quality, high impact, high potential to come and teach for a period of three to five years three years with the option to renew for two years well thank you what I'm saying is in 2017 the administration tried to pause it and it was at risk and people couldn't get in on those promised visas so I guess my ask is first of all to raise awareness because we seem to be investing a lot in this and we can't control the status of visas but also perhaps keeping in mind how the board can help advocate as part of our federal

[02:04:51] legislative agenda but also we're gonna need to inform our community I just want to raise awareness here because this this already happened so that's just one thing the other thing I want to ask and this really gets to this executive limitation portion that I know we're gonna talk a little bit later about

adjusting there's a policy that goes with it but you know I look at the work done in HR as the systems that support all of the HR systems but we know that there have been there's been a big challenge with the implementation of our athletics programming when it comes to the transfer rules so that could be interpreted under HR as making sure the staff as maintained by the principal you

[02:05:31] know do what they're supposed to do but when I'm looking at the other policies in the 13 executive limitations it also could come under instructional program where we more clearly because they're thinking athletics is part of the instructional program so when we talk about you know fairness access integrity you know monitoring for consistency we could as a board add language and not tonight but for EL 10 which is CL 9 which is instruction and also EL 10 the student learning environment which we did you know now we've had a lot of

[02:06:06] content you know and a lot of conversation about this and so now with all that in mind I think we could go back and adjust so that we are monitoring even better going forward making sure that athletics and all ACTIVITIES ARE CONSIDERED PART OF THE ANNUAL REVIEW MORE SPECIFICALLY.

[02:06:22] NEW SPEAKER: THANK YOU MISS MARIN. MR. DUNN. NEW SPEAKER: I WITHDRAW MY QUESTION THANK YOU. NEW SPEAKER: THANK YOU MR. DUNN. I CALL ON MS. ANDERSON FOR A MOTION.

[02:06:40] NEW SPEAKER: I MOVE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD FINDS THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT IS IN NONCOMPLIANCE WITH EL NUMBER FOUR HUMAN RESOURCES AND REQUEST A CORRECTIVE ACTION MEMO BY DECEMBER 19TH 2024 BY THE 25 THE DECEMBER 19TH 2024 REGULAR MEETING THAT ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS RELATED HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND OTHER DIVISION PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES 2A ADDRESSES THE LACK OF CONSISTENCY RELATED TO TRAINING AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT REGARDING THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF UNDER DIVISION POLICY NUMBER 2D ADDITIONAL MEASURES TAKEN TO ENSURE ADHERENCE TO ALL

[02:07:14] GOVERNING CODE AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS NUMBER 3B EXPLAINS MEASURES TAKEN TO ENSURE EMPLOYEES ARE PREPARED TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF THEIR POSITION NUMBER 4 INCREASES CONSISTENCY OF EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORS AND EXPLAINS THE EXPECTATIONS FOR FURTHER ACCOUNTABILITY ON THE PART OF COLLEAGUES AND NUMBER FIVE ADDRESSES PLANS FOR INCREASED VALUABLE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES. IS THERE A SECOND? SECOND. MS. SEISMARHEISER.

[02:07:42] MS. ANDERSON WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOUR MOTION? YES, PLEASE. SO WE HAVE A ROBUST AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS WITH THE EXECUTIVE LIMITATION PROCESS THAT HOLDS THE DIVISION ACCOUNTABLE ON ALL ASPECTS OF OUR OPERATIONS THROUGH THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT. And I will be honest that this is not my favorite aspect of our work because I know many of the problems that we encounter as a system were here when I was a high school student many years ago.

[02:08:05] And I have personally seen Dr. Reed address every issue that she has found in her tenure with Fairfax County head-on. Yet it's still true that we know that we have an issue with consistent implementation of our policies and regulations between schools.

[02:08:23] I also believe that we have a problem with a small number of our staff to not only hold themselves accountable, but also hold their colleagues accountable for their actions that threaten the safety and success of our students, regardless of the arena. This EL gives us a place to request a plan to address these concerns at a holistic level.

[02:08:42] But I also want to be clear that the reason that I have a problem with these ELs is that we have made so many strides in human resources in my short tenure on the board. And I cannot thank our hardworking staff enough for what they've done. Tonight we've heard about collective bargaining, we've heard about the recruitment and retention of our teachers, we have a new HR platform that we are rolling out, we have paid parental leave, we have implementation of background rechecks and the required infrastructure related to that, we have an increased focus on compliance training, and we have onboarded an amazing new chief of human resources who's done an awesome job beginning to change the culture

[02:09:20] OF HR ACROSS OUR DIVISION. AND I PROMISE I HAD THIS WRITTEN DOWN BEFORE YOU SAID IT. BUT CONTINUED WORK ON THIS CONSISTENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY WILL HELP ENSURE THAT WE ARE A STRONG SCHOOL SYSTEM AND NOT JUST A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS. THANK YOU, MS. ANDERSON. MS. SEIZEMORHEISER, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOUR SECOND? JUST BRIEFLY BECAUSE MS. ANDERSON COVERED IT VERY WELL. I DO BELIEVE THAT WE PUT THESE EL SYSTEMS AND DR. REED YOU ACTUALLY LED US IN THE WORK TO PUTTING IN A PUBLIC TRANSPARENT ACCOUNTABLE EXECUTIVE LIMITATION SYSTEM SO WE could hold you we could get reports on what was happening in the division and

[02:09:54] we could hold you accountable and so we are using that process here there's a lot in this EL and there's a lot of really good work going on in human resources but there are some issues as my colleague has mentioned around consistency around ensuring all of our employees are holding themselves to the standard for a small group employees at that and prepared to perform the duties of their system and there's a need for some increased training in a variety of areas across the division I would love to see a more information from you on what we're gonna do to address that that doesn't take away from some of these really amazing things that I've seen you head-on do from the problems when I was

[02:10:32] chair and you were your first year that we discovered in HR and the incredible work you've put in to resolving these problems and moving HR forward our our teacher retention rate has gone up which is incredible our you know our time to hire. I know we had lots of conversations about how long people were taking in the hiring process, and you've reduced that significantly. The parental leave program is incredible.

[02:10:57] So I don't want to take away from the work that you have done. I don't want to take away from work that your team has done and the team that is here. Please know we recognize this, but there are some serious issues in the areas that my colleague has mentioned, and for those reasons at this point I believe this is non-compliant until we can come back with a corrective action plan on those areas and this is what this process is for this is what the public elected us to do is to hold you accountable and hold your team accountable when there are areas that are lacking and that is what we are doing so thank you for bringing us this process to do this in a public and transparent way and I look forward to the corrective action to address

[02:11:33] these concerns around consistency and behavioral expectations and training so thank you thank you Thank you Miss Sizemore Heiser. Miss Marin. Yes this executive limitations again sometimes it

could be these curious structures like education it's an art and a science and the timing just so happens that this is the perfect opportunity to take you up on your offer to let you know how to do better. So although the work has been tremendous I do agree that we need a better plan to keep things consistent not only with athletics and activities but as you know Dr. Reed about how we do the work of transitioning students between schools

[02:12:10] between elementary middle and high that coursework trajectory. You know we have a very every different every school has a different process on how they're going to get families and kids through the course selection process. And I really like that's got to be better because that's half of our students at any given time are in secondary school.

[02:12:27] So I look forward to the report that I expect and the plan that I expect will be in in detail and implemented fully. Thank you. Thank you Miss Marin. Mr. Dunn I appreciate the intent but I have no idea what this means. I look at the bullets and, you know, I don't know what the ask is. Number five is addresses plans for increased valuable training opportunities. I have no idea what that means, what valuable training opportunities. If we're going to ask for a solution, we need to be clear

[02:13:05] in what the problem is. And if we don't clearly identify the problem, how can we expect a solution that actually directly addresses the problems that we're contemplating. So I'd like to ask the mover and the seconder if they could please explain what are the problems that they're trying to solve through this motion.

[02:13:25] Would you like to speak? I would. I, like you, don't have all of the answers related to the training that we're currently doing. So I am expecting that part of this corrective action memo is going to be talking about the training opportunities that we currently have for employees and what we're going to do to increase consistency because we've seen consistency increase with cell phone enforcement when we worked through actually making sure that everybody knew what the policy was and what we expected them to do. So I am expecting that the superintendent is going to be the educational expert here and bring us back

[02:14:04] the information that is appropriate to bring back related to what training our staff needs.

[02:14:17] Yeah, I just wanted to, my colleague said it well, just in addition, we heard from our student representative tonight talk about consistency of cell phone implementation, how it looks different in each classroom. So that's one example of consistency and expectation and accountability for employee behavior around our cell phone rules.

[02:14:34] So that's as an example of something we're talking about. But again, I trust the superintendent to know the areas of lack of consistency around training and development and to come back with a corrective action memo around that. but there's several incidences, I think, have even come up today around that consistency.

[02:14:50] So Mr. Dunn, you may continue. - The motion is specific to high school athletics and other division programs and activities. So I appreciate the clarification, but I'm still uncertain on what this will yield at the end of the day.

[02:15:09] - Thank you, Mr. Dunn. Dr. Anderson. - Thank you. I do agree. There's been a lot of progress that has shown up here. I am particularly appreciative of the charts that show progress over time but as again we had a lot of discussions this week sometimes even when there's a lot that is going on when there's

something so egregious it can dwarf some of the good works it doesn't mean that they're not there but it can really need to it sometimes it moves us into the environment of where we are right now which is not finding this compliant I will be

[02:15:44] supporting that effort I do think that some may be a little bit vague but the one for me that is of great clarity is two way because clearly with the issues that have happened regarding the football crisis situation whatever it's being called the processes have not been cleared the the rules have not been clear who's going to be doing what and how are we going to engage and certain fact finding have not been cleared so minimally if we're able to get this type of response from you plus communication I heard from one of the speakers earlier that there was to

[02:16:24] be a community meeting at Hayfield and I did not know about that I actually sent you a quick note you may not have seen it yet if these are the processes they need to be outlined so that they're predictable and consistent and so I do think this is the right move but I do think it's not the only move there are some additional things that should be happening as well which I know we'll most likely get into in a little bit but I will be supporting the motion. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Mr. Moon. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am going to support the motion

[02:17:01] however let me let me note that the terminology we are using non-compliance that sounds very harsh. That's the terminology we agreed to use either doing compliance or non-compliance so regrettably that is why we're using that terminology I'm looking at your report and overall presentation there are a lot of good information a lot of progress as we have made under EL4 which deals

[02:17:35] with human resources having said that the reason that I'm supporting this motion is there seem to be a number of board members enough of them wanting to have a more information in certain areas and I want to be able to support my colleagues desires to have a more information they want to have in those areas that is why I am supporting this motion sir thank you mr. moon miss Sizemore heiser for a go back yeah I just want to briefly clarify my comments I think in response it is related to athletic programs and other

[02:18:13] division practices so my comment was to give an example of an area of inconsistency that we heard about at the dais tonight but there are as we mentioned areas in all athletic programs and I agree with my colleague that have come to light that we need to look at from consistency and training so I appreciate your willingness to bring us back a collective action memo as part of this process. Yes ma'am. I want to mirror Mr. Moon's statements because I think there has been a lot of work and I think we need to recognize that our new HR chief of HR is new and in the short time he's been here he's done a lot of good

[02:18:50] work but the idea of consistency across everything and I've worked in the schools for 26 years and I have gone from one school to another and that that consistency is important for our students and also for our staff members and I know that that's something that you've been working at across you know teachers IAS everyone and I think that if we get a little bit more of information and how we can reach that that is why I'm going to support this motion but that does not take away from all the work that has been tremendous

[02:19:25] And I agree that sounds pretty harsh, non-compliance, because you have done such good work. Thank you, Ms. St. John Cunning. Seeing no others, we will go to a vote. Yes. I think I'd like to just make a statement, Mr. Frisch.

[02:19:43] I just want to be really clear tonight. I appreciate the community showing up tonight and sharing their concerns and being very thoughtful and forthright in the comments. And that's important.

[02:19:59] I'm here to serve the community. And as the leader of this large and complex school division, the buck stops with me. I'm taking, I have to be responsible for what happens in this division. I'm responsible for all 183,000 students, for their classroom academic achievement, for their achievement in theater, on the sports fields, music, career technical, world languages, everything.

[02:20:28] 40,000 staff, I'm responsible for their success. And it's important to me that all 40,000 of those staff are successful. I want to mention tonight, since we're talking about athletics, we have 15,000 athletes and we have 2,300 coaches.

[02:20:45] And when we talk about transfers, which is one of the keys to this whole situation in terms of the level of clear and accountable, bright line rules around transfers and eligibility,

[02:21:00] In this school division right now we see 3,700 transfers every year 3,700 at the high school alone every year and out of our 15,000 athletes who participate our student athletes 400 transfers occur every year and to date we've had one employee that monitors residency in this county for years and I want to say that while the buck stops with me and I'm responsible for this situation and I am sorry to every single

[02:21:35] athlete that's been impacted negatively by this situation every coach that's been impacted every family member fan and community member and i want to assure you this is not going to happen again on my watch it is simply not going to happen again we have to put processes in place that do not result in a situation like we've just had and that's my commitment to you as a board and i will come back on the 19th with the beginning of a plan because it is my responsibility to lead that

[02:22:05] so thank you. Thank you Dr. Reed. Mr. Dunn. Dr. Reed I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of my district for your statement just now. I think that's a statement that has long been sought and will be much appreciated because it's the accountability piece that has been in my communication with constituents lacking more than anything else and your clearly articulated committed to ensure that this never happens again, and fix the protocols, the processes,

[02:22:45] the procedures, and with my colleagues, corrective motion, fix the training, the development, inevitably all aspects of HR from hiring to removal and reassignment will require a systemic approach because if anything has become clear in recent days, as I've received emails talking about problems in other sports and other high schools. It's that what happened at Hayfield was terrible, but it was a symptom of a larger disease. And then until we tackle the problems in a

[02:23:21] systemic way, we will not be able to put in place the measures to ensure that it never does happen again, right? Because if we only fix Hayfield, what about all the other concerns that have been raised about programs, both happening now and that have happened in the past.

[02:23:37] So it is my commitment to work with you as the leader of our school system to make sure that you get all the support, all the resources you need to implement these systemic changes as well as to ensure a thorough accounting of what exactly happened in Hayfield and providing rectification.

[02:23:56] I also just want to mention that out of all of this, there's come a lot of ugliness in community on on all sides and and we've seen some terribly racist messages online and I just want to condemn those as

vile remarks that are contrary to the core values of our community of our school system um and and um and should never have been uttered in any form and so for everyone who's suffered from that I just want to express my my support my sympathy that they've had to endure

[02:24:28] of that. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dunn. Dr. Anderson. I do want to say thank you for the statement you've just made. It was very impactful. And it's what our community needed to hear. And you heard it here tonight where I think at least two speakers talked about the statement that was sent on 1120, which many feel that it was shifting the blame, that it was somebody else's responsibility. Yes, there's a lot at play. Yes, VHSL has a role.

[02:25:01] But at the end of the day, what you've just said just now is exactly what the community needs because we need to rebuild the trust and nothing is going to do that unless we take accountability for the areas in which we did not meet standard and committing to moving forward.

[02:25:19] And so I very much appreciate that you did that. Yes ma'am. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Mr. Dunfer-Goback. Okay. Ms. St. John Cunning. All right. The motion is on the screen.

[02:25:34] We'll go to a vote. All those in favor, Ms. Marin, Mr. McAveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemore-Heiser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Dixit, and myself. That is unanimous. The motion carries.

[02:25:53] And we will give colleagues a brief recess to complete their EL intake form, and we will be back in 10 to 15 minutes.

[02:30:06] Board members, please return to your seats.

[02:42:23] Former board members, please allow current board members to return to their seats.

[02:42:46] agenda item 6.01 policy review human resources EL4 the next order of business is the policy review for executive limitation for human resources EL4 annually the board will review each executive limitation at the time the

[02:43:22] monitoring report is provided to determine if revisions are needed board members may offer amendments to executive limitations at any regular meeting provided they send final amendment language to the board and and clerk at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which it is being considered at this time no amendments have been submitted in advance of this meeting but the board members may provide comments on executive limitation for human resources before we vote on maintaining the

[02:43:58] current language for the year ahead if there are no comments or discussions i will call on miss anderson for a motion i move that the school board maintains executive limitation for human resources as currently currently detailed in the strategic governance manual is there a second second thank you miss anderson would you like to speak to your motion no thank you miss sizemore hyzer would you like to speak to your second no thank you all right if there are any other board members who would like to speak seeing none i will call for a vote on the

[02:44:33] motion on the screen all those in favor miss marron mr mckelveen dr anderson mr mcdaniel miss anderson miss sizemore hyzer mr moon miss st john cunning miss dixit and myself with mr done away from the table the motion carries i call on miss st john cunning for a motion our customary practice

is to introduce new business at least one meeting before taking it up as an action item however due to its nature it would make sense to consider new business item

[02:45:07] 10.05 tonight as an action item we have done this in the past under a suspension of the rules this i ask for unanimous consent to suspend the rules and take up new business item 10.05 after all scheduled action items is there a second second there's a motion on the floor to suspend the rules and take up new business agenda item 10.05 after all scheduled action items this motion is not debatable and a two-thirds vote in favor is needed to adopt the motion to suspend the rules if the vote does not

[02:45:42] meet this threshold then the motion will stay on new business calendar all those in favor miss Marin mr. McIlvain dr. Anderson mr. McDaniel miss Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemore-Heiser, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Dixit, and myself.

[02:46:01] I thought I did. Okay. Ms. Dixit with Ms. Dixit and Mr. Dunn away from the dais.

[02:46:19] Will the clerk read the vote? No. Oh, there she is. Ms. Dixit, was that in favor? Sorry, my camera is not turning on.

[02:46:35] Yes. All right. Thank you very much. Will the clerk read the vote? No. And myself, yes. Sorry. Mr. Chairman, I have an answer. Oh, I apologize. Uh... All those against abstentions Mr Moon now will the clerk read the vote 9 0 1 with Mr Dunn not

[02:47:07] present the motion carries thank you agenda item 7.01 action item certification of closed meeting compliance in order to comply with section 2.2-3712d 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 december 5th 2024 to the best of each board 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 discussed were heard discussed or

[02:47:46] considered by the board during the closed meeting do i have a motion dr anderson do i have a second mr mckelveen all those in favor miss marron mr mckelveen dr anderson mr mcdaniel miss anderson Ms. Sizemore-Heiser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, and Ms. St. John Cunning, and Ms. Dixit, and myself. That is unanimous.

[02:48:13] The motion carries. Agenda item 7.02, action item. Confirmation of action taken in closed meeting. There were no actions taken in closed tonight, so we'll move on. Agenda item 7.03, action item, external review and internal processes. I call Ms. St. John Cunning for a motion.

[02:48:30] I move that the school board engage an external law firm to conduct a comprehensive and independent review of all student athletic transfers and eligibility practices for all high school athletics across FCPS schools, starting with a review of Hayfield Secondary School and report its findings to the school board and the superintendent.

[02:48:54] Thank you, Ms. St. John Cunningham. Is there a second? Second. Mr. McDaniel. Ms. St. John Cunningham, would you like to speak to your motion? I would, and I'd like to thank Dr. Reed for her statement. The Hayfield football situation has raised community concerns about the treatment of student-athlete transfers, adherence to the VHSL rules, clarity of the VHSL rules, fairness, and sportsmanship.

[02:49:17] We recognize and apologize for recent events that have eroded public trust with some in our community and have had direct and collateral impacts on students, families, and staff across FCPS,

including those at Hayfield. As leaders in this system, we take full responsibility for this and acknowledge that FCPS has a duty to ensure fairness in sports and competition.

[02:49:39] We take that responsibility seriously and are committed to restoring confidence and upholding the integrity of our programs. I have actively engaged with students, staff, and families in the Hayfield community to understand concerns about student residency requirements and staff conduct.

[02:49:56] I've listened to perspectives from all sides and have consistently shared these concerns with FCPS leadership and my colleagues. This feedback highlights the need for a broader discussion on preserving the core values of high school athletics, integrity, teamwork, and personal growth.

[02:50:14] Although the spotlight has been on Hayfield, this has brought to light a larger issue, a systemic problem that requires a holistic approach, one that addresses the broader needs across the entire district, not just focusing on a single school. I support Superintendent Dr. Reed's plan for a comprehensive, independent review of student-athlete transfer and eligibility practices across all FCPS sports and schools, starting with Hayfield's football program.

[02:50:41] Let me be clear. Dr. Reed announced a plan for an independent review, and this motion's intent is to set the guardrails to ensure its impartiality and to address the concerns at Hayfield. My focus is on all students who participate and contribute to the vibrant sports experiences in FCPS.

[02:51:00] I believe all students should have equal access to every aspect of public education, including sports, while upholding the principles of fairness, sportsmanship, and the true spirit of high school athletics. - Thank you, Ms. St. John Cunning. Mr. McDaniel, would you like to speak to your second?

[02:51:17] - I'll be very brief. When Ms. St. John Cunning asked me to second this motion, I was happy to. I voted against the motion on August 29th, but in my comments, I said, if new evidence comes to light, I'm happy to revisit this. And I think it goes without saying that new evidence comes to light, and we're revisiting this.

[02:51:37] So I'm happy to second this and happy to support it. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. Dr. Anderson? Thank you. I appreciate this motion being brought because, well, let me backtrack a little bit. I do want to center the most harmed parties when it came to this entire situation.

[02:51:56] it is our students all of our students across all of the schools that has to be the center and that has to be where we focus our energies and so for those students I am sorry for each and every one of you and however this impacted you secondly we also and I'm glad to hear this around this table that we are being cognizant of the fact that our community has been harmed in this as well public trust has been eroded this has not been Fairfax County's finest moment yet it should not be defining Fairfax County I think there's an opportunity for us to turn into a new path to

[02:52:33] chart a new course so that we can regain that public trust it is really really important to do that and I will save some of my comments for some of the follow-on motions that will be coming on some of the amendments because what I think this is a good start as outlined by Miss St. John Cunning and I so appreciate all of the work that she has done to connect with her community because Payfield is not my community.

[02:52:57] Having said that, my community expects me to hold this system accountable, this superintendent accountable, this board accountable. And that is how I come into this work. And that's

what we also heard tonight. Our community wants accountability. They want transparency.

[02:53:13] They want for us to determine what the next steps would be to prevent this from ever happening again, as Dr. Reed shared in her comments earlier, that this will not again happen on her watch. these are the things that we need to clearly articulate because the board has the opportunity to set the guard rails as Ms. St. John Cuning has just stated and I think this is a good start.

[02:53:34] I don't think it gets there fully but I hope that we can get there in the next few amendments. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Ms. Marin. Ms. Dixon. Good evening everyone. I'm sorry to be remote today but I'm you know very excited about this and you know that we all have come together and supporting this motion we are definitely trying to do the right thing here when we found out about some

[02:54:13] new information was released we all decided that we do want to go move forward with an external law firm to do the investigation before we did not know that and hence the the motion was you know we didn't support the motion earlier i do want to say that we are learning we are all going going to do better and also Dr. Reed how she said that today that shows the sign of the great leader and superintendent we have that she took accountability and and we all are here to support and move forward.

[02:54:50] So I'm in support of this motion. Thank you Ms. Dixit Ms. Marin. Thank you just a moment I support this motion it reinforces what the superintendent said and you know I think for the public it's you look at us as the board and we are in charge of a lot of things but we actually don't like get into schools and tell principals what to do and we don't hire principals and we don't do evaluations of staff and we haven't even had a meeting scheduled it's been a month now we've been at a statewide conference talking about how to get money for our school division which is under attack by Governor Yunkin we've had the Thanksgiving holiday so you

[02:55:28] know this has certainly been pressing on me I know people in my community are looking to us and I hope that people see that this is not taken lightly we also have a I feel like I have a responsibility to make decisions based on evidence and data and the data and evidence presented us in August it didn't look great but it was not evidence okay it just wasn't and I have to spend taxpayer dollars and you know I have to make these decisions and things come up and situations change, and I'm glad that we are here now enforcing, recommitting to this.

[02:56:02] But the other thing I just want to say is I really appreciate the members of the community who came up tonight and spoke eloquently and respectfully and shared their input. And I really hope that that model continues. I'm very nervous about the political situation in this country and locally, and just as during COVID just says during you know the students are always watching us and those students in our athletics they were they're relying on adults to make the right decisions and unfortunately the adults didn't and we're going to hold accountable who we can but for the rest of us we've got to

[02:56:39] uphold good behavior and be civic you know be be civil rather so um I'm looking forward to putting this behind us and I really you know I'm from the get-go I've wondered you know the students how best can we help the students and we just have to never have this happen again. Thank you. Thank you Miss Marin. Mr. Dunn. I'd like to thank Miss St. John Cuning and Mr. McDaniel for bringing this motion. It establishes a foundation which with the following amendments that we'll discuss in a few

[02:57:15] minutes will respond to the call throughout our community for a comprehensive and independent investigation that addresses the full full array of issues that have arisen over the past few

months. I also welcome the statement of the superintendent to to say the buck stops with her that was pioneered by President Harry Truman and reflecting that on his desk he had that plaque so everyone would know that ultimately whatever decisions get made whether it decisions by him or decisions by subordinates there's

[02:57:52] accountability and that is something that our community has been demanding that they have been perceiving as lacking, and now we are charting together as a unified school board and as, under the superintendent's leadership, an independent investigation that will truly get to the bottom of what happened both last spring, this fall, in a very comprehensive manner.

[02:58:17] And I commend all my colleagues because to come together on a very divisive issue that's caused a lot of emotions on both sides is very difficult. And I've been very vocal in my advocacy, not to be critical of any one person, but just to be reflective of the trauma and the turmoil that my district has suffered.

[02:58:46] West Potomac, Hayfield, Lewis High School, South County High School, Mount Vernon High School, there have just been too many student-athletes, coaches, staff, families, boosters, and communities who suffered personally and significantly.

[02:59:05] And I can't undo that. As a board, we can't undo that. What we can do is establish a new direction. and we can establish a direction where we are working in concert with the superintendent to remedy this to not just fix what happened here because we need to do that but we also need to be cognizant that this is a symptom of a larger problem and that larger problem is something that will be addressed both through this motion and through the amendments and through the diligent efforts of the superintendent with the unified oversight and scrutiny of the school board going

[02:59:42] forward so I I am I am heartened and excited by this development again I I'm I'm reassured by the unified action of the school board because what I can testify from personal experience what I have personally witnessed is that every single member of this school board has an incredible devotion to our children to their communities to providing every child with world-class education and and access equal access to extracurricular activities so they can realize their potential explore their interests and the same can be said for the

[03:00:20] superintendent who works tirelessly driving all across the county to be more in person than perhaps any superintendent in FCPS history so this is a momentous day and and we can finally say that we are beginning we are at the beginning of the end of this crisis with this independent investigation that will come in determine what happened and also make recommendations hopefully so that we can move forward um in in fixing the systemic issues and supporting all the communities that have been

[03:00:51] affected negatively over the past few months thank you thank you mr dunn all right i call on mr dunn for an amendment thank you uh i move to amend the motion by inserting the words that has not been, sorry, that has not performed any work for FCPS or the superintendent in the last 10 years

[03:01:26] after the words external law firm. Is there a second? Second. Second. Thank you. Mr. Dunn, would you like to speak to your amendment? Yes, I would. I can attest again that every member of the school board and the superintendent have a profound integrity and devotion to our child and to our schools, our children and our schools. But there has been a perception of a lack of accountability and to address that I think it's very important that the law firm that we do hire because of a

[03:02:04] number of issues that have risen in recent months be a law firm that is not currently affiliated or associated with FCPS or the superintendent in any way. Ten years may seem an arbitrary number but in the legal world, if it's been 10 years since you've done work, you've probably had a turnover in the attorneys. And so 10 years is a good mark to say there will be true independence. This is not a law firm that will have any financial interest that might be conflicting.

[03:02:33] And it will also provide the public with reassurance that the people who are looking at this don't have anything at stake other than the truth. And their determination is that their interests are the interests of of of our school system and for that reason I brought this amendment to build upon the great uh motion that missing John Cuning and Mr McDaniel brought forward. Thank you.

[03:02:59] Thank you Mr Dunn. Dr Anderson would you like to speak to your second. Um briefly just to kind of add to what Mr Dunn just talked about. I think the reason why we need to make sure that we articulate that is because we know the public's trust has been broken and so we want to be sure that the part that is independent and external is really really clear because we do know that FCPS contracts with a number of law firms who do have some connections with us and so we want to ensure that the public to the public that those relationships are not going to be impacting this evaluation and so that is

[03:03:36] why it is really essential for that to be present because right now I feel like we're on we've turned a corner and we've started to build and in order to regain that public trust these are some of the things that we have to be very clear about even though they might be a given we have to articulate them and put them to paper so that the public can also hold us accountable and we could be clear with them in terms of what our expectations are because the motion does read that the school board is going to be doing the engagement thank you dr Anderson seeing no others we will vote on the amendment on the screen all those

[03:04:12] in favor of amendment 1 mr. Mcilveen dr. Anderson mr. Mcdaniel miss Anderson, Ms. Sizemore Heiser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Dixit, and myself. All those opposed? Abstentions? Ms. Marin, will the clerk read the vote? 10-0-1, the motion carries.

[03:04:34] Thank you. I call on Mr. Dunn for an amendment. I move to amend the motion by striking both instances of review and inserting examination. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. McElveen.

[03:04:50] Mr. Dunn would you like to speak to your motion? Yes briefly. I believe you know as an attorney and as the son and brother of English teachers words are important and the word review has been used many times in connection with the internal investigation that was performed this summer in connection with an outside counsel who reviewed the notes of the investigation and perhaps did other things as well. I think it's important to understand that the intent is to have

[03:05:24] a very thorough and independent examination, unrestricted, looking at all the issues in this that have arisen in recent months. And I believe that properly reflects the nature of the investigation that will happen so that the public can be reassured that we're not simply going and looking at what was done last summer but it's starting fresh starting with the support of the school board and the superintendent and that firm whichever firm gets hired to perform the work will have the mandate to to get to the

[03:06:02] bottom both of the systemic and the school specific issues thank you thank you mr. Dunn mr. McElveen would you like to speak to your second no thank you seeing no others will vote for the amendment number two on screen all those in favor? Mr. McIlvain, Dr. Anderson, Ms. Marin, Mr.

McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemore-Hyzer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Dixon, and myself. The motion carries. That is unanimous. I call on Mr. Dunn for an amendment. I move to amend the motion by striking of all

[03:06:38] student-athlete transfers and eligibility practices and inserting parenthetical to include but not limited to student-athlete transfers and eligibility practices, end parentheses. Is there a second? Second.

[03:06:55] Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunwood, would you like to speak to your amendment? Briefly. This for me is the most consequential change to the original motion brought forward, and I believe there was always the intention to have an expansive investigation. That is what Dr. Reed has stated publicly.

[03:07:12] But to reassure the public as to the scope of the investigation, that it will not be narrowly focused. I felt this change, although it may seem in the weeds in terms of wordsmithing, from the perspective of making clear to the outside law firm, the scope is not limited just to those issues, but can be broader.

[03:07:36] And that scope will be determined by the school board in consultation with the outside counsel. We needed to provide them that reassurance that all of the issues that have arisen will be examined and examined thoroughly. Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Dunn.

[03:07:51] Dr. Anderson, we'd like to speak to your second. - He took all the words. - Thank you. Mr. Moon. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am supporting this motion. I appreciate Mr. Dunn bringing this particular amendment among others that when I first saw Ms. St. John Cunningham's main motion, even though I appreciate our efforts to put in that, one place that I had some concern was whether there was going to be interpreted to be a comprehensive enough.

[03:08:28] So I think this clarifies our intent of the examination to be as comprehensive as possible because we need to address all the allegations and accusations and rumors floating around to get to the bottom of the facts and be able to share our findings.

[03:08:47] know whatever we can with the public and i think this provides that revenue with that said i would be remiss if i didn't know my appreciation to dr reed for making a statement earlier i think that's such a right tone going forward than what the school system is intending on doing especially you as a cao thank you mr moon seeing no others we will vote for amendment three is it on the

[03:09:18] screen line to the bat all right all those in favor miss marron mr mckelveen dr anderson mr mcdaniel miss anderson miss sizemore hyzer mr dunn mr moon miss st john cunning miss dixon and myself that is unanimous the motion carries i call on mr dunn for an uh amendment i move to amend the motion to insert and make recommendations after report its findings is there a second second mr mckelveen Mr. Dunwell, would you like to speak to your motion?

[03:09:55] Briefly. I think the original motion, again, a solid foundation, but one of the areas that I wanted to clarify is not just that the outside law firm will identify what went wrong, but will also make suggestions for how we can do better.

[03:10:14] And since they will know the facts better than we will, we will receive a summary of their comprehensive independent investigation. In my experience as an attorney who's done many internal investigations, usually there's not just findings, but also recommended actions.

[03:10:31] And so the law firms that we will be considering will be well-known, highly capable, and very much capable of making recommendations for us, which we can then consider both to resolve what happened at Hayfield, but also to strengthen our system so that we can reassure our families or communities that we are restoring the integrity of our athletic programs and acting urgently to rebuild trust in FCPS leadership. Thank you, Mr.

[03:11:04] Dunn. Mr. McElveen, would you like to speak to your second? No. Thank you. Dr. Anderson? Yes. Thank you just very briefly I think this it just comes across almost as a given but again we're looking for clarity we are looking to really communicate to our public these are the things that we're looking for and it aligns perfectly with what one of the speakers has talked about what are you going to do about it or about whatever it is you find so whatever those recommendations are I think it's really important that we articulate that we are looking for whatever guidance this investigation may determine.

[03:11:43] Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Miss Sizemore Heiser. Thank you. And I wanted to reiterate that that once we hire the law firm, we'll be able to work with them on what we want them to do. So this is there's no harm in putting this.

[03:11:58] I think it's clear, as as my colleague said, that any good law firm would give recommendations anyway. So I think it's great that we clarify that, but I would not anticipate any law firm not making recommendations. And there's actually a follow on the talks about some of the policy work that we related to that so I also want to just thank the maker of this the main motion Miss St.

[03:12:19] John Cuning for her collaboration all week in working with colleagues all through shortly before this meeting on making sure all voices were heard. I appreciate that. Thank you Miss Sizemore Heiser Miss St. John Cuning. I want to thank all our colleagues as Miss Marin mentioned it. We were out of town as a board and Thanksgiving was upon us and in the midst of all of that in this part time job that we have I think we were all working full time to try to get to to an understanding

[03:12:55] and I appreciate everybody's effort and input um and I appreciate that we have a leader that's willing to say the buck stops here and will take into consideration all the findings that we get. Thank you Ms. St. John Cuning I'll take a turn um I want to say that the views on our board are no different than the views in the community they're diverse on this topic and every other topic we often get accused of marching in unison we always vote unanimously but I think through this process we've been forced to listen to each other to share our thoughts and opinions with each

[03:13:33] other one by one by one and that's how this should work when we have disagreement and there is always always always room for improvement I'm heartened by the superintendent's comments this evening and by board members willingness to work together through difficult situations to find common ground and to ensure that the work we're moving forward with puts kids at the center and ensures as dr reed said that this doesn't happen again because i'll tell you what

[03:14:09] as part of this process you know many of us don't have schools that were in this grouping but everywhere you go somebody shares a rumor that they've heard or a comment that they've heard about one school or another or at Hayfield or at another school in a different sport in a different county you know just counties nearby where this is a standard practice because they have open district so we have a lot of ground to cover here and you know a lot of those rumors are probably just that

[03:14:47] just rumors right but maybe they aren't and so we've got our work cut out for us and I think the collaboration here will help us get there so thank you miss st john cunning for your motion i'm speaking on the fourth amendment not the fourth amendment but mr dunn's fourth amendment and uh so i appreciate miss st john cunning's uh motion and work on this i appreciate mr dunn's amendments happy to support them and bring greater clarity to it and i appreciate the

[03:15:24] comments of my colleagues and with that there is a motion number four on the screen we will vote on All those in favor of the motion, the amendment, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemoreheiser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Dixit, and myself, that is unanimous, the motion carries.

[03:15:50] Ms. St. John Cunning, are you wanting to speak? No, just thank you to everyone. I know it's been a lot, and the most important thing is that we are going to center on our students and also on our staff, Because in the midst of all of this, there is still great work going on by all of our staff across the county.

[03:16:13] And I don't want this to get lost in this situation. I always want to lift up our teachers and our staff that every day are supporting our students academically or in any extracurricular program. I really thank all of you for your support throughout this process.

[03:16:32] Thank you, Ms. St. John Cunningham. The amended motion is on the screen. amended main motion seeing no others who would like to speak to it we will go ahead and have a vote although Miss Sizemore Heiser sorry just briefly I was waiting to speak to the main motion when the main motion was up so I just wanted to say just very briefly I think this is really important to recognize that as a board as the work we do as information changes we also are willing to change and take additional steps there's always a balance between making sure that we're looking at everything as fully with the information we have and then making

[03:17:11] changes as we need to make changes. I think as one of my colleagues said in August the information that we had at the time before VHSL took actions is what led to our vote. As more information has come through we've always said that if more information comes to light we will take additional steps and that is what this board is doing and I think that's what government is and that's what government how government holds itself accountable so I think it's actually a great exercise in showing that I know there's been a lot of strong emotions isn't a lot out in the media but that's if you take all the actions initially you have to take the actions initially in August that's warranted by the facts and data that you have at the time and if those facts and data change or

[03:17:48] information changes then you take additional action and that's what we're doing today so I appreciate the colleagues willingness to take that additional action I appreciate those colleagues who are willing to have the conversations with each other so we can get to this point I appreciate my colleague bringing this forward as well I also wanted just to say that I think it's important to do this today and I'm glad we voted to take it off new business so we could vote on it today rather than having to wait two more weeks because the meat the public has been aware of this and I want to move forward with hiring the law firm doing the external review and getting that information so

[03:18:23] we can take the action needed I really our students are counting on us our communities counting on us our coaches our staff are counting on us and a way to rebuild public trust is to get started as soon as possible on doing that work so I appreciate my colleagues doing that and Dr. Reed I appreciate

your comments as well I think it is very needed and very appreciated to say that I know some of these processes were put in place before you got here but it is your division and I appreciate you taking ownership of that and committing to making changes so it doesn't happen again and I want to say I really appreciated that so thank you to everybody for this motion thank you my colleague for bringing

[03:19:03] it and I look forward to supporting it thank you Ms. Sizemoreheiser Mr. Dunn no sorry Mr. McElveen so I wanted to go back to something that Ms. Sawant was talking about earlier tonight which was the fact that earlier this week we relaunched our student leadership development program and during that meeting one of the points that I tried to convey to our students was that if you love a place if you love an institution you will do everything you can to make it better

[03:19:38] right and oftentimes that means pointing out its flaws and working to correct them and i think everyone at this day as tonight comes to this with a sense of love right we love this place we love everyone in it particularly our students and we want to make sure that every experience they have is is the best possible because frankly their their lives and their futures depend on it so i appreciate dr reed's remarks tonight everything we're doing here those remarks

[03:20:16] these actions this is a starting point it's not an ending point we have a lot of work to do we have an investigation to undertake and results to hear and we'll see what comes from that but just to the community who is who has come and spoken to us who has reached out over the past months um and half year even um uh it's important to make make sure that they know that we're listening that they we care about them that everything they say to us um matters and that

[03:20:50] we're taking it into account uh and i think that um with um st john's st john cunning's movement motion sorry I've had this thing for a month it's not going away her with St. John Cunning's motion with Mr. Dunn's thoughtful amendments we'll we'll get to a good place tonight. Thank you Mr. McElveen miss it Dr. Anderson yes briefly just to quote someone who's out in the audience to put a finer point on this matter we've been really focused on three terms comprehensive external

[03:21:29] independent and I think these follow-on motions really outline what that means we've talked about the comprehensiveness of this motion and that the board will determine the scope which also lends an air of independence because it will not be done in-house it will be done by an external body with whom we have no existing relationship or 10 years which is a fairly long time I think and I keep going back to this because this is the piece for me is the most troubling I think these mo these amendments to this motion will rebuild public trust which

[03:22:05] we need to do we cannot have a community that looks at our board our superintendent as in our system as untrustworthy and so this is our main goal at least for me this is one of my main goals as well as you know identifying what happened but this is one of my main goals we need to have the community understand that this process it's going to be thorough it's going to be comprehensive it's going to be transparent so thank you both of you for all of the work. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Mr. Dunn. Thank you. I wanted to start by

[03:22:42] thanking the City of Fairfax School Board for its continued advocacy for a comprehensive and independent investigation. That's been very meaningful and consequential to our discussions so thank you. I also want to say thank you to everyone who has emailed me, contacted me, telephoned me, spoken with me in person or otherwise over the past several months I'm sorry this is a part-time job and I do have

to pay a mortgage so I don't I'm not able to issue an individual reply to every email always but I wanted to reflect

[03:23:18] that I have heard your voice and and I've heard the pain that you've suffered reputations that have been injured, people who have felt traumatized and gone through unnecessary turmoil. And that has been the basis for my advocacy, not to criticize anyone, not to attack anything, because I do have confidence in the school board and confidence in the superintendent.

[03:23:48] But we are all imperfect, as God made us, and everyone makes mistakes. August has been mentioned. I did bring a motion in August for a comprehensive and independent investigation. I did my best to advocate for it, and I apologize if I fell short. Some people said I didn't talk to them about far enough in advance, and perhaps that's true, but I have been. I didn't drop it. I've continued carrying that ball down the field, behind the scenes, in conversations and otherwise. And I'm grateful that my colleagues have all come together through this motion by

[03:24:27] Ms. St. John Cunningham and Mr. McDaniel as amended to enable this to happen because it is so important to our community. And I also just want to express that I've also heard the pain of the families at Hayfield, those who have been there for many years, those who moved recently. And that also needs to be addressed because there's just been too much pain going around and I hope that what we do here with this examination will enable us to never have to put any more families

[03:25:02] or any more student-athletes through the ringer as has been happening this season. It's so important that we recognize that on all sides people have taken slings and arrows. I know all of us on the school board have very strong opinions in different directions and so this represents a compromise and and I think a solid one for our future for our system so that we can restore the integrity of our athletic programs and we can rebuild a public trust so I thank my colleagues for working together tonight

[03:25:37] to establish this new direction that I believe will be enduring in its consequences and and be therapeutic so that people know that not just that accountability has been accepted but action is being taken to remedy the wrongs and make sure that those wrongs do not reoccur thank you mr. Dunn mr.

[03:26:03] McElveen wanted to go back all right thank you the main motion as amended is on the screen all those in favor of the main motion miss Marin mr. McElveen dr. Anderson Mr. McDaniel Miss Anderson Miss Sizemore Heiser Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon Miss St. John Cuning Miss Dixit and myself the motion carries that is unanimous Mr. Jack I'm sorry there is an issue with the main motion we're just seeing it says he felt high school and not he felt

[03:26:38] secondary school so we need okay without objection I would like to allow the clerks to make clarifying Jason remind me the language technical and conforming technical and form conforming conforming changes to the motion to ensure its accuracy seeing none the clerks will do

[03:27:01] that thank you all right I call on miss Sizemore Heiser for a follow-on motion does the clerk need to read the vote I think the clerk needed to read the book she hadn't read it yet okay thank you based on the findings of this review I move to direct the superintendent to work with the governance chair to

[03:27:40] identify potential updates to related policies including but not limited to policy 1106 and bring these potential policy update suggestions to the Governance Committee to review and to send recommendations to the school board for consideration and a vote as needed. Is there a second? A second. Ms. Marin Ms. Eismerheiser would you like to speak to your follow-on motion? Yes absolutely. I think it's

really important to not just have the review by this external and this comprehensive review but have a process to then make sure that we update our policies as needed based on the findings and recommendations of this review and so that is what this fall on motion is to direct the superintendent to work with our governance chair to look at related

[03:28:19] policies that we have and identify which may need to be updated one of my colleagues has mentioned policy 1106 so I've named that specifically but it's not limited to that policy there may be others that need to be updated and so per our typical process we would have the governance chair and staff bring those update potential updates to the governance committee the committee would discuss it in open meetings and then make its own recommendations to bring to the full school board for consideration and a vote so that way the public can also transparently see what we are doing to change our policies based on this review so that is why I'm bringing this follow-on motion thank you miss Sizemore

[03:28:56] Heiser miss Marin would you like to speak to your second the policies are how the school board ensures that things happen that we intend to happen I could say a lot more but I what I'm going to say is my colleagues is we still have a lot of presentations to go through so I'm please ask you to shorten your comments we I think have covered the entirety of this topic and let's get the votes get the action done and move on please thank you thank you miss Marin mr. Dunn thank you for the public policy 1106 the title is protection against retaliation when

[03:29:33] engaged in protected activity what that refers to is whistleblowers and you know I don't know the merits of the rumors, the many allegations that have been made over time, but I can tell you, having worked in federal agencies, that the role of whistleblowers is absolutely essential to ensure that when something is going wrong, that it is reported and that you have safe channels and safe harbor so that those people who do report wrongdoing

[03:30:07] in whatever form it may take, are protected and sheltered from any potential retaliation. And whatever the merits of, you know, this could have come up at any other time in our four-year terms, and I would have supported it passionately.

[03:30:26] But it's something I feel very strongly about because as we go through this or any other situation, we need to make sure that those people who share their views, their personal views are protected those who identify things that need to be remedied are protected and not just their disclosures but protected against potential retaliation thank you thank you mr. Dunn seeing no others the well I apologize mr. Dunn I call on you for an amendment I move to amend the following

[03:31:04] motion by striking review and inserting examination is there a second second Thank you Dr. Anderson. Mr. Dunn would you like to speak to your amendment. This is just a conforming change since the main motion that was just approved refers to an examination rather than the review.

[03:31:22] Dr. Anderson would you like to speak to your second. No thank you. All right the amendment is on the screen. See no others. All those in favor of the amendment. Ms. Marin Mr. McElveen Dr. Anderson Mr. McDaniel Ms. Anderson Ms. Sizemore Heiser Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon Ms. St. John Cunning Ms. Dixon and myself.

[03:31:37] The motion carries that is unanimous. I call on Mr. Dunn for an amendment. I move to amend the follow-on motion by striking governance chair and inserting governance committee. Is there a second? Second. Mr. McElveen, Mr. Dunn, would you like to speak to your motion?

[03:31:52] This is simply, I believe, a conforming change to ensure that the policy deliberations or policies to be examined are discussed with the full governance committee which is a public body with recorded meetings so anyone can attend, anyone can watch on YouTube and ensure that there is that transparency. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Don. Mr. McElveen, would you like to speak to your second? No. Thank you.

[03:32:17] Ms. Anderson. I'm a little confused about this one because I believe that's what the the this is the process that our governance committee usually takes is that the superintendent will work with the governance chair related to motions or policies that need to be adjusted and with recommendations from the staff. That's the starting point for this work. So I actually don't agree with this change because I think that we this is the process that we normally go through.

[03:32:46] Thank you Miss Anderson. Miss Sizemore Heiser. This isn't really a point that I I mean it's fine but I just want to make it clear that the original follow-on motion says the policies will be discussed in governance in an open meeting. So putting the words governance committee instead of governance chair doesn't change that. So just I wanted to clarify what was just said that it's not Adding governance committee means now it's going to be in public, whereas before it wasn't.

[03:33:18] All our typical process is the governance chair works with the superintendent to identify which policies need to be reviewed next, add to the agenda. Then it goes to the governance committee to review those policies with the update in the open transparent meeting. As I know you know from all the governance meetings you attended previously when we were working on some of the other policies.

[03:33:38] And then it goes from the governance committee to the board for a public vote as needed. And that's what the original motion says. If we want to substitute that committee versus chair, I don't really, I don't think it makes that much of a difference, but I do want to clarify what was said because I don't want to leave the impression that without this change, it wouldn't be discussed in a committee meeting in the open public.

[03:33:59] And so it will be, I think our typical process is that the governance chair, that's the purpose of the chair, works with the superintendent to figure out which policies to bring, but it's a technicality. - Thank you, Ms. Seizemarheiser.

[03:34:14] Dr. Anderson. - Yes, thank you. Can I ask the clerk to scroll down a little bit to the beginning of the main motion? No, no, no. Just right there where it says I move to direct the superintendent to work with the governance chair to identify potential updates.

[03:34:35] They I don't believe the superintendent works with the chair to identify potential updates. I believe the superintendent works with the governance committee. And again, when we're in this space where we're trying to increase transparency, I think we all benefit from ensuring that this is going to be happening in that public setting where the community can be present.

[03:34:52] So if it's you did mention as the maker of the motion that you don't have any strong feelings about it so let's make sure we're being really clear that we're going to be really transparent about all of this work. So I hope we can support that for that for those reasons. Thank you Dr. Anderson. I will take a turn. I was governance chair for a year and a half when I first joined the board. And so I just want to be clear that if we do change it to governance committee that we still have a process for making agendas for the

governance committee that includes the chair of the governance committee working with the superintendent to gather the materials for the committee meeting so that the governance

[03:35:29] committee can discuss those things now I don't think changing this language precludes that but that's what this is about so I'll vote for it but I think it's important for people to know that this is not a nefarious attempt to hide something someone has to set the agenda on our board and that's the chair of the committee and they work with the superintendent to ensure that the materials the research the other items that are on the agenda are fully staffed and supported at the committee meetings and then the governance committee gets to discuss those things

[03:36:05] and so I'll support the motion in a showing of collegiality but I just want people to know that there is a process that all of our committees follow to inform the creation of their agendas Ms. Sizemoreheiser I just want to say I appreciate that because I think it's important that our community is clear on how our committees have and have been functioning for a long time and not to have some doubt that our committee meetings that are all on YouTube are in the public so I appreciate that clarification thank you Ms. Sizemoreheiser Mr. Dunn okay uh seeing no others

[03:36:42] the um amendment is on the screen all those in favor Mr. McElveen Dr. Anderson Mr. McDaniel mr dunn mr moon and myself anyone else or excuse me it's getting late all those opposed miss anderson miss marron abstentions miss seismor heiser uh miss st john cunning with miss dixit potentially away from the table i can't see her on the screen

[03:37:16] okay miss dixit is abstaining all right will the clerk read the vote so we're at six two three the the motion carries. All right the motion carries. We are now on to the third. I should have created a punch list before the meeting began. All right I call on Mr. Dunn for an amendment. I move to

[03:37:52] amend the following motion by inserting policy 1105 and policy 1107 after policy 1106. Is there a second? Second. Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunn would you like to speak to your motion? It only clarifies the universe of policies to be looked at which includes the policies governing our office of Auditor General which reports directly to the school board and is responsible for auditing our operations and potentially could strengthening that function is aligned with also looking at our whistleblower protections. Thank you.

[03:38:29] Thank you Mr. Dunn. Dr. Anderson would like to speak to your second. Just very quickly again I don't think there's any harm by adding these other policies which is our work and will be the work of the Governance Committee and there might be a whole host of others. It's just at this stage

[03:38:45] just being as inclusive as we can be. This is not a deal breaker in any way that I see. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Miss Marin. Yeah I don't support this because the governance committee which I am on is already trying to get a schedule together of reviewing policies and to get on a rhythm so that we are meeting our five year cycle of reviewing policies. We actually right now have a whole list of policies that were put forth by my motion on the capital improvement program that have been sitting waiting to be reviewed by governance because it takes a long time to do these things I'm also my patience unfortunately is growing very short at this time of night reviewing motions by the same makers and I really would

[03:39:24] appreciate the respect to please let's move it along because our superintendent still has to present and this is just going on and on let's take let's get this done and not tell other board members what to do in their committees trust us a little bit. Thank you Miss Marin. Miss Sizemore Heiser. All right seeing

no others the motion is on the screen all those in favor of the motion mr. McElveen dr. Anderson mr. McDaniel miss Sizemore heiser mr. Dunn mr. Moon and myself

[03:40:02] posed miss Marin all right abstentions miss Anderson all right and miss a John Cunning with mystics it away from the the dais will the clerk read the vote the vote is 7 1 2 with mystics it away the motion carries thank you

[03:40:32] Well, I certainly welcome all of our colleagues to attend governance meetings or at least provide your red line edits to help us with the review process because we are very backlogged. Thank you, Ms. Marin. All right.

[03:40:52] I call on Mr. Dunn for a follow-on motion. I move to direct the superintendent to explore and evaluate best practices and provide recommendations on establishing standard protocols to include policies and procedures. Hang on a second. I apologize. Do you want to raise a point of order?

[03:41:09] Yes, point of order. I think we need to vote on the previous follow-on motion first. Taken. I apologize, Mr. Dunn, for leading you on. All right. The motion as amended is on the screen. All those in favor of the motion, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Sizemore-Hyser, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Ms. St. John Cunning, myself, Ms. Marin, with Ms. Dixit away from the table.

[03:41:38] The motion carries unanimous for those present. All right. Now I call on Mr. Dunn for a follow-on motion. I move to direct the superintendent to explore and evaluate best practices and provide recommendations on establishing standard protocols to include policies and procedures on the direction and management of internal investigations by FCPS, external reviews by FCPS-affiliated law firms, and independent investigations by non-FCPS-affiliated law firms.

[03:42:08] Is there a second? Second. Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunn, would you like to speak to your motion? Yes, thank you. I think what I've become aware of, not just with Hayfield, but with other matters, historic and recent, is that there is no standard playbook for any of these types of investigations, internal, external review, independent investigations.

[03:42:36] And if we are to reassure the public that what we do when there is wrongdoing identified, that we are doing things by the book, it's necessary to have a book. and it's necessary to have a yardstick policies and procedures so then we can attest truthfully to our constituents that we followed the proper protocols right and those protocols are not just you wrote on a piece of paper but they were reflective of best practices that have been developed in other school divisions and other organizations in the private and public sector

[03:43:11] So this is an opportunity, I believe, for FCPS to become a model, as it is a model in many other respects, for how to manage those situations when there is allegations, and who knows whether the allegations are true or not, so that we don't have to make it up on the fly, and we don't have to then have the public question, well, was that appropriate or not?

[03:43:37] We will have a yardstick by which to measure. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dunn. Dr. Anderson, would you like to speak to your second? Just briefly. I think one of the things that I've shared before and I'll share again, when Dr. Reed first got to the division, we had two external investigations and key findings were provided to the public.

[03:43:58] And I was under the impression that this was our playbook. And if it isn't, if it is, then we need to kind of put a stake in the ground and determine that. If it isn't, we also need to put a stake in the ground. If there are nuances, we need to articulate it. It's better to have a plan rather than make it up when we're in the situation.

[03:44:15] And I think that's what this motion will realize. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Ms. Anderson. I'm a little concerned about this particular motion because I am under the impression that we do policy work, not the superintendent. So if we are going to do this, then it would be having the superintendent bring it to governance to actually have it be a policy that we create if we don't currently have one.

[03:44:40] What I believe that it actually is saying is that we need regulations related to this, not necessarily policy. So I would ask that my colleague bring this to a forum topic so that we actually have the ability to talk about it as a group before we actually bring it to the dais and make some sort of decision so that we better understand exactly what would be included here.

[03:45:02] Thank you, Ms. Anderson. Ms. Sizemore-Haiser. Yeah, I have, I mean, I agree with the concept of having a standardized process for investigations. I think that's important. I think that's part of what was the intention under the previous fall on motion to have the review done and that way all of the recommendations and information from the review would inform the policy changes and if we need policies around either update or create new ones around investigations I think that's the moment informed by the data and information that we need to use as opposed to determining now you know I think and if

[03:45:40] not I think I'm a little concerned by the term protocols is a protocol of regulation or is it a policy I wasn't sure because normally the way it works we have school board policies that sets the direction and tone for the system that's the job of the school board and then the superintendent and her staff issue regulations to implement those policies I'm not sure where protocols and I know you mentioned earlier that words are important so I want to understand what that word is it a regulation is it a policy if it's a policy how is this different than the fall on we just passed and I apologize for creating the sausage at the table but I think that's part of the

[03:46:16] conversations that it's there hasn't been anyway the space to have those so I'm also a little concerned about some of these definitions that are there we're not going to have questions it says direction of management of internal investigations by FCPS external reviews by FCPS affiliated law firms do we have a definition right now of external reviews that include that is defined as an external review is done by FCPS affiliated law firm or not?

[03:46:46] Because I don't know if I have the understanding that an external review are reviews done by FCPS affiliated law firms versus independent investigations, which seem to be defined here by non-FCPS affiliated law firms. But I don't think we have that definition somewhere. So I'm curious how these terms were defined.

[03:47:04] And again, I totally support the spirit here and the desire to create standard protocols. But I think we need to be really clear on what we're doing, and we're defining terms here that I don't think there's clarity on those definitions. So I think this is part of what we already voted on in the previous follow-on motion and can be done through that, which will then be informed by the data and the review that we're getting.

[03:47:27] So I think we're already going to do this. Anyway, in terms of the protocols, if those are regulations, and I'm not sure those are the same thing, but if they are, then once we set the policy, those regulations can come from the policy. But if we're going to have Dr. Reed establish protocols independent of policy, I find that difficult, too.

[03:47:46] So I think this may be better to bring either as a forum topic or as part of the policy review after we get the review. I'd hate to put in something in place now that gets contradicted. If the review comes back and doesn't recommend that external reviews are by FCPS-affiliated law firms, I think that contradiction would be worse than just putting something in that's defined and driven by the review that we're hiring an external expert to do.

[03:48:12] So I don't quite understand some of these terms and how they were defined. So I have a lot of questions. Thank you, Ms. Sizemore-Hyser. Ms. St. John-Cunning? Yes, I have some questions about this too, and I really would like us to have the time to explore this more.

[03:48:29] What I'm having trouble with is just the, when you say FCPS-affiliated, It sounds like as opposed to FCPS contracted, I'm not a lawyer, but my thoughts are that when you contract a law firm, they're supposed to be impartial.

[03:48:47] FCPS affiliated sounds like they're doing work that's going to be in our favor as opposed to we're contracting a firm to do whatever. So I have problems with the wording here and what it might mean and how we can go forward.

[03:49:04] I also when I saw this and saw that it was policies were the ones that talk about policies and the superintendent does regulations. So I appreciate my colleague talking about a forum topic and going into this with more depth. I do like the spirit of this and I do think that all of us on this board are finding and seeing that we want to see more for lack of a better word standardized practices in place.

[03:49:35] I just think that right now we need to go into this in a lot more depth. Thank you Miss St. John Cunning. Miss Dixit. Thank you to share. I'm actually going to say that I'm going to make tofu now on the dais because I don't eat sausage.

[03:49:56] This is my own joke. But this is what my interpretation is that when we direct to pretend to do something it's basically in a very specific ask. This doesn't look a very specific ask. it doesn't include a lot of different layers of standard procedure they're like a lot of words here and maybe i'm tired i'm not able to read them but there is it's it's very complicated so my request would be to the maker of the motion mr dunn that can we just discuss this more and

[03:50:29] i think we can even go with school board directing an external expert of that you know in this area to give us that background knowledge about how then it is kind of things are done in a proper way rather than redirecting the superintendent.

[03:50:47] So this is something we can discuss that maybe that's the direction to go. Thank you miss Dixit. I will take a turn. So I think this is an example of a motion that gets added as we're hurtling towards the beginning of a meeting.

[03:51:07] And I support exploring coming up with, like, best practices around this. I don't think this is the way to do that. We do have room for a forum in January, just saying, and a holiday or a winter break to build something during and submit to the clerk and the chair for consideration.

[03:51:35] And from what I've heard at the dais tonight, you have several colleagues who may not want it in this forum or this setting because it's not quite there yet, but you've got probably a robust conversation on your hands if it comes to us as a forum. That's it for me.

[03:51:51] We have a couple go-backs. Mr. Dunn. I appreciate the thoughtful comments from my colleagues, and I'll accept their SAGE guidance that this is a matter that requires further discussion.

[03:52:11] I was hoping to have the superintendent go out there and look at best practices and come back with recommendations, but certainly happy to sit down and have a forum topic so we can discuss amongst ourselves more before we start tasking the superintendent and her staff.

[03:52:27] So with that, I'll withdraw the motion if I'm allowed to do so by the... With unanimous consent to withdraw the motion. Seeing no objection, the motion is withdrawn. we will move on to calling mr dunn for a follow-on motion i think it's a full motion it's a main motion which means we have yeah we just withdrew that motion so okay um so i call mr dunn for a motion mr mckelven for a motion thank you mr chair i move that the school board direct the governance committee to ensure that all fcps policies and regulations including but not

[03:53:06] limited to the srnr uphold the rights of student journalists to make decisions regarding content without prior review or approval thank you mr mckelven is there a second second mr mckelven would you like to speak to your motion yes thank you mr chair so this was originally part of a larger battery of of motions if you can imagine there were there's a time when there were even more emotions um to address um issues that have arisen out of the football situation in fairfax county so um it has come to light um and concerns have arisen from the community

[03:53:45] That there has been censorship in some areas, and one of those is with student journalists. And as one board member, that's very concerning to me. And the good news is that FCPS has very well established policies and regulations on this front through the SRNR.

[03:54:08] We follow VHSL regulations on this, and there's actually been guidance sent out by the system on this. However, again, given the concerns that have arisen, I think it's worth the school board's time to ensure that issues are not happening at the school level that should not be happening. I think we owe it to our student journalists to ensure that their First Amendment rights are not being curtailed, and I call on my colleagues to join me in this effort. Thank you, Mr. McElveen. Mr. Dunn, would you like to speak to your second?

[03:54:43] Only briefly, the right to a free press is the foundation of a free society. And what we teach in our schools is what we become as a society. So making sure that our student journalists have the necessary freedom to pursue news stories, wherever that may take them, is very much aligned with our discussion regarding whistleblowers.

[03:55:06] And again, I don't have any facts of censorship. But I have heard stories and I want to make sure that our student journalists all of whom are amazing in my direct experience have the support of FCPS to pursue new stories and report truth especially at this time when truth in our society is continually challenged.

[03:55:33] Thank you. Thank you Mr. Dunn. Ms. St. John Cunning. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. This motion reminds me of what Dr. Reid said earlier when we when she was presenting EL4, which is part of the EL presentation was to ensure that the things that need to be happening are happening.

[03:55:57] And another component is to show the growth and to give the data. And I see this in that way. This is just a look to ensure that our policies are where we want them to be. This is not asking for additional information from the superintendent. This is just a review for the governance committee to put in its queue.

[03:56:14] and I would be very happy to support it. - Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Ms. Marin? - So the board is scheduled to have a work session on March 11th about the SRNR, the student rights and responsibilities. I think that's a much more appropriate place. I am just sitting here in awe of how expansive these motion makers are being.

[03:56:34] I mean, should we talk about athletic fields and the quality of athletic fields? Let's throw that in there too. Our staff has been up since before dawn and this is not a model of behavior how to do business in a public school division I'd also like to know as a point of order our board members being tracked for how many times you're speaking to motions because according to our governance manual and Roberts rules I believe it's only twice and are they being timed so I'd like to be sure that that's clear but I don't know what motion to make to curtail this lack of any self-aware the self-awareness I'd like to hear from the chair what are we

[03:57:11] going to do now that it's 11:30 and we haven't gotten to the superintendent's presentations because I physically don't know that I'm able to to go through that well to answer the first point if someone notices it's Robert's rules not our governance manual for the number of speakers on a main motion if somebody notices somebody doing that and I don't catch it you would say point of order and then I would say what's your point you would tell me and then we would resolve it yes ostensibly everybody is timed we don't always hear the timer and I try to be a

[03:57:48] little broad with the grace to let somebody finish the thought or a sentence and so we do our best there on the question of time I think I knew coming into this that it was going to be a long night I know that there's frustrations about this but I think we have a posted agenda and short of items being removed from it we're going to get through it well thank you I am aware that there are options to postpone and lay on the table items there are Roberts rules and motions that we can do I also just want to state that this is not the way that a

[03:58:27] board should be doing work to be making the tweaks at the table and I am certainly gonna try my best to work with people to make it better but I would like to consider and maybe if somebody else on the fly wants to help me figure out how we could possibly lay some things on the table because I just don't see how this is going to continue. Thank you, Ms. Marin. Mr. Moon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before, you know, I can decide whether to support this motion or not, I would like to ask a superintendent or another senior

[03:59:06] staff member, explain to us, or explain to me at least, the rights of a student journalist to make decisions regarding contact. What are the current rights they have? Thank you, Mr. Moon. Dr. King is our Student Rights and Responsibilities Oversight Chief, so I'll ask Dr. King to provide the actual language. Dr. Reed, I don't have that information tonight, but I can get it to you as soon as possible to the board, what the language says about students' rights when it comes to journalism.

[03:59:43] Okay, but we are voting tonight. That's the quandary I am in. So let me ask Mr. Chairman, could I ask to make up the motion on exactly what he's seeking, whether he's trying to make sure that existing

rights of a journalist to be preserved properly in all policies and regulations, or are you trying to expand the current rights beyond?

[04:00:12] The former. One second, Mr. McElveen. you may speak. Mr. Moon, the former, just ensuring that we uphold our current policies. Okay, thank you. That makes it easier for me to support. Thank you, Mr. Moon. Ms. Sizemore-Hyser.

[04:00:34] I am all in favor of journalists. I'm all in favor of freedom of speech. I talk constitutional law. I think this, words matter. I think this is a dangerous motion the way it's written. The right of student journalists to make decisions regarding content without prior review, Even newspapers have editors.

[04:00:57] Even newspapers have reviews. We had a whole situation last fall about what was published in a yearbook and how it was taken and how it was considered potentially hate speech by some students, but it also created a lot of angst among students about what was published in the yearbook and what was not, and why was it reviewed and why it was not reviewed.

[04:01:17] I am all about student journalists being able to publish, but we need to build a review. This doesn't define student journalists. So if we had someone who says I'm a student journalist and goes out on X and publishes hate speech or a manifesto about how to blow up a school and says you can't do anything to me on the SRNR because I'm a student journalist.

[04:01:41] Even the Supreme Court allows limitations on free speech for safety. Again, if we want to bring this to a forum talk, if we want to review our policies and have a thoughtful conversation about how to ensure our student journalists can report what they need to report while protecting student safety I think that's great and if we want to talk about what approval might look like or not look like but we just had a whole situation in the yearbook about this and if we're saying in the words in this say uphold the rights of student

[04:02:16] journalists to make decisions regarding content without prior review the Washington Post has editors the way I read this is prior reviews no editing no one gets to read it you can publish whatever you want that's not even what the supreme court allows for free speech so I you know maybe this is my lawyer my constitutional law hat but this is a dangerous motion the way it's written and I cannot support this if we want to bring something later to the governance committee to look at our policies around strengthening protections for student journalists absolutely

[04:02:50] this is dangerous thank you Ms Sizemore Heiser I'll take a turn I appreciate the back and forth between my colleagues to clarify the intent of the motion. But I think the clarification is not what the language of the motion says.

[04:03:09] I would support a motion that says to review our you know to make sure that our policies are being upheld as it relates to student journalists. But what this says is that we would look at those policies to ensure to paraphrase that there are no roadblocks for students to publish anything.

[04:03:29] so um I am all for being as expansive as humanly possible with what students can publish in our publications um and I you know I um so uh but um if the motion maker is intending to do as answered I don't think that this does that Miss St. John Cunning oh wait I apologize you've already had a turn no I haven't Miss Dixit oh I thought she had already gone okay uh Miss St.

[04:04:06] I concur with again having freedom of speech but I agree with my other colleagues and I particularly agree because this we received legal advice particularly about this notion earlier where there was concern about this and so I will take pause on this one I agree with the spirit of of what my colleague is trying to do I do believe it has to be refined and if we are going to be reviewing SRNR then that might be a more appropriate place to to look at this and ensure that what you

[04:04:46] want to happen will happen and just that's where I stand and I really am at the back of my head is some legal advice that we got earlier this evening. Thank you Ms. Sizemoreheiser. Ms. Dixit did I say Ms. Sizemoreheiser no Ms. Sejong Cunning Ms. Dixit go ahead. Thank you Mr. Chair um again in this particular one and I would say i have no idea what this is you know going on here um mr mcleven uh could you please you know next time give us a call or just email or text or do something to reach out before

[04:05:26] you know motion like this because i would have supported if i knew what is going on what are you looking for and what he's trying to achieve but it's like things are coming you know very quickly and no time to discuss so I would appreciate if you could take some time to talk to us and then we can revisit this and and hopefully you know if it's the right thing to do we'll do the right thing. Thank you. Thank you Ms. Dixit. Mr. McDaniel. Chair I move to call the question. The question has been called. I second. And seconded. All those in favor of calling the

[04:06:03] question Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Seismarheiser, Mr Dunn, Mr Moon, Miss St. John Cunningham, Miss Dixon and myself, that is unanimous. We would have gotten there and question is called, debate has ended and so we will vote for the motion as seen on the screen.

[04:06:23] All those in favor of the motion, Mr. McElveen, Dr. Anderson, all those opposed, Ms. Marin, Mr. McDaniel, Miss Anderson, Miss Sizemoreheiser, Mr. Moon, Miss St. John Cunningham, Miss Dixon and myself.

[04:06:39] Will the clerk read the vote? Didn't I say? I didn't say, did I not say your name? Okay. Mr. Dunn. Mr. Dunn is in favor. Will the clerk read the vote. It's at 3 8. The motion fails. Thank you. Madam Clerk.

[04:07:07] All right. Agenda item 8.01 2025 mid-year budget review. I call on Dr. Reed for a presentation on the financial year 2025 mid-year budget. Thank you. Chairman Frisch. It's this evening. Miss Burden is going to be presenting the FY 2025 mid-year budget. So Miss Burden would you please share the mid-year budget. Thank you. Good evening. The mid-year review offers an opportunity for revisions

[04:07:45] to the fiscal 25 budget based off revenue that was received after the year-end was completed. I'm going to go pretty quick. Basically, the revenue, we have a grant adjustment, IDEA and Perkins. Both were reduced by about a half a million dollars each. So you can see that we also are reducing the expenditures for those two grants by a million dollars. And then we have 3.8 million that is largely sales tax and additional funds from Fairfax City as well as vape settlement funds which give us 3.8 million to spend and the

[04:08:24] recommendation is that we would spend it on eSports stipends which is an after-school program that's a VHSL video game competition and that is about \$141,000 that would provide stipends one at each semester at all of our high schools and then we have an alternative route to licensure that Mr. Solomon spoke about earlier tonight I teach and that is expected to cost for a hundred participants about

three hundred thousand and then three point four million to go to safety and security initiatives which are of course still in

[04:09:00] you know pilots and planning stages that could be vape detectors cameras at elementary school panic button security screening vestibules those kinds of things but they're still either in pilot or in the planning phases I don't normally go over the other funds because they represent multi-year funds that flow from year to year the appendix has the fund statements if you're interested and the last page gives you some updated information on grants development and this item will come for action on December 19th thank you miss

[04:09:37] burden we'll go to our budget chair mr mcdaniel thank you um thank you for this this work uh this a fairly um routine item but i did want to raise up one point that i know i've shared a couple of times um we're putting money into stipends for e-sports which is fine i'm fine with that but we really need to look at stipends division-wide and i know specifically our current tech education side of the house i think that's about a quarter million dollar item um but we if we're going to of start giving I instead of giving out stipends one group at a time on this kind of ad hoc basis

[04:10:12] I'd really like to see as part of the budget process this year a top-down review of stipends and where we have gaps that need to be filled so that's all thank you Mr. McDaniel Mr. Dunn thank you Dr. Anderson just one quick question regarding the vaping settlement 1.5 I wasn't in the impression and I may be wrong so please correct me that when that was provided that it was earmarked for particular activity not to my knowledge the funds that we've received

[04:10:49] over the last couple of years we've already had two other payments and we're expecting about three more and all of those we have allocated towards safety and security initiatives thank you thank you dr. Anderson mr. moon just a couple of questions the \$300,000 for a license or pathway I teach do you have any funding allocated on a recurring basis for that, or this is going to be one-time funding?

[04:11:26] It is recurring funding. It is recurring funding? It is recurring funding, and we'll need to build that into the next year's budget. But we just used it very, we had very few participants in this past year.

[04:11:41] This is the year that we're going to ramp up and try to get 100 people to be able to do that. And so we need to allocate funding for it. but we will have to address the recurring funding. Okay, so when you said the recurring funding, you mean it's the recurring needs, but we have not really funded in a recurring manner.

[04:11:58] Correct. It's not in our base. Yeah, it's an unanticipated item for this year, which is why we included it with the mid-year. Okay, next has to do with something that we passed earlier this evening about external investigation or external examination.

[04:12:16] That's going to incur some expenses. Don't know how much at this point in time, But where do you think that's going to come from? It's going to come from the school board flexibility reserve. I thought the school board was going to discuss how we were going to spend our reserve funding in a more structured, more systematic way rather than on an ad hoc basis.

[04:12:39] I believe that that is true. But at this point, you know, all of the funds in the budget, the approved budget, are allocated to specific purposes. And so whatever the cost of the review is, the school board's flexibility reserve would be the appropriate place to charge that.

[04:12:58] Just to make sure that we understand the amount of remaining balance of the reserve, school board reserve, how much is left? The fund is replenished at \$8 million annually. You've spent \$3.5 million, and so you have \$4.5 million left.

[04:13:16] \$4.5 million. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Burden. Seeing no others. - Thank you very much. - Thank you. - Agenda item 8.02, Academic Matters.

[04:13:33] I call on Dr. Reid for Academic Matters.

[04:13:50] - All right, thank you, Chairman Frisch. This evening, please join me in celebrating this Academic Matters segment with our FCPS important inclusion work. And being as it is the National Week of Inclusive Schools, which started this past Monday, December 2nd, and officially ends this Friday.

[04:14:12] So, this year's theme is Every Voice Matters, which resonates the belief that every individual has a unique perspective and contributes to our community. The inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families create a sense of belonging and membership that's positive for social relationships, friends, and the development of learning and achieving our full academic potential.

[04:14:37] You can learn more about this celebratory week, focus through the Inclusive Schools Network, and this inclusive schools network also provides extensive information on inclusive practices. FCPS schools have celebrated this week with many activities.

[04:14:55] Annually Flores Elementary provides fourth through sixth grade students with an opportunity to take part in our annual awareness program called Walk in My Shoes. Many schools participate in spirit weeks to promote acceptance and inclusion and many of our high schools like Annandale, West Springfield and Woodson sponsor buddy clubs which are after school clubs to welcome students of all abilities and hold monthly events. Robinson Annandale Frost and Woodson all participate in Special Olympic Unified Sports programs that promote inclusion in sports teams and this year

[04:15:31] Herndon High School supported collaboration between the Watt program and the astronomy classes to build constellations using mapped poster board. One of the big keys this year that we've really taken under and again big thanks to Dr. Presidio and his team for working with this universal design for learning project also known as UDL and one of the keys is in this program that it focuses on minimizing barriers to learning that exist in the environment or within the design of the learning experience this

[04:16:08] is a really important mindset that allows all students to access curriculum It originated from the educational organization CAST, and it's based on brain research for how each individual is uniquely motivated to learn. Also, how they take in information and how children are able to demonstrate what they know and what they can do.

[04:16:30] UDL emphasizes learner choice and agency as learners are taught to advocate for themselves. It's really a powerful best practice. In sharing our progress this year, during the 23-24 school year last year, we started to deliver professional development on these foundations last spring.

[04:16:52] It started for our central office and school-based leaders at all county principal meetings. And at the beginning of this year, our leadership kickoff was actually patterned utilizing UDL strategies. Again, central office teams are engaging in professional development. And I want to make sure that I create a reminder that this is a general education initiative.

[04:17:14] This is something that all of our staff are really I think becoming more and more aware of and more and more in terms of utilizing these practices as they connect with our instructional framework.

[04:17:30] As we think about re envisioning inclusive practices in FCPS one of the things we've done is we've begun working with a consultant Dr. Julie Koston and Dr. Christy pretty Fraszak who are experts in this field not just in isolated sort of outbreaks of inclusion but rather systems that could occur across our division that would support inclusive practices consistently across all neighborhood schools and one of the goals this year is to have a long-term

[04:18:04] comprehensive plan that enables progress for inclusive schools so we meet both our targets and the vision for inclusive educational opportunities for all students by the 29 30 school year which is the culmination of our current strategic plan I want to really do a shout out and a save the date for those of you listening for the family summit on March 15th 2025 we are bringing back our family summit as an in-person event and we're very excited about that Julie

[04:18:40] Koston and is actually going to be here for that event and we're really hopeful that this keynote and the breakout sessions are gonna re-energize our students our families and our staff about this really exciting and transformational work so that is academic matters for this evening chairman frisch thank you dr reed seeing no others we go on agenda item 8.03 strategic plan update i call on all right miss seismorheiser under the gun kind of under the gun i i know it's late i will not take all the time i could take on this topic as you know i could take quite a bit of time

[04:19:20] so i i know we talked a little bit about this at the work session as well in the goal report um i just wanted to say a couple things here in the public meeting one i'm really looking forward to this three to five year action plan from for inclusion inclusive schools week is an indicator of what we do with inclusion in fcps right now i'm not going to say any more to that um but it's a week it should be a year and another year and another year all the research shows that inclusive

[04:19:56] education leads to better outcomes for students with and without disabilities leads to better mental health at least it's just the body of research is strong and we are not good at inclusion in FCPS so I'm really excited about the consultants you're bringing in I'm really excited about this three to five year plan and I'll just end with what I ended the work session with that for too long in Fairfax County we have expected the parents and the students to lead innovative change in special education and we are the educational experts we're supposed to be the educational experts we're supposed to be the leaders and if we want to have

[04:20:36] transformational change for a population that has some of the most worst outcomes We have to lead that work, and we have to be committed to leading that work. And if we can lead that work, we can lead that work around the nation. It will have impacts around the country.

[04:20:52] So I hope this three- to five-year action plan is that visionary transformational work that can lead this for the entire country because the population of students are growing, and the needs are growing, and the gaps are growing, and everybody deserves to be included, and everybody deserves to have the right to be included.

[04:21:18] So I hope and I believe in you Dr. Reed I believe in what you've done I believe in your leadership and I believe that you can lead this team in this transformational work and inclusion and I look forward to partnering with you and my colleagues on that. Thank you.

[04:21:35] Sizemore Heiser agenda item 8.03 strategic plan update I call on Dr. Reed for a strategic plan update. Thank you chairman Frisch and members of the board as a reminder to the public we do share a strategic plan update once a month. And I don't know if Jenny is still here.

[04:21:52] Is Jenny still here? Okay, Jenny Kenean, who's the Director of Leadership Development in our Strategy Planning and Learning Office, is going to join me or at least be closer. This is very important work. In looking at Pillar C, tonight we're going to really talk about our diverse, adaptive, and supported workforce, which is in alignment with our HR executive limitation.

[04:22:20] And the ability for us to reach our five goals really depends on our success in meeting the needs of our four pillars. So as we think about the support and leadership development, the Office of Professional Learning provides a variety of leadership development programs and supports, both for aspiring and current FCPS leaders.

[04:22:41] and the picture you see on the slide was our leadership kickoff and when you think about that I want to say that I think we have some of the finest leaders in this country and I couldn't be prouder to support a team of leaders as we have here in Fairfax County Public Schools and part of the strength of our leadership is the development and support that our team at the central office provides so very proud of the work that they do and as we continue to develop and support the leadership program it'll enable us to have more coherence and alignment in our work and we know that's important you recall our

[04:23:19] picture of all our arrows right we're going to be able to do really transformational work of those arrows are all moving together and not in a you know a hundred or in this case several thousand different directions the opportunities for aspiring leaders are listed on the screen for you it's really important that we provide flexible options to accommodate different needs because we know we have aspiring leaders at all stages in their life journey and all stages in terms of their work journey as well so we want to make sure we have pathways that meet the needs of our staff it's important that we

[04:23:58] cultivate a strong pipeline of future leaders and the pathways to the leadership conference and supporting the mission are two strategies that support this the opportunities that we currently have for our leaders we have a range of leadership development programs as well as short-term workshops conferences and long-term leadership development programs our leadership kickoff week we actually added several days and I appreciate our school-based leaders and central office leaders because we are committing more time to our development and support and I think I really appreciate the passion that takes us

[04:24:38] there our operational flex which is a program that supports the growth and development of operational leaders as well I think for a while we kind of stopped focusing on leadership across operational and instructional I'm really proud of the team working on developing leadership across all departments and schools in our county. So let's take a look at a few of these programs and hear from some of our FCPS staff members who have participated in these programs thinking about staff voice. Madam Clerk,

[04:25:10] please play the video. So we have a vast array of leadership development opportunities in FCPS, both for our employees on the instructional side and on the operational side. And when you think about it, really our goal is to support our all our employees from hire to retire and we better serve students by serving our staff and our leaders.

[04:25:41] It was important for me to develop my leadership skills because I had never really had any training in how to be a leader. I was made a plumbing supervisor in 2018 and I had to kind of learn on the fly. One of the things I discovered was you can't just read a book on how to be a better leader.

[04:25:59] Supporting success really helped me with my professional development because I learned so much about my personality. If you're going to lead others and you're going to inspire others, you have to know your strengths and weaknesses. I think it's made me a better leader and a better person as well.

[04:26:15] - Supporting success gave me the knowledge and made me feel that I was successful in what I was doing on a daily basis. I was able to support my drivers, my attendants. I was able to answer questions from schools, from parents in providing a safe bus ride for their students.

[04:26:36] I just had the experience that I could give great stories and examples to our drivers in attendance on how to deal with difficult situations, how to keep a smile on your face daily. I think I just needed the strength and just a little bit of confidence that I could do that.

[04:26:54] - I wanted to have a broader impact. So the leadership programs that I participated in were the George Mason Educational Leadership Program through an FCPS cohort. And then a few years later, I did Supporting the Mission. I really think that the way those programs helped me the most was in giving me a much broader perspective of leadership but also problem solving and connecting across the division to look at ways to accomplish goals.

[04:27:20] As a whole, Fairfax has been supportive of my leadership journey. - The most valuable aspect in participation in the programs that FCPS provides is twofold. First and foremost, being able to develop a network with other leaders within the division.

[04:27:36] And then it's also about being able to understand recognized not only how your work is being impacted day-to-day now but what that work could look like moving forward in the future as well. What I really admire and love about Fairfax County is the fact that Fairfax invests in its people as they are ensuring that we are being provided programs that are developing us not only in our current roles but to assume future roles in the division as well. So for me that first opportunity arose through accelerated certification cohort. From there, I also took advantage of the aspiring principals cohort,

[04:28:15] and as a result, I now find myself leading one of the high schools within Fairfax County. So when you think about our strategic plan, the whole goal is to prepare our students now for a future world that doesn't yet exist. And it is our responsibility, but also our privilege, to make sure we're doing the same for our staff. Excellence, equity, and opportunity.

[04:28:40] Thanks Dr. Reed. So we as you can see we are so proud of the existing leadership development work and just as we have worked to expand our programs for our school based leaders we recognize that we have continued work to do around expanding our operational leadership pipelines to continue to support a diverse pipeline of leaders across our system. So this work is crucial to building a stronger more inclusive and more effective leadership team for FCPS. So as we continue to move throughout the year we are committed to keeping our community informed about our strategic plan work the goal to report will be presented

[04:29:17] and voted on at the December 19th regular school board meeting and this concludes Mr. Chair our December strategic plan updates. Thank you very much Ms. Kunin for hanging in there with us. You're welcome good morning. Just kidding. Hang on a second Mr. Moon. I know I was late but I just want to

make a quick comment you know thank you for thank you for the video clip that made me feel really much better than just looking at other other data because when we talk about a leadership program it's not someone who wants to become

[04:29:53] principal directors eventually superintendent it's not just an instructional administrative but also operational and hopefully you know Dr. Reed when you are when we are all discussing this we are also addressing the needs we talked about excellence and equity opportunities and with that should be applied that should go to everyone with an FCPS including level 1 custodians for service workers and we saw you know people who work as an

[04:30:33] hourly wage owners for decades still as an hourly or hourly workers because we have decided just keep them that way somehow. I think we addressed it providing equal opportunities for those people to advance in their careers as well. Thank you Mr. Moon. Thank you Ms. Kuneen.

[04:30:57] Dr. Reed and this is the part of the meeting where I read very slowly. Agenda item 8.04. We have superintendent matters and I call on Dr. Reed. In the interest of the morning, the early morning hours I think I'll pass this evening thank you Dr. Reed agenda item number nine consent agenda our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure Roberts rules provide for a consent

[04:31:33] agenda listing several items for approval of the board by a single motion many items listed have gone through board review and documentation has been provided to all board members and the public in advance items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member prior to the meeting the consent agenda items are on the screen is there any objection to approving the consent agenda. Hearing and seeing none, the consent agenda is approved. Agenda item 10, new business. The following are new business items. There will not be a vote on these items this evening, but action is scheduled for a future meeting. Agenda item 11, board committee reports.

[04:32:10] Mr. McIveen, do you have an update from audit? Not tonight. Thank you. Mr. McDaniel, do you have an update from budget? A gentle reminder, the budget priority survey is due tomorrow by close of business. And you should all have a calendar invite with the link to the form. That's all.

[04:32:29] Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. And with no objection, I would like to skip board matters this evening. Seeing none at 12.07 p.m. we are adjourned.



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