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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, January 23, 2025

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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bR8G7tJMjw4>
- Official School Board page (FCPS): <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board>

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[00:00:23] This January 23rd, 2025 regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board will now come to order. Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence and a performance of the National Anthem by the West Springfield High School students

[00:00:35] under the direction of Dustin Brandt.

[00:03:03] In accordance with changes to the Code of Virginia, section 2.2-37083B, Ms. Sizemore-Hyser has notified the chair and clerk of the board that she is using remote participation as she is caregiving for an individual with a disability. Thus, she will be counted as in person for the purposes of quorum tonight and does not need to be voted in by the board.

[00:03:24] Ms. Seizmarheiser, could you check your audio and video? - Thank you, welcome, can you hear me? - Yes. - Great, thank you. - Thank you. I'd also like to have our student representative, Ms. Sawant, will you test your video and microphone?

[00:03:40] - Yes, can you hear me okay? - Yes, thank you very much. 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,

[00:03:53] please reference the qr code on the agenda or visit fcps.edu slash board docs tonight's meeting is being broadcast on channel 99 and live streamed on YouTube and our website fcps.edu slash live stream agenda item 2.03 volunteer and mentor appreciation week proclamation. I call on Miss St. John Cuning for a proclamation. Thank you Mr. Chair. Whereas school volunteer week is nationally observed during the third full week of April to encourage parents and citizens to volunteer in their neighborhoods.

[00:04:30] schools. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools has the good fortune to have many persons willing to volunteer their time and services in our schools and at school sponsored activities. And whereas every school whether through formal or informal partnerships counts among its volunteers those who give generosity generously of their time to improve the academic cultural and athletic environment of the school especially through tutoring and mentoring programs.

[00:05:01] and programs that sustain parent involvement in school activities and whereas national mentoring month is an annual campaign to recognize mentors for the exceptional support care and guidance they provide our students and to focus attention on the need for mentors as well as how each of us can work together to increase the number of mentors to ensure positive outcomes for our students. Whereas Fairfax County Public Schools honors volunteer mentors and staff who support students by showing up for them every day and demonstrating their commitment to helping them

[00:05:39] thrive and whereas by sharing their own stories and offering guidance and advice mentors instill a sense of infinite possibility in the hearts and minds of their mentees demonstrating that with hard work and passion nothing is beyond their potential whether simply offering a compassionate ear or actively teaching and inspiring curiosity mentors can play pivotal roles in young people's lives now therefore be it re be it resolved that the fairfax county school board hereby proclaims

[00:06:17] January 13th through 17th 2025 as Volunteer and Mentor Appreciation Week in Fairfax County Public Schools and Honors are committed school volunteers and mentors and therefore be it further resolved that the Fairfax County School Board encourages all students and employees to recognize and applaud the contributions and services volunteers provide to our school communities And therefore be it finally resolved that the Fairfax County School Board honors all those who continuously strive to provide

[00:06:56] young people with the resources and support they need and deserve. And we recommit to building a society in which all mentors and mentees can thrive in mutual learning relationships. Thank you Miss St. John Cuning is there a second second Dr.

[00:07:14] Anderson. All those in favor of the proclamation as read Miss Marin, Ms. Dixit, Mr. McIlveen, Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Moon, Ms. Lady, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Sizemore Heiser, and myself. That is unanimous for board members at the table with Mr. Dunaway from the dais. Agenda item 2. The motion passes. Congratulations.

[00:07:38] Agenda item 2.04 has been postponed until February 6th for our regular meeting. Agenda item 2.05, the 2024-2025 Exemplar Awards. I call on Dr. Reed for a recognition of our 2024-25 Exemplar Awards schools. Thank you, Chairman Frisch. Tonight we are honored to recognize schools that have received special recognition from the Virginia Board of Education. The Exemplar Performance School Awards recognize schools that exceed board-established requirements or show continuous improvement

[00:08:17] on academic and school quality indicators to achieve the 24-25 exemplar performance highest achievement award a school must earn a state accreditation rating of accredited and meet the following

criteria the school meets the state benchmark for reading which is at least 75 percent mathematics at least 70 percent and science at least 70 percent based on the current year pass rate not including growth measures or multilingual progress for the all students group and for each student group in the school.

[00:08:50] In addition, for schools with 3 or more student groups, there are no more than 10 percentage points between the lowest performing group and all other students in the school. The school meets the state benchmark for chronic absenteeism rate, 15% or lower. And for schools with a graduating class, the school meets the state benchmark for graduation and completion index, at least 88%, and a dropout rate of 6% or lower.

[00:09:16] are three fairfax county schools that are in the board of education highest achievement award and these are sankster elementary school allison jenkovich principal thomas jefferson high school for science and technology michael mukai principal and cg woodson high school kevin grata principal congratulations on earning this award and to earn the exemplar award for continuous

[00:09:52] improvement a school must earn a state accreditation rating of accredited or accredited with conditions and meet at least one of the following criteria the school demonstrates an increase in the combined rate for math reading and science for each of the past three years with a total increase across the three years of 10 points or more the school demonstrates an increase in the combined rate for two or more student groups and reading and math for each of the past three years with the total increase across the three years of 10 points or more and the school demonstrates an increase in the graduation and completion index the GCI for each of the

[00:10:28] past three years with a total increase across the three years of 4% or more and school demonstrates a decrease in the dropout rate for each of the past three years with the total reduction across three years of 15% or more of the first year's dropout rate and it sounds like a story problem a math story problem however Fairfax County Schools receiving this award for continuous improvement our Fairfax County Adult High School Michelle Morgan principal key center and

[00:11:01] Ann Smith, principal, and West Potomac High School, Jessica Stotts, principal. See the Wolverines are in the house. Congratulations on earning this award.

[00:11:20] Thank you, Dr. Reed. We'd like to welcome the West Potomac High School community, recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for continuous improvement, to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:11:32] I would like to welcome the Key Center Community recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for Continuous Improvement to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:13:28] I would like to welcome the Fairfax County Adult High School Community recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for Continuous Improvement to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:13:50] I would like to welcome the C.G. Woodson High School Community recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for Highest Achievement to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:15:17] I would like to welcome the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Community recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for Highest Achievement to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:15:42] I would like to welcome the Sangster Elementary School Community recipient of the 2024-25 Exemplar Award for Highest Achievement to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:16:48] I would like to welcome all those here in support of the Volunteer and Mentor Week proclamation to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:18:01] Mr. Chair, that's the conclusion.

[00:19:06] 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 acknowledged they were informed of the school board's expectations for proper decorum when providing comments.

[00:19:33] These expectations are also available online and with the printed agenda and meeting materials at 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.

[00:19:55] We are grateful to those who have come to speak to us today and thank you for your cooperation. School board members will be listening, but not responding. Madam Clerk, please call the first speaker. Michaela Danner. I am a sixth grader at Pine Spring Elementary School.

[00:20:19] I am a Girl Scout and I am learning about effective advocacy. I start middle school next year and I am here to talk about healthy school start times. Your delay on this important decision directly impacts me. I wonder if each of you really knows and understands the now decades old research on healthy school start times because I can't help but think that if you really understood we wouldn't even be in this conversation.

[00:20:46] My friends and I, the students you represent, know that starting middle and high school at 8:30 a.m. is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. We know that doing so positively impacts so many of the outcomes that you say you care about.

[00:21:04] For example, increased attendance and engagement in school, decreased depression, and decreased suicidal thinking, better academic performance, even less car crashes. reconsider pairing this decision with your conversation about school boundaries. You have five viable options available to you right now. Honor your original timeline. Make a decision for the upcoming school year. It is not too late. FCPS has changed about schedules as late as May, but it is urgent. We know that if you decide by March, it is best for a smooth implementation.

[00:21:41] Discuss the options that have been provided, choose and choose the most viable one for FCPS and implement for fall 2025. Thank you. Luke Loretty.

[00:22:01] Good evening, FCPS members. My name is Luke Loretty, and I'm here tonight as a representative for my community awareness product for a decade called Vaping Stops Here. My partners are Anthony Bertamute and Daniel Gully, who are sitting over there, and throughout our time in middle

school and high school, we have noticed that vaping has become a significant problem, not just in our schools, but in many schools around FCPS.

[00:22:29] On the surface this may not seem like a huge problem, however countless students are affected by this horrible activity, whether it be the health of the students vaping or their peers around them. It has come to the point where students are unable or scared to even use the restrooms at school as a result of the space being taken over for the use of vaping or vape dealing.

[00:22:45] While Vaping Stops Here originally started as a project for school, we quickly realized our opportunity to inspire change in school communities everywhere. This led us to set a goal of transforming the school project into a legitimate youth organization. organization. That works towards reducing the amount of vaping occurring in schools and minimizing vaping among teenagers.

[00:23:04] We hope that we can continue working on this organization inspiring change even after our decade competition at the end of February. So why are we speaking to you tonight? Our purpose is to raise awareness about the harmful effects of vaping. We notice that you are piloting a program of using vape detectors in a few schools, and we would like permission to fundraise those same vape detectors for other schools including Madison.

[00:23:24] However, if that is not possible, we would like the contacts to get the forms for permission to fundraise and send the funds to the section of the FCPS to speed up the pilot program and send detectors to more schools. We feel this is very important because vaping in schools has skyrocketed over the last few years and thousands of children are hospitalized every year due to a volley and other harmful vaping diseases.

[00:23:44] We think that with your help and the vape detectors installed, this could cut down on vaping across the school district and help solve this crisis. We hope this has helped change your perspective and if you would like to contact us you can You can contact us at vapingstopshere@gmail.com or visit our website at vapingstopshere.org.

[00:24:00] We would love to be certified and start fundraising as soon as possible. Thank you so much for your time. Haya Shirzad. Hello.

[00:24:21] I'm Haya Shirzad and I'm a sophomore at Justice High School. Can we hold the speaker's time, please? Ma'am, will you return to your seat? Please restore the speaker's time so that she may begin again. Thank you. Hi. I want to talk about the fact that middle schools should start their days too early, should not start their days too early, as it's unfair for students who have to raise as early as Many of these kids face demanding schedules that require them to juggle homework, extracurricular activities, and family responsibilities, which often make it difficult for them to get at bed at a reasonable timing.

[00:24:59] This lack of sleep can lead to exhaustion and decreased focus during the school day, ultimately affecting their ability to learn and grow. With good sleep, students are more likely to participate actively in discussions, retain information better and contribute positively to their learning environment additionally improve sleep can lead better relationship with peers family members as well as enhanced overall well-being therefore we must we must act urgent and not delay until boundary work is completed our students deserve

[00:25:29] better thank you Anjali Seuss Lillian Sada good evening thank you for the opportunity to speak we all know the health benefits of changing middle school start times tonight I want to stress the urgency

of acting now we need be proactive not reactive we are waiting are we waiting for the media attention or the petition

[00:26:08] with over 700 signatures to force our hand we need to do what is right for our kids not what is necessarily easier for the adults inconvenience can be managed harm is irreversible i ask our school board you to support this change without delay why wait for external pressure to make scientifically proven changes. Reports presented to the FCPS family strategy meetings highlighted significant concerns in middle school showing a trend of declining student interest in academics coupled with a rise in mental health

[00:26:45] issues. Dr. Anderson thank you for highlighting that region 2 including Glasgow has an extra year of middle school. This means 3500 students in region 2 will benefit from this change starting in fall 2025 when we know better we must do better as a parent of a middle schooler I understand how crucial this change is for our families it impacts every student every family in our community we need this change now not at some undefined point in the future it's still possible to implement for this year as the FCPS web page

[00:27:21] indicates was our goal if our top priority will always focus on doing what is best for our students, this cannot be delayed. I urge you to discuss the options, refine them, make healthy middle school start times. We cannot fail our middle schoolers during their most vulnerable years.

[00:27:40] Let's address the declining interest in academics and raising mental health issues head on. Actions speak louder than words. Let's show our kids that together all things are possible. Thank you.

[00:27:56] - Kathleen Ann Brown. - Good evening, I'm Kathleen Ann Brown. While my son Peter Cullither graduated from Justice last spring, I remain committed to and volunteer at the PTSA Resource Pantry for our amazing students and have served the past year and a half on the community working group.

[00:28:24] Safety of our students is paramount as they travel to and from Justice High School. The two biggest problems are one, lack of adequate parking and two, the lack of safe routes to and from school. We estimate that there are nearly 500 students using the sidewalks and roads from just the one side of school from Culmore, Vista, and Knollwood Drive neighborhoods.

[00:28:48] Yet there are no high visibility crosswalks, curb cuts, enough sidewalks, and an inadequate number of stop signs to ensure our students' safety. Safe routes to school and the Office of Safety and Security and our working group members collaborated on a report to identify mitigation strategies and that's an addendum to the working groups report. The school board must instruct your staff to work with VDOT and FCDOT and the community to develop solutions to these problems and not erect barriers and excuses for why it can't be done. Your

[00:29:27] staff's resistance to developing solutions have been detailed in our working group report. These proposed solutions are at minimal cost and virtually no cost to FCPS. The simplest solution to the inadequate parking problem is for VDOT and FCDOT to restrict parking on the cafeteria side of Peace Valley Lane for students and staff in a similar way that they restrict parking on the opposite side of Peace Valley Lane for the residents of Ravenwood Park.

[00:29:59] Our working group's rough estimate is that this would provide approximately 50 parking spaces for school use during school hours. Thank you for the hard work you do providing valued leadership.

[00:30:19] Thank you ma'am. Robert Rigby, Jr. Victoria Sneed, Victoria Sneed.

[00:30:40] Matthew Levy. Hello, high school board. I'm here tonight to talk to you about a request of the Justice High School working group and our desire to get more parking around the school we've been meeting over the last three school years and we've made a modest request for more parking near the school via the acquisition of northbound Peace Valley Lane it's

[00:31:19] currently I believe County run and we're asking to use those spots and to restrict them for students and teachers during the school day we met with with the community members and they are on board with this plan it should be a minimal cost and would be of great service to all of us teachers students etc of course the plan really only begins to meet our needs you know when I started teaching a justice 20 years ago we had 1500 kids we have like 2200 now

[00:31:56] we just put up a new addition which reduced some parking so it's been a bit of a struggle for some teachers and the morale in the building so any extra parking would be just super beneficial for the vibes at Justice High School.

[00:32:12] Thank you very much for your time. Vanessa Hall. First I agree with them on sleep and parking but I'll talk about something else. My daughter was physically ill on Tuesday after she witnessed Nazi salutes on the inaugural stage and executive orders designed to create chaos and harm and upend the rule of law. We're in an unprecedented time where violent criminals are pardoned, kindness is out of fashion, and the Constitution is undermined with the

[00:32:50] swipe of a presidential pen. Where science and truth are rewritten by ideologues and ice is unleashed on schools, hospitals, and places of worship, which is terrifying our entire community. Civil rights and public education are under attack. Nevertheless, all of us, we must do the work. Educator and former Congressman Katie Porter says not to let the chaos and fear distract us. Instead we must stay focused on the real people who are harmed by these policies and all work together to mitigate that harm. Stand up to bullying. Be an upstander not a bystander. Work cooperatively as possible but never compromise on values

[00:33:29] or civil rights. Speak truth to power. FCPS must continue to offer safe meaningful educational space for students staff families by prioritizing kindness and patience offering mental health support and maintaining the trust policy to protect immigrant students and regulation 2603 which protects transgender students we need to be loud about this you are the first line of defense for staff so please protect them and provide resources support and pay that they need to do their best by students no matter what happens at the

[00:34:05] federal level you were elected to do the work here and you are empowered by the Virginia Constitution to support protect and educate our children regardless of race, religion, gender, immigration status, gender identity. Our world is being turned upside down which is why we all must do the work to ensure safety, equity, excellence and opportunity in FCPS and beyond. Thank you very much. Kim Lanue.

[00:34:34] Good evening everyone my name is Kim Lanue. I am the parent of four children to whom graduated during covid and I have a senior and a junior all of whom came through the Justice High School pyramid elementary middle and high school I am surprisingly to myself here tonight

[00:35:08] to speak to you about fairness we teach our kids about the concept of fairness in order to approach fairness we have to have justice in order to have justice we must have equality in order to have

equality we have to have parity Justice High School does not have parity with its peer high schools in an inexcusable number of measurable and amendable areas in order for parity to exist fcps and the school board must provide the individual school with what they need to be on a level playing field i am here to ask for one such individual need to provide parity we have

[00:35:45] an incredibly dangerous traffic walking and parking situation at our school which is has the smallest footprint of any school in FCPS and this problem is being shuffled down the road once again we historically and currently do not receive the same support as other high schools in FCPS which our students truly feel and express so I am a member and I was appointed to the Justice High School Community Working Group as commissioned by the Board of Supervisors and the school board in order for FCPS to comply with their legal requirement for this

[00:36:20] group to exist in order for our renovation to have been approved we came up with a plan which we have presented to our sponsors and that includes a very simple solution to allow us to take over ownership of one side of the road by our high school to add an 40 or 50 parking spaces to alleviate a major traffic and safety concern which is both supported by the neighborhood and the school system and can easily be accomplished in the current cip thank you chair

[00:36:56] fresh that's our last public speaker thank you madam clerk agenda item 4.01 student representative matters i call on miss sawant who is joining us virtually tonight miss sawant thank you mr chair while i regret that i cannot be in person tonight as i'm feeling under the weather i want to wish everyone a happy new year and first i'd like to express my appreciation to our custodial facilities transportation, bus drivers, and ground crews who have worked to keep students safe during this cold and snowy weather. With over 45,000 bus stops, walkways, and sidewalks that require attention, their work is critical in creating a safe environment for learning and a safe place

[00:37:35] that students can come to learn. At the beginning of January, I had the opportunity to present student remarks on school safety at the Fairfax County pre-hearing for the General Assembly. Here in FCPS, we've implemented several security measures, such as school resource officers, the anonymous safety tip line, and the phased construction of vestibules at school entrances.

[00:37:55] The vestibules at the front of each of these schools have been well received by students, from the construction at Chantilly High School to the improvements here at Luther Jackson, making sure that we protect students from those entering and exiting the building during school hours. Building on our discussions from our December meeting, I, as well as the students of the superintendent's advisory council are excited to see that the fiscal year 2024 mid-year budget review includes an adjustment of additional financial resources to enhance school safety measures specifically installing additional security cameras vape detectors panic alert systems and expanding the safety screening pilot program as proactive measures however

[00:38:33] as i shared at the pre-hearing we must also acknowledge the growing concerns related to online threats and the rise of school shootings across the nation with which impact students safety and mental health incidents such as the recent tragedy at the school in nashville tennessee have made it clear that gun violence in schools is an epidemic over the past years several fcps schools including but not limited to rocky run middle school catherine johnson middle school thomas jefferson high school glasgow middle school lake braddock secondary school and luther Jackson Middle School have experienced false threats that were made on social media, which were

[00:39:09] later spread through school buildings. While thankfully no one has been harmed, these online threats coupled with the rise of school shootings that we're seeing across the nation right now have created a climate of fear and anxiety within our communities. In a discussion with a high school student from Falls Church and another from Woodson, they both agreed that incidents like these at their schools or even threats made had an impact on how safe they felt while they were learning. I want to share a personal experience from this past May at Thomas Jefferson High School. A threat written on a restroom door was then spread rapidly on social media, which caused several anxiety throughout the school community and where more than half of the student body

[00:39:48] did not show up to school the next day. Despite the extra security staff that we had on hand and support from our current principal at the time, it shook our school community. I walked into a nearly empty classroom during first period where only 10 students were present. Similar incidents have occurred at these other high school and middle schools where some of the threats reference weapons or violence which again leave a lasting impact on our sense of security in our school communities as dr reed has mentioned in several community announcements this fall our schools are committed to ensuring safety and media education for students and families to know how to deal

[00:40:24] with these threats when they arise however when we find ourselves in the same situation again it leaves us wondering how do we prevent these events from occurring again and how do we address the lingering impact of these incidents even after the immediate threat has passed in light of the recent events that have happened in nashville and the concerning prevalence of gun violence nationwide it is essential for fcps to prioritize the next phase of the safety screening pilot program this program should incorporate strategies that address the root causes of false alarm and and threats including the expansion of digital monitoring tools and proactive education for

[00:41:00] students and families about the consequences of spreading such threats and how to deal with them when they arise i'd also like to recognize the incredible work of student organizations like march for our lives at woodson and done with guns at thomas jefferson high school which focus on gun violence prevention and mental health awareness as i urged our state legislators i encourage all of us to think about how we can better address the false alarms that create this unnecessary panic in our schools what steps can we take to mitigate the panic how can we ensure consistent long-term safety at our schools and how do we empower students families and teachers with the tools

[00:41:35] and the resources that they need to feel secure this issue cannot rise and fall with the news cycle or when the next big thing occurs it requires ongoing attention and action i hope that these questions are considered as part of our safety and security screening pilot program and that we'll continue to explore how to better safeguard our schools students and our staff thank you thank you miss sawant agenda item 5.01 action 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

[00:42:11] to certify that since the fairfax county school board convened closed meeting on january 23rd 2025 to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the board during the closed meeting do i have a motion mr mckelveen do i have a second mr moon all those in favor miss marron miss dixit mr mckelveen dr anderson mr mcdaniel miss anderson mr moon miss lady miss saint john

[00:42:46] cunning miss sizemarheiser and myself that is unanimous for board members at the table with mr dunn away from the dais agenda item 5.02 action confirmation of action taken enclosed there were no actions taken in closed meeting tonight agenda item 5.03 action item new intergovernmental contract award james madison university teacher pipeline bachelor's pathway i call on mr mckelveen for a motion i move to the school board one approve the intergovernmental contract with james madison university for teacher pipeline bachelor's pathway and two authorized division

[00:43:26] superintendent or the director of the office of procurement services to execute deliver and and administer the contract on behalf of the school board. Is there a second? Second. Mr. Moon. Mr. McElveen would you like to speak to your motion? Just very briefly. So as folks will see in the agenda item, JMU through this will provide educator preparation programs and courses of study leading toward BA degrees and teacher licensure to FCPS staff who participate in the grow your own program.

[00:43:58] I don't think it's a surprise to anyone that FCPS needs qualified licensed teachers to fill critical needs in special education and elementary education in particular and that need in FCPS is further underscored by the VDOE who also identified pre-K to 6 elementary education and K-12 special education as the top two critical shortage endorsement areas in the state.

[00:44:22] With that I encourage my colleagues to pass this. Thank you. Thank you Mr. McElveen. like to speak to your second no thank you mr chairman i was the one who asked this to be pulled out from the consent agenda because i think this is very important program that deserves a little more explanation from our stand maybe superintendents and one of the things i noted in the agenda material was that these programs if i'm not mistaken uh are not available in the same way as other educator preparation program and this is also for those who may not have a bachelor's

[00:45:01] degrees and we're providing stipend. So this program in general is a program that enables, it's a tuition share program that enables some of our staff who are not currently teachers, perhaps paraeducators or instructional assistance to go to school with an assist from us in these high as mr.

[00:45:28] McElveen said high need areas special education and special education early childhood spaces and JMU uniquely has this program so we're very excited to be able to support upskilling with our employees who have a high interest in this area so is the expectation for our employees some of our employees take advantage of this opportunity and be able to do it virtually, or do they have to be at the JMU, which is two hours away?

[00:46:01] I would say that this program, we currently have 12 staff members participating, and I think, let me just look here real quick. It's a two-and-a-half-year program over six semesters, summer, fall, spring, and summer, fall, spring.

[00:46:19] And I'm just trying, it's used, one-time-only grant funds, supported with Title II. I don't know that it's completely virtual. It's not like the ITeach program, which is our Avanza program. But I think some of it is possibly virtual, and some is, I would have to get back to you on how much is virtual.

[00:46:38] I didn't send you my questions in advance, which I should have done. No, that's okay. You know, those are some of the questions that I had on my mind, you know, to share this information, this opportunity, not just our employees but general public because as uh we are committing about half a million dollars for this uh you know altogether is it two years initial term of contract that not only just our employees but i think you know a community members in fairfax county who support us need to

[00:47:11] know that we are offering these to uh strengthen a a a you know teacher rank for you know special education. Yes, sir. And it really was intended for us to take current staff members who were instructional assistants or paraprofessionals who'd worked in special education classrooms for years here in Fairfax County, enable them to successfully transition into a teaching role with tuition support. And their passion for children and education, I think, has really

[00:47:47] led them to this and it is extra work but we share the finance burden with them and then we celebrate some amazing teachers. So I think we're working very hard. I appreciate you and Mr. McElveen wanting to highlight this. It's an important program. Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you Mr. Moon. Dr. Anderson. Thank you and I'm also very glad that this was pulled out to be highlighted because I think it's an opportunity to raise awareness that it does exist so we can kind of advertise it in this conversation.

[00:48:19] But I did have a couple of quick points. There are three areas in which those candidates can receive a licensure. It's elementary education, pre-K and special education. Yes, not just limited to the special education component, because you mentioned that there are people who are working for years.

[00:48:36] It could be in any of those areas. Could that be coupled in any way with our students who participate and teach for tomorrow, bringing them into our ranks and coupling this program because we have space for one hundred and ninety five. And I think you said we have 12 currently it's just a wondering.

[00:48:55] So, you know, essentially it is it has been historically teachers who have been or excuse me, instructional assistants or professionals who've been in the classroom working for several years at least. And generally our teachers for tomorrow's our high school students who have not yet transitioned to that workforce.

[00:49:17] So I think we could contemplate a program that might match teaching for tomorrow's students. But I this would be a different program. I was just thinking if there would be a possibility to to for those who are graduating. Of course to know that this is a possibility if they come and work in our systems perhaps as instructional assistants and have this be something that is waiting for them again it's just a wondering because I know we have to be pretty creative in terms of growing teachers I'm just shocked that elementary education is one of the shortage areas you know I remember years ago that was

[00:49:56] a glut and it was you know math and it was science it's always been special education so I'm very glad to be able to support this and I hope that this little commercial gets some more folks to apply for it. Thank you Dr. Anderson Miss Marin.

[00:50:12] I just want to point out the number of very creative ways that the superintendent and her staff have used to produce more teachers and fill teacher shortages, including the Avanza program, which I believe is already launched or launching this month that will curate applicable candidates from internally.

[00:50:31] We've got the great beginnings program that brings staff from abroad and then this initiative. So this is how we help fill teacher vacancies, but there is a national teacher shortage. So when you know families wonder why do I have a substitute and why don't I have the teacher like we are doing the best we can but it is a very dire situation and we need more teachers. So. So thank you.

[00:50:53] Thank you Miss Marin seeing no others we will vote for the motion on the screen. All those in favor Miss Marin Miss Dixit Mr. McIlvain Dr. Anderson Mr. McDaniel Miss Anderson Mr. Moon Miss Lady Miss St. John Cunning Miss Sizemore Heiser and myself that is unanimous for board members with Mr

done away from the dais the motion passes all right agenda item 6.01 performance review technology EL 12 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 2023-2030 strategic

[00:51:31] plans goals and adherence to a set of 13 executive limitations found 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 executive limitation 12 technology dr reed thank you chairman frisch so it's my pleasure this evening to present executive limitation 12. And as Mr. Frisch mentioned, this is an exciting executive limitation

[00:52:09] and one of the operational guardrails around which the division achieves its strategic goals. So we're excited this evening to talk about technology. And I want to again report that 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.

[00:52:36] And I'd like to share some of the highlights this evening. So I'm not sure, is it okay? Can we go ahead and move to slide three, please? Thank you. So there are eight areas of executive limitation 12, and items one through four can be seen here.

[00:52:55] For those following along at home, the full report, monitoring report, is attached to the board agenda this evening and I will be just highlighting certain sections of the report I want to share that items five through eight are here and these are just really exciting topics and foundational to everything we do in the school division so I'll be excited to make commentary on a number of these this evening first of all item number one with regard to this executive limitation talks about innovation, future focusing, comprehensive and efficient

[00:53:31] approach in providing accessible and equitable technology resources to support student learning and activities. So I just want to give an update on our FCPS on program which ensures that all FCPS students have one-to-one access to age-appropriate division purchase devices. Since 2021 our Department of information technology has scaled student divisibility availability to ensure every student has access to a device that is less than five years old and that is significant not every school division is able to ensure that and

[00:54:07] that makes it clear to be able to have future focused devices that are able to manage software that our students are using in current in real time the table on this slide shows current investments in these student devices across all grade levels. The total number of managed devices are currently 195,941, so there's a lot of excitement and a lot of technology use going on on a daily basis in our County. Continuing on with item number one, just want to remind our community and staff that we are committed to using the latest technology.

[00:54:45] This includes updating laptops, servers, and wireless points. Every student we believe deserves access to the tools they need to be successful we're supporting a wide range of instructional applications and tools that also support a diverse learning style and sets of needs including supporting basal resources assessment tools databases and quite honestly I think our data usage and data planning has like multiplied exponentially in the last couple years as we work to achieve our goals of our ambitious school strategic plan.

[00:55:23] Item number two addresses the experience. And to make sure we have the fastest, smoothest, most efficient experience for families who have invested in building new tools here, we support now digital parent engagement and an online registration system.

[00:55:45] Those are new, and we've expanded those to include online verification update and impact aid forms for school year 24/25 the parent digital consent system is available for families which hadn't previously been available to families and this allows consent to additional resources quickly from phones or computers school staff can also efficiently manage track and act on these digital consents rather than paper consent forms and the system does support multiple translations to ensure accessibility for families and you know

[00:56:23] I want to just make sure that I pause because sometimes I feel like we just sort of read through some of these slides but that one small project is a huge access opportunity for our students and families and I just a big shout out to our team each of these improvements really mean something in that experience for our students and families I'd like to also move on to share that our multi-tiered systems of support were integrated into our student information system for all schools this year.

[00:56:54] This served over 37,000 students with over 13,000 plans that were created. Our Department of Instructional Technology continues to reinvest in new technology and systems modernization, such as robotic process automation and low-code development platforms.

[00:57:13] And I don't think I can answer questions on either of those, Mr. Sethi. We'll have to look to you on those topics. But I can say that the integration of those plans with our student information system makes those plans accessible for students, families, and our staff in ways that they weren't previously.

[00:57:30] So a lot of excitement about that. On item number three, as part of our commitment to modernizing this aging technology infrastructure, we continue to upgrade our wireless systems. And it's quite interesting.

[00:57:45] the cell phone the lack of cell phone usage during classes creates a really interesting Wi-Fi bounce at the end of the school day which we it's very interesting to look at the heat map now on the wireless system this project began in 2023 and expects to be completed by FY 2027 as we want to do this project within budget and by the end of FY 2025 the estimated mix will be 58 percent new wireless modern access points and only 42 percent old access

[00:58:21] points so by far the majority of our access points will be new and modern and the design goal is to ensure a hundred percent strong Wi-Fi coverage in all instructional areas as we continue to support increasing bandwidth demand so you can see an example of Bailey's elementary school with their 27 access points and what needs to happen for full coverage so lots of infrastructure work going on moving on I also want to mention that FCPS manages a large and complex infrastructure with approximately 300,000 devices connecting

[00:58:58] during peak usage that's 300,000 devices our IT team our operations team works with a goal to operate the network with 99.99% uptime during instructional hours so we're always on access to internet the DIT staff also schedules maintenance during off-peak hours which is much appreciated to minimize service disruption so this means late evenings weekends and so forth requiring IT staff to flex their time as well I also want to share that we do partner with our county partners to operate a shared fiber network which

[00:59:35] connects our buildings to the internet these fiber connections while highly reliable are susceptible to damage with the constant construction activity in our area. Sometimes those wires are the fiber is cut and it can abruptly shut down all internet access and must be repaired by boots on the ground.

[00:59:56] So this fiscal year since July 24 we've had six documented cases of fiber cuts which have affected connectivity in our building during instructional hours. And we continue to work on minimizing fiber cut events. So moving to number four, which is providing for a safe and secure computing environment.

[01:00:15] We have now implemented Lightspeed Classroom Management, which allows our teachers to focus all student attention away from their devices to the front of the room or to a specific instructional website. As of December 2024, as recent as last month, Lightspeed Classroom Management has been integrated into 185 of 199 FCPS schools and centers.

[01:00:39] Teacher feedback shows that Lightspeed Classroom positively impacts the classroom learning environment. Our IT department again utilizes advanced intrusion, prevention alert detection, and industry-leading endpoint detection tools to protect the security of our technology.

[01:00:57] Number five, we're looking at establishing appropriate boundaries and ethical guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence in educational and operational settings. And I'm really proud of our team. They've chosen a cross-departmental approach, which means that we're not having the AI conversation in one silo department because we know AI actually permeates across the entire school division.

[01:01:21] As AI capabilities are added to our existing tools, they're validated by review teams before being enabled for staff use. Currently, we have available tools with AI such as Google Gemini AI and Zoom AI 2.0 for FCPS staff.

[01:01:38] You'll hear a little more about this. It's kind of a spoiler alert in our Academic Matters presentation this evening. We try to match those to match our ELs. Number six, in terms of the training provided tools and accessibility resources that support instructional needs and inclusion for all learners, our instructional software review process now includes criteria from the ISTE teacher-ready evaluation tool to help select high-quality tools for teaching and learning.

[01:02:08] And that's the International Society for Technology and Education. And these teams have been training with school-based technology specialists to implement universal design for learning for the past three years. So we really want to make sure that any software is accessible by all students.

[01:02:26] And the curriculum developed and adopted by Instructional Services checked for accessibility before being published for staff and students as well as copyright training and accessibility is included in summer curriculum development projects so number seven the ensuring staff and students are provided with training and support to effectively ethically and safely use technology tools I want to share that during school year 23/24 15 FCPS schools earned Common Sense Recognition. It's an interesting title, Mr. Sethi, but we did. 15 schools earned

[01:03:02] this for providing digital citizenship, professional development to staff, and teaching digital citizenship, lessons to students, and expanding family awareness of digital citizenship. The Department of Instructional Technology Upskilling Academy fosters continuous learning for IT staff with over 521 employees, enrolled in 676 courses in 2023, and 762 courses in 2024.

[01:03:32] So there's a lot of continuous learning, which we think is very important for our staff. The FCPS Instructional Technology Career Academy for Students offers up to 1,000 FCPS high school students access to entry-level industry certificates.

[01:03:50] Finally we have 838 student learners participating in 1,051 courses. This program is driven purely by student demand to learn in real time demand skills. No credit associated with the program, just the opportunity to learn more, which isn't that the purest form of motivation.

[01:04:09] So item number eight, the ability to deliver transparent information for families about the purpose and frequency of technology use in the classroom and the division. Lightspeed parent portal remember I talked earlier that teachers are able to use it parents also are able to monitor and control their children's internet activity on FCPS devices we're seeing a steady increase in the parent signups for this tool and if you're a parent watching tonight we encourage you to sign up and check in with your student I'm sure they'll help you with that sign up and if they won't or they're not sure how please check in with their

[01:04:45] teacher and I'm sure they'll be able to help you the FCPS digital ecosystem library provides information to parents about instructional digital resources including privacy policies in terms of use and finally FCPS requires parental consent for the use of online instructional tools which is now supported online by the parent digital consent system so mr. chairman this concludes the presentation for executive limitation 12 technology I'm happy to take any questions. Thank you, Dr. Reid. We will open the floor for questions. Mr. McDaniel. Thank

[01:05:22] you. I want to talk a little bit about cybersecurity. There was a newspaper article that talked about a PowerSchool data breach. Can you, my understanding is that didn't actually impact us. Is that accurate? That's correct. We have a contract with PowerSchool for certain of their products, but we did not have a contract, nor did we use the product that experienced the power, data breach. So none of our data was actually breached. No sir. Okay that was my understanding so I just wanted to make sure that was in fact the case. And again on that same line of cyber

[01:05:59] security and I'm kind of curious as we especially as we're going to be talking about budget later what I mean how do we determine staffing levels for cyber security. I think it's kind of a nebulous thing. So one of the things we've chosen to do and we did this I think two years ago is we benchmark around divisions similar to our size and or our pretty much really our size and our technology use patterns and as we benchmark both organizational structure for cyber security

[01:06:33] also staffing resources and tools so our primary plan is benchmarking with other divisions okay is that means i would assume that's probably based on the number of devices number of technology

[01:06:44] products number of users those types of benchmarks. Yes sir. Okay all right and as we get into budget do you think that there's opportunity to potentially centralize some IT services with either the county or the school systems to look at cost savings and more efficient service delivery whether it's cyber security or other IT products. I think there's always a possibility to streamline operations and perhaps integrate operations. We do partner with our county partners on certain sites investigations at times I do think that there are we can we continue to work on

[01:07:24] finding efficiencies as we look at budget dollars for sure okay thank you thank you mr. McDaniel dr. Anders thank you as a frequent user of light speed I'm going to ask all the questions that I I

come up with when I do review it with my own personal children on a weekly basis it only seems to capture information for that current week you couldn't go back can you explain why that is is that a user error or is that the limitation of the system well I was

[01:07:58] thinking of a river that flows downhill and rarely flows back but I'm not sure that's helpful I don't know how much storage system that the light speed system has but I'm gonna ask mr. Sethi because I there may be a cost in some of our video systems there's a limited time because there's a cost to storage but mr. Sethi good evening I do believe the system should capture we have data on the back end for all of the logs which go back a little longer than just one week but on the parent portal side you're just seeing the opportunity to go

[01:08:37] back one week I can certainly check in with the with the staff on this and get back to you I can check in with the staff and get back to you on the process for that yes thank you because I think it's really a great tool because it also allows for parents to do what teachers are able to do which is maybe shut off the the internet piece but I think it's limited by how many people are using it and evaluating the number of parents who have the parent view sis accounts which is predicated for you to be able to use life speed what is the range of that I

[01:09:17] I know in these documents you have that, I think you had you have it broken down by school level, you know, 88. I think they're all in the 80s, but we have some schools that are on the lower end. We have some schools that are on the upper end. Can you speak a little bit to the range of access to parent view if there is arrangement?

[01:09:36] We did run those numbers, and I think and you are correct that the Lightspeed Portal, you have to have access to access the Lightspeed program. And actually, in our parent panel meetings, parents have really been interested in knowing what sites their children are visiting, right?

[01:09:53] Because it really, I think, generates a conversation. But either Dr. Persidio or Mr. Sethi, do you have a sense on why the perhaps disparate distribution of access to ParentVUE? So the range in terms of the parents who have access to ParentVUE, which is the SIS system, we see somewhere from 40 percent all the way up to 90s.

[01:10:16] And you might see the distinction where it's lower on the elementary side and much higher engagement on the secondary side. And that could be just naturally how parents engage with the technology, but also schools who help communicate that over and over again, bringing parents in to help them sign up.

[01:10:33] Because a lot of access hinges on that sign-up. And our goal is to get everyone to 100%, and that's sort of an ongoing engagement with the schools who can engage with the community to have the parents come in, sign up. Once they're signed up, then they can manage that kind of obviously on their own. I definitely agree.

[01:10:50] It is definitely lower with the elementary schools, but we have some high schools that are in the low 50s as well. And I just want to make sure we have a little bit of a push there just so parents are available. They know the tools that are available. I want to move a little bit to the A.I.

[01:11:06] work. Can you speak to any of the tools that teachers can potentially be using right now to reduce their workload? So I did mention a couple tools that are available, but in terms of actually reducing the workload, I think there's a Google tool and a Zoom tool that we have given teachers access to.

[01:11:26] And it might be helpful, Mr. Sethi, if you could maybe give an example of what each of those tools might be able to do in a workload pattern. So thank you. Yeah, so a couple of things. I think as we go through AI adoption, you would see a typical pattern of, you know, the crawl, walk, run approach, where staff engages with these tools and learn how to use it, and then you have to change how you do your day-to-day activities, right?

[01:11:53] Currently, a teacher may be set up to kind of, I'm going to go into a Word document or Google Doc and write up what I want to write up, but having the tool integrated into the same platform, where if you use the Google Gemini platform, you can very quickly go to the chatbot and say, hey, help me write something, and it can give you a starting point to go from there. This requires both a different way of thinking about how you approach your day-to-day work and a new practice. And we've seen that approach kind of slowly organically growing through the system, but currently we provide Google Gemini access to staff, and primarily because we want to vet those tools out before we put them in front of staff where they can engage

[01:12:31] with it and we want the privacy to be absolutely crisp, the security aspect to be tight, and make it really simple, where it's already plugged into the tools they use on a day-to-day basis. The Zoom AI tool is pretty interesting. It's used a lot in the central offices where when you're having a meeting, instead of taking notes, you can just switch it on and it'll take all the notes for you.

[01:12:51] At the end of the meeting, it sends you an email where here's the transcript and you can go back into it and you can use it. Really, very powerful and we have had some ideas with teachers where teachers are able to kind of use that tool in a classroom session and when they're done, they can actually transcribe those notes and be able to share it out with students as a document in Schoology or as a Google Doc.

[01:13:11] So lots of opportunities and lots of great ideas organically coming through the system and we hope we'll continue to expand. There's definitely a lot of opportunity and it's really exciting. But one of the things that always causes me some concern, and you've heard this before in some other areas, is when we provide guidance rather than expectations.

[01:13:30] I know there's a lot of concern on part of staff regarding how students can use AI. And I know there's concern about academic dishonesty. And in the documents, I see that we have guidance. Those tend to be more optional than an expectation that it is going to be the law of the land.

[01:13:51] If you could speak to that a little bit, because I do worry about disparate application and maybe acceptance of student use of AI products that are being made available in classrooms across FCPS. - So I do know that the AI on slide 12, We did sort of try to quantify for example the zoom tool and over 3,500 meeting summaries have been undertaken but in terms of the AI directives versus guidance I think as we're rolling it out there are a number of projects that we're going to highlight one of those

[01:14:30] the lighthouse school project which is again new where I think what we often want to do and I don't know if the term beta test is still current but we often want to try pilot be a tester pilot certain new tools and smaller spaces before they move larger so some of the guidance enables the opportunity to do that and then once those become tools that we believe should be taken to scale that would be when the guidance shifts to directives so um did you have a particular tool in mind that you noted on that but i i think the pattern should be um we used to

[01:15:09] we talked a little bit about pilot pilot scale or pilot pilot prove scale right or you pilot something and then you pilot a little bit larger a little bit different then you take a proof of concept and try it in an even larger more challenging space and then you bring it to scale and when it comes to scale is when it would move to being a directive is really kind of our work plan in that topic area and i would assume that when you get to that point then you will develop regulations which will require that we have some clearer board policies on ai because we haven't

[01:15:46] anything substantive at this point yes ma'am that's correct referred to here or there so that's just something that i want to put out here for us to consider what that could look like because that should be driving those regulations um i want to say i want to give a big kudos to talking points it is something that my um personal children and my schools they use all the time and it's really quick and it's really easy that's been I think a fabulous tool and I'm glad to see that it's been growing one of the questions that I had and this is kind of

[01:16:25] going back to light speed if parents are e are observing that their students are in or have accessed sites that they shouldn't be accessing where is it written in terms of what should they do who should they be contacting is it the classroom teacher is it the technology person at the school because I've received that question quite a bit from parents who are engaging in the light-speed review of their kids digital footprints I think it's always good to contact the students teacher directly because that's the ecosystem which in

[01:17:04] with the student is operating I think that we've had some concerns that have been escalated by the teacher perhaps to building level administrative staff or the SBIT within the school and then there are times when some circumstances are escalated up to the DIT department.

[01:17:22] But I would always start with the classroom teacher first. Maybe that's something we could add on that page where light speed information is held on the website. Because that question comes up quite a bit. This chart I that's my time. So I'll come back to it.

[01:17:38] Thank you Dr. Anderson will put you on and go back. Miss Marin. Thank you I word over this report as you know Dr. Reed I'm very passionate about how we in particular use Schoology and all the communications.

[01:17:56] Routes especially during this time of year when our students are selecting their courses half of the school division is selecting half of their courses all of their courses. So so I want to start with some really exciting growth things and thank you for in this report including what we asked for which is to really show that growth and the benchmarking there's some outstanding.

[01:18:16] outstanding, exciting things happening. So all of that FCPS on program data, when I think of FCPS on, that was like before COVID, the previous board members, we were deciding, should every student have a device? And then COVID hit, and here we are. But knowing how many devices we have, how we upgrade, how we're saving costs by using things like Chromebooks, making online registration systems and things that are easier for families to navigate, some integration of key business leads like the WIDA and the multi-tiered system of support, cost savings moving to the cloud, teachers reporting that the Lightspeed classroom management system is having a positive impact.

[01:18:55] Like these are really great things that I hope that you will share and we could show the community that we're investing in technology that's really making a difference for our students and

economizing what we're doing. Also some really impressive operations things to share, 17,000 wireless access points, 99% network availability from last school year to date, key infrastructure updates.

[01:19:19] But on that point, I will pivot to something I know we all love, which is queues, in terms of like making a list of things to get to. So I saw in the report that there were updates to certain areas and certain technology. Well, I wondered how are we keeping track of what needs to be updated and when and who got this upgrade at that point.

[01:19:38] So I don't know if Mr. Gotham has a queue a la Ms. Szymanski and our chief of facilities, but I certainly would love to see some of that so we can get a sense of where everything is, just like we're doing in our facilities. My concerns and things I wanna elevate are, there's a number of software applications for teaching and learning, like a lot, like hundreds.

[01:20:02] And there's apparently more in the queue. And I would just like us to be clear on, what are we using for optimal use for instruction and learning? because we don't need 500 options. We need a few that work really well. Unlimited choice is not really, it's very, it can really stymie people's choices.

[01:20:21] What are the goals of some of the tools used? Like the performance matters provided 3,000 unique assessments. Is 3,000 a goal? Is that a good place to be? Do we want more? Do we want less? What, okay, so apparently in some construction projects, our fibers are being cut.

[01:20:39] they the same companies that keep accidentally cutting our fibers and causing our business operations to lax like that's something I know I'm going on and on but I really like this report so you know and being sure in the reports of the data is meaningful like um I don't need to know exactly how many materials are in Schoology but I'd like to know is the interactions with Schoology is it being effective is it doing what it was designed to do I will take a go back because I have support thank you Mr. Moon thank you Mr. Chairman a couple broad questions related to cyber security first we do understand need to

[01:21:18] keep our students our schools everything that we have our assets safe so there's then need versus there's some other needs such as be able to use for to help the students improve and their academic achievement and also realize a operational efficiency how do you balance those two I'm not saying that necessarily against each other sometimes when you focus on something we could lose our sight on

[01:21:52] the other side so i think the balance between flexibility and tools and security is one that's in front of us every day right on almost every topic in the school division but in technology i think you have to look at the cost benefit analysis and we want to make sure that our risk appetite is reasonable but acceptable and so we want to make sure we choose tools that are vetted that the agreements our procurement department does an amazing job of negotiating

[01:22:28] contracts with software and all the apps that Miss Marin was discussing or the tools our HR management tool or tools that are used in the classroom to make sure that they have the protections that we would expect in Fairfax County Public Schools.

[01:22:45] But it is a it is a balance. I think that we review at the re-up of every contract on every product at this time. So when you when you do that, when you balance those needs, are you the one who's making a final decision to see whether something is worth the risk, the risk?

[01:23:10] You said risk appetite. Well, I think that we are Instructional technology department in partnership with our cybersecurity department assess that risk and more often than not determine

whether we're going to move forward with instructional services who usually bring the product ideas.

[01:23:30] I would say that when there's a disagreement about it, then it certainly it does land on my desk and we want to make sure that whatever that product is, that it does have sometimes we might ask an external person to take a look at it.

[01:23:46] we may look at industry use patterns across other divisions but you know we have some in our some of our IT staff here this evening and they work very hard to do that research so at the end of the day I trust their judgment and we I think have a very strong process in the school division to make those evaluations and level of our risk appetite could change well it does and I think Ms. Burden talks about this sometimes we you know the level of risk appetite and negotiating a

[01:24:22] contract for chicken nuggets for example versus risk tolerance and choosing a software that's going to include student information is going to look different like I have probably a lower threshold of worry around ordering chicken nuggets than I do about I'm going to have a much higher heightened sense of security need when something involves student data and that's where sometimes it's by type of product that I think we want to make sure we have and you know that other I have less of an appetite for risk when it comes to our

[01:24:56] student or staff data okay thank you Dr. Reed I another you know second broad question that I have is we are using technology we are utilizing a lot of technology and we are investing a lot of resources to do that for bottom line purposes of first helping our students improve in their academic achievement second again I think it's something that I mentioned earlier operational efficiency and here your executive

[01:25:31] elimination tool which has to do with technology does not seem to give a data related I'm looking for some quantifiable data how a how much of efficiency I don't know whether you can put the dollar figure what is worth investing in a certain amount of money to realize in a certain amount of efficiency whether you can ever quantify that whether you can quantify the academic role I can be

[01:26:11] watching on growth in the similar manner I was trying to find whether whether you had presented that in the last year's report and I didn't see that and I don't see that this year and looking at Those eight items on the goal - it does not specify for you to report to us in that regard Is that something that we should be looking into or well? We should just assume That what technology we use will just become more efficient. So just continue investing more and more money. Well, I think that

[01:26:49] I think these are really good questions right we're talking about a return on investment and I will say that digitizing I think one way we're looking at measuring efficiency is digitizing some of these forms so we're not sending paper out and paper paper getting sent from a school or a department to the central office and back.

[01:27:10] I think it saves a lot of time. I don't know that we've quantified that amount of time that we've saved, but I do know that the more we are able to digitize and create online digital approval trees for different topic areas, we're going to save staff time that could otherwise be repurposed.

[01:27:29] So Dr. Reed, you know, I would like to see at least one example you can give us in the future So that when I want to when I have a conversation how we are investing our resources in technology I can have that I can use the data. Yes, sir. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Moon. Miss lady. Thank you Thank you for this. This is technology is moving fast. I think we're doing a good job to keep up I just had a couple

questions one on slide 11 it references the fact that in terms of light speed classroom It's it's integrated into 185 of our 199 schools. What's with the other 14?

[01:28:10] so we are probably still working to finish out that or what do you have a an update a late breaking report mr sati it's it's between training so switching on the tool doesn't take much effort it's the ability for the staff to use it they have to go through training they have to learn how to use it it has to be set up for them so that aspect we give schools the choice and only because every school has different things going on right within their day to day activities so they have that little bit of flexibility we imagine especially with the success this year the few schools that are left will

[01:28:49] certainly be signing up and getting the time to train up on the tool okay thank you um the other the other comment I had was in relation to AI it seems to me that mostly what's referenced in the report is sort of AI guidance for staff I'm not really seeing any AI guidance for students and they're distinctly difference I just know my colleague asked some questions about both so I that's an area of interest for me I think at some point I my understanding it's now on teachers to sort of have the parameters around AI use for their students in in their individual classes versus having a school-wide policy is that something we're going to look at eventually I think there's going to be

[01:29:26] I'll talk a little about that with the lighthouse school project and academic matters but do you want to make any comment on that I know we have a committee that dr presidio and mr sethe are jointly supporting again remember i talked about a cross-departmental approach you want to talk a little bit about where we are i think you in some of your earlier comments talked about you know the readiness of staff to be able to use tools and we're still the kind of the initial stages of you know i think comfort comfortability with ai tools just in general so really where we're at right now is we have guidance for students that

[01:30:03] that they are not allowed to use AI in their coursework. They can use it obviously in their personal life and could even use it to support studying. Many students do use AI to support creating study guides or different types of things that are gonna help them academically. But they're not permitted to use it as part of their coursework unless it's approved by their teacher.

[01:30:23] And we have that in the SRNR, we have that in our acceptable use policy, and then we have additional guidance to support teachers with best practices for using AI if a student was going to use it a particular assignment but again we're still the initial stages of trying to figure out how we want to integrate the use of some of those these technologies into the into the classroom environment thank you and then the biggest question for me is in relation to AI and in your reference of lighthouse schools in the training of staff so what is the plan to build capacity and teachers around AI especially in light of all that's on their plates from benchmarking to

[01:31:00] instructional planning to you know IEP meetings to collaborative team meetings etc sip goals I mean these things trump tech teaching in schools so what is the plan for teachers to be trained on this because it's moving so quickly and it's so important yeah I can certainly start I think the approach we have taken as talking about crawl walk run is our ability to give staff the support when they needed. And we see the organic demand for some of the staff which are willing to put some time towards it. It's an interesting paradigm because the more you use it, the more time you

[01:31:40] could potentially save on the other tasks that you have to do. So once you get that flywheel going, we see adoption going up pretty rapidly. And we see those sparks in individual buildings. Our long-

term hope, since we don't want to bring everyone in and say, hey, everybody's going to sit through 10 hours of training so you know what to do with it is that we can get some champions in each building where there is more organic conversations happening with doing teachers who are champion the idea they know how to use it and you will see in the lighthouse how we are kind of approaching this those teachers can and that staff can then help the other staff see value

[01:32:15] in it the the other thing which is is important in this as we've kind of done this this is not training that you can give generically right it's not generic training you want to spend some time helping teachers say, here's a potential way of doing lesson planning. And to do that, here's a prompt for it. And prompt is sort of the modern programming language for AI. It's in English, so it doesn't take a whole lot of technical knowledge. But you learn how to speak to the machine in its language, and then you can work much faster, and it can produce much better output.

[01:32:46] I think providing those prompts seems to be a good starting place for someone who hasn't been in the system, doesn't want to get in there to say, hey, this is, you can't break it. It's just matter of being able to engage with it and use the tool having the tool universally available so there is no friction around how do I get to the tool and then giving some ideas of how to engage with the tool we feel those two things would bring adoption and understanding which will then increase with time okay so there's really no no plan it's sort of just like it's catching fire right like I I hear you I I have a couple concerns one is this one

[01:33:25] of model right so you know our ESPITs do fantastic work but there's one per school and so if you're Chantilly that's 2900 students and you have one ESPIT versus a high school that it could be of a much different size you know maybe that that fire spreads faster to all those faculty but I just think that there needs to be a specific plan and maybe it's instructional services right like if I'm a IS person in mathematics maybe I can provide I don't know if it's happening some training on how to use AI in your lesson development in your design of assessments whatever I just want to make sure it's coming there's

[01:34:05] there's several opportunities and eventually I think because we have some people who won't ever adopt with technology I think there eventually has to be a point where you have to you have to step into this space in order to be effective in your work so that's just my concerns that we have to make time for because you're right once people dip their toe in this water and they start to see how it can help and it's a time saver it's fantastic but if I'm you know just doing my thing and I'm responding to my daily grind as a teacher and no one around me is sort of planting those seeds then I'm not

[01:34:40] I'm not going to be aware thanks thank you Miss Lady Miss St. John Cunning thank you Dr. Reed I wanted to ask you if you could provide an example of like in terms of the data bites and school pulse that aims to provide actionable insights to relevant division leadership and school administrative teams. If you could give us some examples of how that's working to support our students and you know the outcomes of students and support our staff. Yes ma'am I

[01:35:16] we as I've shared with the board before every Monday morning at 6:30 senior leadership myself I get a data bite, what we call a data bite that has tiles of what I consider high profile data points that I'm tracking in the division and that senior leadership are tracking.

[01:35:34] Also, every Monday morning, every school principal in the division gets a school pulse, which is a data bite of tiles of data that each principal gets at 630 Monday morning on tiles that they with our

chief of schools, Dr. Ponce, Dr. King, and Dr. Presidio have worked on to make sure that those are actionable data in real time. I will share that attendance is one of those. We're tracking attendance rates.

[01:36:02] I'm tracking filled and unfilled teacher positions across the division by region and school. We're tracking immunization records. We're tracking graduation rates and plans. We're tracking algebra registrations and algebra achievements across grading periods I know the schools specifically our high schools middle and elementary have some differences I know our high schools are we're transitioning the state has gone from requiring CCC RI as part of an accreditation to

[01:36:37] now it's the 3E framework so we have to shift it but we want to make sure we're tracking data in real time so if we see patterns we can intervene in real time and not wait like till the end of the year to say oh attendance sure looked poor here or there or whatever so I probably didn't enumerate every tile there are other tiles discipline disproportionality and so forth but those go out and they are a combined effort of interdepartmental data teams that bring those reports together to enable those to be at our desk I think another one we're tracking

[01:37:14] is professional development are people completing the required professional development and in time and by region by school and department so just making sure we're checking into engineer success we want to make sure a division that sends reminders supports and resources to make sure you know everyone's able to show up as their best professional self when they come to work every day thank you

[01:37:37] Also I was looking at the Schoology numbers from August 2024 to December 2024 which shows the active parents and parents sessions and I don't know if you all know what percentage of households this represents are you able to track that I will defer to Mr.

[01:37:59] Sethi I know we've been trying to capture data that's quantifiable on a lot of these data points do you have a percentage. Is it the same parent over and over and over again, or is it what are the discrete households? I think is the question. Is that correct? The parent count would be unique.

[01:38:14] So those would be the total number of parents who are signed up. So if you're looking at a total student body, I think top of my head it was a 28,000 number. So that's the percentage of parents who have access or who have chosen to set up access into Schoology. The engagement on when they come in and check the system, we can go and pull those records.

[01:38:35] What we see right now is just overall engagement by all parents. That's sort of what the data is out of the box. So what I'm trying to get at is can you also see what regions or what specific student schools or populations so we can see who's accessing it, who isn't, and where we have to do work?

[01:38:56] Yes, we can do it for both the CIS parent logons, and I think we have some of the data, also for schoology where we can see which regions watch what level of schools so is it mostly you will see schoology in secondary schools than elementary schools and that we can we can certainly discern that that finer details of engagement because I mean what I'm gonna go to and this is just something that has that comes up to me a lot and I'm sure other board members have heard this is that there's a lot of different you know components like there's you

[01:39:28] know Schoology says talking points and is are we disseminating that information in a readable accessible way to everyone and saying this is what this specifically does this is what this specifically does this is what this specifically does because I think there's a lot of confusion and there's confusion from highly educated native-born parents that are like I'm so confused and if they have two or three kids when

an elementary one in high school when you know this school does it this way the school does it this way I'm getting all this information I don't know which way to go I mean do we have

[01:40:07] like toolkits out there for our parents to understand it and then and do we have it translated or do we are we providing that I mean I think I agree with everything that everyone's saying here technology is great if you know how to use it yeah we certainly don't want to leave we don't want to leave anyone behind in terms of access right access leads to engagement engagement leads to outcomes we recognize that and our goal is to continue to increase the access and engagement so we work with a communications team they send out the parent the principal talking points which

[01:40:43] we provide information to say hey principals at certain time of the year so at the beginning of the year they send a lot more information to their homes saying these are the tools that you can sign up we also have reorganized our public website so the parent engagement tools are all on one page so parents can very quickly see what's available, what they can get into.

[01:41:04] We can certainly go back and engage on how much more dissemination. I think another great idea, which having here in this conversation, is possibly we could include tiles in our principal dashboards to give them a sense how many of your parents are engaging, right?

[01:41:20] Because that engagement is probably going to start and stay best when the principals or the schools engage their families. And this is a great idea. I think we're going to work on this this year to make sure we can get Schoology engagement and maybe the CIS engagement on a principal tile in the school pulse dashboard so they can get real time data of how many parents are coming into the system.

[01:41:42] Thank you. Finally, I mean, I'm going to touch on the AI as well and this comes up from a situation that occurred in my district where there was a situation where a teacher gave out an assignment and didn't tell the students that she was going to use the free version of Grammarly to check for plagiarism.

[01:42:06] Anyway, whatever happened, she flunked all the students. The students didn't know about it, and apparently the parents complained, and there really wasn't plagiarism involved, and I don't know the exact details. But that brings up some of the questions that have been brought up, like in terms of, you know, how are our teachers being taught to use these tools how do they communicate it to students going to integrity for students how they can use it and what and I know this is all moving quickly

[01:42:35] so I do know that we are working on units to make sure that we remind students about good digital citizenship but I think there are times when our students are moving at a quicker speed with some of the tools than we are as adults but I know Mr. Sethi probably I know that's one of the things that the AI initiative is with teachers is as we're able to bring them on board sort of what tools

[01:43:11] that we will be working with at some point and then the digital citizenship work. Yeah a couple of things and I'm welcome Mr. Presidio to jump in Dr. Presidio. The plagiarism side is is has been a complicated conversation a lot of universities a lot of school districts have tried to find a magical tool which can assess student work and they're truly the false positive on those tools is just so high that we do not recommend to our staff to be able to rely on one tool i think their best judgment is knowing their student and how they perform and if if you see changes dramatic changes in their output then that's certainly a conversation they can have but

[01:43:49] we we have not authorized a plagiarism checking tools so when teachers use them they're mostly doing it on their own because these free websites allow you to do that work but our guidance is not to go in that direction in terms of the student engagement i know we updated the srnr to talk about some of these issues and also the acceptable use policy that is shared out with the students which they they must acknowledge that they've seen and received it so there is guidance embedded in those in those documents which already capture a lot of these what you can and

[01:44:23] can't do and what you shouldn't do. Thank you Ms. St. Cunning. Ms. Dixit. Thank you Dr. Reed for the presentation. I actually wanted to ask about the page which talks about common sense recognition the certificate given to 15 high school schools I don't high schools out of these how many of our high schools and how many are middle school are they only going are you guys doing only to those secondary schools or it's primary schools as well

[01:45:02] so yeah great question mystics at night i we probably should have had a listing of the schools but do we have a rundown team whether these are primarily secondary or elementary schools i don't think we have the rundown right now but we could get that for you one thing to point out about that is that the common sense certification has i think a five year window of time and then a school has to recertify so these are just the number of schools that did it this year but schools have been working on common sense recognition for a number of years and we have many more schools that have earned the recognition than what we've represented here although potentially some of that recognition might have expired so it kind of is a moving

[01:45:41] target a little bit but we could break it down by level um i do know a lot of elementary schools had worked on this really hard in the past so we can get the breakdown by level though and the reason I ask is and I don't know the code that the what is all entails on that but cyber bullying online harassment stalking which are happening obviously for many many years now and and sometime it's just too late for them to they're already feeling bullied already so if we can start teaching them early on then stood because technology is now on their

[01:46:17] fingertips so they're fifth graders or sixth graders so do you know if that is part of the program it is and again obviously I mean the curriculum looks different at different grade levels developmentally but at the elementary level there's a there's a lot to introduce students to the concept of using technology responsibly even starting to think about your own digital footprint that you're creating when you're using technology and certainly not using technology in inappropriate ways including cyber bullying. Thank you. My second question is about the smart cloud approach of software, software service. I wanted to know it's

[01:46:56] a great way of obviously moving into the cloud servers from the physical servers and you also mentioned here Dr. E that this strategy avoids typical large capital expenses and with the aging server so what kind of savings we see by moving to this option option so in the early stages of the work and what is happening in the education market if you see majority of the vendors are now selling software as a service and that completely shifts the notion of you have to run the server

[01:47:31] on your own the new hcm product that we purchased from oracle typically currently we run our own h servers to maintain the hcl product but the new service is going to be software as a service which means there's not going to be a whole lot of server footprint and that saves the the capital cost because servers have to be replaced every X years right five years or seven years depending on how far you can push them and that is a huge capital cost when you kind of do the replacement cycles when they move

into the cloud the vendors move them into the cloud those capital costs go away obviously it becomes more of an operational cost of running those

[01:48:06] systems in-house we still have infrastructure left over where we are running certain things but almost everything that we are investing in at this point is hosted is software as a service and is not going to require us to install a lot of infrastructure in-house yeah right and that's where industry is moving like you said I I would like to see some numbers actually the you know just the percentage wise that over a period of five years or something like that's going to be the saving we bring to FCPS because whereas

[01:48:42] budget is getting tighter we need to show where we are doing really good job for like saving long term our funds and i think i'll just ask one more question is about everybody asked for ai and i would say that the google gemini i use that actually for my work that is a very great tool that you're already using here nfcps and if this could help our teachers to take some of the admin burden off them maybe just like more support for them to you know even lesson

[01:49:16] plan anything like that I think that's a great tool to use my last question was actually about do we use a virtual reality in any of our classroom instructions I believe we do and I believe we've been piloting some of that as part of our lighthouse project but I'll let mr. Sethi respond but I do believe we are in certain content areas? We engaged on a tool which was available through the math department, and there's certainly a lot of excitement on that tool set. The hardware that comes along with it, to scale that, you have to purchase the headsets. And the headset market is

[01:49:54] also evolving really fast, I think. Meta, Facebook company is the one which had the most available headset. Then Apple came into it, but it was really expensive. So we're watching that market evolve. It's still early stages in that realm, but it is certainly a new and very interesting way to engage students.

[01:50:12] And not every student, we've seen in our testing, not every student engages with it. You know, some of our motion sickness and all those other aspects that they, and especially the younger kids. We don't want to use it with younger kids. So early stages, some testing going on with the vendors, understanding how the tools work.

[01:50:28] We had them attend our mid-year annual conference where they were able to provide those tool sets to engage with. Lots of excitement around it. I think it's going to show up in the next couple of years in our district. Yeah, that excites me. Sorry I said last question, but one tiny thing. We have Grow Our Teachers program.

[01:50:47] We have a lot of PD and everything. I want to see how we can grow our own software developers sort of in our school system. So, for smaller projects, and we talked about, Ms. Lady, if you remember, about our maintenance program, which is kind of outdated, and we talked about how we can use our students to, and I guess DIT is an excellent department to address that.

[01:51:17] Yes, ma'am. We'll work on our software developer academies. I think our students are definitely ready. Thank you, Mr. Dixit. I'll take a turn. First, I want to say the very first motion I made on this board in February of 2020 was to bring Lightspeed to our parents, which has a bit of symmetry with the same parents who are advocating over middle school start times. Many of them share the same concerns about the use of technology by their kiddos. And so on two points, one, I'd really

[01:51:52] love to see the number of parents using Lightspeed explode. I think 10,000 is great, given where started which was zero but we have a lot of parents who don't even know it exists so I think we've got a little bit more work to do there secondarily on the middle school start times question just for the public so that they're aware the board has asked for a report back from the superintendent on our options which we'll be getting in February and then the board will be deciding how to proceed on the question of middle school start times I want to talk about numbers so my parents are among the 1.3 billion people who use iphones in this country and in 2023 they

[01:52:32] began using the address book technology on their iphone that is probably the only piece of their iphone that they use they don't download apps they don't listen to music they might take photos although it might just be their face rather than what they're intending to take and so while 51 million user sessions of schoology is a great factoid um what i would i think more like to know is what are the optimal uses by families of schoology what are the optimal uses

[01:53:05] of schoology by staff and how are the devices being used to accomplish those things obviously the optimal uses are things that drive student achievement and student success right um and then the disaggregation actually means something because even if we just disaggregate the 51 million number it doesn't tell us anything about the tool and so I know that there are some great tools in there and you know we have colleagues who use the tool regularly everybody should have the opportunity to help their students succeed using these tools so I'd love to see some more intentionality behind that and I have been talking to some colleagues about how

[01:53:41] we might might get there the other thing I would note first I want to thank Mr Sethi because we have come so far in just a few years and this is just this section of the ELs but if you go back and look at the ELs that we do throughout the year every one of them is seeded with new technology that has come to fruition thanks to this superintendent and your leadership and your team as well so thank you very much for being here and thank you for all of your incredibly diligent hard work. It has not been unnoticed and you're very much appreciated.

[01:54:18] To that end, information, technology, security. This is a perfect opportunity to talk about JLARC. What we spend on that front is used efficiently and effectively, but we need more resources desperately.

[01:54:34] So I hope our friends in the General Assembly are listening tonight and that they will make progress on JLARC so that we have additional funding to fund this and other critical infrastructure needs. So we will take some go backs. Oh, Mr. Dunn for his first turn.

[01:54:51] Thank you. I want to echo what the chair said. I'll have some other comments, but the robustness, the strength, that's really a world-class IT system. So I feel that very strongly. And that being said, schoology, I haven't met a single teacher, parent, student who likes schoology.

[01:55:17] I really feel very strongly based on all my conversations that that's a horse that needs to be taken out back and shot. Sorry to be blunt, we really need a comprehensive reassessment of Schoology. If we have 27,000 parents and 183,000 students, that's not frequency of use.

[01:55:39] I come from a background in the federal government where you build 12 IT systems each doing one thing rather than having like one-stop shop that really all the functionalities are used so we really need to look at Schoology with franchise because I was there when I was first introduced and it was

hated from the beginning and it's hated now now maybe there are parts of the county that it's not hated but my district definitely hates Schoology so I hope that there can be an assessment of whether that's the right platform for us before we start trying to get everyone to get on Schoology maybe there's a reason people aren't using it right maybe it's not one click easy like amazon to buy

[01:56:17] a product maybe it's 15 steps to do a particular action and the information is just not accessible so i would appreciate dr reed if you'd be willing to take a look at it through that lens not committing necessarily just because we have it but should we have it is that the right platform to move forward yes sir um i i think uh from for this el there was a great article in the wall street journal recently um talking about you know there's so much technology and you know the pandemic catapulted us you know years forward in our technology use and at this point i think it's

[01:56:57] not just a matter of keeping up right i'm not interested in keeping up i'm interested in should we keep up so not just how can we move faster but should we move faster with technology use because there are studies a lot of data coming out showing that students learn better from taking notes by hand rather than typing on a computer and you know learning you know listening less effective than teaching someone else taking notes summarizing right there's a whole mental processing and I'm embarrassed honestly by the handwriting the signatures of a lot of

[01:57:33] students I see in high school it looks like what you know kids learn when they first learn to write you know people don't can't read cursive anymore which is a problem you can't read letters from their grandmother or grandfather and they can't take notes because they don't know how to write properly and a lot of kids don't learn how to type we don't seem to teach typing so if we're going full-bore into Chromebooks in the future why aren't we teaching typing why aren't we teaching handwriting these are methods that work right we seem to be - I've talked three minutes?

[01:58:06] - Yeah. - Okay, I'll take a go back. - All right, Ms. Sawant. - Thank you. I just wanted to start with, thank you, Dr. Reed. Thank you, Mr. Safi and the team. There's been so many improvements these last year. And I just like to name a couple that have changed the way students approach it.

[01:58:24] One is the parent digital consent forms. Now it's easy to like send it home to your parents, get it digitally signed and you can come in the next day and use it without turning any papers in. So thank you for that. Also the absence reporting insists, especially for parents who have kids who go to different schools or maybe a middle school and a high school.

[01:58:41] Having it all streamlined where parents can go into CIS and report absences makes it so much easier than like doing one form and doing another form. So thank you for that, as well as keeping CIS open until the last day of the quarter, especially with second quarter coming to an end.

[01:58:56] Students really appreciate being able to see their grades until the last day and having that clear transparency. One thing that I did want to talk about was the FCPS Chromebooks that students have available. They're not always effective, especially for students who may be in coding classes or art classes where they have to download software for that specific class.

[01:59:18] For example, in like an APCS class, when you have to download like Java or Python or whatever that platform is that you're using, sometimes it's not available on the Chromebook for students to be able to download, or it's just not possible to download it on a Chromebook. And I know that at Chantilly, TJ and Woodson, students have the option to switch out their Chromebooks for other laptops where they may be

able to download that software, but I was wondering if that was the case across all schools or what the numbers are on the divisions between secondary students using Chromebooks versus other laptops.

[01:59:52] - Thank you, Ms. Sawant, and you raise good questions, right? Because some of those softwares are essential for success in certain courses. So Mr. Sethi, I think they should be available all schools to change out do you want to share our practice there yes so the the practice that we we set up for this is for classes where the teacher deems it necessary for the student to have a different device ie a windows device they can certainly and very quickly request that and the students can go swap their chromebooks out to the windows device it's just not restricted to those three schools so if there is any any misunderstanding that we had to clear up we

[02:00:28] would be happy to do so this opportunity for all and even at the middle school level the other hope as all these technologies evolve is that the idea of installing software on your computer becomes a historic action simply because of cyber security and other risks that come in when you install software on your computers you you can bring in issues which you do not want and working through the browser is becoming the uniform default choice for most modern technologies and I understand our curriculum especially from the state takes a long time to change and so they might dictate because it was six years

[02:01:08] ago it was the only practice that was available that you must use a certain kind of device and a certain kind of software but I'm hopeful and we will certainly be making those those recommendations that they move towards web-based platforms where students can very quickly engage and do the the activities without having to rely on special software.

[02:01:27] When it comes to Photoshop and other tools like that, we also provide high-end labs in schools, and at least in high schools where they can go in and do the work on those high-end Windows computers because that kind of work generally cannot happen on the student Windows devices.

[02:01:44] They're very low-powered devices to begin with. - Yeah, yeah, and I completely understand that. And I do know students who choose to use like a virtual interface or whatever it may be to use those platforms. And I do understand the risk of like not being able to download software on your computer just because of whatever the safety risk may be.

[02:02:06] But just what I've heard from students is that sometimes it is easier to just run that platform instead of trying to run it through a virtual interface, especially when you have your assignment open or you have other tabs open for instruction. So just a thought for the future. Thank you, Ms. Sawant. Thank you, Ms. Sawant. We'll do go backs. Dr. Anderson.

[02:02:25] Thank you. If you could speak a little bit, Mr. Sethi, to the change and timeline regarding changing or updating the devices that students receive. It says in the document that we've gone from four years to five years.

[02:02:42] Yeah, so we started this year with teacher laptop replacement. Traditionally, we had been replacing teacher laptops every four years. And we feel as the technology is evolving, the reliance on the browser to do most of your activity doesn't need you to have much more complex new CPUs.

[02:02:58] You know, there was a time when Intel would sell you a new chip every year, pushing you to keep upgrading your laptops. Those are not the cases anymore. So, and also in the light of the conversations we were just having around budget efficiencies, our total footprint of devices is now substantially high.

[02:03:16] if you keep replacing them every four years we certainly incur much larger costs and our goal to stabilize those costs is to spread it out a little bit and we are committing to providing support for the devices for the full five-year life of those devices and if one is damaged it cannot be repaired we'll figure out a way to kind of get them a replacement laptop so our students are always have a device in their hands no that's very much appreciated thank you because i know a few years ago one of the concerns that i had that i raised was about the e-waste can you

[02:03:46] give us a sense to how much we um we generate so a couple of things i think the team which is right here and they spend a considerable amount of time before something is wasted piece it apart take out all the parts and pieces because that can be used to repair other laptops which are still active right it it goes through a series of reviews before something is given up as waste we also talk in this report and we had previously mentioned where every employee connected initiative that dr. Reed asked us to move towards where we're taking our laptops refurbishing them

[02:04:23] installing lightweight chrome os and then repurposing them to give to devices to staff who typically does not get devices i think there's a number in there that last year we had done about 2 000 and something and this year we added another 1800 devices into that mix so we're constantly trying to optimize with 40 000 staff we believe technology is now a gateway to many things and and giving them access to technology is an imperative and also an opportunity that we feel strongly about.

[02:04:51] - Thank you. I just wanna talk about Schoology a little bit and ParentVUE as a very frequent user. I definitely help your numbers in those areas. I have to say, I don't hate it, but I also do not love it. It is very cumbersome.

[02:05:06] There has to be an easier way to make it a little bit more user friendly. And I think Ms. St. John Cunning really hit the nail on the head. have some parents who are very tech savvy and it's still it is multiple clicks to get to where you need and and also in order to get a full picture of your child's progress you have to go to schoology and then go to a parent view you can't just do one or the other because they don't have all the same information i think they could talk with each other a little bit more seamlessly in order for it to be a real one-stop shop so i don't know what the possibilities here

[02:05:44] are mr. Sethi but I'd love to hear your thoughts there are certainly opportunities I think we've been told by the vendors who supply some of these tools that they can actually provide a portal which combines like sys data and Schoology data because parents are typically getting in there to review performance grades output pending homework and those are options that we can engage on and we are taking all of this Schoology feedback to heart right we engage with the the vendor who supplies us the software pretty frequently at the pretty high levels we will certainly make sure they're aware of our concerns and figure out a strategy

[02:06:19] of bringing them in and engaging deeply on on the product to say are there improvements they can make to the product we are large customer of theirs are they other opportunities that they can provide to us so it becomes much easier for our families to use and also for our students thank you and also having a more consistent approach from schools because once you're in secondary schools It's really challenging to figure out what the seven teachers are doing differently in Schoology and having to keep up with that.

[02:06:48] So that's also a point. I know you're a huge proponent of having textbooks, something in the kids hands that they're taking home. How is that impacting our investments in digital textbooks? I don't know that we have a big investment in digital textbooks at this time.

[02:07:11] um dr presidio i think i think what most of the vendors have and what we've tried to take advantage of is the hard copy resource as a classroom resource with the digital components that can more personalize the learning experience to students based on their level of need and that's really i think where the market is in most with most of the publishers right now so it's really kind of a hybrid uh with hard copy and digital resources combined together is typically how the publishers are marketing their materials and i think that's probably true for the

[02:07:47] literacy materials for for math students do not have a math textbook it's all digital that's that's correct but we're in the process of initiating our uh math adoption right now that's on i think on new business tonight is for board members to appoint their committee members and And we're looking at a hybrid environment, again, for math as we go through this basal adoption process.

[02:08:10] Thank you, Dr. Anderson. It's actually, it's my expectation that we have a text for mathematics moving forward. I think all texts currently have some resources that support online, but we definitely need a text and written materials that go home with students for family support for homework.

[02:08:32] So I think right now we have pacing guides online and a lot of online activities, but I'm not aware, particularly at the elementary, of an elementary online math textbook. I don't believe that currently exists, but I think there are online materials, but I don't know that that's a textbook because I see a lot of variant materials school-to-school and class-to-class in mathematics right now.

[02:08:55] But is there a publisher that's published an online math textbook that we use right now? Yeah, I mean, that's what we adopted in the last cycle seven years ago. So again, under Dr. Reed's leadership, we're definitely looking at increasing the investment in hard copy resources. 100%.

[02:09:12] Thank you, Dr. Reed. Ms. Marin. Yeah, I appreciate the topics my colleagues have brought up, including about textbooks and writing and intentional teaching of technology. I'll try and be succinct in this little clip here. But, you know, I want to underscore that we just need to have consistent use of technology platforms in practice for our students, for their benefit and for our teachers.

[02:09:35] So they are not looking at a million different apps to make something work. I also want to continue to advocate for consistent and intentional required professional development. You know, our teachers getting professional development on Schoology when they are hired or at the start of a school year to see upgrades.

[02:09:56] Do they know how to teach students how to use Schoology? It's not only limited to Schoology. I'd really love to see some consistent business rules for electronic communications is e-notify in the report it said it was used for certain types of more operational things but I've gotten you know as a parent e-notifies about hey check your email I just sent it or don't forget to you know pick your kid up well that's kind of operational or other things but you know it's not clear like when are these avenues used for the messages and again just more information about this master learning management system I also think it would be helpful to

[02:10:32] have budget and cost numbers so and I know we're going to see your budget soon but you know is where are the investments being made are they working should the even more globally the executive limitation reports include crosswalks with the budget and costs like what's our run rate on all these things and then I just again think we need more training or usage that is required there's too much in here about

if things are offered or staff may do it or webinars were held okay even if you know people showed up what did they do with that information was that a useful you know

[02:11:08] use of our resources so um i also want to put a plug in for that dit upskilling academy i mean that sounds great an online uh education offering but only 838 students and 521 employees are using that. So what's the goal there? Thank you. Thank you, Miss Marin. Miss Lady. Thank you. I appreciate the comments, but I also do, from a teacher's perspective, I feel like I want to talk about Schoology. Here's the reality. It's very similar to my AI question. What's the plan for training?

[02:11:44] Because the situation is that early adopters and self-learners love it. Those who only did that, what they had to do to check the box, they're not maximizing it. And what consumers, what parents are seeing is the discrepancy, which is the multiple clicks and the lack of understanding.

[02:12:03] It's a fantastic communication tool, has the ability to increase accessibility of materials and assignments for students with disabilities and multi-language learners, and allows for UDL enhancements to meet more learners where they are, increases ability for students to access learning and time, place, pace, and pathway, and best-use scenarios take teacher engagement to learn how to facilitate them in the digital space.

[02:12:26] So you know there are a lot of benefits you know additionally teachers can assign modified assignments to students with disabilities multi-language learners that roll at the same time as the rest of the class allowing them to work an appropriate level simultaneously as the rest of the class without everyone seeing their differences and how the instruction practices are different.

[02:12:47] So the problem is similar to my question about AI and that is that the capacity gap between those who know how to use it and those who don't. So again early adopters they're running with technology so there has to be a point where we spend this money and we have a Maserati it seems like but we have people who are driving it like a Pinto.

[02:13:12] And so my question again is what's the plan for training so that our instructional staff can maximize this because when used appropriately it's fantastic for differentiation and also as a communication tool for parents.

[02:13:27] So it sounds like we need a plan for training, so I will work with staff to develop a plan for training. Thank you, Dr. Reed. Mr. Dunn? Is there a plan to teach students typing?

[02:13:44] Dr. Presidio, do we have an instructional plan for teaching typing? We don't do that universally, no. So I mean... I think the answer is no, sir.

[02:14:01] Not at this time. Why? If we provide every student with a laptop, why wouldn't we teach them to type? Well, I mean, there is research that would say that students just even using hunting and pecking methodology can type almost as fast as people with technical typing training.

[02:14:17] So there's that aside, but I think a lot of this just comes to, and this is back to Ms. Lady's comments about training. A lot of this is just time in the school day to do these things. Where would we put that into the curriculum? We're struggling now to cover all the things that we have in the elementary curriculum.

[02:14:33] And at the secondary level, if we're going to teach that class, then that's obviously a class that students aren't going to be able to take an elective of their choice. So it's trade-offs and balances. Maybe

we've had that wrong in the past, but that's just kind of how we've gotten to this point right now. Can I ask for a plan?

[02:14:50] Because if we're going to teach them how to use Google, they can't learn it very well if they don't even know how to type. I will certainly commit to at least bringing back some research on that, like how many divisions are still teaching typing.

[02:15:05] and maybe some research on the benefits of that. Would that be helpful before we set off on that journey? I do remember... Would it also be possible to bring back research on teaching cursive handwriting? Yes, sir. I can do that. Can I ask, you know, learning online summer courses such as finance, I've looked at the personal finance.

[02:15:28] It's a great curriculum. We pay good money, but it's taught in the summer, taken online by students, and there's rampant cheating, so they're not really learning the content. Has there been any assessment of actually looking at teaching something like that in person rather than online and the effectiveness of using technology resources, actually achieving the educational goals?

[02:15:51] So I'm not aware of rampant cheating and would be disappointed if that were true. If you Google the questions, they're all on those flashcard websites. I see. So I think I know that often students are taking that course in the summer online to make room in their schedule for other courses.

[02:16:14] Right. Perhaps the arts or another world language. So have we ever taught that course in person. Dr. Presidio is that a course we I think we offer it during the school day but you can choose online for the summer. So is your question I think do we ever offer it in person during the summer versus online during the summer.

[02:16:35] Well, I'd like to see an assessment of whether it should be continued to be offered online, given the fact that all the answers are available on flashcard websites, and are we actually chaining, like, why offer the class online at all if kids aren't going to learn the content?

[02:16:51] Well, if the answers are online, whether they be in person or virtual, would they still have access to the answers, or is it a different type of, it must be asynchronous online then? Is that, perhaps Mr. or Dr. Presidio, you could comment on our summer offer? I'd have to hear the question again.

[02:17:07] I was taking notes on the other two next steps of research, I apologize. This would be the online personal finance course during the summer. Have you ever offered it? Yeah, the reason we have that is when the state passed that requirement, it was another course that students needed to complete, which, again, is limiting their choice of availability for electives.

[02:17:29] So we came up with, actually, I think a dozen different ways that students could fulfill that requirement. And one of the ways is to do it online through the online campus. And many students take advantage of that. And then that frees up room in their schedule to take a different class of interest. Dr. Presidio, the question was, do we ever offer it in person during the summer because of a concern around the possibility of rampant cheating in the online?

[02:17:52] Well, again, I apologize for not hearing the correct question. We have a pretty limited course offerings during the summer. Our summer extended learning program is really focused on credit recovery. So we've not offered that class in person during the summer. We've really focused on those courses that students need to repeat for budgetary reasons.

[02:18:10] Could there be an assessment of whether there is rampant cheating and we have evidence of that just Googling online? I mean, I've done it, so I know there is. But, you know, whether that should continue to be offered online, given the availability of all the answers? Yes, sir. I think we'll do a deep dive into the possibility of rampant cheating in personal finance.

[02:18:29] Thank you. Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Dunn. I now call on Ms. Sizemore-Hysler for a motion. Thank you. I move that the school board finds the superintendent is in compliance with executive limitation number 12 technology.

[02:18:46] I further move that the school board approve the monitoring report based on the superintendent's reasonable interpretation of executive limitation 12 technology as outlined in the strategic governance manual. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Ms. Lady. Ms. Sizemore-Hysler, would you like to speak to your motion?

[02:19:03] Yes, thank you. I'd love to speak to this motion. I'm, while there's always room for improvement with technology because technology is changing so rapidly, there's always more that we can do and more that we can come up to date to, I'm actually very impressed with what we've done. And this is a little foreshadowing of my remarks later on, but this is, I think, an example of all the work we're doing around technology of both the promise of technology as well as the realities of schools today.

[02:19:32] Public education is being asked to do more, maintaining an entire IT infrastructure, and I think we're doing it pretty well than we've ever had before. And this is an example, but it's also the promise in terms of the data dashboards that I know you've created and the ability to have the information that you mentioned, Dr. Reed, every morning at 6.30 and for the principals to really be able to, in real time and every day, adapt to the needs of their students and the teachers and staff.

[02:19:59] I think even the use of AI has a lot of promise, has a lot of potential for harm as well. So we need to be careful as we tread there, but there's a lot of potential. I like some of the work that you're doing around that. And just the amount you've used technology to make people's lives easier, whether it's online registration to online impact aid, making SIS available, all of these things, and integrating MTSS into SIS to make it easier for schools to provide support is huge.

[02:20:26] So I'm happy to do this. I just want to make a couple comments as I've listened to my colleagues speak. I do think that if we're going to prepare our students for the future, we can't shy away from teaching them responsible use of technology and teaching them how to use technology.

[02:20:43] I think one of my colleagues mentioned earlier software engineering classes. I think that's great, or I think a technology academy, we have TJ, but really focused on technology, policy, psychology, and innovating technology into society, I think is such an important thing that we need to look at, not just giving our kids the tech skills, but sort of the responsible use of technology.

[02:21:08] I did wanna just mention around personal finance. I think if we're gonna look at rampant cheating in one class, we probably should look at, just in general, all of our classes. I know for a lot of students, having personal finance available online has helped them to achieve a standard diploma, to be able to have, for students with disabilities, be able to have four to six years to use their IDEA time to get what they need.

[02:21:33] It has helped students be able to access electives that they wanna take. So I think we maybe wanna have a broader conversation around online classes, but I'd hate to sort of focus on one. I know for

my two kids, one took it in the summer online and one took it in person during the school year, and they both had good experiences with it.

[02:21:52] So I think it's gonna be a broader conversation about what we offer online. I do think, I appreciate the wifi that we're doing. I do think we really need to look at how we're teaching both our teachers and students around the possibilities of technology and the responsible use of technologies.

[02:22:10] But in the meantime, I think you've demonstrated a ton of innovations and improvements you've done in our use of technology, so I'm happy to move this. thank you sesmerheiser miss lady would you like to speak to your second no thanks thank you all right the motion is on the screen all those in favor miss marron miss dixit mr mckelveen dr anderson mr mcdaniel miss anderson mr dunn mr moon uh miss lady miss st john cunning miss sizemore heiser and myself that is unanimous all right uh we will take our moment after we do the

[02:22:43] policy review so we will go ahead and pick the next item up um agenda item 7.01 policy review technology el12 the next order of business is the policy review for el12 annually the board will review each executive limitation at the time of the 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 clerk at least 48 hours in

[02:23:18] advance of the meeting at which it is to be considered at this time no amendments have been submitted in advance of the meeting but board members may provide comments on el-12 technology policy before we vote on maintaining the current language for the year ahead i call on miss Sizemoreheiser for a motion i move that the school board maintains executive limitation 12 technology as currently detailed in the strategic governance manual is there a second second thank you miss Sizemoreheiser would you like to speak to your motion no i think this is

[02:23:56] are pretty comprehensive so i'm good thank you thank you miss lady would you like to speak to your second no thank you miss marron yes uh colleagues i will be working with miss anderson to develop some language for an amendment on this policy at our next meeting and it's been agendized tonight as a new item new business item i look forward to receiving your input and support thank you thank you miss marron seeing no others with the language on the screen of the motion we will will take a vote all those in favor Miss Marin mystics it Mr.

[02:24:28] McElveen Dr. Anderson Miss Anderson Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon Miss lady Miss St. John Cunning Miss Sizemore Heiser and myself that is unanimous for board members present we will take a 10 minute recess five minute recess I know it's going to take us 10

[02:24:42] minutes but we're going to take a five minute recess board

[02:36:08] members please return to your seats board members please

[02:37:21] return to your seats agenda item 8.01 academic matters I call Dr. Reed for Academic Matters. Thank you Chairman Frisch and this evening we are

[02:38:00] bringing the light into the board setting with the discussion about our Lighthouse Schools initiatives part of our Academic Matters. This project is a multi-year partnership with ISTE which is the International Society for Technology in Education and represents a strong step forward towards supporting our Strategic Plan Goal 5: Leading for Tomorrow's Innovation.

[02:38:26] And I want to start by sharing that this project provides coaching, professional development, and builds a community of practice to support real-time, real-world learning experiences that are authentic, relevant, inclusive, and aligned with essential skills of future learning and work.

[02:38:43] Many of our Lighthouse schools are piloting teacher AI tools this year. And these schools were selected to pilot advanced AI tools. and are learning, validating, and aligning future teaching practices where AI is available.

[02:39:00] Honestly, when AI is available ubiquitously as a purposeful way to empower educators, enhance equity, and prepare our students for a rapidly changing world. I think Mr. Sethi said a number of our team are here from our Lighthouse Schools program, so thank you for being here this evening.

[02:39:17] Appreciate that. This is exciting work. I want to share that we have a year one, year two, and central office cohort. This program began in January of 2024 with an open application process for all secondary schools to be part of the cohort.

[02:39:36] And the year one cohort had six secondary schools, secondary meaning middle and high schools, and an alternative school. The year two innovation cohort expanded to include elementary and central office with a total of eight schools and two teams joining the program. The program design is really a combination between ISTE and ASCD and for those keeping track of the acronyms that's the Association for Curriculum Development

[02:40:13] provision and curriculum development and provides a sustainable community of practice and professional development lined to the technology international technology standards throughout the year coaching is provided on the concept of design sprint supporting innovative school goals school teams use a human centered approach which is one that's designed to reflect on their work and create use cases to share their learning and staff are also supported with

[02:40:47] webinars online courses and access to membership and resources additionally these lighthouse schools have exclusive access to pilot approved AI tools like AI Gemini or Google's Gemini advanced wanted to share this evening just a short slide on data and as you can see we do have 17 teams across the division that are supporting over 1800 educators close to 2000 as you also look at it there are 840 hours of shared conversations between the coaching staff

[02:41:25] from ISTE and the instructional technology lighthouse team leads and the school teams there are a significant number of hours over 12,000 for professional development with school champions and leaders self-paced PD for teachers and the number of teachers almost eighteen thousand educators that have ISTE portal membership I want to share a couple examples of the innovative projects that have been underway these are at four of our sites

[02:41:59] and you can see obviously on the screen examples Lemon Road Elementary School currently is redesigning communication channels to ensure inclusivity and for all families with ideas like shadowing families to better understand their experiences and aligning with strategic plan pillar two. Center Ridge Elementary School is leading efforts to prepare students for their future with career and college readiness portfolios. Their processes and ideas are really more aligned with goal five of our strategic plan and Cooper Middle

[02:42:36] School has been using AI tools to refine and expand a cross-curricular project that creates historical figures into superheroes. It's an interesting project. I'll have to learn a little more about that.

Some more spotlights.

[02:42:53] We have Hunters Woods Elementary focusing on designing their STEAM lab and empowering student ambassadors to help lead work. And McLean High School, AI is being leveraged by teachers for data analysis, helping to create newsletters and streamlining operational work, supporting instructional staff.

[02:43:12] And as we had in our previous conversation, these are opportunities to beta test or pilot strategies that, again, pilot, pilot, prove, and scale. And as we work out the bugs with these projects, we're able to bring a proof of concept and potentially bring them to scale across the division.

[02:43:32] At Bryant High School, staff are using support for students unable to attend school by using neat board technology to set up high-definition hybrid classrooms. again, maintaining student academic consistency and engagement.

[02:43:48] So the lessons we've learned from Lighthouse schools are not confined to those selected schools, and I wanna make sure that there's an understanding that all schools will benefit from the work that these early adopters have chosen to do.

[02:44:03] This initiative is laying the groundwork for broader district-wide adoption of AI tools and practices and wanting to make sure that what we do implement across the entire division as purposeful, equitable, and scalable. Throughout our partnership, a playbook is being developed to guide innovation and technology integration in schools.

[02:44:23] And this spring, the Lighthouse Schools will begin a series of learning walks to see each other's innovation in action as they collaborate to improve shared outcomes. Now, I'd like to share a video of our year one Lighthouse Schools, McLean High School, Bryant High School, and Madison High School.

[02:44:40] So let's go ahead and roll video, please. program gave us an opportunity to really come out of you know Covid and all that and when we were kind of just at a loss of where we were in education it felt like it just felt like we were stuck in this place and where we ever going to find improvement where we're gonna find that we're gonna find creativity again and so when that project came about when they started explaining what it was

[02:45:17] about it was it seemed to me like a good opportunity for us to to start looking at ways of improving education, about improving things for students, for teachers, and for our community. So when AI came out, we saw it's going to have a big implication in education and lots of different industries. And so AI in education is one big use case, but we wanted to see how we can focus in a little more on what that looks like. And so because of our partnership with Google, we were able to source their AI tool, Gemini, so that all teachers and FCPS, all staff and FCPS have access to Gemini Chat. Still within our digital ecosystem still within our Google workspace and still you know covered by

[02:45:55] our data protections now our our lighthouse schools have an additional layer of Gemini access they have Gemini advanced which is another level of this tool that works inside of your Google Drive so when I am working with Gemini a lot of times initially I will use it to see if there are other ideas for how to present some sort of lesson so for instance I was doing a lesson on how plants grow with our cat bee program and science is not my forte and therefore I

[02:46:31] wanted to see what Gemini would suggest for lesson planning different activities and the like I had a loose idea in my head of what I wanted but I wanted to think outside the box and I wanted to approach it maybe a little bit differently I am now ISTE certified so going through the modules it's like we think we know about technology but I don't know if I would know how to teach it I don't know if I would know how to have a strong conversation with somebody about it until I got the knowledge and the vocabulary and an understanding of what it can do in the classroom so Brian is super grateful to be a lighthouse school

[02:47:10] this is an opportunity for Brian to have access to technology resources we can leverage those against the needs of our students at Bryant we have students that come from 11 different pyramids, they come with a myriad of needs and being able to have these conversations about how to use technology to reach our school improvement goals, to improve student achievement, student engagement is probably the most critical at Bryant.

[02:47:42] These tools have helped us reduce the amount of time on task to evaluate and look at all the different components of feedback as we look at redesigning a mission statement or What is that next thing that I need to be considering to move Madison forward? Lighthouse has given us the tools, the space, and the time to be able to do those things.

[02:48:02] Madison being a Lighthouse school, I'm able to get support from my colleagues on a different level and then also collaborate with people across the county. And it just opens more doors and it's not just isolated, like I said, to my one subject.

[02:48:18] So when I started, I originally jumped into ways that I can help and make my instruction more fun and like engaging for students and then it started kind of morphing into how i can give my students better feedback and how i can use gemini with my drive to almost like as a thought partner with to like reflect how my rubrics my lessons and my assessments kind of go together so those are kind of the three big things i've done student engagement self-reflection and feedback. What does it mean to be a lighthouse school? What it means is we are given permission

[02:48:57] to innovate. We're given permission to try new things, to push the envelope, and you can't do that unless you have good solid instructional vision. You have to have technology support and you have to have the willingness and the mindset of your teachers to try new things. You have to make an environment that's safe for them. Lighthouse School gives us permission to do those things.

[02:49:19] So just want to close this topic out by reminding folks that this is a key initiative to help prepare our staff to support our students for a future really that is yet to be imagined and we're proud to lead the way in providing every student and educator these benefits and opportunities and as we look ahead it's really important to think about how we're creating these dynamic learning experiences and that culture of innovation that several of our principals talked about we're not

[02:49:59] going to be able to make those next moves without folks trying something new and feeling creating that safe space for them to try new things so very excited about this project and happy to answer any questions the board might have about it thank you Dr. Reed Dr. Anderson thank you this is very exciting work it's just nice to see how engaged the students are and how excited the educators are about the possibilities.

[02:50:32] My one question that I have is how are we quantifying the impact of all of this work on student outcomes? Because we have to have the through line to whether it be quantitative data or portion of a graduate skills.

[02:50:47] How is this being incorporated or being thought about since we're still with a small cohort? Right. So it's a relatively new program, obviously. And the intent is to provide tools and training to educators to enhance the teaching and learning experience for children right as we move forward in this.

[02:51:12] And so trying to capture return on investment data right now on that. I think we'll have to contemplate what that will look like. You know how do you measure engagement? I think probably the variety of ways, how do we measure excitement?

[02:51:31] I think quantifying innovation almost makes it -- it's just an interesting concept. So I think I would have to think about that. Mr. Sethi, do you have sort of thoughts? I know I've talked to the team because part of the proof or pilot-pilot-proof scale, before we're going to bring anything to scale, we have to understand its impact, right?

[02:51:52] And you run that cost-benefit analysis. but mr. Sethi thoughts early thoughts on that because we are early days these are early days and much of the engagement is with schools i think this is installing the practices which can help them support and engage with their students so the quantitative data is going to be a lagging indicator and it's likely going to show up in a few i would say years plus we we're only in 17 buildings and we are trying to sort of organically grow this instead of kind of mandating it across the division because it's it's a it's a need which requires commitment of time and resources from every school and we recognize time is is a tight

[02:52:32] commodity currently in the buildings sure thank you it's definitely something for us to wrap our minds around because one of the things you said in your response to me was we want to enhance the learning environment we have to be able to describe what that is yes ma'am and if we're not able to articulate what

[02:52:50] does it look like when you've arrived we won't ever know how much growth is necessary but just kind of as another aside one of the things that I get concerned about there are a lot of wonderful things that are going on and it typically is that schools are left to self-select to participate and it just seems to be that it's the same schools that are participating in some of these activities and again this is just anecdotal this is just me just running through in my head what I have asked about and what we've had where it's been a self selection I just wonder if there's a better way

[02:53:26] to do that because we end up clustering some innovation in in in only a few places no fair point and I think because it's an add-on or an extra and we're not ready to bring it to scale we're not ready to require it so I think the question is where do we engineer excitement or engineer interest and I think it's a question we wrestle with on a variety of topics so fair point. Thank you Dr. Anderson seeing others will move on in the agenda the next item on the agenda

[02:54:03] and thank you by the way to everybody from the team who is here the next item on the agenda is agenda item 8.02 strategic plan update Dr. Reed. Thank you Chairman Frisch and members of the board this evening I want to talk a little bit about our strategic plan food and nutrition services topics around goal 2 and as you know our strategic plan has a variety of goals goal 2 is our safe supported included and empowered

[02:54:39] goal and I'll wait till we bring it up this evening and one of the this particular goal the measure we're going to utilize this evening that we're going to take a look at is a positive school climate inclusion and a sense of belonging and this evening I will be highlighting how our FCPS food and nutrition services have been championing student voice through offering new student driven menu options and I think we sometimes look at student voice in more traditional ways but I think it's important to amplify these practices

[02:55:18] across other division operations and the program goals here are listed and it's really something I think that we know that healthy food fuels learning and this program helps ensure that every student is well nourished and ready to succeed so we're very excited about that and Melissa here tonight oh there she is okay Melissa D'Angelo is our director of food nutrition services in case I need to phone a friend, Melissa's here. So I do want to say that the menu driven options that this office actively seeks student feedback throughout the year. We

[02:55:56] also have a food show and focus groups. On February 27th we'll be hosting at the Westfield Marriott, we'll be hosting the Future of FCPS Student Food Show. We're over 200 students from all grade levels. We'll sample and provide feedback on various breakfast and lunch recipes. Based on feedback from last year's food event over 20 new scratch made menu items were added to the fall cycle menu including Korean barbecue chicken drumstick, chicken tiki masala, and chana masala. So there are a lot of menu options that are the result of this work

[02:56:35] and our students are enjoying healthy food and the scratch cooking is really a commitment we've been making to healthier non-processed foods throughout the school year the office of food nutrition holds student focus groups as well and these focus groups give students the opportunity to try dishes that are upcoming and share their honest feedback with our chef and our dietitian these student surveys are used to gather valuable insights and ensure that our meals are delicious and student improved these cycle menus happen at

[02:57:12] least twice a year. So at this time I'd like to show some highlights of our students sharing their keen feedback on new menu options. Madame Clerk if you would please play the video. Food Instruction Services has really been trying to make sure that we're putting students at a center of every single one of our plates. One we do it through increasing student engagement and increasing student voice. One of our strategies is doing a food show that we host every single year now and it's a way for us to invite a variety of different diverse student

[02:57:48] populations whether it's elementary school middle school or high school making sure that they're sampling out at least 20 different menu concepts and then giving us immediate feedback for that as well which one do we like better the one you just tasted or the one before our focus groups smaller focus groups where we bring in a few students where we go out to a school and have a few students sample out a few different menu options, provide us detailed feedback about those menu options and what they would like to see in the future. We really want to make sure that every single menu option that we launch on our on our menus is

[02:58:23] student tested and student approved. So number one is gonna be a chicken filly which is on the sub roll. It should be up top on your plate. I tried the chicken filly sub. I think it would be better if there weren't any peppers because the peppers add too much sweetness. I'm not going to tell you what the spice

is I'm just going to say it's a southeastern spiced chicken. I thought it was good but it's really salty. It's like the

[02:59:00] same chicken that my uncle. My dad makes it. I think there's some kind of sweet sauce on this that I'm not a big fan of, but otherwise I like it. This is our special sauce that we're gonna start serving for your chicken nuggets, your chicken-less chicken, put on your hamburgers, dip your pizza in.

[02:59:18] It's called Fairfax sauce. The Fairfax sauce is really good. I like the chicken nuggets, it's spicy, I like it spicy. I think this is really good, but I think it's really good. What do you think it is? I wrote this down because it's a great, a great, a great sauce and I'm gonna give this to my mom so that way she can help me make it, that way we can have it every night and day for dinner.

[02:59:46] It's like a salsa. Wow, good. Fairfax County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services is really focusing on just elevating student voice and making sure that every single decision that we make is through the lens of is this best for our students and is this what our students want.

[03:00:02] Kids need to know what they're eating before they just eat it and if they're gonna like it or not. Also, because adults don't have to make food choices. I think that student voice is important because if we take a sample of students, they have different palates than the adults.

[03:00:18] So whatever they like is most likely that the other students will like it too. We know that food is fuel. Food is fuel for students to really succeed in their academics, but it's also more than fuel. traditions it's family it's part of our comfort and as part of our celebrations and we want to make sure that FNS is providing food to our students that can represent that all and so our students actually are quite well informed about

[03:00:50] their palates and what they really value and the exciting piece is that I am so proud of all our food nutrition services staff the excitement that they have in serving healthier food the scratch-cooked food versus the highly processed foods there's just a different level of energy I'm really proud of all of our staff our kitchen staff and our central office our dietician staff and Melissa and Sean really turning what's a ginormous operation completely turning

[03:01:29] the dial to some seriously healthy food so very proud of the team so thank you mr. fish I appreciate the opportunity to update thank you dr. Reed several of us up here are wondering when Fairfax sauce is going to be for sale to the general public so there's a secret ingredient I don't know if Melissa can give it up are you ready to disclose Fairfax sauce secret ingredient don't tell I didn't ask for the secret ingredient I asked when it's gonna be

[03:01:53] available for sale thank you mr. McElbeen thank you Dr. Reed thanks Melissa and thanks to Sean in absentia as well as our new chef glad to see him on the screen and obviously as you said all of our FNS staff for all the work they put into this I would just say very briefly that seeing something like this

[03:02:30] a decade ago was unheard of and the progress we've made in that time is truly incredible just as you said you know at that time we were essentially just meet meeting bare minimum federal guidelines and now we've just elevated it so great and I'm one thing that you didn't mention is that the new standards that we've set for our food and I think that's something that should be shared with the board as well I don't know if you want to speak to that so we have a group of six registered dietitians on staff so we're very proud of the number of dietitians that we have and about a year ago we got together and we said what are the standards that we're doing internally right we have our federal

[03:03:09] standards that are federally mandated then we have state standards and we have those local standards we really wanted our local standards to reflect the quality of food that we wanted to be providing to students and so we've made a commitment to work on ensuring that our foods do not have such additives like high fructose corn syrup. No additional like fillers when it comes to our proteins. Right.

[03:03:33] So you're not going to find soy fillers in our in our chicken. You're not going to find soy fillers in our in our taco beef and then also removing all MSG. So really trying to make our food items as clean label as possible which then again elevates the quality of it but then also helps increase also for those students who may have food allergies. There's less fillers in there right and then it's also we're able to go ahead and meet their needs in a better and easier way well thank you so much and that's just one small slice of the work that you've

[03:04:04] done so congratulations again thanks thank you mr mckelveen mr dunn um congratulations at foods food safety and providing delicious food that's healthy nutritious is so important have you made any efforts to partner with organizations like world central kitchen which does work around the world and has really pioneered how to deliver you know uh very tasty you know almost restaurant quality food at incredibly low prices this time with world

[03:04:43] central kitchen exactly no but that's also why we have a new chef on board right to be able to bring in that industry experience from the outside so then that way we can go ahead and continue to work on not only bringing student voice to the table but then elevate our food when we that we do have have that student feedback um and so it's definitely something to consider for us to continue to continue to look at our partnerships what existing partnerships uh do you have right now with outside organizations that might be in this field yeah so um currently right now right we will we do work with real food for kids um on a regular basis we also do have partnerships

[03:05:16] with capital area food bank um various food um uh fairfax county health department um uh as well also for like the food council and then we also regularly engage with Virginia Department of Education and then we are also a member of the urban school food alliance which then represents a high number of the largest school districts in the country and then that's when we're also able to learn from them their practices we're able to definitely do some knowledge sharing and we're able to look at our processes alongside with them and just to continue to

[03:05:53] be more efficient and and um to be able to just elevate our practices um in addition to getting rid of uh soy fillers and things like that uh do you track at all the use of artificial dyes such as red dye 40 that was just banned by the fda yes so we actually do not have any additional um like dyes or artificial colors on our serving lines to students so that was something that did not impact the food that's directly on our service line. And have we entirely banned or eliminated the use of high fructose corn syrup? Yes, we have at this point. That's fantastic. And when was that achieved?

[03:06:29] That was achieved probably about a year ago. We looked at the foods that we had. We didn't have many. We did have some that were affected. And then we went ahead and we were able to get rid of them. We put new foods out to bid. And then through our procurement process, we're able to go ahead and procure items that were high fructose corn syrup free. And did you replace it with cane sugar or did you find other sweeteners or did you just adopt new types of food that might be like spicy or have other flavors so I would say probably more the latter than the former so like for instance our barbecue sauce right it did high-fructose corn syrup we were able to go ahead and eliminate that and it was

[03:07:05] replaced with an alternative you know natural sugar the exact one I'd have to get back to you but then what we also have done is with diversifying our flavors those products as well they all have been coming in high fructose corn syrup it is a standard that we provide to our vendors so then again when we put out a bid and we go through the procurement process we are very adamant about do not come and bid an item you know that is going to contain these particular additives that we do not want and to be serving to our students and to what extent we use you know local farms or local DC region rather than you know

[03:07:42] distant farmers in other countries. We're really proud of the increase of local food products and produce that we've been able to also provide to our students. So last year we were keeping track and we were able to increase so we had about I want to say 17 percent of our produce was local.

[03:08:00] We are now actually also tracking our local food products and along with our produce. So like for For instance, we have, like, our corn chips, they come from Abuelita, which is a plant in Manassas, right? So we know that that's just right down the way.

[03:08:16] Our fresh fruit and vegetable program, we have 10 schools that receive that grant. And so we're able to go ahead and bring a lot of local produce. And that's where students get exposed to fresh fruits and vegetables two to three times per week. And so we've been able to really also increase those partnerships.

[03:08:33] We also work with a food hub called 4P and they are able to go ahead and help us procure those local food products. Can you provide an update on the scratch kitchens? Are those in all schools now? So our scratch made foods is, they have been increasing.

[03:08:49] So we do not have kitchens that are outfitted to do meals completely from scratch. We just have not been outfitted in that manner for quite some time. But what we are doing is looking at scratch made meals. what what the equipment we do have currently and then what we're able to go ahead and do so again that's where chef Tim Jones comes into play to be able to bring in that experience because we're not going to have like an open skillet for instance and so he's able to go ahead and help us evaluate this recipe that we want to go ahead incorporate and how can we have that work with the equipment that we do have I thought there was some effort underway to

[03:09:26] transition kitchens to scratch kitchens from what exists right now that's correct and we're looking at central kitchens creating scratch cooking options at central kitchens that were then able to package food and deliver from central kitchens to schools that they're able to reheat or warm and we also talked about renovations providing kitchens that would look different as part of our ed specs for new building and renovations but I think our plan was really looking at some of the work that and chef Ann was doing in Colorado actually and really thinking about how to retro central kitchens we have what

[03:10:06] eight eight central kitchens in the school division that prepare food that then hubs out to schools and if we can I think we have a cycle of those to move into more scratch cooking with really large kettles we have to have space for those items but that certainly we worked on a plan to provide that remodeling Are those, where are those central kitchens located?

[03:10:33] Oh, dear. Are they in school buildings? No, they're in our high schools. So Herndon High School, Marshall, Hayfield, South County, Mount Vernon, Westfield, Chantilly. Did I get all eight, perhaps? I think I did. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dunn.

[03:10:51] Ms. Dixit. Thank you, Dr. Reed, for the presentation. I just have just praises at this point to say that 10 years ago, like my colleague said, When I was in the cafeteria with my son, I'm a vegetarian, I

couldn't find anything to eat.

[03:11:10] Everything was either meat-based or it was something I would not eat as an adult. So I was struggling to go for those lunches. And now seeing those new options and salad bar and beans, I think I can eat in pretty much every single cafeteria of our school.

[03:11:31] So that changes, that speaks volume of the work done. I did have one to ask you how many meals do we serve in a year? We did provide that data and it's do you have it off the top of your head, Melissa? Of course you do.

[03:11:47] Come on. I love it. We're at about 20 million meals per year to include our breakfast, lunch and then our special programs. And that would be per day. How many? So right now we are averaging, oh my gosh, the team is going to kill me.

[03:12:05] So we're about up to 35,000 breakfasts and 75,000 to 85,000 lunches depending on the day. And that's done by a very cohesive team working together. And our students are fed.

[03:12:23] And there are a lot of students who depend on these meals because those are like the only healthy meals for them for the day. And so any, all the work you've done, I think it's very, really appreciative of that. And I just wanted to be at the next event of a cheer holding because I could taste the food too.

[03:12:43] Thank you. Your invites are coming. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Dixit. Ms. Marin. Well, Dr. Reed, I'm delighted that you mentioned renegade cafeteria lady, Chef Ann Cooper, who I actually met at her office in Boulder in 2013 after she came to FCPS with Real Food for Kids.

[03:13:02] So that's got to be some time before then, I mean, Real Food for Kids was really the impetus to get this work going. And I'm just so delighted to see where it's been. The lack of the ultra processed foods is so great. I just read an article about how ultra processed foods could actually be one of the next things that we really have, even if it's healthy stuff like soy protein or the stuff in your protein bar that that's really it's that ultra processed stuff.

[03:13:25] And so glad that there is no dye. I wonder if just for a moment you could speak a little bit about the the costs and how that's going with covering and funding our meals. I mean, in light of trying to provide as many meals as we can to those in need, but also like this is a revenue generating office.

[03:13:42] And so how's that how's that going? So do you feel comfortable talking a little bit about the cost piece? Okay, sure. We can talk about the CEP schools. I know really I'll go to Melissa.

[03:14:01] So we do have 47 CEP schools this year And so those schools are where students are able to come in and get meals at no cost, right? So breakfast and lunch. And that is where we see our highest participation as well. And that is also where we do know that there's a greater need.

[03:14:18] And so we're happy to be able to do that and to be able to put in those additional avenues to increase participation. For instance, like our breakfast, increased participation is really thanks to the breakfast kiosks we've been able to install in those schools.

[03:14:34] And so when we're looking at the cost, right, we do look at the type of foods that we're bringing in, what is it that, you know, local as possible, and then the cost around that. I mean, it's something that we're always analyzing, we're looking at, we're monitoring on a weekly, monthly basis.

[03:14:52] And so in regards to the cost per se, with something that we just continue to look at and knowing that there are a number of bills that, for instance, are in the state, we've got a possibility of having breakfast for all possibly coming up. We'll see how that could possibly work in our favor and be able to just increase our revenue.

[03:15:11] but it is something that is something that we look at when we're weighing and what is it that we're able to bring in we're not going to be able to bring in really you know just these products that are going to be just higher cost so we are we do take that into account but we're still very proud to ensure that again those internal standards that we've created are being met every single time yeah thank you I know when we do our quarterly budget reports that you present dr. Reed that's you know something we're in the past we've asked about that so just knowing are we in the red or the black are we making money and I loved in the video how the students were using those portrait of a graduate skills to communicate

[03:15:49] about their food right have those interpersonal skills and teach like what we should be doing when we eat which is to eat slowly and perhaps even be communal about it so as much as we can incorporate that into learning is just fabulous so thank you. Great thank you. Thank you Miss Marin. Dr. Anderson.

[03:16:05] Thank you and I was very excited to be able to participate in that tasting last year and the kids were so excited now like the chicken wings are over here like chicken wings we're doing that at our schools. So there's been a lot of enthusiasm around it to the point to now our high school students are particularly sensitive to the fact that they don't have enough.

[03:16:27] So my wonder is do we differentiate servings based on levels or do we provide the same amount of food at elementary than we do at high schools because it seems to still be want at the upper grades for a larger serving interesting so Melissa so again our federal standards to require us to provide more servings in our high school so we do build right so our elementary schools have a they have two entree options right and we're always providing a vegetarian option and then we also have our power packs and then our middle school we're adding on again to

[03:17:05] that menu and then our high schools have the most robust menu so we're always building on to what we have in our elementary schools and yes by federal standards we do have to provide more calories and our requirements are more more servings for our high school students can you quantify that a little bit yeah so it's really where you see it in our fruit and vegetables and then also in our grain options I could get that to you more specifically we could go ahead and follow up with you and give you the exact.

[03:17:37] Sure that would be helpful because slice of pizza is a slice of pizza is a slice of pizza they're not necessarily getting more at the upper grades but that's definitely been a concern and of course they're using more calories so having that information will be helpful. We'll provide that in an upcoming Friday letter likely in a week.

[03:17:55] Thank you Dr. Anderson Miss St. John Cunningham. So I would just like to take an opportunity to highlight the work that our cafeteria workers do. They're in early they're getting the meals prepared they're serving the meals.

[03:18:09] and particularly where I come from working in middle schools they're helping kids open milk boxes they really do a lot for our children and when we talk about this on the global level I also want to always highlight the people that are actually in the schools and doing the work and thank them for that

and I also want to highlight the program that you have for after school snack for our students when any after school programming is involved what is served as a very nutritious what is really considered like a light supper and I've seen kids you know it's provided

[03:18:47] to the kids that are in the program but I've seen kids save some of that to take it to their siblings and it makes a difference and I just want to thank you for your work. Ms. Anderson. So my children are four of those meals often during the day they often go back and purchase two meals at a time so what I would wonder even my 10 year old is very interested in making sure that there's enough and he often talks about the fact that more so I echo particularly my older one that is playing sports six days a week and is

[03:19:22] starving all the time and so what I what I was wondering is do they have do we have any ability to allow them to buy a second entree without having to buy the full second meal because I often worry about the waste that may come with taking you know things that they're not going to use and so I well well I I personally am working on making sure that they are bringing food when appropriate from home to supplement.

[03:19:49] I'm just wondering whether or not there's a way for them to just buy the entree. Yeah, I can personally relate to that. I have a son who eats, and I tell this story often, he eats breakfast at home, he eats breakfast at school, he eats lunch at school, and then he goes back for a second entree. So yes, just to go ahead and purchase the entree is a possibility.

[03:20:06] Okay. It's an a la carte option for just the entree. That's wonderful to know. However I would like to plug in that for students who are still hungry they do have the option to go back through our salad bar and again unlimited fruits and vegetables a second time at no cost wonderful. Thank you so much. Thank you miss Anderson I'll take a turn. I really do want to commend everything that's happening in our nutrition programs. A few years ago Secretary Vilsack came from the Department of Agriculture to tour and see some of the early work that was being done in this effort. And we've come so far since even then and I thought then we

[03:20:41] come so far on top of that i do want to again stress that i think there's an opportunity here for maybe the deca clubs at schools to be selling this fairfax sauce to make money we're going to look into this i i've not even tasted it but we're going to look into it you haven't even tasted it no but i'm sure it's delicious it looked delicious so uh looking forward to that conversation because i think it's a golden opportunity um maybe we can even have the kids name it so all right thank you very much thank you chairman first thank you melissa and also thank you andy

[03:21:18] muick who is our chief operation officer that oversees the food department so definitely uh props to everybody mr moon came in at the buzzer mr moon all your buzzer all right uh just one quick question about the food show uh out of over 30 different menu concepts have we adopted any of those menu concepts for our actually in the cafeteria absolutely yeah yes so those menu

[03:21:53] concepts the top 10 were really looked at in adopting we added them into our fall and they're also being added to our spring cycle menu so again like the chana masala the tikka masala we have a fish taco unveiling this spring we have a lasagna roll up unveiling also this spring so that's directly from the results from the food show oh so korean barbecue did not make the list GREEN BARBECUE, YOU KNOW, NO, YES, IT DID, IT DID, YEAH, SO IT WAS THERE, YEAH.

[03:22:21] ALL RIGHT, THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU, MR. MOON, AND NOW WE ARE OFFICIALLY MOVING ON. ALL RIGHT, AGENDA ITEM 8.03, FINANCIAL YEAR, 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET. I CALL ON DR. REED FOR A PRESENTATION OF HER 2026 FINANCIAL YEAR PROPOSED BUDGET. THANK YOU, CHAIRMAN FRUSH, AND I WANT TO BEGIN THIS EVENING, AS YOU KNOW, THE BUDGET REALLY IS OUR BACKBONE.

[03:22:47] it provides the resources for us to engage in um all of the work that we've described this evening and all of the work that we describe over time and um thank you i i want to start by thanking our budget team um first our board budget chair mr kyle mcdaniel and our budget vice chair Ms. Rachna Sizemore-Heiser and just the guidance that they've provided throughout this process has been just remarkable and very helpful and also our chief finance officer Lee Burden

[03:23:24] Matthew Norton and Alice Whittington just big props to our finance department I think the best in the country so this evening I'm going to work really hard to try to present this budget in a way that tells our story here in Fairfax County and our story is one that's a story of incredible achievement and a reminder that these budget dollars represent more than charts and data they represent the hopes and dreams of the children in this community and the hopes and

[03:24:02] dreams of the many many families who moved to this community because of our Fairfax County public schools so as we walk through the budget presentation this evening I want to begin by acknowledging that our current situation that we're facing a tremendous funding gap that is not of our creation or of our county's creation honestly our team Miss Marin our board our elected board our elected board of supervisors have worked tirelessly to share the information which I'll share a

[03:24:39] little later about our J Lark funding and the lack of funding in terms of meeting this gap from our governor's budget that was recently presented and I know that our Commonwealth lawmakers those lawmakers from this area continue work hard to provide funds from the General Assembly and we just want to acknowledge that there is a tremendous gap between what we believe is necessary and what we're actually receiving and this is I think exacerbated by the

[03:25:16] changing needs and goals of our public school system and our children the world is changing technology industry the workplace and so too what we present and prepare our children for needs to change and adjust and these changes require resources to have the success we're used to having requires resources to support the high expectations we hold here in Fairfax County I also want to acknowledge that many of our citizens in Fairfax County do not currently have

[03:25:51] children in school and to those citizens I really want to speak to how important public school is whether we have children currently in school or not and as a recent grandparent myself I know that there are many grandparents in this county who have a next generation that will be coming through our schools and are counting on the high quality and the tradition of excellence that we have maintained here in Fairfax County and to sustain those high quality instructional opportunities require our support across the board

[03:26:30] whether we have children and classes currently or not and in recognizing a bit of the tax fatigue that is out there because I mean let's face it things are more expensive today than they were a year ago than they were five years ago ten years ago and those cost escalations do create a budget impact even just to maintain the level of support that we have needed much less increase the level of support as we work to increase academic standards and provide

[03:27:04] those activities for our young people that are so important finally just want to make sure that we understand that we're in a real competition for talent right now in this country and as we think about outstanding educators in every role in the school division we want the very best for our young people here in Fairfax County and there's a cost to that and for us to be able to compete with not just our regional colleagues but our colleagues around the country it's critical that we maintain salaries that are competitive because as

[03:27:44] you'll see in some subsequent slides those also provide the bedrock of what we consider respect for the profession and the hard work that occurs so I want to make sure that I thread those themes this evening and make sure that in the coming days and weeks that we continue to come back to those key themes one of the things I want to also remind our community is that these charts and the data I'm going to talk about this evening are representative of real children and real families and real hopes and dreams and as we look at the

[03:28:20] investment we're thinking about making here and what I am providing in this needs-based budget we're making huge gains in our academic work and we're maintaining our excellence in terms of high expectations which again will require high support I want to remind our community and our board that this This year, we have 10% more students that were named as National Merit Commended Scholars than year over year.

[03:28:48] Last year, our SAT scores were 77, almost 80 points higher than the state average and continue to outperform the global averages, even as we have more than 80% of our students taking the SAT, while the state has only around 50% of students taking the SAT.

[03:29:08] So we've provided access, opportunity, and continue to maintain higher achievement than our state and global peers. Also want to make sure that our families and communities know that 75% of our high school students complete at least one college equivalent course during their career with us.

[03:29:27] And our graduation rate at 94.6% far exceeds the state average and is a really proud data point for a division of our size and finally I wanted to make sure that I dialed in to one of our students who as you know was named time kid of the year recently and you're going to hear a little from him in Bekela he is one of our students who is represented by this budget and budgets before us Hemans story was he was born in Ethiopia and came to Fairfax County as a preschool student who

[03:30:06] spoke no English and his family his mother is now a teacher for us and he's been honored as you know for inventing a soap which treats skin cancer and I will tell you Heyman just also was recently honored at quite a star-studded event in Atlanta this past weekend and spends many of his weekends at Johns Hopkins doing cancer research and Heyman is one of thousands of students in our county who is doing incredible work day after day inspired by incredible educators in the school division and I continue as I know you do to be very

[03:30:45] proud of the work we do here and the many many young people who are launched from this county who go out and change the world. I also want to share that one of the things that's really important as we think about resources and why our budget is going to be a slight increase over last year is we want to increase our academic expectations and as we look at one example in mathematics we continue to outpour outperform the Commonwealth in math science and reading with improvements in math and science but even more important we're close to

[03:31:22] 10% more students year-over-year of our eighth graders that are at least in algebra one or higher and almost 7% increase in our fifth graders taking advanced math at this point this continues to be a high focus area for us we recognize nationally mathematics as a challenge and we know that math accounts for 84% of our career choices now for children it's critical that we invest in increasing and upping requirements in this critical content area because we have to maintain high expectations and high support for all of our students.

[03:32:00] And as we think about mathematics, the credentialing of more staff to enable this to happen, the clarity around resources that you heard this evening are going to require resources and it's a necessary body of work. I want to share that our student needs are changing. While our enrollment increases are flattening or leveling in other words we're projecting a 2% increase in enrollment the increase for example in some of our student groups who do require extra supports continue to increase and so as we have a higher need for certain

[03:32:39] specialized supports for example some of our students and special programs require smaller class sizes require teachers at times who have more planning needs require multiple assessment and perhaps supports that may require more funding and more resources we have career coaches social workers therapists at times and these are critical resource needs for our students without which our students are not going to be able to achieve the high expectations that we

[03:33:14] have here in Fairfax County as I move forward and think about the importance of our high expectations and those systems and structures that support them I want to contemplate our class size comparison and I think it's important to note that with the funding that we have been provided Fairfax County Public Schools ranks fifth of eight schools in our area when you look at students per classroom across all grade levels and individually for elementary middle and high you can see that we do rank you know third sixth and fourth but this

[03:33:50] This does say that while our class sizes are a reasonable size, we're middle of the pack. That's with our current resource allocation. It's critical to keep up with those resources to maintain these class sizes to support that well-rounded education for all of our students.

[03:34:08] I want to remind our community about this data point, which we're particularly proud of. As you know, I think I've often talked about our hearts beating strongest when we're in schools. where the action happens and i can say proudly that most of our funding is directly allocated to instruction with 92.5 percent of our employees designated as school-based and this is the highest among all of our wavy participants in the washington dc area so we focus the over 90

[03:34:42] percent of our expenditures on school-based employees. Conversely, I want to share that our ratio of central management staff is 1.1 percent compared to two to four percent at surrounding jurisdictions. In other words, our administrative staffing is lean. It's well below our surrounding divisions and that's because we've worked very hard to be fiscally responsible as a school division and make sure that we direct the bulk of our funds over 90% to our schools and classrooms and those that directly support our schools and

[03:35:22] classrooms. We believe that as a school division most of our budget should be spent as close to the classroom as possible. One data point we haven't talked as much about over time is actually the amount of money that we would say the actual funding that FCPS puts per pupil base and compare that to

our surrounding divisions and I would say at this point that based on budget numbers we provide about twenty thousand nine hundred and forty dollars per pupil which actually puts us number five of

[03:36:00] all the wavy districts so if we as an example if we use the same uh classroom or the cost per pupil funding that arlington uh county schools had we would have an additional 769.5 million dollars annually in our budget if we were going to fund at that rate that would enable us to hire 6000 additional teachers to significantly reduce class sizes well we're not likely to have that kind

[03:36:33] of funding but what we can say is that given the funding we do have we rank five out of eight but it definitely is funding that we would certainly want to we have our expectations for achievement to be higher than five of eight and therefore we're going to need to resource our work at a higher than five out of eight level let's take a look at our teacher salaries and why that's important and I'm gonna actually if we could go back to the slide before madam clerk I presented this to educators this afternoon as a

[03:37:12] dry run kind of a practice run and one of the things our educators that I shared this with in a practice run said they said dr. Reed if you go to the board this evening and publicly talk about this it makes it sound like no matter what we're going to be able to continue to get high results year after year with perhaps less than adequate funding and it's honestly not sustainable and because here in fairfax people work longer harder i think care deeply we also have to recognize that we need to adequately resource our programs and our staff

[03:37:50] so that we're not burning out our educators and that this is a sustainable workload as we work to maintain these expectations. So I want to make sure that I say that because I did commit to seeing that this afternoon. So let's go to salaries, please. I want to we're going to take a look at three levels of salaries.

[03:38:09] Last year we looked at the master's level and we were asked to make sure we looked at beginning teachers and teachers at the end of or at the more experienced and I apologize I need just a little bit of water right so for beginning teacher salaries currently we rank fifth of eight with teachers starting salary in the master's lane and after the compensation increases included in the budget I'm presenting this evening we would likely rank first in starting teacher salary this is

[03:38:49] important because we're all competing for a diminishing talent pool and we want to make sure that as our students come out of university or teacher colleges and so forth that we are a school division that recognizes the importance of the professional preparation that our educators have undergone and that we are able to provide that top salary for beginning teachers we know that the quality of the educators in classrooms and schools is directly connected to the quality of the educational experience that's why this

[03:39:25] is so important let's take a look at the midpoint of our teacher salaries and this data is less positive obviously we currently rank seventh of eight at the midtier at the midpoint for the Masters Lane and even with the compensation increases I'm proposing this evening that were part of our historic collective bargaining agreement we will likely rank fifth in teacher salaries at the midpoint even following the application of those salary increases and let's look

[03:40:00] at the maximum teacher salaries currently we rank seventh of eight at the maximum lane for the master's lane at the maximum for the master's lane and and we expect to remain the same seven out of eight even with a seven percent increase in salary based on the collective bargaining agreement and a lot of this is largely due to a lesser number of steps on our salary schedule and we end we top out at 25 and many of our surrounding

[03:40:37] jurisdictions have 30 or more steps so we are going to be a bit challenged at this lane as well even with the seven percent salary increase possibility so let's talk a little bit about striving for smart savings it's so important that we talk about the work we've done to try to trim our budget and trim our initiatives to become lean and still work towards maintaining the support for our high expectations. One of the things that we really had to reckon with is

[03:41:13] as we think about trimming our budget and making sure that we've provided some type of cost-cutting and clear direction around trying to be more efficient and look at reductions to afford some of the collective bargaining agreement dollars as well as our continuing initiatives, we realize 93% of our positions are school-based and that makes it very difficult to make cuts without impacting the student experience.

[03:41:46] I will say year over year, we have cut 51.3 million, which is 1.4% of our budget because we no longer are receiving ESSER dollars and those dollars, we either sunset initiatives or sunset programs and those post-pandemic needs are still persisting.

[03:42:06] So we have collapsed programs. We've also said that there are no new initiatives. only funding those that we have currently uh have in motion and that's really important for our community to understand we want to be and intend to be and believe we are fiscally responsible and good stewards of the money that our taxpayers work so hard to provide to us so our need for high quality instructional resources continue and we are going to hope to continue to see future savings in training and professional development based on the fact that if we maintain

[03:42:45] work spaces class sizes and salaries we will retain our educators and when we retain our educators it costs less for new professional development repeatedly new training and in general provides a better educational experience and i'm proud to say that with our board's commitment year over year for the first time in four years our year-to-year teacher retention rate exceeded 90 percent last year and the division retained almost 400 more teachers in 2024 than we had in 2023 so that is a

[03:43:22] significant number of staff that did not need to be retrained but are excited to continue the work here in Fairfax County so that type of efficiency is so critical to our mission-driven work. We also continue our Baldrige Efficiency Review where we're taking each department and running through lines to see how we can tighten and tighten which is part of how we were able to arrive at our 51.3 million dollar budget cut year over year and again our continued commitment to not begin new initiatives at a time where we recognize we have to

[03:44:01] fund our priorities I want to remind our community and board that our proposed budget our needs based budget that I'm presenting this evening aligns with our strategic plan both our five goals and our four pillars and we are a very large division the ninth largest in the country with over a hundred and eighty thousand students this framework the strategic framework allows all of our schools our departments and our offices to move in the same direction and with that alignment we'll continue to see funding efficiencies and efficiencies

[03:44:38] and how we use and spend our time so I want to share at this point our budget priorities to meet the changing needs of our students to meet the changing needs in our workplace we have budget priorities that must provide competitive compensation for all of our employees in Fairfax County the changing needs often require different resources which have a gear up time and these changing needs will

continue probably in an exponential flywheel movement we need to continue empowering our educators to provide differentiated services and the multi

[03:45:16] year initiatives the board is committed to must be seen to their logical impact end so I will share that the budget summary I'm presenting this evening provides an FY 26 school operating fund budget totaling four billion dollars which is a net increase of 297 point 1 million or 7.9 percent over this FY 25 budget the county transfer request is actually an increase of 268 point 3

[03:45:51] million or a 10.4 which is a slight decrease from last year's requested percentage which was 10.5 percent I will also say that we've worked between the fiscal forecast numbers of 275 million to get it down to 268.3 million and this would be the county transfer request for the needs-based budget that I'm proposing this evening we are looking actually let's stay there for just a minute the state revenue could we go back to thank you the state revenue we

[03:46:28] look like we are expecting twenty three point two million the federal revenue we expect to decline by one million which is IDEA and Perkins dollars and this is in a key factor here with our beginning balance so the request for our county transfer is two hundred and sixty eight point three I will make or I will share that the Board of Supervisors request again is ten point four percent increase which is a slight decrease most of the way be participants budgets have yet to

[03:47:07] be released however we do know that Loudon and Montgomery County and Maryland have released and they are requesting local transfer increases of 9.7% and 13.4% respectively so we feel like the 10.4% increase is well within a reasonable expectation and satisfies or meets our needs-based budget request so next slide please as we look at the compensation adjustments I want to be

[03:47:42] very clear about why competitive compensation matters and I want to share just a bit about one of our educators who happens to be the 2024 Washington Post Teacher of the Year Laura Centuria who is a fourth grade teacher at Colin Powell Elementary School and she received this award because of her excellence and inspiring learning encouraging individual growth and demonstrating subject matter expertise by fostering collaboration and leading by example teachers like Laura Centuria and many many many others thousands and

[03:48:20] thousands of our educators are committed to the mission driven work we're doing here in Fairfax County Public Schools and we were able to negotiate under in the last calendar year a collective bargaining agreement which is historic here are first in fairfax county which would provide a seven percent compensation increase also transportation and food service salary enhancements and health rate changes this is

[03:48:52] going to be the f the change from fy 2025 budget is 240.8 million there are also retirement rate changes and the base savings from turnover again two hundred and thirteen point seven million would be the specific amount of money here related to providing competitive compensation and this again is based on the collective bargaining agreement which I really am proud of the team for negotiating I also want to just point out that this seven percent increase for employees is very

[03:49:30] much so in line with our surrounding divisions. For example, Loudoun County recently is asking for a 6.5 increase, 6.5% in salaries, and Prince William County is asking for 7%. So we're right in the ballpark if we want to simply maintain competitive salaries within our region. As we think about meeting

our communities' shifting and changing needs, it's not just our young people that are changing our community is changing we know our schools are the

[03:50:05] center of our community we know that companies settle in spaces where schools are effective because workforce development is a critical bridge to the economic drivers here in Fairfax County want to remind us that the funding of twenty three point six million represents the recurring costs of of baseline or of adjustments for quarterly fund review and other baseline adjustments such as substitute teacher incentives and you can read through the topics on the slide further we have

[03:50:38] 20 million which includes 207.9 positions to impact these student need adjustments that are driven primarily by increases in special program services as well as routine funds to support summer school major maintenance contractual services and existing lease and so on now let's take a look at our multi-year initiatives so as you can see we have inclusive preschool

[03:51:15] and again these are very similar these are programs that were on the deck last year for budget they're a continuation of funding we've made commitments and we need to see those through and these commitments are for a total of 4 million and this is a the fya 26 proposed budget for example represents the third year of a multi-year implementation to establish a dedicated family liaison with with benefits and an additional 50 school sites this year in addition to the topics

[03:51:50] addressed and these budget budgeted positions um are established through a position conversion of existing hourly positions and therefore won't require addition additional funding so they're not represented here but i know those are a commitment that our board has made and want to make sure that i note that that's something that we're doing we know learning happens best in community and there's never been a more important time for our family liaisons and and their work than a time such as this.

[03:52:22] So let's look at our targeted investments at this time. We do wanna make sure that our community understands that we have been listening and we wanna make sure that we're able to devote funds to safety and security.

[03:52:39] There are different topics listed, as well as the differentiated learning credentials. We have a high need for micro-credentialing and support around universal design for learning, multilingual learner initiatives, and as I mentioned earlier, if we're going to continue to make the progress we need to make in mathematics, we're gonna have to have more teachers algebra credentialed than we currently have, and that's gonna require resources.

[03:53:06] We cannot put a stake in the ground around increasing academic expectations and not support the professional development resources necessary to continue to increase academic expectations. It's not good enough to just continue what we've always done. We have to put a stake in the ground and say that mathematics again is going to be impacting 84 percent of career choices. We have to increase our expectations in that content area especially which will require resources. So I want to just share some of the

[03:53:44] funding needs not explicitly addressed in this budget we do want to we do have budget to continue our middle school sports but we are looking to try to do an expansion and we'll have to see where that's going to be possible we have also in this particular budget not addressed additional funding to accelerate addressing the maintenance backlog which continues to increase at 8% a year and I will say

that some of my concerns around the budgeting process is that in addressing some of this maintenance backlog I don't want to take

[03:54:21] money from our classrooms and therefore it is so critical and again this needs based budget concept that we effectively and efficiently address what we need to meet our educational outcomes even as we still have our maintenance backlog that's rising we're not planning to lower class sizes we haven't yet looked at middle school start times or electric buses and jet goals so those are things yet to be contemplated as we think about future budgets so let's take a look at

[03:54:56] the revenue overview and again this is sort of where all the different buckets of money come to us we have state federal other in the county transfer request and the other in thinking about that represents an increase due to projected increase related to tuition at Thomas Jefferson but the county transfer request as I repeated or as I mentioned earlier is set at two hundred and sixty eight point three million and that will create a total revenue increase of two

[03:55:31] 297.1. The next slide is a historical slide of the county transfer history and we went back to 2016 where it looked like really when we think about the percentage of revenue of the county and we talked a little about this last year where there was a five-year historical trend of about fifty two point seven percent and that fifty two point seven percent down to fifty one point five percent represents a sixty four million dollar gap last

[03:56:08] year so we're hopeful that we'll be able to bridge that gap this year and be able to fully fund our transfer from the county and we appreciate the support and the focus on public education that our county partners share with us and appreciate certainly their efforts and will look forward to continuing to collaborate with them.

[03:56:35] I have spoken to our county executive and I know that it's important that we collaborate with our county partners as we develop our budget moving forward.

[03:56:45] I do want to call out Jay Lark and just I know this is a slide that we have talked a lot about but I just want to remind our community that Virginia school divisions do receive less funding per student than the 50 state average and also our regional average and again this is an opportunity to take a look at Maryland West Virginia Kentucky and Virginia which again we sit at 14% below the national average for funding per pupil.

[03:57:21] Again, we don't have expectations that are below the national average because our students are performing above the global average. So it's not sustainable, however, without adequate resources. So we believe this needs-based budget will provide those.

[03:57:40] In round numbers for the community, if JLARC was fully funded or our schools were fully funded, that would be about \$3,100 per student, or a total of \$568.7 million. So what you see on the screen is our General Assembly's work right now, and there are several key areas that they're looking at.

[03:58:07] The elimination or incremental raising of the support cap, exploring enhanced support for special education focused on the proposed percentage add-on to special education based on student level of need, and additionally, the subcommittee highlighted the importance of addressing data and infrastructure needs to provide better cost data for the recommendations.

[03:58:28] However, at this time, we don't have any concrete legislative reforms that have been adopted And we continue to wait on the outcome of those JLARC deliberations. I want to say that thriving schools equal an economic prosperity.

[03:58:51] We know that the schools are the center of a community, and we know that investing in excellence for our schools invests in excellence for our county. And I encourage each of you to think about what kind of a community would you like us to be in five years 10 years 20 years what will history look back and say about this group these decision makers in terms of what we did to prepare our young people for the next decade and decades ahead our community support helps anchor fcps is our region our region's education destination for

[03:59:28] students families and staff high quality schools bring new residents better workforce development new businesses increased opportunities for student upward mobility education an excellent education has often been talked about as the first rung to upward mobility increased property values and reduce social costs so we are grateful and continue to be grateful to our partnership with our board of supervisors with whom we know we have a shared interest in the excellence of our schools and we appreciate our state leaders and elected leaders who share our belief in public education

[04:00:05] and look forward to their continued financial support of our community's most important asset our children so here is a way to stay involved attend school board meetings we're going to continue to have we have a work session upcoming this evening the board will not be asking questions this is my presentation but we'll be having a work session and many other conversations about the budget so please take a moment to learn about the critical needs of this great school system and why we must continue to support our educators our support staff and our students

[04:00:43] today is just the beginning of the conversation and so we'll have many opportunities for board discussion these dates above are listed as a point of reference and we do have a work session to discuss student needs and compensation in more detail on February 4th.

[04:01:01] I know you're going to have many questions at that work session. And as always, the community and obviously the board and board of supervisors are able to submit budget questions via our normal process.

[04:01:16] Thank you for your time and attention. This is the most important work happening in our country at this time. it is critical work and it is work that's transformative there's never been a more important time to invest in public public education because together all things are possible so i'd like to finish the budget proposal with a word from our students at the end of the day that's why we're here that's why we're doing the budget and that's why we need to continue contemplating the critical nature and the transformative difference that our

[04:01:54] educators here in this county make each and every day so madam clerk will give him in the last word now we're doing so many different types of labs and science and bio and chemistry there's always been this kind of choose your own adventure but at the same time be innovative be creative and just give a great final product and that those experiences are what have kind of shaped my curiosity today so a huge shout out to Fairfax County all my teachers I've been here since kindergarten it's just been a wonderful experience so so mr.

[04:02:32] chairman that is my superintendent proposed budget this evening thank you very much I would like to turn it over to our board's budget team starting with our budget chair mr. McDaniel thank you and thank you the superintendent and Alice Lee Matthew for all your work there's a lot of stuff that goes in behind the scenes to this as a reminder to my colleagues our budget work session is going to be February 4th in a couple of weeks and we will have lots of time to ask lots of detailed questions after we've all had enough time to really dig into this so thank you for this first blush presentation tonight the budget

[04:03:10] for this school system is fundamentally built upon shared values and it's a statement of what we value and how we plan to turn those into reality we fund the things we believe in year after year and in this community we believe in things like taking care of our most vulnerable, running the school buses on time. We believe that on a 90-degree day the air conditioner should actually work.

[04:03:35] We believe in serving students high-quality meals. We believe in having the latest technological products in the classroom. We believe in paying teachers a fair wage, treating them with respect, supporting them, and treating them as the professionals they are. And we believe that the best teachers deserve the best administrative support behind the scenes. Now if the community over the next few months decides that the expenditures you're proposing are too much, then they can tell us that, and I'm looking forward to having that conversation.

[04:04:07] I welcome ideas for savings, for efficiencies, for better ways to do business, because fundamentally we need to be looking at that all the time. In fact, I'm pulling together a community advisory committee to help me look at the budget and to come up with ideas of how we can potentially do things better.

[04:04:25] So we're going to be having that conversation over the next few months, but I think I know this community pretty well and I think I know what this community values and I don't think that we're going to tolerate and I don't think the public would tolerate cuts to our budget that will result in cuts to service delivery I don't think they'll tolerate cuts to mental health services that our kids have come to rely upon and I don't think they'll tolerate us allowing kids to go hungry or even feeding them cheap junk food as we have worked so hard to correct over the years and I don't think they'll tolerate things like higher class sizes and at the end of the day budgets have real impacts on real people day in

[04:05:02] and day out in our buildings. I believe in this community and I know how much we value the services that we've come to expect from our school system and Fairfax County is a place that we can all be proud of and while these are challenging times and I appreciate the recognition of the challenging fiscal environment that we are in it's time to meet the moment and I'm looking forward to the community conversation over the coming months around this budget and and quite frankly i'm looking forward to telling the story of fairfax county because that's why we're here we know how great our community is we know how great our schools are and i know that

[04:05:40] we're going to be telling that story because fundamentally that's our job so thank you for the budget proposal and thank you for your work thank you mr mcdaniel miss sizemore heiser our budget vice chair thank you and i wanted to start first by thanking mr mcdaniel for his leadership as the budget committee chair and especially superintendent reid chief financial officer lee burden and her staff for their leadership and hard work there was a lot that went into this budget and a lot of thoughtful conversations um as my colleague mentioned this budget is much more than

[04:06:14] a bunch of numbers it's a policy document that at the end of the day reflects our system and our community's values and priorities through how we choose to allocate limited resources simply put where we choose to spend our money is an indicator of what we believe is important and i'm proud that this budget focuses on fiscal responsibility while continuing to deliver on the promise of an excellent education for every student who walks in our doors and prioritizes compensation for our frontline workers our teachers and staff so they can provide that excellent education i believe our community expects that excellent education for our students

[04:06:51] i believe that our community expects our students to be fed well supported with their mental health needs given an excellent education that sets them on success on their path so I'm grateful for our county and our county partners for their strong and continued support of our schools our schools not just educate our students but they're the heartbeat of our communities over 500,000 events happen in our schools our schools are truly a community resource and most importantly our public schools educate our future leaders creators entrepreneurs voters and innovators so I'm proud

[04:07:28] that this budget focuses on maintaining that track record that FCPS has in providing the best public education in this country. We're known for that best public education and I'm proud that this budget continues that. We cannot allow our system backslide and to do that we must be good stewards of our resources and make sure we have resources to educate our students. A couple data points I wanted to lift up. I'm proud that 92 percent of our staff are school-based serving our students highest in our jurisdiction meanwhile we have the lowest ratio of central administration staff the second lowest ratio of school-based administrative staff to teaching staff and our

[04:08:06] pure per people spending is fifth out of the region we are working hard to be fiscally responsible and austere but we want to not just stay current with what we do but we want to meet this changing student needs and continue to meet our high community expectations this budget simply allows us to maintain our current status we acknowledge our taxpayers retired we acknowledge we did that there are demands for our taxpayers funding and while we have no authority to levy taxes raise revenue we are so grateful for our county partners and their commitment to our schools

[04:08:44] we're committed to work with our county and state partners to address funding gaps but also i want to recognize that these good schools benefit everyone not just those with students in their homes much like the public safety professionals whose roles have expanded as our society has changed in recent decades the roles of teacher and staff is more complex than ever before our education professionals are expected to be social workers security personnel communications and technology experts as we heard earlier and much more to do that requires resources

[04:09:19] and i'm proud that most of all this budget prioritizes the most valuable resource on the front line our teachers and staff thank you simply put if we can't pay our teachers competitively we risk losing them thank you to our community to our team for supporting our schools i think i heard my time was up i apologize i can't see a timer my apologies thank you ms seismor heiser as a reminder to colleagues we have a work session coming up so there is no obligation to dive in uh with an hour of questions and answers at this point but we will go ahead and dive in with board

[04:09:55] member comments questions mr dunn um dr reed can you address the potential impact of the elimination of federal funding if the department of education is abolished especially on title one and special education programs yes sir i think if we go back to unless miss burden has that on the tip of her

tongue i'd have to go back to the revenue slide um and the percentage or the let me miss burden do you have that right off the top of your head let me go back to the revenue here oh we had the

[04:10:30] revenue change less than 1 million I know we had was it about six yeah I mean most of our only IDEA and Carl Perkins support the operating fund as far as federal funding goes the other federal funding is in the grants fund so it's really only those two revenue streams and we're expecting the IDEA to go down a million which is what we're seeing here the last that we talked to others about you know what might happen at the federal level it was believed and I

[04:11:07] don't know if this will actually come true is that funds of the federal government would then be shifted to the states to manage not that the Department of Ed would be completely eliminated and all the funding would be eliminated as well but of course that begs the question does the state have the the capacity to handle large influxes of money and pushing that out to divisions how much money do we receive from the federal government every year for the general well the school operating fund

[04:11:42] it's 51 million if you add in food nutrition services which of course gets federal reimbursement grants and self-supporting grants title one title two those kinds of things it's 168 million in total and again what would be the impact on our special education program if we lost the federal Based on the information that I got from AASA, IDEA is not expected to be reduced.

[04:12:13] And I heard someone say that if our proposed budget increase is not granted, suddenly kids will not get the healthy food that was discussed tonight. Is that a serious risk that will actually happen if we don't get this budget increase?

[04:12:29] If we don't receive the budget increase, we'll have some difficult conversations and decisions to make. And one of those will be adding back in soy fillers and red dye 40? I can't. I don't want to speculate this evening about whether or not we would add soy fillers and red dye back in. I would hope we're not going to come to that. So I don't want to speculate on that this evening, but I suppose it's certainly, you know, a conversation that could be had. But I don't believe that's

[04:13:00] where we're headed. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dunn. Mr. Moon. Thank you. Since we have a work session coming up February 4th I'm just gonna just to mention a couple of things a first of all I appreciate the work done by budget chair and vice chair and the presentation by the superintendent but one thing there was a little at least little disappointing was that we didn't get the presentation

[04:13:36] material until like a few minutes before the meeting started I mean we were by the time we received an email with the material we were in the closed session so we're willing to really be able to take a look at and and you know unlike budget chair and vice chair who are able to provide very thoughtful remarks and they presented a budget the other 10 of us or eight of us were in dark so that i found a i must say the disappointing hopefully from the next year that

[04:14:15] It won't happen again. I mean, that's my request. I can speak to that, Mr. Yes. Tonight is not a work session. Tonight is the presentation of the budget by the superintendent and budget team, and part of that budget team is our budget chair and vice chair.

[04:14:35] So we do not have a history of putting up this particular budget document well in advance of the meeting. Historically, at least in the last five years, it's been. Thank you, Mr. that must be a new practice you know pre-2019 board we always had more advanced notices of materials to be presented in public having said that some of the questions that I will bring up

[04:15:09] at the work session would include amount of SR funding that will be lost obviously because federal government is not going to continue funding that anymore. And another question is whether we are discontinuing any of the programs because I am trying to anticipate questions from funders, funding authorities, whether we did take a look at all our programs and these are the things that we have decided not to do and resulting in certain savings, et cetera.

[04:15:49] if you could share with us at the workstation that i would appreciate that very much yes sir and also you know looking at the salary comparison i think you mentioned about 25 years and 30 years being ours is 25 years 25 steps and other jurisdictions 30 steps you know obviously the midpoint when you talk about masters midpoint ours could be after 12 years and others could be after 15 years whether I am interpreting that correctly and then may make some differences

[04:16:25] in the amount of what other jurisdictions pay versus what you pay yes sir we'll have an answer ready for you okay thank you thank you Mr. Moon Dr. Anderson yes thank you and none of my thoughts here are for you to answer right now it's really just preparation for next time I would definitely like to see some greater detail particularly regarding the targeted investments it's kind of a big block with many different initiatives i'd like to get a sense of

[04:17:01] the disaggregated allocation of each of those initiatives i would also like to have some sort of update in terms of where we are with the bulge work because i know that's been a long-term conversation and lastly you talked quite a bit about 53 million dollars that's been reabsorbed or sunset if we can if you could please provide some details in terms of how are these reabsorbed and what was cut specifically if you could provide those details for the fourth I would appreciate

[04:17:36] it thank you. Yes ma'am. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Miss St. John Cunningham. Thank you for the presentation of this budget i'm not going to ask a question i just want to iterate that this is not a needs-based budget this is a basic needs based budget i mean we are at the lowest level of what our needs are it is not there's not any fluff and i think that we can't lose the importance of that

[04:18:16] we all know that the best investment any community can make in the future success of that community is to invest in the education of their children and I seriously hope that our funding partners can hear that and that we can come up with a difference because all of our children deserve more than just basic needs. Thank you Ms. St. John Cuning. Ms. Marin. The success of our public

[04:18:55] school system is not solely the responsibility of this school division. Our funding comes from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors who manage the Fairfax County government. It's time to work differently between our public schools and the county government. We need the county to step up to do a new way of doing business. We have collective bargaining instituted by the state.

[04:19:13] This is a new way of working and a critical way to retain our employees and the county and school division should be partners actively working together to maximize our outcomes. We have We have sustainability goals, joint environmental goals, yet I see our two entities working in silos on this.

[04:19:29] Partnering on the provision of services and economizing on joint costs is a no-brainer. I see room for improvement. We have pedestrian safety needs and as recently as last week we heard a proposal for our educators and principals to be taking assessments of speed zones and crosswalks.

[04:19:45] We must remain mission critical. Traffic safety is not our mission. And our facilities. While facility funding is not included in this operational budget, maintenance costs could have been but needed

to be omitted based on limited funding the bulk of the maintenance of our 8.7 billion dollars in public facility assets falls to the school division and yet in addition to instruction of a hundred and eighty thousand hundred and eighty thousand students during the school year our schools were the location of 500,000 community hosted events as arranged through the school divisions community use program and the proposed budget was just talking about maintenance not even improvements which of course is in the

[04:20:21] capital improvement program which tells its companion story of funding woe when our children's and when our children enter our schools they are still constituents of Fairfax County the responsibility to steward them into adulthood is not the sole responsibility of the school division I've seen our superintendent be unimaginably creative in ways just tonight we talked about ways to recruit teachers we need to do to work differently and work with the County Board of Supervisors and our superintendent and our County Executive need to work in different ways together. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Marin. Ms. Dixit.

[04:20:57] Thank you, Dr. Reid, for the budget presentation. I will only say this, and my colleagues have shared most of it, is we are at the cusp of, you know, losing a great public education in the country. And Fairfax County is doing a great job in sustaining that and being, I should say, were leader in this however if we do not meet the needs of our educators the cost of living is really high and living in a county or working in the county and commuting we will lose our educator a lot of them are waiting for this

[04:21:36] budget to go through if this is fully funded we will not only retain our teachers will attract more teachers we will get to the excellence and we'll do better and better but right now we're at that stage that we could lose and we are not a losing team we are not a Fairfax will not lose so I would appreciate everybody in the stakeholders to support this and and make this a full fully funded budget thank you thank you miss Dixit agenda item 9 consent agenda our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure Roberts rules provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval by the board

[04:22:14] 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 is about to be on the screen and when it gets there, here it comes. Is there any objection to approving the consent agenda? Hearing and seeing no objection, the consent agenda is approved. Agenda item 10,

[04:22:52] business. The following are new business items, agenda items. There will not be a vote on these items this evening, but action is scheduled for a future meeting. Agenda item 11, Superintendent Matters. I call on Dr. Reed. I will be extraordinarily brief, which is to say Happy New Year, and I appreciate everyone's patience and grace through our weather decisions, and I'm proud to announce that it's going to be 50 degrees next week. So I want to go a full week without discussing weather but I do appreciate the community's efforts

[04:23:29] patience and grace so thank you very much and let's have a great rest of our winter week next week. Thank you Dr. Reed. Agenda item 12 board committee reports I call on Mr. McElveen for a report from the audit committee. The audit committee continues to review its annual audit report. Thank you. I call on Mr. Dunn for a report from the comprehensive planning and development committee. We had a very productive CPDC meeting out of that we referred the recent public-private partnership report to the Facilities Planning Advisory Committee for them to review and provide their analysis, both of the report provided by facilities

[04:24:09] and the staff response. In addition, we voted on two motions to request the chair and vice chair to schedule work sessions. The first work session would cover new construction management approaches, including design-build and construction management at risk.

[04:24:26] And a second work session would focus on public-private partnerships and swing spaces. Through the combination of these efforts, we will be building on the great work that's been done in recent months by Ms. Szymanski and her team in the Facilities Department. And we will chart a new direction for FCPS to accelerate the construction of school buildings, school renovations, and do so at lower cost and faster time frames.

[04:24:51] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dunn. I call on Ms. Leidy for a report on the Governance Committee. continues to work on policies we are currently trying to work together with the superintendent's office to develop a plan of attack because of the backlog of policies we have not reviewed in previous years due to things taking precedent like the boundary policy and the grading policy but we are hard at work and hopefully we'll be bringing policies to the board to improve sooner than later thank you very much agenda item 13 board matters without objection and we will skip board matters this evening.

[04:25:27] Seeing no objections, agenda item 14, at 11:25 PM we are adjourned.



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