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

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- Official School Board page (FCPS): <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board>

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[00:00:29] This October 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 their performance of the national anthem by the Fairfax Villa Elementary School 6th grade chorus under the direction of Mary Gaskins.

[00:00:47] I pledge allegiance. - To the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible

[00:00:58] for liberty and justice for all.

[00:02:46] Can we give our amazing students another round of applause, please? Agenda 3.02, Announcements: If you would like to receive 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.

[00:03:06] Please reference the QR code on the agenda or visit www.fcps.edu/boarddocs. Tonight's meeting is being broadcast on Cox channel 99, Verizon Fios channel 11, and live streamed on YouTube and at our website at www.fcps.edu backslash live stream.

[00:03:27] Agenda item 3.01, proclamation honoring National Red Ribbon Week. I call on Mr. McDaniel for a proclamation. Thank you. Whereas the National Family Partnership, a national leader in drug

prevention, education, and advocacy sponsored the first Red Ribbon Week in 1988 in response to the murder of DEA agent Enrique Camarena, in which angered parents and youth in communities across the country began wearing red ribbons as a symbol of their commitment to raise awareness of the violence and destruction caused by drug abuse in America.

[00:04:01] And whereas the red ribbon program is based on scientific and evidence-based principles for substance abuse prevention and incorporates the following six prevention strategies, information dissemination, prevention education, alternative activities, community-based processes, environmental approaches and problem identification and referral and whereas the 2025 theme for Red Ribbon Week life is a puzzle solve it drug-free is a call to action emphasizing how living drug-free helps build a stronger brighter future with each positive voice fitting into the bigger picture it also serves as a reminder that every person is empowered to shape the communities around us

[00:04:40] through positivity bravery and strength and whereas Fairfax County Public Schools is committed to fostering a safe and supportive environment that empowers students to make healthy choices through offering activities and learning experiences which focus on the many ways cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and other drug use can negatively impact student lives including a substance abuse prevention program for students experiencing substance abuse. Whereas, and whereas the efforts of FCPS educators, counselors, and support staff are instrumental in equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to resist peer pressure and lead fulfilling drug-free lives, we especially commend

[00:05:17] our substance abuse program specialists and the role they play in reaffirming a cultural wellness and resilience in our schools. Now therefore be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board does hereby proclaim October 23rd through 31st as Red Ribbon Week in recognition of the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation and encourages students, families, and the Fairfax County community to unite and take a personal and visible pledge to a drug-free lifestyle.

[00:05:41] Is there a second? Second. Mr. McElveen, I will call for a vote. All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Sizemore-Hyzer, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself.

[00:05:57] That is unanimous for all board members present. Agenda Item 3.04, Proclamation Honoring Student-Athletes and Activities Month. I call on Mr. McElveen for a proclamation.

[00:06:12] Whereas National High School Activities Week was first proclaimed by Congress and President Ronald Reagan in October 1983 in recognition of the significant place extracurricular opportunities have in the growth of our high school students and how these programs and experiences help students to learn to set and achieve goals to organize their time effectively and to enhance the social skills that are needed to enjoy and succeed in life. And whereas the National Federation of State High School Associations expanded this week to National Activities Month in 2012 to properly celebrate the contributions and benefits students experience by participating in athletics and activities such as speech, debate,

[00:06:50] music, drama, and other student groups. And whereas national studies indicate that students who participate in school athletics and activities have higher grade point averages and attendance than non-participants, and participation in school activities is one of the most accurate predictors of success after college. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools offers a wealth of athletics opportunities both through Virginia High School League and through club sports throughout the fall, winter, and spring for

high school students and and cross-country and track and field for middle school students, which encourage team building, confidence, and personal growth. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools stresses the

[00:07:29] importance of providing a well-balanced activities program to augment the learning activities in the classroom and provides opportunities for student growth and enrichment in a variety of extracurricular areas including student government, safety patrols, performing groups, journalism, drama, general and special interest clubs, and honor societies. Now, therefore be it resolved, the Fairfax County school board does hereby proclaim october 2025 as student athletics and activities month in recognition of the many achievements by students participating in school athletics and activities and the generous contributions and effort of the athletic coaches and trainers club sponsors

[00:08:06] student activity staff parents faculty and school communities who support them is there a second second miss lady i will call for a vote all those in favor mr frisch mr mcdaniel miss Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Seismar-Hyzer, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself.

[00:08:26] That is unanimous for all board members present. I would like to welcome all those here in support of Student Athletics and Activities Month proclamation to please join the board for a

[00:08:36] photo in front of the dais. I would like to welcome those here in support of the National

[00:09:50] Red Ribbon Week proclamation to please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:09:55] agenda item 4.01 community participation the next order of business is community participation

[00:10:55] 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 www.fcps.edu backslash school board during the sign-up process community members acknowledge that they were informed of the board's expectations for proper decorum when providing comments.

[00:11:21] These expectations were also available online and with the printed agenda and the meeting materials in the back of the room. We ask audience members to be respectful of one another. Shouting and outbursts will not be tolerated. Please hold your applause until the conclusion of the 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 we are grateful for those who have come to speak with us today and thank you for your cooperation school board members will be listening but not responding um deputy clerk will you please read the first speaker Michaela Danner

[00:11:59] good evening school board members Dr. Reed today I am back to talk about how frustrated I am with middle school start times studies from the American Academy of Pediatrics say that starting school before 8:30 a.m. makes it harder for students to focus learn and most times stay healthy when we don't get enough sleep we feel tired stressed and sad and anxious that's not how school should make us feel in fact I've asked a handful

[00:12:36] of my friends what they think about this too and they agree with me I know from experience that waking up so early makes it hard to pay attention in class no matter how much we try by the time its first period some of us are still half asleep not because we're lazy but because our brains are aren't fully

awake yet if school started later we'd be more alert happier and more ready to learn we do better on tests be be nicer to each other and teachers would notice the difference too this isn't about wanting more free time in

[00:13:11] the morning it's about wanting a fair chance to do our best we can't control how our bodies work but we can change when we start school you have the power to help us succeed just by giving us a little more time in the morning to sleep. You chose this job to protect us and take care of us and I will say you're doing a really good job doing that in other important places but right now you're not when it comes to starting school at a good time. Is that you a lot of you know and say you care about this but you

[00:13:46] don't care enough to change start times and that is what makes me mad. Thank you. PJ hints I'm here to talk about the new Western high school I'm an Oakton freshman and I really want you all to know that I want to stay at Oakton this will be the third if I move to this school it would be the third new school in four years since elementary school for any sophomores making the switch and I don't think that that can promote a good learning environment when you

[00:14:26] constantly know no one and are stressed out because you have to make connections again with new teachers and new students this will make it much harder for the school to form a community. I'm also in Oakton DECA, which is a 500 person club with history, experience, and connections. A big part of that club is the upperclassmen, which this school would not have any, and it really adds to the experience, just like all my teachers, like Mr. Barrows, who runs the Oakton DECA. There are also 299 other clubs at Oakton that are mostly driven by upperclassmen and athletics. I play hockey, which is a club sport, and we only have a varsity team. I don't know how we would be able to get that start again

[00:15:04] only freshmen sophomores no coaches no connections and even if we were able to get coaches and ice time how would we be able to field a competitive team with only freshmen and sophomores same thing with all the sports would we have a JV football team only or would we put sophomore and freshman on a varsity football team I hope that puts into perspective what this would be feels like for an open high school student thank you for taking my thoughts into

[00:15:29] consideration Kara Danner good evening I'm speaking as a Fairfax County resident a parent of a middle school student and a CPS graduate and a long-time supporter of evidence-based school start times I want to express my concern about how the middle school start time initiative TIF has been managed and communicated in January 2023 the board approved

[00:16:05] a contract to study late start time options nearly two years later we have a motion to delay rather than substance about student outcomes or implementation and planning the motion initiating this work focused on operational feasibility and cost neutrality, but omitted reference to student health, safety, academic performance, the very reasons this issue matters.

[00:16:26] You all know the research. It's been clear for years. Adolescents need start times after 8:30 a.m. for adequate sleep for learning, safety, and well-being. The community has invested time and trust in FCPS to take this issue seriously.

[00:16:41] We need a transparent, data-driven plan, posted reports, and clear accountability for progress. Prefix County led the way once with high school start times. It's beyond time to demonstrate that same leadership for our middle school students. Thank you. Cole Mallard.

[00:17:17] Good evening.

[00:17:42] My name is Cole Mallard. I'm a Vietnam veteran, retired Voice of America journalist, and father of three former FCPS students. My remarks tonight pertain primarily to student safety. While your number one responsibility is to educate and prepare the 183,000 FCPS students to be productive members of the community.

[00:18:04] It's a big job, and you do a very good job in some areas. However, it is your responsibility to provide a safe environment that is critical for student success, in fact, for their very survival. Tonight, you have issued two proclamations, Red Ribbon Week to Educate the Dangers of Drugs and a proclamation honoring student-athletes and activities.

[00:18:26] Both of these proclamations highlight the importance of a safe school environment. I found this bottle, this plastic bottle with a funny metal insert in the cap about three to four years ago while walking my dog at McLean High School.

[00:18:44] This is the little funny thing I'm talking about there. I learned it's a contraption to smoke weed. Today, however, our students don't need this sort of contraption to do drugs, and we know that the drugs available to them are far more dangerous, if not lethal, and hard to detect.

[00:19:05] However, there is a way to keep many students safe that is not hard to detect, and that is keeping boys and men out of girls' sports and locker rooms and bathrooms. And finally, stop promoting a curriculum that leads to gender dysphoria and sexual engagement and then, surprise, a girl gets pregnant or trafficked.

[00:19:26] You send her to get an abortion without informing the parents. Please protect our students, include parents, please do something within your control to keep our kids safe and don't use a taxpayer dollars to groom them. Every FCPS high school by your own admission has had incidents.

[00:19:43] Hi I'm Erin Gaines I'm here to talk about school start times. I'm the parent of a first grader and a preschooler so we are just starting our time at FCPS. I have a lot of empathy for the middle school students and parents and recognize that

[00:20:20] data shows the importance of later school start times for middle schoolers but the options FCPS has presented in the latest survey are frustratingly unreasonable for elementary school families. I want to focus on a few impacts. First of all, the cost. Later start times for elementary schools will require families to pay for before school care when they didn't have to before. To my knowledge, these proposals don't include any additional money to expand SAC, which already has years-long wait lists. Our already late start school, which starts at 920, would start at 950, three hours after most kids are waking up. Even

[00:20:57] Even though I have a very flexible job, no job is that flexible. So families will have to pay hundreds of dollars every month for before school care. This is especially true for government workers with back to office policies. Second of all, safety. School release time so close to 5 p.m. means dark bus rides home, especially for a school like ours that have kids bussed for an hour to attend our deaf and hard of hearing program.

[00:21:19] And more buses on the road and bus stop drop offs during rush hour will create serious safety and traffic issues. Finally, the process. This process has lacked transparency. Parents found out about surveys through Facebook posts and text messages not from the district.

[00:21:34] And the survey design made it impossible to convey the true impacts of the time change, especially for families at already late start schools like ours. A 9:50 start time will be very challenging for working parents, and elementary families have to deal with our start times for at least seven years.

[00:21:49] Again, I'm sympathetic to the middle schoolers, but if middle school start times are moved later it should not be done in a way that increases the cost and burden and decreases safety for elementary school students and families. Thank you and Gordon. Good evening.

[00:22:18] I'm here just trying to emphasize the programming for New Western High School. It's very close to me and I happen to have a special need kids. So I want to express my my thoughts on how we want to schedule the how we want to structure the new western high school programs that try to supply enough of the support for for the students who may need a little bit more help and i know that the school teachers and the schools are doing great job and i am keenly aware that how blessed

[00:22:57] we are in this fairfax county that we have the funds to actually get an extra high school which is not easy I know that probably will cost a lot to actually get the teachers and specialty teachers so I just want to be here to you know encourage the school board and the same time trying to put that thought in so there are you know families like ours that not only the kids will would like to participate in new high school but also they may need a little bit more extra help when

[00:23:29] they start thank you Erin heights good evening thank you for the opportunity to to contribute this evening you heard earlier from my son PJ about his very strong feelings to stay at the school he is already immersed in Oakton High School and I'm just going to ask that you really prioritize that so that there's the least amount of disruption and

[00:24:07] the most amount of stability especially for those kids already enrolled in high schools that are not over capacity I realize that requires alternatives so I just want to share a few that we would suggest for you all to consider first establishing the Western High school as a county-wide magnet let the kids who are excited and enthusiastic to be at that school be at that school rather than disrupting the kids who are already immersed and thriving the communities elsewhere option two redirects strict crossfield elementary to franklin middle and then oakden high school our kids play sports and are social with the kids at wables mills at navy

[00:24:46] elementary and that prevents some of these pesky beater school issues we are only 10 of the population at carson so removing us and sending us to franklin makes a lot of sense option three is consider accommodations for students like my son who are at high schools already that are under enrolled we will drive our kids there we will do whatever you need but please don't ask us to move them in the middle of their high school careers i realize there's a lot to consider so we're going to ask that you all apply the same really thoughtful deliberation that you are to the

[00:25:22] county-wide redistricting conversations that you engage community feedback along the way and are transparent with that process it takes a lot of time so we may need to slow down it feels different than the broader conversations it feels rushed and our community is concerned thank you Please play the video testimony submitted by Stephanie Lindquist-Aurora.

[00:25:53] Good evening. Dr. Reed claims student test scores are improving, but let's take a look at how we're actually doing. About a quarter of FCPS students failed their math, science, and reading SOLs in

2025. That doesn't sound like academic excellence. Our most vulnerable students are failing at alarming rates. English language learning students make up 27% of the student population. In 2025,

[00:26:24] 69% of them failed reading SOLs, 98% failed writing, 56% failed math, and 68% failed science, while 76% failed their history SOLs. Taxpayer funds should be spent for positive student outcomes.

[00:26:43] You wasted \$980,000 for King and Spalding to investigate the abortion scandal, which was inconclusive. That seems like a million-dollar cover-up, which you topped off this week by placing the whistleblower on administrative leave.

[00:27:00] Meanwhile, you've cut 275 teacher positions this year while school board members hired personal secretaries with six-figure salaries, some that are doing campaign work on the taxpayer's dime. Also, our superintendent makes more than the U.S. president and has personal bodyguards.

[00:27:19] and then there's the nepotism chief of schools Giovanni Ponce hired his father-in-law Gustavo Suarez as the district's business operations assistant in a non-competitive process obviously we need an external audit of the budget and leadership decisions more generally people used to say that Fairfax County had amazing schools but no longer because your terrible leadership is sinking them moving forward you need to stop bloating gatehouse with more family staff and ensure that taxpayer funds are thoughtfully allocated to improve student outcomes.

[00:27:57] Thank you. - Carrie Anderson, that was our last public speaker. - Thank you, Mr. Jackson. Agenda item 5.01, student representative matters. Ms. Maconan can't be with us this evening, so her comments are, is she on now?

[00:28:17] Oh, I call on Ms. Maconan. - Thank you so much. Hello, Madam Chair, members of the board, and those listening in the audience are online. At our most recent SAC meeting on the 21st, students broke out into regional groups discuss what's happening in their respective communities talked about things that they're working that were working in their schools what's changing and what they want to see improve this year here's some of the most pressing topics that came up one of the most prominent topics was redistricting was redistricting and how it affects school pyramids and community identity many students express that while they understand the necessity of balancing enrollment they're concerned

[00:28:55] about the impact on school spirit and connection especially for students who have built long-term relationships in their current schools I mentioned the changes in feeder pattern can feel disruptive This is not just logistically but emotionally as students adjust to new environments. Others saw it as an opportunity to bring together different communities and increase diversity within schools, with some schools discussing partnering with neighboring pyramids.

[00:29:17] The overall theme was the desire for open communication and student inclusion throughout the redistricting process. Another major point of discussion was the new gradebook system being piloted this year. Students appreciate that the county is exploring new ways to make grading more consistent and transparent, but there's some uncertainty about how it works in practice.

[00:29:34] Students shared confusion about how assignments are weighted, how grades are calculated, and whether teachers across schools are interpreting the system in the same way. Another topic that has come up is how reassessments work with skills-based assessments, with skills needing to be retested in the same core to have an impact on the student's grade.

[00:29:50] There is a call for clear communication, not only to students but also for families, and what this new system means, how it supports fairness and equity in grading. The rolling gradebook being piloted has some notable changes from the gradebook we had in COVID years, and that difference should be highlighted. A particularly meaningful conversation centered on inclusive extracurricular opportunities, especially around the intersection of special education and athletics. Some schools have Best Buddies programs that help connect students with intellectual or developmental disabilities to peers through social and athletic activities. Others are building partnerships between sports teams and special education classes, creating moments of shared joy and school pride. Students discuss wanting to see

[00:30:29] those programs expanded and standardized across more schools so that every student, regardless disability can feel represented and included in school life. Several groups also raised concerns about the loss of certain mental health resources that were available last year but are now limited due to funding changes. Students spoke about how critical those supports were and how the decrease has been noticeable. Alongside those concerns, students discussed how important it is to raise awareness about the supports that do still exist because many students don't know how to access them until they're already in crisis. The desire is not only for restoration of resources but also for consistent, visible communication about where help is available. Finally, there was a lot of

[00:31:07] enthusiasm about pre-college preparation programs, particularly after-school workshops that help seniors navigate the common app, financial aid, and other college essays. Students said these programs make the process much less intimidating and more equitable, especially for those who might not have as much support at home. Expanding these opportunities across more schools was a shared suggestion since they directly help with the transition after high school. Students will begin been breaking up into their strategic plan groups next meeting and I cannot wait to share what they decide to tackle this year on behalf of the SA Student Superintendent Advisory Council I would like to thank the board for continuing to listen to student voices we look forward to continuing these

[00:31:46] conversations and finding ways to ensure that every student feels seen supported and set up for success thank you thank you miss McCona agenda item 6.01 action item certification of closed meeting compliance in order to comply with section 2.2-3712D of the Code of Virginia. It's necessary for the board to certify that since the Fairfax County School Board convened a closed meeting on October 23rd, 2025, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from public meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion

[00:32:23] convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the board during the closed meeting. Do I have a motion? Mr. Fresh. Is there a second? Mr. Moon. All those in favor? Mr. Fresh, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Seismar-Hyzer, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself. That's unanimous for all board members present. Agenda item 6.02, confirmation of action taken in closed meeting. I call on Dr. Anderson for a motion. Thank you. I move that the school

[00:32:58] board grant the school reassignment appeal of a student who was charged with an alleged crime that occurred in the community and to overturn the disciplinary decision of the division superintendent is there a second second all those in favor mr frisch mr mcdaniel miss marin mr mckelveen miss lady miss dixit miss sizemarheiser mr moon dr anderson and myself that's unanimous for all board members present. I call on Dr. Anderson for a motion. I move that the school board deny the

[00:33:38] grievance appeal of an employee that was considered on the written record in closed session. All those I'm sorry is there a second Mr. Frisch. All those in favor Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Dr. Anderson.

[00:34:06] Okay point of order can we recess for a moment thank you on track again Dr. Anderson can you

[00:34:57] you please read your motion? Absolutely. I move that the school board denied the grievance appeal of the employee that was considered on the written record in closed session. Is there a second? Mr. Frisch. All those in favor. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Sizemore-Hyser, Dr. Anderson, and myself. All those opposed. All those abstaining. Mr. Moon and Ms. Marin. Thank you.

[00:35:30] I call on Ms. Seizmerheiser for a motion. I move that the employee identified in the closed session be dismissed from employment for the duration of the 25-26 school year and that their contract will not be renewed for the 26-27 school year.

[00:35:51] Is there a second? Mr. Frisch. All those in favor. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Seizmerheiser, and myself. All those opposed. Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson.

[00:36:07] All those abstaining.

[00:36:09] Ms. Lady Deputy Clerk. I'm sorry. I missed Mr. McDaniel is in the affirmative. Mr. Mc McElveen is not. We're going to have a fun time with names tonight. Mr. Jackson, will you please read the vote vote is six three one. The motion carries. Thank you very much. Action item six point zero three strategic plan goal one report strong start pre K through 12 presentation and vote on Dr.

[00:37:10] for our presentation on strategic plan goal one report strong start pre-k through 12. Thank you madam chair and good evening board and the public listening. This evening I'm happy to share highlights from goal one and the amazing work that our educators and our young students and their families have done over the course of the past year. So just a reminder that this is a highlight presentation because we did spend significant time at a work session reviewing goal one and I appreciate the input feedback and introspection honestly

[00:37:47] that the board gave during the work session. For those at home note that the full report is attached online for your reading. I want to remind our community that of our five goals this is goal one which is a strong start pre-k through 12 goal one has recognizes that students need to have a strong start to their educational journey no matter when they enter our schools and there are actually six measures for goal one which were on this slide tonight i'm going to be sharing highlights focused on school

[00:38:22] readiness for our youngest learners and our growth for our multilingual learners so as we think about school readiness next slide thanks as we think about school readiness we discussed these early learning experiences and how important they are in building a foundation for student success. I want to share a couple of our key findings because we really I think had some things to celebrate this year and compared to a year ago our kindergartners our very youngest learners had a higher rate of readiness in the spring than they did at baseline. We also saw

[00:38:57] strong improvements from fall to spring and many of our students entered kindergarten with pre-k experiences we know early learning and early literacy is so important our very youngest learners with when we can accelerate learning we can close gaps much more quickly one of the things we also

know is the link between pre-k experiences and school readiness this increase was driven by greater student participation in both FCPS and Fairfax County VPI pre-k experience again which is a reflection of this board's investment in pre-k finally we actually

[00:39:37] anticipate meeting the state target for pre-k inclusion this year which has been a target of this board and our educators when we look at how we measure school readiness FCPS measures the readiness at both the beginning and the end of the kindergarten year by looking at three main areas reading math and self-regulation and so to demonstrate readiness our students need to meet benchmarks in all three of these areas these are defined by the Virginia kindergarten readiness program so as we think about this last year the reading

[00:40:14] screener that we use to assess readiness for kindergarten students changed from the PALS to the VALS assessment it honestly makes sometimes year-over-year progress difficult when we continue to change how we measure our children which is a bit of a theme in the Commonwealth at this time. The change of course was a result of the Virginia Literacy Act and the VALS screener is actually more rigorous and it better predicts reading risk and allows us to better identify students who would require early intervention. Because the VALS is more sensitive to identifying risk, the state noted that school divisions had more

[00:40:54] students classified as at risk and not meeting benchmarks. In other words, a harder test is harder to pass so one of the things that is noteworthy is when the screener became more challenging we had more students identified as needing support so here you can see our fall kindergarten readiness or those students who met all three benchmarks overall we saw 14% fewer kindergartners meeting all three reading benchmarks primarily driven by the change in the reading

[00:41:28] screener as I mentioned when we went from PALS to VALS the VALS screener actually is going to pick up more children who need support and while the numbers year over year may cause concern it actually does flag children who could benefit from early support and thereby be stronger readers by third grade fourth grade and on into their academic career while math and self-regulation data remain stable we did see a 16 percentage point decline for students meeting the reading benchmark again connected to the vowels instead of the pals given the

[00:42:08] timing of these sorry in the timing of these assessments assessments which are within the first three to five weeks of the school year fall readiness scores often tend to reflect the skills children come to kindergarten with since teachers really don't have within three weeks much time to show impact for their work. However we are continuing to monitor these data points to provide support as soon as possible. So as we look at school readiness among kindergartners in the spring the story is a different story and we're excited to report that we saw increased reading readiness levels for our kindergarten

[00:42:46] students up two percentage points from the baseline and honestly since they started further behind and ended further ahead we consider that progress with our kindergarten teachers and I'm going to tell you team kindergarten has been rocking it with a new curriculum and a new assessment our kindergarten teachers have really put in the time and their their work is showing real results gaps do still exist and we will require continue monitoring and attention because we know early readiness is so important one of the most impactful things we

[00:43:24] can do to prepare students for kindergarten is to provide a quality pre-k experience this slide highlights the impact of pre-k on kindergarten readiness and you can see that those students who've had a

pre-k experience actually generally are better ready 65 of our students who had this pre-k experience met fall readiness bench benchmarks whereas only 26 of those students that didn't have a pre-k experience entered kindergarten meeting those benchmarks and that's honestly a significant data points about a 40% gap so a quality pre-kindergarten experience preschool experience really sets our

[00:44:03] youngest learners up better for kindergarten increasing the percentage of kindergartners with a pre-k experience is a common interest between us in the county and it's something that as we continue to grow the number of our young children who have a preschool experience we will continue to see improvements in reading so while we share this data and we're excited when we continue to have more students enrolled it's not necessarily a data point we're really completely able to control as a school division whether parents have

[00:44:37] access to or can afford or are there spots available for preschool so we look at these data points and continue to work at making sure we have opportunities for pre-K within Fairfax County.

[00:44:56] So this is another increased percentage chart of students in pre-K overall, and it's driven by increased enrollment in our FCPS programs or county VPI programs. As this board knows, we've been continuing each year to provide funds to support increasing classrooms and so we are up from 22 percent we actually had 29 percent of our kindergarten students attend one of our programs which was up from 22 percent in school year 21-22 and it does show that these investments are that we're making are helping to close access gaps for students

[00:45:34] so again I think the work of the board you can see our budget resources in and budget resources out to actual opportunity and it's important based on the slide we saw that if they have these experiences they're going to be stronger readers just last week Virginia released the quality ratings for pre-k programs all FCPS programs continue to meet the state standards for quality and several of our schools were recognized in this year's report we actually had 16 of our FCPS schools and pre-K programs recognized so we're very proud of that and

[00:46:12] in Virginia the quality is monitored through the unified Virginia quality birth to five system which assesses which assesses the quality of observed teacher child interactions and the use of evidence-based curriculum aligned with Virginia's early learning and development standards so looking at rates of inclusion the video we also monitors inclusion which is another element of pre-k that's important for developing school readiness we've seen steady growth in this area with an almost 12%

[00:46:47] point increase over four years last year we estimate that 28% of our pre-k students met the definition for the video indicator 6a as a result we actually this year expect to exceed the video we target we also know that inclusion rates vary and for example the rates of inclusion for students with a primary or secondary disability category was 11% which was accomplished primarily through our paired classroom model and we do know we have work to do with our

[00:47:23] pre-k autism programs in particular and have not made the same level of progress with those programs so that's definite focus for us moving forward but if you not but and if you look at the chart the progress that we have made is significant in the sense that we have not met the video e target I don't think ever have we dr. Presidio so this will be the first time ever in the history of cps that will actually meet the inclusion target so if that's the only goal one data point I am very proud of how hard our team has worked to really

[00:48:03] make progress in making sure that our young learners have the opportunity our neurodivergent young learners have the opportunity to learn alongside our typically developing learners at a very young age excuse me to improve school readiness we're focused on four strategies and these are on the slide first strategy is focused on our shared role the second on expanding opportunities for inclusive preschool and as part of strategy 3 we continue to provide training to pre-k educators in evidence-based curriculum in the areas

[00:48:41] of literacy math and social-emotional skills and our final strategy is focused on transitions and developing foundational skills once students are in our kindergarten classes I think that the strategies over time are showing promise and as I mentioned in some areas clearly we're going to need to accelerate our work and we also need to recognize that there's an entire culture shift that's at play here as we add children add classrooms and integrate programs in a way we haven't traditionally this is an exciting

[00:49:19] time to be connected to FCPS preschool so I want to then shift to our multilingual learner process or progress and this is a very important area of focus for us particularly this year and one of the reasons it's such an important area is about one in five FCPS students is a multilingual learner which is to say almost 40,000 of our students are multilingual learners it is not an insignificant percentage of our population and we are proud of our multilingual learners and the strengths

[00:49:55] they bring to the instructional programming. This year our multilingual learners have made great gains in language acquisition. 57% of them met the state standard for WIDA growth, which is up 12 percentage points from our baseline.

[00:50:11] A higher percentage exited services last year, which is important because we know our multilingual learners once they exit our programs actually perform higher than students who were not in our programs. We saw some of the largest gains for our ELP level 4 students in both growth and exiting services this year.

[00:50:31] One of the ways we measure our learning progress for multilingual learners is this WIDA access test. This assessment evaluates skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and the state sets expectations for multilingual learners to make regular progress toward English proficiency each year.

[00:50:53] So let's take a look at some of the progress we've made. We continue to see gains overall and across student groups on this measure. All student groups have improved 10 or more percentage points from the baseline, with economically disadvantaged students and our Hispanic students showing the largest gains.

[00:51:12] We, this year, many of our schools, as you're out in schools visiting, you'll see that their Continuous improvement school plans are connected to the progress of our multilingual learners. This year's goal report also includes data on the percent of multilingual learners who successfully exited the program last year by gaining English language proficiency.

[00:51:35] This is not a data point we would expect to see close to 100% as we don't expect students to exit when they're just beginning when they're just beginning to acquire English skills. At the baseline, 10% exited the program successfully, and last year that rate increased to 14%.

[00:51:53] These successes we are observing in the data are a result of an intentional focus on four strategies as well. The first, focusing on direct explicit instruction provided to students in the English

language development. And recall that last year is the first time we've actually purchased K-12 basal services for English language development for all schools.

[00:52:18] and began piloting a digital English language development resource at 15 secondary schools to give students extra practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Our second strategy focused on enhancing English language acquisition and content area instruction and this year we're launching a multilingual learner micro-credential to increase teacher skills in supporting multilingual learners because we know 90 percent of our teachers are teaching multilingual learners our third strategy focuses on supporting students in schools who are not making expected progress we offered summer programming to long-term

[00:52:56] multilingual learners and are piloting a new ai tool support for multilingual learners as well the reading assistant with amira is the tool that is supporting literacy instruction for multilingual learners and the final strategy focuses on engaging our families and their students educational progress and this is by offering resources to support students continuing their language skills at home such as our family literacy program and access to family licenses for students using summit k-12

[00:53:29] so I think we've got one more slide which is that this concludes the presentation this evening and the highlights from the goal one report that a reminder we have spent a great deal of time discussing at a previous work session.

[00:53:48] So thank you, Madam Chair. I'll take questions. Thank you, Dr. Reed. I call on Ms. Marin for a motion. I move that the school board accepts the goal one strategic plan report for school year 2526.

[00:54:07] Second. Thank you, Mr. Frisch. Ms. Marin, would you like to speak to your motion? I'm glad that we have these regular updates on the strategic plan. It's something that just helps us benchmark the change. This is a wildly exciting report, I think, tremendous gains, proof that our teachers and educators are doing amazing work.

[00:54:31] The instructional, you know, the basal instructional curriculum is helping, and I think we're going to do a little bit more on that this evening. But, you know, I am passionate about early childhood, but there's only so much we can do. And, Dr. Reed, you are, like, getting to little kids as much as we can, putting them in classrooms, like, inch by inch.

[00:54:49] And really, it's that state role that we're waiting for to help fund this work that I know the whole board wants to do way more of. Thank you. Mr. Fisher, would you like to speak to your second? Yes, thank you. So this is interesting, right? And our goal, and when we do an executive limitation as part of your performance evaluation, the board is voting in those instances to say whether or not the presentation demonstrates adequate progress towards those indicators, which are an extension of the strategic plan work, right?

[00:55:21] but when we receive a strategic plan goal report we're simply accepting that you've given us a report and then we measure the quality of work done towards the strategic plan in our executive limitations work and so i just want to acknowledge that for the public who may not know the distinction that when we receive these reports we're just accepting that we've received the report and that's how it's been done for a long time i will say our governance manual is opaque in this regard and still references sorry our board's governance manual and still references the previous strategic plan throughout the document so perhaps we can take care of that

[00:55:58] in governance this year um i do want to dig in like ms marin into our pre-k work because whenever i think about this topic you know um we clearly offer a high quality product uh when it comes to pre-k but many young people children in Fairfax County still receive private services where the quality of instruction is not clearly not as good as it is an FCPS and we're kind of like in this position of where people want to grow that because it's a much cheaper way of getting kids in and getting them

[00:56:37] care and at the same time it's not the same level of quality instruction that they would receive here which would give us more of the added benefits that we know are existent when a child has access to services that stay with them through the trajectory of their education.

[00:56:54] So I know that the state has new report cards out for private services. I think that's a start in terms of accountability. I know that FCPS provides some instructional materials to help in those settings. What more can we be doing to help bridge the divide knowing our budget situation and knowing that when we're butting heads, nobody wins.

[00:57:20] Those are all comments I would agree with. One of the things, we know the importance of early childhood education. Quality preschool actually is a very economically wise decision. When children come to school ready to learn, fewer resources for supports later in their educational career are necessary.

[00:57:44] So we know there's both an economic and a self confidence benefit. The research is so very clear. I think at the end of the day, the data point that I find most compelling is for this nation to provide child care for every preschool child in this country would only cost 1% of our military budget.

[00:58:07] And as supportive as I am about our military And our military-connected families, 1% of that budget put toward universal pre-K for this country, I think would do dramatic things for the future of our country.

[00:58:26] I can't imagine Washington doing anything to help us right now, unfortunately. So I guess my question is, and we can talk about this perhaps another time, what about before that happens? more can we be doing before the federal government sees the error of their ways and steps in or the state sees the error of their ways and steps in well in lieu of a clarity of thought around the importance of early childhood at the national level i think that one of the things we're going to need to think about is how to better integrate tuition paying preschool perhaps with vpi and

[00:59:03] head start preschool spots as well as spots for developmental preschool and i think as As we think about providing some type of paired preschool instruction with tuition paying families as well.

[00:59:18] I think that we can begin to grow our program perhaps with less of a budget impact. And that's going to require a strong partnership with our county and also with our facilities team. As we conclude our boundary process for this cycle in January it'll be I'm very eager to see where we may have some spaces at some elementary schools to provide some of these paired sites but we're going to really need to think about how do we put together those families able to pay tuition that might be interested with positions that perhaps don't

[00:59:56] begin to grow our inclusion program even further. Thank you and I would be remiss you know Miss Marin mentioned this is the important work we're doing um and it feels like it's the first meeting in weeks that we haven't had Richmond politicians in our parking lot uh to observe this uh this great work that's happening in FCPS so I appreciate you bringing the presentation thank you. Thank you thank you

Mr. Fresh uh Ms. Seismar Heiser. Thank you and um this is a struggle for me and I know I've talked to you offline as well so I appreciate the conversations we have some

[01:00:34] incredible work we've done here and there's no you know I want to thank you and your staff for the focus you've had on the goal reports on preschool the data and it research is so utterly clear on the benefits of preschool and early childhood education on long-term success of students and I know you know this and and I agree we need help from the state and as someone who's been talking about indicator 5 and 6 from the states around inclusion for 15 years the fact that we have surpassed one is monumental I will say and this is not on FCPS it is very sad to me that the indicator that the state has for preschool inclusion is just 25 percent because what the

[01:01:14] state is saying this is the state not us the state is saying that they're perfectly fine with 75 percent of kids being segregated is what they're saying but that is not an indicator that we are in charge of so I want to thank your team for that I will say however and the multilingual progress that I saw on slide 17 is incredible as well. I will say however I am not sure I can support this report tonight. I have been asking for probably two years every time we've talked about preschool inclusion and the good work we're doing about what is going on with the students whose primary or secondary diagnosis is autism in particular those in the preschool autism class because we cannot be

[01:01:50] uneven in our inclusion efforts and your slide said only 11% of a child with a the primary or secondary diagnosed with autism is included, as opposed to the 25% or 26%. We can't leave students behind, and there's no reason that we are differentiating based on a label.

[01:02:12] So because of that, I am not sure I can support this today. I appreciate your reassurance that there's going to be a redoubled effort to make sure that we are more even in our inclusion efforts. I know for two years when I've asked, I haven't gotten as many answers as I would have liked.

[01:02:31] Please, I want you to know that it is monumental that we've met the state indicator and I don't want to gloss over that. I just hope that we can work to make it even across the board so all of our students can benefit from the science and research base that inclusion is. Because we know inclusion saves money, but even more importantly, it leads to better outcomes, right?

[01:02:51] And it leads not just to better outcomes in education, but in long term. So thank you for your work. I'm not sure I'm going to support this report tonight, but I'm looking forward next year for a more even report on inclusion. Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Ms. Seizmerheiser. Dr. Anderson. Thank you.

[01:03:10] I'm particularly glad that you followed up with some of the questions that were asked by the board during the work session and that you shared with us. So I want to take a moment to take a look at that. it is very clear that pre-k matters and the the gap between students who are who do not have pre-k it's 27 percent even after intervention by staff and I'm looking at the spring data because they've been with us for for the year but something that I thought was curious that I noticed here is that our students with pre-k increased nine points and our students with without pre-k increased 21 points

[01:03:49] Can you speak a little bit about what what happened behind there? OK, let me think about that. You said I apologize. You said that students with pre-K increased nine points, right?

[01:04:05] And the students without increased 21, 21. I think it was that without Fairfax County preschool. Miss Neal, can you clarify that, please? I know you just put that data set together. So, Dr. Anderson, I believe you're referencing the spring readiness data.

[01:04:20] So that was in the work session, but not in this slide presentation for this evening and and just to clarify I think you're asking what the driver we think is in terms of why we saw the larger gains for students without the pre-k experience yeah the gap still exists but they had they had much more growth so I just want you to kind of speak a little bit to that I think that's something certainly that we would have to do some additional analysis on to be able to answer that question with with confidence but I would certainly say that we're seeing students obviously the gaps closing in terms of the students

[01:04:58] were seen at risk in the fall to not at risk in the spring due to a lot of that intentional intervention work that's happening but we would have to do some additional analysis to be able to answer that question sure absolutely thank you um one of the other things that i wanted to point out that you sent to us was the um disaggregation of the three benchmarks for our students i think a colleague had asked can we hustle that out and clearly it has come across that some of the strengths of our students are in the self-regulation realm and um reading is the area that there that

[01:05:35] requires a little bit more support so i appreciate having that and i i'm very glad to see the wita performance and that you outlined how when our students exit um the you know the ell world um multilingual world my apologies um they do perform better than our students who are native english speaker English speakers and that shows up on their SOL assessments that shows up in the scores in the assessments that the that the state provides and it makes me it makes me wonder at this point

[01:06:08] how will that then show up when we have these new cut scores I'm very concerned about that impact could you speak a little bit to how do we see these new cut scores impacting the where our students are and the progress that we've made so thank you Dr. Anderson I think that we did prepare a couple slides for the board this evening to share on the cut score so I appreciate the question so I think the clerk thank you Kevin if you can or Janet the impact on the proposed cut scores

[01:06:47] let's start with this slide and I I think that we've talked about this at several meetings but this visual is so I think startling to be honest the cut scores for example what we did is we took last spring's math SOL scores for Fairfax County Public Schools and the sort of turquoise on the left is the old cut score results and cut scores means the level it would that passing obviously is set at.

[01:07:19] And then with the new cut scores is in the very dark, the indigo blue. And it's absolutely startling to look at. Same test, same kids, just different cut scores. And for those at home watching, this is something that's still being debated at the Virginia Board of Education.

[01:07:41] And we are really strongly recommending that this process be more transparent and actually be paused at this point because we're almost at the end of first quarter and the initial plan was to have this be in place for this year's tests.

[01:08:01] So and I also I think Dr. Presidio is here as well as Ms. Hunstad and Ms. Neal and one of the things that's been very challenging is the math standards have changed in the last couple years the types of problems the rigor of the math tests have changed and now we're going to change the score necessary to pass a harder test with new standards it just it really feels like it's a lot of change within a very short amount of time and we know that change management is very

[01:08:36] important so we really would encourage and those at home and I know our PTAs and our elected board to make sure we provide feedback to the Board of Education about this cut score issue and I also want to add this morning I had an opportunity with Miss Neal to do an ed week interview and we

talked about the doing away of the blue ribbon program at the national level and how the recognition of educational excellence in this country is something that is such a

[01:09:13] a powerful reminder of the power and promise of public education and when we do away with programs that celebrate excellence that we're not doing a service really to public education and if one of the reasons and it's been stated several times that we're changing the cut scores and the test and new standards is to raise expectations I'm going to take issue with that because it actually will have the exact opposite effect because one of the communications we're going to be providing tomorrow we I met with Principal Stroud from Langley High School one of

[01:09:51] our amazing 25 high schools here in Fairfax County Public Schools and we looked at geometry as an example and this past year I believe it was 96 percent of our Langley Saxons that took the geometry SOL passed. Well, if you change that cut score, it would have been 50%, 50%. Now, I can't imagine that that's going to inspire more Langley Saxons to take higher levels of math courses.

[01:10:20] Higher expectations doesn't mean changing the score we give students. It means changing their educational experience. And so what we want to make sure is that students who successfully are completing geometry are able to take algebra trig and precalc and AP calc AB and BC and multivariant calculus or linear algebra and concrete math. Actually having students progress to taking and leaving our school division with a higher understanding of math concepts is what raising expectations means and that requires funding and our expectations that our students

[01:10:54] are capable of higher level coursework not quarreling over changing the scores in basic math classes so I really think we need to rethink what the impact of these cut score changes had and how it actually flips I think having higher expectations so let's also take a look at reading what that would look like year over year this is I think as or more startling again left side our scores from last year right side the indigo would be the scores based on new cut scores in many

[01:11:32] cases it's actually outrageous what the impact is and so i really encourage those at home we'll be sending communications out to make sure that our voices are are heard i think parent partnership is critical and as we partner with our parents and families to send a message about what we really mean when we talk about high expectations i think that's critical at this time no thank you thank you for providing this information and to me it's jarring just to see the results and i wonder if When you do the modeling, let's say for schools like TJ, what would that show?

[01:12:06] Do we have significant changes in how those students are performing, knowing very well that they're very, very bright students? Moving the goalpost does not increase rigor. It just moves the goalpost. I would like to go back, please. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Ms. Lady.

[01:12:23] Thank you. Good evening. Since we're talking pre-K, I have to give a shout-out to my lovely granddaughter who's at my house. Can't wait to see you in the morning, but I think it's bedtime. But I will start there because when I am interacting with my grandchildren who are in pre-K, it's amazing to me the learning that's taking place, the fast pace, the connections that are made outside of that learning space and translates other places.

[01:12:51] So I, again, want to emphasize the early intervention and the importance of that. think the data speaks for itself Dr. Reed you talked about the 1% of the military budget and the fact that it's the best economic investment we can make not mostly because if kids are learning by second grade reading by

second grade then their trajectories pretty much change numeracy and literacy so having said that I think I'm very pleased with slide 12 which talks about the fact that we're down to 18% of our kindergartners don't have a pre-k experience I'd like to

[01:13:28] make that a little smaller and talk about the preschool that's at the Western site it is my hope that we will keep it as a preschool I was in there my most recent tour and I think the maximum capacity is like 60 in there now we're gonna have learning folks but it's very well designed I feel like we could service quite a few kids from a fairly needy area where there is needed preschool and also again this is Robin speaking from her perspective but we don't have our early childhood program we have teachers for tomorrow but we don't have early childhood in our system so if we can make that an academy

[01:14:08] program I think it also help our older kids so that's one thing I want to talk about I'm incredibly proud of that for the first time ever we're meeting the inclusion target and I think you know well I understand there's always room we always have targets we always have goals you know what I've seen just in my short tenure on this board and then the year ish prior when you came in as our superintendent the the change the progression the higher standards the implementation the fidelity of teaching is all resulting in higher scores and so

[01:14:45] I thank you in the work in your leadership and the team and yes we we definitely can can and we always do you're a good to great person one of the things I really appreciate about you and your expectations of your leadership team and all your principals and all the teachers is we don't ever say we're pretty good you know let's rest we're always striving for it so I really appreciate that and also the multi language learner improvement is incredible is incredible so I will be supporting this report and again I not only is the

[01:15:20] The President eliminated Blue Ribbon Schools, but also the Presidential Service Award that many of our students were striving for, actually got the hours for, and then couldn't put on their college applications this year. And I think it's a sad thing because it's another thing that we want our kids engaged in, and it's not there anymore to achieve.

[01:15:39] So again, thank you for the great work that you're doing with pre-K. Thank you. Ms. Tixit. Thank you, Dr. Reed, for the presentation. I agree with my colleague, I am in support of this goal report, and I totally believe that we are doing the best in the state in terms of education, educating our students.

[01:16:01] And I just feel this cut scores and new cut scores are just to, you know, demoralize school divisions across the commonwealth, and the expectation of excellence comes, you know, should be both ways.

[01:16:17] We do not receive excellent funding from our state, but they do want excellence in education. I feel like if we are one of the best performing county in the state, what is happening to the other counties?

[01:16:36] Do we know how are they doing in terms of the cut scores now they're facing? The framework or the new state framework for accountability, it's very difficult to know exactly. And again, these are projections because the state still hasn't released the scores, which were supposed to have been released in September, I believe.

[01:16:59] So, Ms. Neal, do we have any ETA on when our framework scores will actually be released because they're already quite late? So the most recent update we have is they do have an external consultant who's coming in to look at the data with the state for our SPSF information.

[01:17:15] And we're anticipating sort of mid-November would be the earliest we would see anything. Oh, dear. So mid-November. Yeah. So that's well after first quarter is over. So, yeah, thank you for that, Sonia.

[01:17:32] But I totally believe that we are educating the students we want to and how we want to. I also want to say almost like if we can do universal pre-K, like a lot of my colleagues support, there'll be so many working families who are literally, you know, have to, moms, especially mothers who are staying home because they can't afford a private kindergarten or a pre-K.

[01:17:55] So this is going to help the students get started early, and I just feel we have the money, like you said, that 1% of the DoD budget can be given to them. I'll support that. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Dixit. Mr. Dunn. I'm looking at slides eight and nine and I'm trying to figure out certain things about these slides because they're they seem somewhat troubling. What is what is the baseline on slide eight and nine? What does

[01:18:29] that constitute? Ms. Neal, you want to clarify, please? Sure, I believe and Mr. Dunn, I'll have to double check in the report, but it's normally the first three years prior to the start of the strategic plan. The three school years prior to 23-24 when we started our strategic plan. On slide nine, what is the target? Is that mandated by state law, state policy? No, that is an internal target we've set year over year to get to our end 2030 goals. So we have mapped out annual targets to keep ourselves on a growth line that shows consistent growth year over year. So we hit our

[01:19:07] 2030 targets. I'm just troubled by the fact that we have a different target for white children than we do for black children and Hispanic children it seems like we we shouldn't divide children but we should try to have a high standard that all children meet regardless of their racial background is there a reason for that I don't think it's a different target I think it's a percentage that was consistent which a percentage of I believe that's how they were set but Miss Neal do you want to clarify yep so our our end of goal report targets who

[01:19:44] are 2030 targets are the same for all students the annual growth that students need to make based on their starting point looks different. So that's why the targets look different. So in some cases, some of our student groups may need a 2% increase year over year to get to the end of year or our 2030 goals.

[01:20:00] Some of our student groups may need 10% increases year over year to get to those 2030 targets. So it is a paced out over the seven year duration of our strategic plan to ensure that there's consistent growth happening year over year. So what you've done is you've taken an all student And then you've broken it down along racial lines, is that correct?

[01:20:21] No, the board asked for the data presented in this manner to be disaggregated. So we're presenting it in the way the board requested on the original measure. What Ms. Neal is saying is that if you're farther behind, if you're at 20%, whatever category, then you've got 80% to make up.

[01:20:40] So we're going to have to have more aggressive targets for that group than if you're already at 80% and you only have 20% to go. So some groups have more ground to make up each year than others to get all groups to the same place by 2030.

[01:20:55] And it just seems like if you compare the baselines in slide 8 with the baselines in slide 9, the baselines in slide 9 are lower in general than the baselines in slide 8. So it suggests that we're kind of lowering, I guess there's less achievement for students who start kindergarten in the spring.

[01:21:18] that what's shown by the slide no it's the spring scores are a different measure than the fall readiness scores and in each case we took the cumulative score of the prior three years to the strategic plan but they're two completely different data sets um if i would understand that yeah it's not a pre and post it's two data sets okay um thank you i'm happy to go through those

[01:21:50] more in more detail in our one-on-one thank you mr dunn mr moon oh thank you madam sure thank you for the presentation i'll i'll be supporting the motion now with that said could you repost the a slide showing how the a changed cost scores might impact yes sir uh math or reading math or let's start with the math you know you talked about what the board asked you to provide in

[01:22:26] terms of different subgroups the data disaggregated this aggregated scores right there one on the left one on the right with the higher cut up scores and list with this this might show maybe at a higher level higher level there is more achievement gaps amongst the different subgroups so when we talk about SOR

[01:23:00] scores, we generally look at a past proficient level as opposed to past advanced. With higher cut-up scores, it may not necessarily be past advanced scores, but at a higher level, maybe gaps among different groups might be even bigger. At least I think that's something I could glean from looking at these graphs. So, great question. Ms. Neal, do we have any insight into

[01:23:35] the advanced versus proficient passing with the new cut scores we can go back and check to see if we've done some analysis on that and get back to you Dr. Reed the point I'm trying to make is this as we try to address eliminating reducing that human gaps by 2030 or a certain point we shouldn't be just looking at past a proficient level but even at a higher level that all students should be encouraged should be prepared to pass at a much higher level

[01:24:14] and those gaps and I wish to work to eliminate those gaps yes sir thank you I'm gonna take a quick turn and then we've got some go backs to go to I can't help but use this opportunity to reiterate one more time that we have had a new curriculum a new accountability and accreditation system that we don't even have the full details of at this point we have new tests we have new standards it and now we were still doing okay so now we have new cut scores it's

[01:24:49] it's incredibly difficult to not see this as targeted the question that I had though was I'm assuming these are these are our raw scores correct there that I lost the term when when we get them that are normalized or whatever the the word of art is. These are unadjusted scores. Thank you. So I assume that we are going to at some point receive adjusted scores. Are those typically higher or lower than the, than? I think if you

[01:25:24] recall, Ms. Anderson, that we'll have fewer students coming out of those adjustments because those adjustments change now with the rule changes for our multilingual learners. So we'll see what those differences are as the frameworks are released. They used to be much higher because our multi well not because they used to be much higher and there were factors that supported those being much higher in particular I believe we had 11 semesters before multilingual learner scores counted in the adjusted scores correct

[01:26:01] so they were now more time to reach right they had five and a half years to reach proficiency and I believe as of this year they'll have a year and a year and a half right um so in in this case if we do have adjusted scores that are higher our disparity between where we have are right now and where we will be

next year is going to be a wider gap than we're even seeing here correct i believe that's likely true but miss neil you are closer to the numbers i don't know if i can definitively answer that tonight but i believe you're down the right

[01:26:35] track so i mean i i just don't know a way that so significant such a significant number a quarter of of our students are going to end up not doing as well overnight. It just doesn't make any sense. In addition to the changes to the SOL law that are due to go into place that many of my colleagues are working hard to try to make sure is right sized for a division of our stature and size.

[01:27:04] So I just want to keep reiterating to anyone that may be watching that we are not failing just because outside systems are being set up the way that they are intentionally to make us look that we are.

[01:27:19] So I want us to keep doing the good work that we're doing and keep working to have students improved and keep thriving. So it's just unconscionable to think that this is the plan. Ms. Seismerheiser.

[01:27:37] - Thank you, I'm gonna pick up on where you left off around sort of the plan. To your point, we changed math standards, We changed accreditation standards in the middle of the year without change management or planning. And now we're changing cut scores. And I think the one thing when you mentioned PTAs and families to be aware is that Virginia, I don't remember how many states, but it's one of the few states that has high stakes testing at high school.

[01:27:59] So these change in SOL test scores don't just impact school accreditation or school accountability, but for high school students, it actually impacts their ability to graduate high school. Because if they don't pass five SOLs in various subjects, they don't graduate.

[01:28:19] So even if they've passed their grade level classes, even if they would have passed under the previous cut score, it also impacts the locally awarded verified credit, which had been 375 to 400, which is unclear whether that's going to change or not for certain students with disabilities.

[01:28:37] So we are students who are already in high school without the chance to maybe do the extra learning or the extra prep for a higher SOL score that's needed to graduate, may not graduate. And that should be a four alarm fire for some of these families, you know, and just people in general that if you're going to do these changes, you've got to do the change management so we don't punish the students because we didn't plan and do the change so they could actually learn and prep to the level they need to learn and prep for.

[01:29:07] So the other thing that I really would love to understand is what is the rationale behind the higher cut scores? Is it because we think that that level is what's needed to be proficient as a high school graduate or not? And I don't know if that's a question I think should be asked.

[01:29:23] You don't, of course, have that answer. The state is doing this. So I just wanted to make sure that we get that out there, that this is an impact on current high school students' ability to graduate, and we saw that 50% may not pass. What does that mean for seniors who need to pass an SOL to graduate this year?

[01:29:39] Can I have one little go back? Sorry. What I was going to talk about was I didn't get to. Okay, that's fine. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. addition to that one of the things that I want to point out that it's become exponentially harder to keep up with what is the right and what is the passing score because it

used to be 400 all grade levels all subjects now if I'm looking at math I'm sorry reading it ranges anywhere from 444 to 479 if I'm looking at math it ranges anywhere from 443 to 452 so if I have a third grader

[01:30:18] he might pass at 443 but if my child is in 8th grade they need a 430 parents can't keep up with all of that I could barely keep up with all of that but I knew 400 was passing 500 was advanced 600 is a perfect score 375 to 399 you get to retake now we are all over the place this is just really really poor planning and I'm really excited because that was one of the things I wanted to raise the impact on the end of course for our high school students we're talking the difference between graduation and not graduation. And when I saw this this morning I'm like this is just so jarring. It should really really be something that our parents are highly

[01:30:56] concerned about. I did have one follow-up question because I asked this last year. It took me a long time to wrap my mind around it. The kindergarten readiness, the fall versus the spring. They're not pre and post but we are presenting them like they are pre and post. How do we evaluate the impact of work with those students once they come to us because we know they come to us all over the place based on who they are and what they've done but usually we can say we worked with you so this is a growth that we're seeing but we're if we're administering two different tests we don't have a space to do that yes ma'am so dr. Presidio do you want to talk a minute about that and maybe miss

[01:31:35] Hunstad or miss Neal could answer sort of the data set piece well I would actually characterize it a little bit differently because when we give the assessment in the fall right at the very beginning of the year the first few weeks of the year that kind of establishes the baseline for where the students are when we give the assessment in the spring then we can see the growth that students have made over the course of the year yes but this is miss Neal you remember we talked about this last year we have some students that in the fall their scores were greater than in the spring so we unschool them while

[01:32:13] they were with us I'd like to think that's not what happened no I think I think what we tried to do showing the two different data sets particularly in dr. Reed I think did a good job in the presentation talking about some of the changes that have happened so that we've seen the changes with the assessment the literacy assessment from moving from the PALS assessment to the vowels assessment and how that much more rigorous vowels assessment compressed those scores in the fall in comparison to prior years because it was much more rigorous assessment than the PALS but by the time we got to the spring students

[01:32:50] had actually made a lot of growth and even surpassed prior years performance on a less rigorous assessment. So for this data set what I think I'm hearing is that it's best to compare it year over year rather than fall to spring. I think it depends what purpose you're looking for if you're looking at overall performance for students I think that's correct but if you're trying to gauge the growth students made throughout the course of the year. I think it's helpful to look at how did students do in the fall compared to how did students do in the spring. I think that was my time. Thank you Dr. Anderson. Seeing no others we're going to call for the vote for the motion

[01:33:28] that is on the screen. All those in favor Mr. Frisch, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself. All those opposed? All those abstaining?

[01:33:44] Miss Sizemore Heiser with Mr McDaniel away from the table. Action item 6.04 K through 12 start school start times project update. I'm going to pass the gavel to Vice Chair Lady.

[01:34:03] Thank you, Madam Chair. I call on Dr. Reed for presentation on K 12 start times project update. Thank you, Vice Chair Lady. Tonight I'm going to really be providing an informational update on school start times and a review of where we are today.

[01:34:19] and as I walk through this I also want to recognize the really really hard work of our chief operations officer Andy Muick and Paul and DeAndrade who's here our executive director of transportation there has been a significant amount of work that continues to be done on this topic so I just want to share that these These were the options that were presented by our consultant this past February in 2025.

[01:34:55] Some of the constraints on this project were really cost neutrality, to not move secondary or high school times, and to not allow for civil twilight loading or unloading for elementary school students. Our current run time is 110 minutes, and the run time is defined as the total time from the first morning start 7:30 a.m. to the last morning start which is 9:20 so that's the amount of time buses are running to get students to start the first classes to the last on the runs four of the six proposed options a B C

[01:35:34] and D were not cost-neutral and had run times of 80 or 90 minutes which when our team actually modeled those routes on in a bus in our traffic on our roads it was not possible to get those run times to 80 or 90 minutes so while it looked possible on in the plan for whatever reason I don't know if it's construction or congestion or whatever but it wasn't possible when our teams actually took

[01:36:07] buses on the road to try to model of the two remaining alternatives options c2 and e only e was assessed to be achievable based on the run time again meaning that c2 just wasn't able to be to get to a run time that was going to be helpful while c2 was cost neutral the team determined that a 100 minute run time with the current number of buses driver vacancies and known traffic constraints this would result actually in an increase in later deliveries across

[01:36:43] all three tiers of busing in february we still had over 100 driver vacancies and the number is much lower today that still hovers at around 60. so c2 was not deemed really doable by our transportation department so again only e which i think we've established is not ideal based on the elementary in particular start times as late as 9 50 for a particular tier of the elementary so

[01:37:18] looking at the start time options for september and again i know there was a lot of confusion well about why these two models and i want to be very clear publicly these two models were not selected by the board they were not approved by the board they were not in any way acted upon by the board these two models came from our offices because the what we tried to do was look at what would budget neutral options be and the team worked hard to try to find an

[01:37:52] alternative to option e but the only two options that they could currently come up with were the two that are on the slide that were actually cost neutral so this was provided along with option two which was previously option e from the consultant option one had elementary going first followed by secondary and high but again we really as we go to the survey results based on those two options there was

[01:38:30] really no clear option that had enough support really from the community there were a lot of respondents among the respondents 73% identified as parents or guardians 35% identified as staff 6% as community members and or 3% of students and then 11% of the respondents identified as both guardians parents or and staff. So we had 25,655 unique respondents and these respondents completed the survey

[01:39:06] in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Urdu. Unique means that duplicate responses were only counted once. So the survey closed, I believe, Monday, October 6th. And In the insights, when staff reviewed all the survey results, you know, the survey results were important, but as mentioned, a partial signal, I think it's fair to say we can read the feedback.

[01:39:39] The concerns seemed centered around the time, the access and so forth. I think in this, you know, essentially I don't think there was a lot of satisfaction in either of those two options so as I look across this and think about what's really possible here one of the things I just want to remind the board about is that we're currently in a significant budget challenge time our County Board of Supervisors has talked about that and we have a lot of commitments to make and

[01:40:17] keep within our budget constraints this year we're also in the middle of finishing our boundary review i'll be bringing you a recommendation of some sort in january of 2026 which is now several months away we just purchased a high school we heard from several community members tonight and that western high school is going to need to be feathered into the boundaries in whatever fashion we're able to do that here over the next month or so and we have a March 26 deadline for me to bring a plan back to you about placing an AAP

[01:40:55] Center in each middle school. So this is these are sort of projects. I also want to share and I guess remind our board and those watching that this year we're also completely changing our routing software. We're currently running two systems our old system as well as our Tyler routing system because we didn't to cut across and not have overlap some divisions in our commonwealth and around the country have done that and had everything sort of blow up and left thousands of students stranded so we wanted

[01:41:32] to make sure that we were thoughtful about an overlap and routing but by this spring and it won't be till probably near the end of the year that the routing is complete and completely cut over and it won't be till the end of the year that we have our tablets fully operational on all buses the tablets on each bus will allow and enable turn-by-turn directions as well as workarounds for accidents and other unforeseen incidents and allow efficiencies for substitute bus drivers as well so that's going to be at the end

[01:42:05] of this year so my recommendation and thinking about this is really that I I think it would be prudent to pause this particular project until we can see the impact of our new boundaries and the impact of the possible plan around AAP centers for middle school and the impact of our new routing software and tablet implementation.

[01:42:32] I just think we're going to have a more thoughtful process at that point, notwithstanding the concerns that staff have about having enough lead time to make thoughtful decisions um and families with child care decisions they need to make as well so that is my report on start times this evening i want to finish by saying this pause in no way should signal that i personally as a superintendent don't think it's important to have healthy start times i know this board believes

[01:43:07] it's important to have healthy start times research supports healthy start times I think we're all committed to making this happen so I think we want to do it well so a pause is not a no it's simply a we're not ready yet so there you have it madam madam vice chair thank you Dr. Reed I now call Mr. Dunn for a motion I move that the school board direct the superintendent to postpone any division-wide implementation of changes to school start times until no earlier than the 2027-2028

[01:43:46] school year to allow for the full implementation of the new transportation routing software and consideration of potential updates to school boundaries. I further move that the school board direct the superintendent to present to the board no later than December 2026 a plan outlining viable options for healthy school start times that where possible are budget neutral and minimize impacts on staff is there a second i second miss anderson thank you mr dunn would you like to speak

[01:44:24] to your motion yes i would thank you i am a strong supporter of healthy school start times specifically starting middle and high school at or after 8 30 a.m as recommended by the american academy of pediatrics there are multiple benefits which really fall into three categories first academic and cognitive benefits later start times align the school day with the natural biological sleep cycles of teenagers leading to improved cognitive function including better academic performance studies consistently link later start times to higher grades and core subjects like math

[01:44:59] english and science and improved performance on standardized tests also results in increased attendance and alertness. Students are less tardy and have fewer absences. It leads to improved attention and better memory because adequate sleep is crucial for memory consolidation and attention span. The second category are mental and physical health benefits. Chronic sleep deprivation in adolescence is linked to numerous health risks which later start times help to mitigate. First of all, improved mental health. Students report fewer depressive symptoms, less irritability and an overall better quality of life and psychological

[01:45:38] well-being. They also suggest that there are reduced risk behaviors. Increased sleep is associated with a decrease in risky behaviors including the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. It also leads to better physical health because sufficient sleep helps regulate hormones that affect mood and satiety leading to a potentially reduced risk of obesity and finally safety benefits. It It leads to teenagers being less drowsy, so you have reduced drowsy driving crashes.

[01:46:09] One of the most significant safety benefits for older teens is this reduction in motor vehicle accidents, and it's a tragedy every time someone who's young, who has a bright and promising future, is lost to an auto accident. It also leads to fewer accidents and injuries on the sports fields and in our hallways.

[01:46:27] And finally, it leads to less classroom disruption. So all around, healthy school start times helps students, helps families, helps schools, helps the community, keeps us all safe, and leads to better academic, extracurricular, and health outcomes for our teenagers.

[01:46:44] So for all of these reasons, I think all of us share a dedication to healthy school start times. But where we are right now, when we're on the verge of new school boundaries, on the verge of implementing major changes to how we do bus routing and we're and we're looking at a Western high school which will lead to further boundary changes we need to really take a step back make sure that we fully and successfully implement all of these different changes and don't try to do too much at once we just can't bite off more than we can chew and so for these reasons it makes sense to wait until new boundaries are in place all the

[01:47:21] improvements and and strengthening of the operations of our school bus system and transportation services are fully implemented that we can then successfully and safely evaluate potential options especially ones that might be where possible budget-neutral so that we can as a system manage change in an effective way to the benefit of our public of our of our communities and of our students thank

you thank you mr. Dunn miss Anderson would you like to speak to your second yes please um so i knew that we weren't doing things in the right order by putting this before boundaries and now that i think that we have gotten into more of the weeds related to

[01:48:00] boundaries and i absolutely think that we still need a little bit of extra time so i'd like to thank mr dunn for his time working on this with me um i think that we have a potential here with reducing our run time maybe maybe if we're directing you to do something that i know you're already going to do. I'm hoping that we can do some sort of audit related to the current bus routes now that we have the new software so we can gain efficiencies anywhere that we can find them. Because my hope is that with boundaries and those efficiencies that we will be able to tighten

[01:48:37] the delivery window if possible. And so that's what I'm hopeful for. So I understand that while we have this extra moment, I understand that we're directing you to do something that you were already likely to do. But what I hope, similar to my colleague, is that this signals to the community that this is still something that we care a lot about. But in my district specifically, there is no way that I can have the tiniest humans picked up at 6.45 in the morning because some of those kids are on the bus for an hour. And I was at my house the other day, very close

[01:49:13] to where those tiny children live, at 7.30 in the morning, and it was dark outside. And so I don't want any of our kids in unsafe circumstances but I certainly can't have it be the kindergarteners and so I can't advocate those kids dealing with those things for seven years and so we are going to we are in a tough budget time and what I'm hoping that this pause will do is give us some more time that we can dig in and figure out where viable options are that even if we could move it slightly even if we could move the window a little bit so it wouldn't put the school starting at 9 50

[01:49:48] in the morning so i i'm fully recognizing all of those things and i just i i believe that this extra time is going to be really important as we work towards a positive change for all of our kids mr frisch thank you i hate that this is where we're at um i'll be supporting the motion but first you know at the end of march i brought the motion that said i moved to direct the superintendent to develop a plan including robust community engagement and consideration of varied student transportation needs for implementing healthy school start times in conjunction with the holistic boundary review process.

[01:50:25] And so I was disappointed when the survey came with two options that this board was never going to approve because they were the free ones, right? And I think what we've learned in this process is that we're not-- so the second half of this motion, and I talked to Mr. Dunn about this a little bit.

[01:50:46] The second half of this motion just ain't going to happen. We're not going to find a magic free version of this. Perhaps what Ms. Anderson is talking about, where some efficiencies can be found Maybe some of the expensive ones will be less expensive. But my hope had been that between March and now, or in January, that perhaps the board would be presented with a, look, these aren't going to work because parents will never stand for, nor should we ever have first graders, kindergartners showing up at bus stops at this hour.

[01:51:21] This isn't going to work because we can't move everybody by 30 minutes, et cetera. But what could work is the one or a slight shift on the one that has a \$2 million price tag and we don't have that money but it would work if we did we don't have the money then the board could have thought hard about what we prioritize right obviously we have to meet our collective bargaining agreement but well where

there's a will and a price tag there could be a way so i hope you read into the emotion that you're receiving today an opportunity to present to this board something

[01:52:01] that may not be something the board can vote on immediately but at least it sets a star that we can aspire to reach and perhaps we can come up with a plan and get creative to get there so that we can stop going around and around on this like you know i was as frustrated as anybody on the board when we were talking about pilots and everything else because it just wasn't we were trying to you know round a square or square around i don't remember what the the phrasing is but my hope in kind of opening up the conversation is that we would get out of here's what the

[01:52:38] consultants proposed and here's how it doesn't work and get to a these things don't quite work you're never going to vote for these ones but if we can get some efficiencies here for two million dollars we can make it happen then the board can get a parents would have something to advocate to our county partners and state partners about the board could try and find additional funding um you know we could when we're talking about programs we could talk about whether those programs are more or less important than school start times etc obviously we're not going to jeopardize the collective bargaining agreement but at least we have a honest frank conversation

[01:53:15] so i'm disappointed but i think this motion provides an opportunity and i hope we take it thank you dr anderson thank you just a quick question first before i start with my comments with the parents survey i'm sorry with the community survey what was the response rate like

[01:53:34] How many people did we actually get to respond I believe we had I think it was twenty eight thousand twenty five thousand six hundred and fifty five unique respondents and do we have a sense of how many of those were parents and how many were staff among the respondents among the twenty five thousand six hundred and fifty five seventy three percent identified as parents or guardians thirty five percent responded as staff and eleven percent identified as both parents guardians and staff six percent were community members and about three percent were students so roughly we

[01:54:13] had about 18 000 parents respond roughly roughly and that is a very very very very small number of our population correct yes ma'am one of the things that i think that would have been helpful to do is to be a little to turn every stone in order to get some more community participation I remember a few years ago we used to do the what do you call it the I forget what you all called it but the the community surveys were the groups where you would bring people in because you did not think they were going to complete the surveys but you brought them in and had a conversation

[01:54:51] this was just a survey and so it was easily missed I would have to say that um can can we go to the slide two please I will say the surveys were all addressed at the September boundary meetings as well so we sort of tried to take advantage of parents or community members coming in and I believe those links were provided during the September meetings as well thank you for that I am seeing less and less that where there's the will there's a way I don't think I'm seeing it as clearly as

[01:55:27] some of my colleagues because I'm looking at what's there right now I know when we were having these initial conversations it was that you know the budget landscape was very tight and so it was not something that we should do but I'm looking at option C option C has a price tag of zero to 1.1 million dollars I mean we spent that on staff and so these are potential options and I worry about the motion particularly the language that speaks to no earlier than 27 28 school year is that correct yes the 27 28 school year so no earlier than

[01:56:06] that so does that mean it's going to be the 30 31 school year the 40 41 school year the parameters for me are unclear and so that makes it really hard for me to buy into this and I don't have the belief that this is something you're already going to do I know others here have said that but I don't have that belief and so if we're going to direct you to do something I think it should be time-bound this is so open that it could be 10 years out and we know we've had families that have been waiting already 10 years because it was after we did the middle the high schools we're going to tackle the middle schools and

[01:56:42] here we are do you anticipate that there will be efficiencies that are that are achieved through the new boundary work and the new software I think that's the hope that we'll achieve some efficiencies but we won't know till they're actually modeled on the road sure is that where and this is primarily to Mr. Dunn is that where you're saying where possible in that second paragraph because if the budget landscape is hard now I don't anticipate it's going to be too much easier in a few years so where's this where possible getting the funds I'll

[01:57:22] take a go back I think that was the timer but I would love for Mr. Dunn to kind of share a little bit regarding the where possible point of order your time is expired and you can't ask questions on board member on I don't know who could answer it then I can endeavor to answer it thank you Dr. Reed yes ma'am I think WHERE POSSIBLE AND MY CONVERSATION WITH MR. DUNN IS I BELIEVE THE MOTION WAS TO COME BACK

[01:57:55] WITH BUDGET NEUTRAL OPTION OR OPTIONS BY X DATE AND I JUST IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO BRING BACK A BUDGET NEUTRAL OPTION SO I THINK IT WAS SIMPLY A STATEMENT OF IF IT'S POSSIBLE WE'RE GOING TO BRING IT I BUT TO THE POINT THAT YOU RAISED OPTION C I UNDERSTAND THE COST WASN'T overwhelming zero to 1.1 but option c option c is predicated on the run time being 90 minutes

[01:58:27] and we weren't able to model a 90 minute run time in fact I believe option c our current run time is 110 minutes and the achievable options were just not we just couldn't get it to 90 minutes so it wasn't doable and therefore the minimal cost was not going to be that minimal so that that would be how I would answer that at this point. Thank you. Miss Dixon. Thank you Dr. Reed for this

[01:59:03] presentation. I would be supporting the motion and I believe we have to wait till the boundary process complete and the new transportation routing system is fully implemented before making a division-wide start changes to start times this also allows the board and staff to have clear understanding of enrollment patterns transportation efficiencies and potential ripple effects it also provides more time to gather meaningful communities feedback and consider the impact on staff and families before moving forward with this such a significant change having said that I'm definitely

[01:59:41] would like our middle schoolers to have a more sleep time. So as soon as possible we would like to move forward with that change. Thank you. Yes ma'am. Thank you. Ms. Marin. I know that everyone on this board wants what's best for students and the superintendent does as well physically, instructionally, mentally. We received data from this analysis not even a year ago. So while we might have contracted out we actually didn't get this data was it December of 24. We have had

[02:00:14] multiple meetings we have spent time and money trying to make this work amidst a historic boundary review process decrease in our local education funding challenges from the federal and state governments from everything from funding to how our students are being tested okay we are not slouching on this matter it's complicated it's 180 000 kids and how many buses a thousand buses 93,000

miles a day 1,600 buses 1,600 buses 93,000 miles a day so I think I'd love to see the board use the largest tool that we have available to us to set

[02:00:53] in motion a better approach going forward and that tool is our policies in governance we are have slated to review policy 3415 which is length of the school day and policy 4275 which is length of the school year for students now the first one's under instruction the second one's under HR I'm wondering if we can use this opportunity to get really clear and say what the school board expects of start times and whose decision is that because that has been a confusion point going back and forth this even relates to the calendar work that we used to do it used to be of the board now it's of the superintendent and

[02:01:30] the more we can codify these things the better roadmap we'll have and that will at least take out that uncertainty I will support this motion because I want to put that final point on it for now and let it be known that this is what it is and at least let people know and people could be disappointed or not but at least it's known.

[02:01:50] I would ask though that the board get back into the habit of working with the superintendent to track motions and that is we used to have a thing called a motion tracker when the board directed the superintendent to do something it was tracked and I have seen lately sometimes we're hearing things that might have come from last year or a prior board and I have you know I'm a little concerned about that but at least now you know we could put somewhere that okay by 2026 that time we can expect this to happen because I think the more we can do that the more

[02:02:25] we can also see how much we're asking of staff what our timeline of work could look like and just be more thoughtful so um it's also one of those things that's in our governance manual THAT WE DON'T USE, SO IT CERTAINLY COULD BE SOMETHING FOR GOVERNANCE, BUT IT'S THERE IF WE WANT IT, AND I REALLY THINK WE SHOULD REINSTATE IT SO THAT IT'S ALL IN ONE PLACE AND ORGANIZED. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. MR. MCDANIEL. THANK YOU. I'LL SUPPORT THE MOTION.

[02:02:57] AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE EITHER BUY MORE BUSES OR WE MOVE EVERY GRADE LEVEL TO A CERTAIN EXTENT. RIGHT NOW, BASED ON THE FACTORS THAT WE HAVE IN FRONT OF US, NEITHER OF THOSE OPTIONS I'm willing to go for so that's why I'm going to support the motion I'm hopeful that the new software could potentially find some efficiencies I'm hopeful that these boundary changes are going to help more compact these routing lines but it's also I think important to point out and I don't

[02:03:36] remember where I heard this number but I know it came from our staff about one-third of our routes are not base school neighborhood to base school they're specialized routes so we're doing a lot of transportation all over the place across a lot of different vehicles it's a very complex issue to tackle and I hate to say that I'm not holding my breath that we're necessarily going to come to a different outcome but at least with the dynamic changes of the software and of the boundaries there's a possibility there or we find a rich uncle that can buy us a bunch of buses

[02:04:15] and pay to run them I suppose that's possible but I'm also not holding my breath on that option. So I'll support the motion. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. McElveen. So I think it comes as no surprise that I'm quite disappointed. Just to take a step back and look at the history here, community advocates have been working at this for a quarter of a century, since 2001, I think.

[02:04:43] It took us 14 years, 13, 14 years, to get to a positive solution. Unfortunately, that positive solution in 2013-2014 left a hole and at that time Mr. Moon and I and our colleagues on this board made a promise to the community that within the next few years we would fix the middle school start times. Well three boards have come and gone since then and that has not happened. It's an

[02:05:17] unmitigated failure of this board to have let this linger so long. We failed our community and particularly our middle schoolers, and we continue to do so. And I take this personally. I personally promised the community that we would do this.

[02:05:33] As Mr. Frisch said, you know, there's no such thing as a free lunch, so we shouldn't assume that we can change something this massive for free with a positive result. This is complex work, but it's not rocket science.

[02:05:52] Karen Garza, Jeff Plattenberg did it with the support of their board. We paid a little money, but we got a positive result. These two options that were taken out to the community were non-starters.

[02:06:09] And I need to apologize to the community that that happened because they've been spinning their wheels over these two options that this board was never going to vote on. So we did this survey based on these two options. And as far as I'm concerned, the results are not very useful to me, not useful to others, because we are never going to consider these options.

[02:06:31] One question I have is there is an option D2 that Prismatic came forward with. That's not reflected here. wasn't reflected in the two options and I'll quote from the prismatic report that said d2 solutions begin to likely be within the range of little minimal fiscal impact when middle school starts 9 a.m or later so I'm not sure what happened with staff not looking at that option but again it's disappointing the question I would leave is that you know we have

[02:07:08] this new transportation software i'm not quite clear why it's taking so long to operationalize it so can you clarify that for us yes sir we it is um we have over 45 000 bus routes right and our bus stops and 1600 routes so we felt like it would be prudent to keep the current system running as we cut over because with computers and routing we didn't want something to go wrong with the new system which has happened in some other

[02:07:47] divisions and not have a backup so my understanding and I think it was prudent is that we keep the systems running concurrently this year and then we'll be tapering off our old system and be fully on board with the new system by the end the year but i believe how close are we to having all routes routed on the new system mr muick please yes ma'am you you have it uh essentially right i just want to correct the timing on it a little bit we've been throwing a lot of stuff at you recently with uh routing so we've fully implemented

[02:08:24] tyler routing as of 6 october and the transportation team led by paul over here wanted to run both systems the tyler routing system and the old system concurrently until winter break to make sure that there were no lost stops misplaced students and it wasn't perfect but it was pretty cool it was really good right we've had some stuff we've had to correct but they were minor in december we'll decommission the old system and at that point we'll fully be on tyler routing and at that point we go in earnest on getting all the mobile data tablets the the type the tablet that

[02:08:59] the drivers use installed on each bus it takes about two hours per bus that should be done by the end of the year so the end of the year will be fully up on Tyler routing system and the tablets and then

over the summer will convert over to the Tyler version of here comes the bus we didn't want to throw all that we didn't want to throw that here comes the bus change in the middle of a school year we knew that would be too chaotic and this is just a smoother way for us to roll stuff out so it's the tablets that aren't done till the end of the year with the because i knew we weren't cutting over on the app till the end of the year so there you have it

[02:09:36] that's helpful thank you and i'll just say um to my colleague mr dunn um and miss anderson i appreciate your work on on this amendment um i'm not sure that i can support it um thank you miss sizemore heiser thank you and i don't want to repeat many of the things my colleagues have said i'll be supportive of this as well i thank my colleagues mr dunn and miss anderson for bringing this um you know i we're all i think hearing i'm hearing that we're all in support of healthy start time so i think no one in this room or you know our leadership team can argue against that but it

[02:10:15] as my colleague said it is complicated the main reason i wanted to speak up is that there's many in my community who are very concerned about the very late start and the late getting home for some of our elementary school students and i heard that quite a bit from my community in braddock and i want to lift that up to say it is a concern and you know when i'm very grateful for the previous board in 2013 to address the high school start times with leaving a promise to fix the other ones and i don't want to do that same thing here where we fix one start time and potentially break another right by having elementary school students get home so late so i am really glad

[02:10:49] that we're pausing this so we can be look for solutions that fix the middle school start time issue to make sure there are healthy start times without negatively impacting or breaking the elementary school start times to make them unhealthy times to get home so i'm glad we're pausing i'm very happy to support this and i just wanted to thank your staff because from the first work session we had on this i brought up the issue of the run times and i questioned whether 80 or 90 minutes was enough for a run time i believe Mr. Meek you may remember those questions that i had and i asked you all to to test it in real time with traffic so i'm very grateful i want to say thank you for doing that because the last thing i wanted to do was promise something that we

[02:11:29] couldn't deliver so thank you for doing that testing to recognize that those run times perhaps with the change in traffic weren't as realistic as perhaps they were you know we thought they might be so thank you for that um and i'm happy to support this motion and i i know that we'll keep doing the hard work to get to healthy start times for everybody thank you thank you um go ahead take my turn as someone who worked in the system when the board in 2013 2014 are leading up to that studied this and evaluated and worked on it the

[02:12:05] conclusion was we're gonna flip middle and high because middle is two years high as four it's gonna cost some money they couldn't find a path forward to make both of those later i'm gonna repeat that that board could not find a way forward to make those paths i mean make that make that work okay for the all the things that we've talked about the 1600 buses the 93,000 miles per day it is incredibly complicated and it's further compounded now by the number of people that have to report back to the office i mean obviously we were in the

[02:12:43] middle of a government shutdown right now but when all systems are firing i have found that since that return to office the traffic patterns have gotten worse and so i think it's going to be incredibly important for this bus routing data for the tablets for us to really be able to model what's happening um

you know i've said this before i am not a morning person and i wasn't as a child and um you know i had to you know i had the early high school start time so um i also will say i think our middle schoolers i understand the health and the developmental but whenever i'm in our middle schools and i'm often to my middle schools um

[02:13:22] they're pretty energetic you know they're they're they're i don't want to say they're bouncing off the walls but they're they're they're not sluggish looking um having said that i understand the importance of it um we also have robust after school programs at this point uh and and i i just need to i think it's okay to uplift this i mean i think that our faculty um we heard from our elementary or middle in our high school principals associations around if there was a significant shift it would decimate many of their faculties we're already battling what our competitors can pay people because their funding

[02:14:00] resources locally seem to be you know they've like loud and has the revenue of data centers and whatnot so it pains me because I was a school counselor and social-emotional health and physical health and mental health is of utmost importance for all our children. I'm going to support the motion but and I believe in transparency. I too am sorry that these were presented in boundary meetings because it was confusing to the public. I tried to chase it with my constituency to get information out into my schools. I think this is the right

[02:14:35] thing to do and again to Mr. Frisch's point it might be that here's what we can do um it's 15 minutes or it's 20 minutes um for middle and high of shift but we're not touching elementary i will not approve anything that's going to have a later start time than what the last schools have right now um and maybe we can get somewhere that's fiscally a viable option um but we fiscally are in tough times we weren't in those in as tough a time fiscally as uh in 2013 to 14 as we are now but I just want to say that so we're going to get to go backs um start with Mr.

[02:15:10] Dunn thank you um I just uh in response to an earlier question I just wanted to mention that uh the I the goal of where possible as Dr. Reed articulated was to provide some flexibility because we just don't know what the analysis will show whether any of the options by December of 2026 will be budget neutral but I also just want to highlight one thing that has not been broadly discussed in terms of school boundaries and that is the grandfathering policy that we passed this past summer.

[02:15:42] While it's well-intentioned, it's going to create a magnitude of complexity to the implementation of school boundaries that I don't think any of us have really imagined, which is if all of the students who are proposed to be reassigned to a new school instead elect under that grandfathering policy to stay at their current school, we're going to face some schools that are going to be severely overcrowded potentially right because you'll have the old students and the new students now this is going to be in pockets across the country because not all schools are being affected by school boundaries but it will also potentially affect our our busing very significantly

[02:16:19] depending on whether uh the school board decides to provide busing to grandfathered students or doesn't so there's also cost implications to that at a time when we're facing the loss of federal funding and many other fiscal challenges. So there's a lot of complexity that is coming up with the implementation of the first school boundary review, comprehensive school boundary review in 40 years.

[02:16:42] I think this is not a year to add on more changes, and so that's yet another reason why school start times, as I articulate all the reasons and all the benefits in myriad respects, that it makes total sense to do it at the earliest possible time, but it also makes sense to do it at a time when we're not carrying so

many other challenges that are vitally important both to our school staff, our students, and the families, and the broader community to successfully implement.

[02:17:12] So we need to execute successfully against the challenges we have without adding to that burden. Thank you. Thank you. And my apologies to Mr. Moon. I think you turned your light on while he was talking. I turned it on pretty late, so you might not have noticed that. I pretty much concur with Mr. Mathieu Dunn.

[02:17:32] uh dear my colleague and mr mckelvin i know that you and i were the only ones on this board who previously participated in approving and working on and eventually bringing in later high school style times uh and we made promises to community which have not been kept as you said over three boards uh that also shows that uh mr mckelvin how complex how difficult it is to find the solution

[02:18:07] for later middle school style times if it were going to be easy we would have done that long long ago and you know dr. Reed even though I support the language I just stated in this motion to be realistic finding a budget neutral solutions to get this done is going to be hard not impossible I wish you well but but if you if you come back with just like you know other options presented

[02:18:43] by consultant that you know some of the realistic options will cost us some money and the board will have to make some tough decisions whether to go along with you know options with the budgetary implications or because we are expecting a a rather tough financial budget situation coming up for the next few years that we have to make a different decisions but i think you know having something come back from new by December of the next year is something that worth waiting for this

[02:19:20] board, especially as we are going through this boundary change and along with phasing that the board agreed to allow and how the community will actually utilize that option they are going to have under the board policy so I'm supporting the motion but not happily with a lot of regrets and sugaring yes sir thank you Dr. Anderson yes thank you and this time I will be mindful of my time so my question to Mr. Dunn is is

[02:19:59] there a reason why you elected to articulate the motion as no earlier than the 27/28 school year rather than by the 27/28 school year I'm giving you my time okay just point of order um point of order you can agree to give your time but it goes through the chair so uh you can only speak from the dais if you're recognized by the chair thank you mr

[02:20:30] dunn uh yes uh i i put it to be uh no earlier than because uh again while we right now are extremely eager and uh i i certainly include myself among that group uh it remains uncertain that various challenges that I've raised other people have raised as well whether what next year looks like and we need to get through next year successfully implementing the largest school change in school boundaries in 40 years new bus technological obstacles which will be you know beneficial once fully

[02:21:06] implemented but we need to have all of that in place before we can contemplate changing school start times because we have had school systems that changed their uh their their school start times and it resulted in a disaster where they had to go back to the previous school start times and and imagine implementing that on on our school system i think it was portland that had to go back and maybe another system just within the last 18 to 24 months so we want to avoid debacles right we can't afford that thank you you cannot use all of my time um so uh i i think my my my concern here is we spent a lot of years talking about this

[02:21:45] this everybody's committed but there's been no action it just seems like another opportunity to kick it down a can and again going to the budget neutral activities I I'm struggling to see how we will have something that is different from what we have right now it just it's just far in the future and that's way too uncertain for me and that's why I'm not supporting the motion okay seeing no other lights on I'm sorry oh sorry Mr. Freshberg go back in your reading of this motion and it says where possible does that mean if you're not able to come up with a budget neutral option you won't bring an option or will you come to the board and say don't have a budget

[02:22:24] neutral option but this would be the preferred path of funding existed I think that it's a good question I think that the amount of work we're going to do obviously we're going to create options with the expectation that they be budget neutral but I think that we would want to show our work and i think we would want to show you budget neutral options and maybe anything close to budget neutral options that we're able to come up with um so i i think that would be my

[02:23:01] read on that i don't think um but i think it's clear that budget neutral is the preferred expectation yeah i think it's the preferred expectation but my hope is that if you find yourself coming back to the same answers that are not palatable to the community or the board that you level with us and say look but here are some other things that we can think about these ones are cheaper these ones are more expensive

[02:23:35] but would be easier to do let's figure out what the path is obviously none of that work has been done so I'm kind of you know predicting future conversations which is never a good idea but I really hope that we don't find ourselves in a position where we are talking about the same or very very similar free options because that's what this says when I read it as being a little bit more expansive than you're only allowed to come with free options it says where possible and that could be read two ways right it could be read as

[02:24:11] if you can come up with free options bring those where possible but it could also be read as if you can't come up with free options give us your best thinking on that as well well I do try to always give you my best thinking when I can remember when the app and the Tyler tablets are all done. But of course, we're going to bring you our best thinking. And I guess I meant best thinking not hemmed in by a parameter that might be more restrictive than allows, than your best

[02:24:45] thinking would be able to get to. Yes, sir. I think the best thinking, we will do our best thinking. I think we also understand that we have to keep thinking until we can get it as budget neutral as possible. Thank you. Mr. McElveen. Thanks. Just one next step that I would like to see is for us to get a copy of the testing report, just showing that all these runs were tested and that we weren't able to get the run times down. That's something we haven't seen yet,

[02:25:22] so I'd appreciate seeing that. I know when Prismatic presented to us, they showed how they were able to get Anne Arundel from 135 minutes down to 75 minutes and get all of their schools, elementary, middle, and high, between 8 and 9.15. Granted, Anne Arundel is smaller, but this method has worked elsewhere, so I'm just not still understanding why we aren't seeing it here.

[02:25:46] Thank you. Yes, sir. We'll get those. All right. Seeing no other lights on, I'll call for the vote on the motion which is on the screen all those in favor Mr. Frisch Mr. McDaniel Miss Marin Miss Anderson Miss Dixit Miss Sizemore Heiser Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon and myself all those opposed Mr. McElveen Dr. Anderson clerk can you please share the vote the vote is 9-2 the motion carries thank you

[02:26:20] agenda item 6.06 action item I'm sorry 6.05 action item award of contract architectural services i call on miss lady for a motion i move that the school board authorized staff to negotiate professional services contracts with with selected firms for architectural services for various facilities projects and authorize the division superintendent or the chief operating officer execute deliver and administer the contract on behalf of the school board is there a second

[02:26:52] second i'd like to recognize mr dunn i move to postpone this action item until the next regular school board meeting to provide additional time for the superintendent to provide requested information to the school board if there is no objection second okay there we have a second mr dunn would you like to further explain i requested additional information regarding this action item on saturday and i believe it's important for the information to be shared with

[02:27:29] the school board and discussed in the proper context so that the school board can make a determination on this RFP, which could go to a broader discussion of how we do procurement for construction and renovation projects. Again, just a brief delay to ensure that the school board is fully informed before making any determinations. Mr. Moon, would you like to speak to your second?

[02:27:53] Nothing to add. Thank you. Some of my colleagues that have their lights on, please turn them off. Thank you. Dr.

[02:28:09] Anderson. Sorry. Yes. Thank you. I guess the only thing that I'm interested in finding out of Dr. Reed is are these time sensitive or we all have time until I don't know what the how long it will take for you to provide the information.

[02:28:25] So yes ma'am. We I did assure Mr. Dunn that we would be able to gather this information and be able to provide it at an upcoming board meeting. I'm so sorry. Say that again. At an upcoming board meeting. Okay, so these contracts are not time-sensitive.

[02:28:43] We're not going to be hamstrung by waiting until the next board meeting. No, ma'am. That's what I'm hearing. Okay, thank you. Okay, seeing no others, I'm going to go ahead and call for a vote on this motion, which is to postpone this until the next regular meeting, which is November 13th.

[02:29:01] So all those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Seismarheiser, Mr. Moon Mr. Mr. Dunn Dr. Anderson and myself all those opposed abstentions Mr.

[02:29:17] McDaniel then we will move on agenda item 6.06 action item monthly separation report September 2025 I call on Dr. Anderson for a motion thank you I move that the school board approve the monthly separation report for September 2025 second thank you Mr. Moon Dr. Anderson would you like to speak to your motion? Yes, thank you. One of the things that I had, I had some questions regarding the data that

[02:29:53] is on page, I believe this is page four, with the large charts. One of the things that stood out to me, I guess Dr. Reed and Mr. Solomon, is for our separations, the two charts down below, our separations for black and Latino staff seem to be outpacing their entire employee group percentage.

[02:30:16] is that a concern I'm just trying to go ahead I'll ask mr. Solomon to respond as he gathered this data dr. Anderson can you repeat the section you're looking at please it's this page that has the the charts with the multicolors they're not numbered so it's hard for me to identify just seems to be the last in the series

[02:30:42] is it numbered oh seven I didn't see it my apologies I think I wrote over it so I think there are a couple of things that I would offer there one of the things that we've talked about as it relates to the employee separation report is that the separation report shows our separations point in time when they're being entered into the system versus when people are separating. So this is showing all of our separations that were processed by human resources in the system from July to September. And that

[02:31:21] means these are people who could be resigning next week. It also means these are people who could be resigning or retiring a year from now. So it doesn't mean that they're resigning in July, in August or in September, it's a point in time, and I would encourage thinking of it as the time at which the volume is passing through human resources. I will say that when we zoom out and look at different employee groups, teachers, assistant principals, principals, and I know this is something that we talked a bit about during a previous MSAOC meeting, we tend to see that separation rates across demographic subgroups are flat. In other words, people are separating

[02:31:55] from the division at a pretty consistent rate year over year and at the same time when you look at other populations of employees operational staff other staff members where you see a higher population of bipoc employees you naturally see that population of separations higher than you would expect for other populations of employees okay thank you another question that i had was regarding the quarterly new hire report just looking at this i guess i'm trying to get a little a sense of an up some analysis are we doing well are there areas of concern is this where we want to be because having just the data without

[02:32:35] some sort of understanding makes it a little bit hard to under to get contacts and to determine whether or not there should be some additional actions so I think there are a couple of things that I would say there I I think that this board has so much to be proud of as it relates to the birth to the diversification of our workforce and I would offer the Fairfax County Public Schools is leading the region as it relates to innovative ways of recruitment everything from the one-year local eligibility license which increases and expands our pathways in Fairfax County Public Schools to leveraging alternative routes to licensure so that more and more educators

[02:33:14] have access to this profession and so that more and more of our students have access to high quality high impact educators and other professionals just some other data points that I would share when we zoom out and look at our recruitment year over year I've shared before that our BIPOC population of teachers is increasing and it once again increased for this past year for the 25 26 school year by nearly a percentage point my apologies just the last thing so and so the the pie chart that is at the top of page seven is this our most ideal circumstance is this our most ideal

[02:33:54] scenario or do we still have target goals that we will that you are endeavoring towards I think it's hard to answer that question looking at the chart on page seven I think we have made great strides as a school division and I think that we still have a long way to go to give you one example and I know this is one that we've shared we've talked about previously when I look at our population of Hispanic teachers and our Asian teachers we've made great strides but we still have room for improvement thank you mr. moon would you like to speak to your second I don't know that speaking on second but I have a

[02:34:33] question and there was a comment to make have the separation numbers slow down overall due to tightening job market while it's hard to pinpoint the exact factors the separation numbers have slowed down immensely our separations for teachers as one example have decreased by nearly a

percentage point 0.8% year-over-year and another thing that I would offer is that they're decreasing steadily year-over-year and have for the past three years for our teachers what about the hiring numbers over the last three months period of

[02:35:06] time since July we hired significantly fewer teachers this past year for a few reasons one of which is that we saw a decrease in the separations for our teachers I believe you also asked during a previous school board meeting if the reduction in if the reduction in the divisor I'm sorry the increase in the divisor for the number of teachers had an impact and that did have an impact so to give you a frame of reference we typically hire about 2,000 to 21 teachers each year this past school year we hired roughly 1,500 teachers what

[02:35:42] about the vacancy rate we started last year compared to last year let's say the last three months compared to the prior years three months period of time we have very few openings for teaching positions in Fairfax County Public Schools at this time and compared to last year we were also doing quite well last year but the difference is noticeable this year okay one comment that I want to make is about that pie chart on page 7 at the top we cannot have a target is that correct we

[02:36:20] cannot have a target it goes we cannot have it cannot set targets are we a lot of set targets generally that is correct generally no generally a school division an employer would not set targets yes that's what I thought we're not allowed to set targets thank you thank you Mr. Moon I will call for a vote on the motion which is on the screen all those in favor Mr. Frisch Mr. McDaniel Miss Marin Mr. McElveen Miss Lady Miss Dixit Miss

[02:36:57] Sizemore Heiser Mr. Dunn Mr. Moon Dr. Anderson and myself that's unanimous for all board members We are going to take a very quick five-minute break before presentations.

[02:38:21] Board members, please take your seats.

[02:46:59] Board members, please take your seats.

[02:47:36] Coming back, agenda item 7.01, presentation, Academic Matters. I call on Dr. Reid for Academic Matters.

[02:47:53] Thank you, Madam Chair. This evening, Academic Matters will focus on the Fairfax County Youth Survey. And a reminder to those watching that this youth survey is a comprehensive, anonymous, and voluntary survey that's given each year to students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12, all even number grades, in partnership with the Fairfax County government.

[02:48:17] So, what we should know about the Fairfax County Youth Survey is that it does examine behaviors, experiences, and other factors that might influence the health and well-being of Fairfax County youth. The survey asks questions about risky behaviors, mental health, physical health, and safety.

[02:48:38] Students are also asked about the positive aspects of their lives and activities, as well as specific protective factors concerning health and safety. Fairfax County Public Schools, as well as county and community-based organizations rely on these results to assess youth needs and strengths, to develop programs, monitor trends, measure countywide outcomes and guide countywide planning of prevention efforts.

[02:49:04] We're not on that slide yet, please. So the survey is also an important tool for measuring student achievement goals that are related to essential life skills and responsibility to the community. Our

substance use and overall trends around substance use would be on the current slide.

[02:49:26] The reported rates of alcohol and substance use among FCPS youth were the lowest since 2018 for all substances including alcohol, marijuana, tobacco and vaping. I have to say that is good news for our county because some of those trend lines start fairly high up and so to have the lowest number since 2018 is really I think a good story.

[02:49:53] additionally we're pleased to report that fairfax county youth reported lower rates of use for these substances than national averages as well so let's talk a little about mental health and the overall trends and we can report that all mental health indicators among 8th 10th and 12th grade students including levels of stress prolonged feelings of sadness or hopelessness and suicidal ideation and attempts have continued to improve significantly since the pandemic period in 2021 reaching their

[02:50:30] lowest levels in the past decade another good news story for our students 22 percent of 8th 10th and 12th grade students reported feeling sad or hopeless two or more weeks in a row which is a decrease from 25 percent in 2023 29 percent in 2022 and 38 percent in 2021 looking at mental health trends from 2017 to 2024 this year's data shows continued improvement in students mental health since 2021 when these concerns peaked when these concerns peaked during the covid 19 pandemic

[02:51:08] it is important to note that female students non-binary students lgbtq students and students from food insecure homes reported higher rates of depressive symptoms suicidal ideation and suicide attempts compared to their peers, so we still have work to do in providing that safe space for many of our students.

[02:51:33] Compared to 2021, the percentage of those who felt stressed most or all of the time declined by 11 percentage points. So our 2024 rates are the lowest since 2015 for considering or attempting suicide.

[02:51:52] rates have been cut by over 50%. There's a lot of good news, honestly, in this report. So, um, our physical health of our students, uh, overall trends. These survey asked students about this and their nutrition behaviors. So in 2024, 46% of sixth grade students and 39% of 8th, 10th, and 12th reported participating in physical activity at least one hour on five or more days in the past week, 18% of 6th grade students and 12% of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students

[02:52:32] reported watching TV for three or more hours on an average school day. I don't know how you find time to watch three or more hours of TV on a school day, but so be it. And 34% of 6th grade students and 40% of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students reported playing video games or using electronic devices for three or more hours for non-academic purposes on an average school day, but not at school bullying overall trends.

[02:53:04] FCPS students were asked about their experiences of bullying on school property, cyber bullying, and having received derogatory comments about their race or culture. One in 10 of eighth, 10th and 12th grade students reported being bullied on school property in the past year, which is similar to the rate in 2023.

[02:53:24] Younger students in general were more likely to report being bullied than older students. So again we have work to do in this area. One of the things that the data from the youth survey reinforced which we already know is the three to succeed model which has really had decades of research where youth that have protective factors in their lives have healthier outcomes.

[02:53:53] Specifically, children and teens with three or more of these protective factors are more likely to manage stress, make better choices, and develop healthy habits. So Mr. Clerk, please play the video to hear from our staff and how they use this data to support our students.

[02:54:15] Thank you. - Sharing the information to bring awareness to our school teams. And when we're having conversations about what factors might be impacting our students that might not be visible, that might be impacting stress.

[02:54:33] So bringing awareness to those life stressors, but also then awareness to the power of resiliency factors, both individual strengths of the student, strengths of our families, and strength of the community and their influence and connection. So we take that awareness and then apply strategies that help respond in ways that continue to foster that resilience.

[02:54:56] - The Substance Abuse Prevention Program It uses youth survey data to share the real social norms of what's happening in our school division. The fact is that most students do not use drugs, most students do not use opioids, most students actually engage in extracurricular activities after school instead of using drugs.

[02:55:16] So we use survey data to share what's truly happening in the division. I value the youth survey data because it demonstrates how building protective factors in our young people really builds resilient young adults who are able to problem solve and cope with challenges in their daily life.

[02:55:36] When we build protective factors, it can counterbalance risk factors that some of our students may be experiencing, which reduces the likelihood that they'll engage in a variety of risky behaviors like bullying, engaging in harassing behaviors, and substance use.

[02:55:52] Most of the time, parents walk in with fear and anxiety. when we do educational sessions for parents we're able to use that data to minimize that fear and anxiety so not only minimize those emotions for those parents but also equip them with the next steps for how they can then have conversations with their children i think it's essential for our school community and the success of our students to really integrate both that understanding

[02:56:26] of wellness, so factors that drive wellness for students, for relationships with families, and even our staff culture. So building that wellness comes with some explicit teaching for social and emotional learning, those skills, and integrating time then throughout the day to be able to practice those skills.

[02:56:46] So our students are able to meet academic challenges and kind of approach that with that growth mindset because we have the tools to be able to apply. I value the youth survey data because it demonstrates how building protective factors in our young people really builds resilient young adults who are able to problem solve and cope with challenges in their daily life.

[02:57:08] When we build protective factors, it can counterbalance risk factors that some of our students may be experiencing, which reduces the likelihood that they'll engage in a variety of risky behaviors like bullying engaging in harassing behaviors and substance use children feel connected to people by way of having conversations with them so when we talk about that youth survey data it shows that when people are connected to one another and we engage with one another and recognize that all of us are just living life and attempting to live life on life's terms

[02:57:44] we become better individuals all right thank you madam chair that is academic matters for this evening thank you dr reed we're going to kick things off with mr fresh thank you um so the 2025 survey results are not yet posted by the county so it's hard to put meat on the bones of academic matters tonight in terms of what the the numbers show but one of the alarming trends that we saw in recent years in the survey.

[02:58:20] If you look at the question about have you been bullied in the last year? In 2023, 25.5% of transgender students said they had. In 2024, 27.9% of transgender students said they had.

[02:58:38] For non-binary students, the jump was larger. In 2023, it was 21.2% and in 2024 was 25.9%. So not the trajectory that we would hope to be seeing in a school division with the policies that we have in place.

[02:58:57] Do you do you know if the 2025 data shows the same trajectory or has there been an improvement? So I will have to defer to Dr. Presidio on that. But we do know that, as I shared think earlier in the report let me see if I can locate this here we did have we do have significant both with our female non-binary and LGBTQ students we do have significant issues still with mental

[02:59:30] health that are noteworthy and are need to be addressed Dr. Presidio 2025 yeah I don't have top of mind the comparison data between 2024 and 2025 but we can get you that information and then a copy of the 2025 survey information the complete report which should be posted on the county website so i'll triple check that as well but we can get that directly to the board as well yeah it's not and in the the tool that they have where you can select between the years it's not posted yet either

[03:00:04] in addition to that information I'd be interested in lesbian gay bisexual students as well and for the trajectory of the data on mental health outcomes and substance abuse in previous years there have also been an uptick in indicators there that are also troubling you know and it bears saying that students who feel supported have far better both at home and at school have far better outcomes academically socially emotionally etc so we have work to do

[03:00:44] to ensure that they feel safe in our schools I guess my follow-up question would be how do you take this data and make use of it yes sir well we at the senior leadership level talk through about the level of resources because we've made really significant progress in a number of areas but not all areas clearly so i know our counseling staff continues to work at the school level our school leadership uh our we continue to work on safe supportive and welcoming environments for each

[03:01:20] and every student I think there's a great deal of also external rhetoric right now around topics that create feelings of a lack of safety for particularly our transgender and non-binary students and I think that you know students learn best when they feel safe and they feel like an authentic member of the community when they show up as their authentic themselves.

[03:01:51] So I think we need to do a better job of managing those environments within our school division. And we also need to understand the impact of what's happening outside our school division and how that impacts our both our students and our staff, quite honestly.

[03:02:10] Yeah, and I think that's what's difficult, right? We can't, on a very local scale, change the national conversation or dialogue, which everybody experiences, right? But what we can do is try our hardest to ensure that when students walk through the doors of our schools, that they don't carry that baggage on their shoulders with them from class to class to class, whether they are trans, non-binary, LGB

students, whether it's based on their religion, their gender, other you know marginalized communities um that they're able to just exist in our school as a

[03:02:45] student and focus on what they're here for which is uh their education and you know building um a social and emotional support system yes sir and i i know we're often asked about sort of numbers of students and we do know that about um just over 11 of our students identify as lgbtqia plus which is just over 17 000 of our students and of that group about 2.3 percent identify as transgender which is just over 4 000. right well and for people that get confused by these numbers

[03:03:23] there hasn't been like a rash of more people becoming gay or lesbian you know it's a pretty consistent number of people in recent decades decade or so that have been identified as gay or lesbian far more people identify as bisexual today than they did years ago and the number of transgender students is still very low more people are identifying as non-binary so I encourage everyone to learn more about those designations. Thank You Mr. Dunn. I wonder a couple things there's a great

[03:03:58] survey great results how many students took this survey? It would be 6/8/10th and 12th we have about 14,000 students ish in any grade span level it is voluntary so what would be ballpark dr presidio well again i don't have that number top of mind we can get that for you but if we're estimating you know 12 000 students approximately per grade level for four grade levels you know somewhere between you know 40 000 plus students possibly but historically per grade level

[03:04:36] Is there an average completion rate that you can recall? Is it half, a third of each grade? Well, the majority of the students do complete it, yeah. Okay. Yeah. And if you could just provide data in a Friday looker, that would be great, especially like historically if we're having more kids taking the survey, list kids.

[03:04:53] I noticed there's nothing about teenage pregnancies. Is there any data on that in the survey? Not in my notes, but I will ask Dr. Presidio. Yeah. I mean, there are questions about sexual activity, but not about pregnancy, to my knowledge.

[03:05:11] Maybe that used to be a big thing when I was growing up, but maybe that's not a thing anymore. I think pregnancy is still a thing. I think that it may or may not be connected to the Healthy Youth Survey. Okay. In terms of health, I mean, do you look for positive questions in the survey?

[03:05:29] I mean, do you ask people, like, do you have a trusted adult in your life? Do you have friends? how many friends do you have I mean things like that would you know not just show I'm not doing negative things but do I have the positive characteristics of mental health because study after study shows that you know having friendships having a trusted donor life is among the most important if not the most important factor and you know a healthy lifestyle and positive academic outcomes well yes sir and if we go to slide two please just a reminder that students were also asked about positive parts of their lives and activities as

[03:06:06] well as the specific those protective factors so both risk and protective factors the protective being the positive but I will share that since we've noticed that often it's middle school the ages where we see still significant mental health concerns and as you mentioned having that connection with a positive adult being so important I think that's why our middle school sports and activities that particularly as we've tried to continue adding those gives more of our children an opportunity to have those healthy connections just as adding like football right girls like football girls

[03:06:45] wrestling boys volleyball the more things that a young person can connect to the more protective factors we're providing so I really appreciate your point the more positive things we can put in place i think the more mentally healthy our children are going to feel if there is any uh data from the survey that you could just highlight in particular that you think is particularly important to write a letter i would appreciate it yes sir thank you miss tixit thank you dr reed for this presentation

[03:07:19] very um interesting numbers um i think students are definitely more mature you know they know what they're doing so all around a good thing such a big drop in some of these numbers especially vaping is encouraging but i also hear a lot of vaping concerns in schools like you know bathrooms and things like that i now we know this is a voluntary data anonymous i'm just wondering if their students are like we just will say what we want to say and then we don't want to get in trouble by saying the

[03:07:56] the truth and maybe there is any way this goes back to the school system that who's made the who's filled out the survey if it's digital. No, ma'am. Actually, the survey goes back to the county because the county and then they release it back to us.

[03:08:14] So in fact, I believe I've provided that near Friday letter not long ago because at that point it was still being presented to the board of supervisors. So it doesn't, the raw data doesn't come back to us.

[03:08:30] It goes to the county. And 44% of the students said they had something bad to say to them about their race or culture in the past year in the sixth graders, and 33% from 8 to 12. Knowing Fairfax County is such a diverse community, that number concerns me a bit.

[03:08:50] I think we have more work to do. Depends on race or any other reason. I don't think our students should be picking on that. So that would be something I think more positive work needs to be done in that. And same thing with bullying, 25% for sixth grader.

[03:09:07] Last year, I remember, was high too among the sixth graders. And there's something going on with our sixth graders. They probably are feeling out of the place or maybe they're too old for elementary school. Maybe this is a conversation to have is like they should be in elementary school or not.

[03:09:25] Like, we are kind of the anomaly there. Overall, a great report and very positive. And I would like to continue to see, I mean, better numbers where we are not, you know, doing well. Thank you. Yes, ma'am. Mr. McIlvain.

[03:09:43] Thank you. And thanks also for all you are doing to push forward with activities at various levels, and the middle school sports in particular, because that's an age group we know that needs that kind of support. You know, looking at this survey, you often lose sight of the real numbers.

[03:10:04] The percentages can be very low, but if just as, you know, as we were discussing about, you know, the participants in this. So, you know, if you extrapolate over the grade levels, you would have 3% attempting suicide, which would amount just among, you know, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders to about 1,200 attempting or 2,700 considering.

[03:10:28] And, you know, if we carry that forward to all the grades, it's a big, real number. And I'm particularly concerned with those numbers because in my community, over the past year, we've had three suicides, including one in the past week.

[03:10:46] And we haven't seen, like, those numbers in my pyramid in particular since probably 2010 or so. And so I also worry that, you know, we sometimes miss patterns and trends in various communities by

aggregating this.

[03:11:05] And I know in the past I've asked for disaggregated heat maps from around the county where things are popping. But I guess the question would be just when we're thinking about suicidal ideation and attempts and successful suicide, what are we doing in particular to support those communities?

[03:11:26] so I know we have crisis teams that go to schools when we have concerns of this nature dr. axler's group several of the folks that were on the video and we deploy extra counseling support to schools and communities where we've had situations dr. Presidio I think there's there are also protocols in terms of counseling, professional development, also with our social workers. I don't know if you want to add anything to that. Yeah, I mean, I think on the student side, one of the things that we've

[03:12:06] really tried to do is, you know, through the social emotional learning that we've really increased a lot since the pandemic to try to address some of the mental health issues that students were having. Focus on, you know, how to recognize signs of mental health issues just on a personal level for students and where to go to get help. So, you know, trying to be as proactive and empower students as much as possible to be reflective about their own mental health and to know how to get support with that we've also done staff training to recognize signs of suicide so that you know if they're recognizing risky behavior concerns with students you know to make sure that we're

[03:12:44] intervening and providing proactive support as much as possible and then you know in the situation if we do have somebody who's acting on some of the some of those concerns and issues then as dr. Reed saying we have a lot of counseling support for students we've increased the amount of mental health supports and services through you know telemental health services so we've done a lot to try to bolster on the preventative side you know because that is a very concerning issue and I think you know with any of these trends as we see these numbers going down we recognize that you know you know we're pleased to

[03:13:19] see the downward trend but anybody who's using substances engaging in risky behavior you know as mystics have pointed out students that you know might still be vaping in our schools those are all things that we're working very actively on to try to mitigate and get as close to zero as possible in Sloan while I have you so I know I've asked this last year and in past years but in terms of heat maps how much are we how much is mr. axler's team able to use the data to look for trends in specific communities we are able to do that we we can do that we haven't provided that analysis obviously here in this report

[03:13:58] but you know that is something that we do have the capability in partnership with the county to do I would love to see that put into action yeah I think one of the most important things we can do mr. McElveen and I the superintendent advisory committee students are talking a lot about this is destigmatizing mental health just being able to talk about it without some of the stigmatization that over time has occurred. So the more we're able to talk about that, I think the more students are

[03:14:31] comfortable getting help and support when they need it. Thank you, Mr. McIlveen. Mr. McDaniel. Thank you. And continuing on this line of questioning, so I pulled our membership report as of today or this month rather, and 8th, 10th, and 12th graders add up to 43,032 kids, which, based on our data here, extrapolating, that means that 4,300 have either attempted suicide or have thought about attempting suicide.

[03:15:04] That is a staggering number. It's an alarming number. So I guess my question is, you know, we get this report. This is always a bittersweet report to read because there's positive movement in many directions. Until we get to zero, it's not enough, in my opinion.

[03:15:21] In recognizing the reality of that situation, I guess my question is specifically on the students that have either attempted suicide or are considering attempting suicide, how deep into the data does your team drill to understand the who, the where, the when, and the why, and what type of extra supports are we pushing down into the schools specifically to address that issue?

[03:15:50] So I know Dr. Presidio's team, Dr. Axler and the team, work with schools directly on how we utilize the data. That was the video explanation.

[03:16:06] I think that when we talk about resources for mental health, you know, we've had for the last several years extra funding. We had a federal mental health grant to recruit and retain mental health professionals. And that grant was ended, as you know, for divisions all across the country.

[03:16:25] I think as we see resources become tighter, it's going to be more challenging to provide the layered resource support we've been able to provide for mental health concerns.

[03:16:41] However, the training for our staff that we do have, our counselors, administrators, educators, staff, will continue. And I think our students are also in some ways eager to become more of a resource.

[03:16:57] There's a student mental health first aid program that's active around the country where students also learn to recognize signs and symptoms and can refer friends because often students are going to be the first people to hear about, you know, one of their classmates that is struggling in that area.

[03:17:18] But I do think, again, if we also focus on some of those positive characteristics like the more activities we have for students to participate in without barriers, a barrier being maybe cost or other transportation, those types of things, I think the more active our students are, the better their mental health is going to be.

[03:17:44] Sure. And along those same lines, when we get this data... it provides year-over-year information. I guess my question is, similar to how we track academic progress, do we have a target goal of where we wanna be, or at least a target goal of annual progress in reducing some of these concerns, such as students attempting suicide?

[03:18:15] - So I believe we, in our goal two report, are gonna be sharing data and goals around this topic. So this is sort of an academic matter prequel to goal two, which I believe is coming up next.

[03:18:30] - Thank you. - Yes, sir. - Ms. Seizmerheiser. - Thank you, and I appreciate the prequel, let's say, and I appreciate the robust conversation. I am glad to see the trends, especially as my colleagues are on vaping, getting better in our students.

[03:18:48] The one thing I wanted to kind of mention was thinking about the intersectionality of some of the concerns students were reporting about being bullied based on their race or ethnicity or ethnic background. and the mental health concerns. And one thing that I don't know, you don't have to answer today, but what training or what supports do we have in place for culturally competent mental health support for our students?

[03:19:11] And I bring that up because the acceptance of mental health issues or supports can vary from culture to culture and the understanding behind it can vary as well. And so, when you mentioned the

Student Advisory Council talking about the importance of ending the stigma, I think we need to look at how do we then target that for specific students who come from maybe specific backgrounds or, you know, how do we help them also end the stigma in a way that's culturally competent but also recognizing the different backgrounds they come from, especially given the diversity of our students.

[03:19:47] I think I saw a number that 40% of our students have a family member who speaks a different language than English at home. So just something to think about. You don't have to answer today for your staff as you're building your supports for mental health to make sure that we're addressing in a way that is um resonant with the different cultures of the students we're serving because otherwise if we say it in a way that may not be resonant for them or recognizing the starting point where certain families and students are coming from we not may not be as effective in providing that you know destigmatizing

[03:20:18] it and providing the support they need yes ma'am thank you miss lady thank you um so uh obviously this is near and dear to my heart in terms of the work that i did with students for years and i just want to sort of share a couple things one i think this is full of very very good news i think it's post-covid um i think that our kids are um i'm hoping learning to to live in discomfort a little better and understand that that that life is we don't get up every morning and we're jazzed

[03:20:56] about everything we that's going to happen in that day right uh except for learning which we're always incredibly jazzed about but I just think that like you know we were doing better work and helping our students find their words to articulate what it is they're feeling I was very encouraged today when I had a meeting with my PTA PTOs and PTSA is that one of the advocacy work that was happening I believe at Clearview and I hope is happening elsewhere is this wait till 8th around smartphones that parents in elementary schools are getting together and trying to work as a

[03:21:32] community and get everyone to wait till eighth grade it sounds like until you get a smartphone so and I bring that up because that's so damaging to self-esteem I read a horrible article this weekend about a young boy who committed suicide based on being on discord and being encouraged by this web of people overseas that were wanting people to videotape these these harmful things they do to themselves and you know lying awake at night I'm thinking like how does that how does a child get to that space right so I mean we're doing great work I also will say

[03:22:09] that the signs of suicide intervention work we do is fantastic I think the struggle and I don't know that my colleagues understand this but whenever we do a signs of suicide screener that we've got to notify all of the public mental health and private places because kids are going to come forward in that and going to be need to refer for services it which is a good thing I think our student services departments also do a very good job of just communicating that we have a robust clinical staff here which is school counselors

[03:22:45] psychologists social workers and the extent to which we can continue to put those folks on the television and broadcast journalism and help kids understand how to map the resources is great and and and all the after school things i mean i i know that as a former coach of five sports a former class sponsor of you know two different classes and one as administrator when kids stay at school and kids have more adults in their life there's a greater chance someone's going to notice something different in them it's our young people who come to school and go home and don't engage with us

[03:23:21] in any other way that often we just don't have that connection with so uh i like the questions on the survey i think that we're heading in a great direction And I'm just really, really, really grateful to the

ratios we have for mental health services here in Fairfax County.

[03:23:40] And I hope we don't go in another direction. If anything, we go to a lower size and we don't spread that. More kids per counselor moving forward because our kids need our counselors. Thank you. Mr. Frischfer, go back. Yeah, just really quickly, as we gather more information from the board to consider at another time, The National Alliance on Mental Illness publishes data on various elements of suicidal ideation and attempts.

[03:24:08] One of the things that's interesting is that overall ideation is at like 5.3% for the general public, all age groups combined. And obviously 7% is significantly higher than that. NAMI pegs the number as highest among young adults and adolescents.

[03:24:32] and that overall that's for 18 to 25 it's 12 percent that have suicidal ideation and among high schoolers they peg it at 20 percent so I think as we gather the information it'd be helpful to have context around the data we certainly have work to do and you know when colleagues talk about things that have happened in this community in years past very serious concerns around those things raising their heads again. But I think we need additional context around the data, too,

[03:25:08] so that we know whether the data, how that fares compared to other things. And this is just a little bit of research that I've done. And I've also found some conflicting research. So I'd appreciate some context around that. Do you know if the data in the youth survey is simply aggregate data from the surveys taken or is anything done to remove outliers or provide a more scientifically stable analysis of the data no I don't know that I've looked at their analytics so my assumption is that it's just raw data so

[03:25:48] but I will check I appreciate it thank you yes sir thank you moving on to agenda item 7.02 new Western high school programming I want to start off by apologizing to my colleagues there was a little bit of a snafu making sure that this was in the correct location on the agenda tonight you were notified previously that we were going to receive the presentation but there was a mistake in where it was so I call on Dr. Reed for a new Western high school programming presentation well good evening madam chair and school board

[03:26:24] and those watching it's an exciting time to have an opportunity this evening to talk about our newly acquired Western High School site, formerly known as the King Abdullah Academy. So this evening, I'm going to share some information with you and the community about the site and also discuss programming options briefly, because those programming decisions will be made at a later date, as well as sharing my recommendation, my current recommendation for a proposed school model and instructional design.

[03:27:01] So a review of the western high school facility facts as you know we've done a work session on this topic as well but I want to make sure that as we prepare for the November 13th board meeting and a decision on programming it's really important to identify some basic facts about the school we do expect the capacity once fully occupied to be about 2,000 students or more it will actually be our newest high school building as it

[03:27:35] was built eight years ago 2016 in the campus space actually which includes two shell buildings on the campus that we're currently going to be in the process of developing provides overall 350,000 square feet with roughly 407 parking spaces as well as a transportation loop that's already been reviewed

for accessibility the boundary process for the western high school is essentially designed to reduce overcrowding in our western high schools

[03:28:12] and that's been in our cip for a number of years i understand actually for over a decade as well as the county comprehensive plan for a similar amount of time so in the addition of this high school the review and the preparation of boundaries for this particular high school we want to try to minimize attendance islands and minimize split feeders as well as provide access to programming so one of the things that um i've asked staff to do is have some draft maps i think

[03:28:49] we're on versions 12 13 and 14 for the western high school but we will be presenting um i believe four maps um this saturday at our western high school open house and these maps will be initially shared at that meeting and then subsequently be available more publicly just a reminder that the open house at the school on saturday october 25th will run from 12 30 to 2 30 with an opening brief presentation that i'll be providing and then tours of the school some focus group conversations

[03:29:28] and a closing with an opportunity to look at draft boundaries and provide feedback when we think about a proposed western high school model we've had some discussion at a prior work session of a comprehensive high school with a traditional boundary being the likely current model with a possible school programming pathway very similar to edison high school and john r lewis high school in terms of edison having their global stem academy and edison the leadership academy

[03:30:04] it's important to note that within any comprehensive high school there are a number of programming pathways and we want to make sure that across our school division these pathways prepare students with 22nd century skills so in thinking about western high school comprehensive programming we want to make sure that that there are comprehensive offerings that neighborhood enrollment that's geographic is definitely prioritized and again that our space our facility support arts general

[03:30:39] academics and are consistent with FCPS educational specifications wherever possible and so as we think about this this is a an opportunity again to shape a high school that's going to take the overcrowding in the western high schools and diminish that obviously so this is just a slide to clarify what a instructional pathway looks like within a comprehensive high school we have these models already in fairfax county public schools and so these are simply

[03:31:17] examples exemplars where a group of students within a school for either three or four years become part of a cohort in a particular pathway program so we took the liberty of laying out a couple possible pathways that we could be considering as an instructional pathway for the new western high school because of the proximity to dulles airport and the incredible career opportunities one of the pathways we're looking at of course is aerospace also the space

[03:31:51] industry and startup companies within fairfax county around space are currently growing very quickly here in the dmv area so when we think about workforce learning and workforce development i've met with victor hoskins today from our economic development authority in fairfax county and we discussed the importance of having those connections with our fairfax county economic growth development teams so you can look at a four-year strand on the slide for aerospace

[03:32:27] ai data science and one of the things that's important we recently met with faa members and one of the things that's important is we want our industry credentials that we're preparing students for to match industry and industry credentials that our employers are looking for because there can be a

disconnect at times where we we don't want to be preparing our students for our past it's really important that we prepare our students for their future so these types of programming pathways are ones that we're certainly looking at also we're looking at the western high

[03:33:06] school humanities programming possibilities these might fall under different lines that would be the next slide please so these might be under civics and government leadership and ethics applied humanities and communications and again making sure that industry credentials would align with actual industry interest and you know I think there's last night a we had our first meeting of our student environmental task force or advisory committee to the superintendent and Miss Marin actually dropped in and joined us it was a gatehouse and we had about 40 students sign up to

[03:33:47] visit with me about the importance of needing to have more environmental both instruction curriculum wise as well as they talked about solar the ev buses and really are challenging one another to think about other things to really be focused on environmental concerns and it was fabulous to hear a group of them talk about writing policy would be really important around this topic so when you look at a humanities pathway the ability to couple sort of science with policy writing and government there are a lot of possibilities in and these young

[03:34:24] people came from high schools all over the county so if we look at my recommendation at this time it's to recommend that the new western high school be a comprehensive high school that will have traditional boundaries and include special programming pathway options so i understand the board this is new business tonight and a presentation and on november 13th you're going to be voting on this so i look forward to continued conversation we have just over a thousand people registered for saturday's open house event so looking forward to

[03:35:02] visiting with our community and hearing their ideas and thoughts um so it's a certainly a time for exciting planning and uh madam chair i'll turn it back to you thank you so much uh miss lady's gonna kick us off thank you um so i i wanted to go first because i have a lot of thoughts around the school i've toured it two times um you know the more i think about it the more i reflect on on it the more i think about it's designed much more like you know a career

[03:35:38] Academy or a magnet I don't really want to use the term magnet school but I am very interested in having us do some evaluation of the Loudon academies because what they have is they basically have some stem programs it could be a humanities track it could be an aviation track the finding performing arts spaces in this building are fantastic I've already mentioned early childhood but what they do is they do in a block schedule so students go to that Academy of Science or Academy their academies with different pathways one like an A day or a B day and the other day they're at their base school right you know one

[03:36:15] of the concerns with the community is the cost of us having to I don't know that the technology terms around redesign construction work that needs to be done but also what we would need to do to make it comprehensive in terms of athletics if we did something more like this model we wouldn't have to put a football field in because all of the kids that attend the Latin academies they they play sports at their base school but it alleviates overcrowding and I would have a huge emphasis on alleviating the overcrowding at the schools that we've named most importantly Chantilly Centerville Westfield

[03:36:52] that has to happen so I don't know if that's a percentage of seats or what this would look like but I just think that we need to be nimble in our thinking I don't want to run with scissors here and I mean

that because I think there's a rush to try and get this open by next year and I don't I don't want to make a mistake I think we really need to be reflective and I'm gonna encourage my my colleagues on the board to think that way because there's also you know I hear a lot if we do another magnet it's a brain drain from some other schools and in the reality is we have amazingly talented kids and we have

[03:37:28] to be preparing them for their future not not our current situation and all these pathways are great right I think we need time to survey I think we need to find more about interest what level of interest is there from the schools that need most of the relief I just think we just need to be nimble about what we're doing um i'm just making sure i'm missing anything here in terms of my notes but um yeah i just want to be careful that we don't rush to get something open and the last thing is if people come to the

[03:38:04] open house it's my hope they will be only those who attend if you don't see the space in my opinion you kind of can't really give an educated opinion of what the space should be used for other than proximity to your home. But I think if people see it and tore it, that hopefully some of this will be posted for them to think about.

[03:38:25] And there'll be a survey at the end that could ask them what they think truly based now, not now, now having seen it, what they might encourage us to do with the space. Thank you, Miss Marin. I'm glad we were able to fit this in on the agenda.

[03:38:41] I appreciate it being brought up. I will ask the question I've asked before is what are the different cost options for the different programming. What, as was just asked, what does it cost to retrofit or renovate to make this start to be habitable for 10,000 teenagers, 2,000, 2,000 teenagers?

[03:39:04] So it really, in some part, depends on the type of programming we put in. Having said that, I think right now we're looking still at the design, and I think we've had the range shared at the recent board meeting of anywhere between you know 20 25 million to 50 million that's been the range that has been discussed i think that in some ways having it as a magnet program is less expensive because a magnet program doesn't necessarily

[03:39:43] ensure that all of the similar athletic facilities for example may be there it it may have slightly less of a need to be remodeled honestly i think to become a traditional comprehensive high school with all of the amenities of fields and so forth is likely the more expensive route to go down so and we're really but again the range has been about 20 to 25 million up to 50 million is what i've seen in terms of range and is it your expectation

[03:40:21] that that money would come from the current rent of the bond where does that money come from well the money would come from the current bond dollars um because um you know we had the um western high school in the cip plan as we all know for quite a long time but we would not be we have no general operating fund capacity to pay for the remodel out of the operating fund so the only other fund available to us would be the bond fund well and my understanding is what's on the bond right now on ballots that people already voted on is

[03:40:58] for the purchase of the school not these additional renovations so then what people are currently voting on is actually not totally accurate because it seems like it would change if we're going to use money from this current bond so the bond the bond project lists every bond cycle have target buildings but depending on cost escalation and depending on pretty much cost escalation and timing it's very often off cycle so for example some of the

[03:41:34] projects that like the silver line was part of the last bond and it's really moving into the design at this time when it was probably voted on on the last bond cycle. So each bond cycle project will get done, but in some cases there is a significant cost escalation depending on time for permitting or time for and I don't want to use tariffs in a negative way, but I mean it there are a variety of factors that aren't always able to be factored in at the beginning in terms of cost estimates. Sure, but this is unusual in that like it's literally on the ballot right now and we're already talking about changing it

[03:42:13] and so I think and I'm not clear on the process for us to change the renovation queue that's been up for some discussion so I'm uncomfortable with that what I'm hearing is we don't know how we're gonna pay for the changes that we expect to be needed I do want to take a moment to talk about the phasing of people of students so you know our policy allows for the phasing of students and when it comes to high school the you know 10 through 12th graders would have the option to remain at their current school and not change but our boundary

[03:42:48] probably says with a new high school that boundary is mandatory and so I would think that since the board agreed that keeping a student in high school once they're in is best for that student that we would want to amend the policy or make a motion of some kind because I that's what the the public here was speaking about that they have a 10th grader in a school that it looks like they could be boundary to Western and our policy allows for that so I do want us to be aware of that and I'm certainly eager to help amend that so we don't have students leaving high schools in their middle of their career the slide

[03:43:26] three which really just talked about the purpose of this of this review with Western it says it seeks to eliminate attendance islands reduce split feeder patterns wherever feasible and those are things that I'm hearing at the other community boundary conversations but provide access to programming is not something I've heard in the other conversations of our four policy priorities in the boundary policy enrollment and capacity has really been the singular priority I've heard in any community meeting it hasn't been proximity it hasn't been transportation and it hasn't been access to programming so it's surprising to see that just for this one school when we

[03:44:05] talk about the boundary we're going to look about access to programming. I think to access we need to be clear about what that means. Does that mean moving some kids and segregating them like we do with AAP or in other programs or does it mean increasing opportunities for all students like ones at other schools that don't even have the full gamut of career programming. So I'd like to go back please to continue my comments. Thank you.

[03:44:34] So Dr. Reed, thank you for this presentation again. We've talked about Western High School for a few weeks now. And the community is very excited.

[03:44:50] I'm getting all positive feedback about going to this new school. In fact, there are people looking forward to going to the school. So I understand there are people who are saying we want to stay in their base school, but there are a lot of people who want to go to the school.

[03:45:06] and possibility of AI track or aerospace tech. That's something unique to going to be the school. And because we want to, as we discussed in the work session, we'll use this as a model of doing it in one school.

[03:45:22] And hopefully we can kind of just replicate that in all our high schools, because we do want those AI tracks in all our high school jobs, not in one high school. So for me, just making another magnet

school. And that was the issue which we had with the programming available in TJ and not any or any other high schools in the county.

[03:45:41] I have seen that firsthand. My son had to go to George Mason because he had finished all his call classes at Centerville High School. There was no no more math class for him. So we want to we want to make sure our all schools have better programming.

[03:45:58] that's what I would feel and definitely to alleviate the the issues of all the overcrowding we have on the western side so I am in support of the traditional boundary at this moment and also the the special programming we can do inside the school and hopefully in the future we can revisit this if we have more time and more more budget.

[03:46:24] Thank you. Mr. Dunn. Thank you. for the record um were any economic development authority bonds used for the purchase of this high school no sir and you provide a range of 25 million to 50 million um there's a published figure recently of 62 million is that is that accurate have you heard 62 million dollars in association with potential renovations of the western high school no sir i haven't thanks um has there been any thought given to given the current configuration of the school as k-12 to

[03:46:59] Maintaining it as a K through 12 school, which would avoid any necessity of renovating it at all. I think walking through it initially It was a thought but with the commitment to reducing crowding in the western high schools It wouldn't be likely that it would reduce significantly reduce the crowding in the western high schools if K through eight were you know remained in the building because and that would only leave essentially four grades given to reducing crowding.

[03:47:32] Could we also reduce costs? I know some of my colleagues have advocated for establishing some kind of early childhood program there. Perhaps it could be like within the CTE framework if we don't have to renovate that part of the building. Could that also reduce the renovation cost? Yes, sir.

[03:47:48] Because one of the things we're actually kind of excited about is the pre-K area that would accommodate approximately 60 pre-K students. and we don't currently have a pre-K career track model plus we have it would be an option to look at some flexible programming. So we're adding roughly 2,000 seats with the western high school does that mean that perhaps proposed renovations of areas of high schools in the western half of the county that might be anticipated to have to add capacity might not have to add capacity and

[03:48:28] and thus we might reduce the scope or cost of other renovation projects that are out there? It's certainly something we could take a look at. I would appreciate if you could pursue that. Yes, sir. What is the process to engage the public on potential names for the Western High School?

[03:48:48] What does that look like? Actually, that's the last slide I didn't cover, but there will be an opportunity to, I think the board is voting. don't know if you guys can put the last slide up on that presentation please there's a timeline for that and that process is underway soon next slide there we go the open house is the 25th the action you're going to take on programming is on the 13th the naming actually decision

[03:49:23] looks like it'll be on new business on january 8th and then for action on february 12th because there are two hearings currently set and there's a chart i'll make sure we publish that gives the entire timeline for naming but between now and february 12th um how will we know what names are being

considered or if the public can propose names so i'm going to turn it over to miss hall who can walk through that briefly for you thank you um beginning tomorrow actually we will start

[03:49:56] the public comment period which will be one month can you hear me okay okay we'll start the public comment period immediately after this new business today and then the public comment period is for one month from October 23rd to November 23rd that's when we will have a sir there will be a time within that period well there will be a survey available for the Western pyramids those families their community members to submit names there will also be some

[03:50:34] community meetings where we'll be having sort of a guided discussion on names and we'll bring those names back dr. Reed will get those I think November 26 she'll have the survey results as well as the names and according to the regulation will be able to submit those to the school board then a new public comment period will begin on the 12th I'm sorry the 4th of December and that will be another month-long public comment period with the list that is

[03:51:10] submitted to the board that will get whittled down again and then on January 4th the superintendent will provide I'm sorry the close the public comment period will close the superintendent on January 8th will provide the short list of names and then there will be the action on February 12th there is also I think there will be two public hearings in that period as well thank you will there be any public input process on the programming question or any

[03:51:46] opportunity to for the public to to weigh in um the programming decision around whether you're going to go traditional boundaries comprehensive versus not traditional boundaries comprehensive is really a decision the board is going to make and there isn't um a lengthy policy or regulation about that um the type of and of course the open house will be able to be the folks attending can provide some input based on their walk through the facility but that's really a decision you all are going to be making in terms of the actual curriculum as a comprehensive high school

[03:52:26] fairfax county public schools has a standard curriculum that apply to all high schools in the county and this western high school would also be governed if you will because you approve those courses of studies as a board annually so that course of study will be the same course of study that this high school will be following the particular specialized pathway will be a decision that likely will come out of once the shell is built our planning principal and we'll be posting

[03:52:59] for a permanent principal will likely have some process to winnow down ideas and settle on a path do you know roughly when that time frame will be when that framework will be published and the public might have an opportunity to comment in some way shape or form the shell is going to be november 13th because that's what we're slated to vote on because that determines the fact that we have to actually have boundaries right so we have to have that go no go decision um the actual particular pathway may not be known until january and uh and so between the november 13th and january

[03:53:38] there will be some public input process on the pathway options maybe maybe not i'm not you know know there will be at the open house it's also to be honest we're going to have to with the budget situation whatever pathway we're going to have to be able to fund it so in looking at a particular pathway it likely will require some partnership funding so there might be fairly limited options to be honest with you which doesn't mean that in subsequent years this would be a start but in subsequent years just like any high school in the county if they come forward with an idea that they

[03:54:13] want to create a pathway within their school they would come forth with some kind of plan and a funding source and that type of thing to create that so it's not the pathway isn't a forever decision it would just be for the you know the opening decision and and do you still anticipate uh that on in January uh 2026 when we vote on the comprehensive school boundaries that that will include the school boundaries for the western high school it will need to include the boundary for the western high school if you decide that the programming decision is to have a boundary yes sir

[03:54:50] thank you Dr. Anderson thank you I for one think that the recommendation that is included in this presentation is the sweet spot where we are going to be able to relieve overcrowding in that area because as I've said before I don't see any other space where that's going to happen there's no land there's no money and there's no way to expand Centerville and some of those other spaces so I am in full support of what you've designed as the recommendation a question that

[03:55:25] I have is regarding the timeline of the um of the renovations because I think we're barreling toward opening this next year so in the 26th school year when is the renovation expected to happen what is that timeline is it going to be as students are there this is going to be accomplished in these next few months I'd like to understand that a little bit better please. Yes ma'am so we currently have filed a permit form 2232 which for those watching that is the permit the conditional

[03:56:05] use permit right because it's been a private school and we're now making it a public school so that process is an evolutionary process and takes some time and we can't begin any renovation until that permit is in place so the team is working on you know possible design ideas we believe that we would be able to accommodate about a thousand students for the fall of 2026 and then while students are there not unlike many of our schools across the county there will be renovation going on as we

[03:56:43] prepare for the next you know the junior class or the next freshman classes the 910s become juniors and then I think the team is in perhaps the big discussion is the amount of time it takes to prepare for that final freshman class so doing design and remodel but again it will be determined by how much remodeling we decide to do so the renovations the first obviously graduating class is likely going to be experiencing renovations while they're there for sure

[03:57:19] which mean currently if you're a Jaguar at Falls Church you've been in a renovation site for the whole high school career renovation well it's not desirable I mean it's certainly something we've done certainly and so just to confirm because I think there's a little bit of confusion which probably seeped into my mind your goal is to open with ninth and tenth grade I think I I wouldn't want to open beyond that, I think.

[03:57:47] But not below that to just be one grade. Well, I mean, you could even if we only open with ninth grade, many divisions have a ninth grade academy, right? So it wouldn't be unusual. And it might give us a little more building space to actually get ahead on the renovation, depending on when we get the permit.

[03:58:10] It's all sort of a right. So but I think that'll become clear as we take a closer look at the permitting. But for sure, we'd want to start with ninth grade. And I think we could start with ninth and tenth if we were, you know, interested in reducing overcrowding by more early on.

[03:58:32] But I also know that sometimes when students start in ninth grade somewhere, maybe it's not as exciting to move to a new school. could also we could start with the ninth grade as a mandatory move

because nobody's been to high school yet and the 10th grade could be you know we could do a lottery for just the 10th grade for one year for kids who want to go um and i think we'd have more than 500 kids want to and then we you know i'm saying like so i think we have to think a little bigger than just um a plan because we're in a unique situation so sure and I I probably I mean I think I could

[03:59:10] support either of those options well I think starting with 9th grade being mandatory and having an optional 10th grade op 10th grade choice is in keeping with the phasing that we amended to the boundary policy because the whole idea is if you start a high school you stay there and now to request that 10th graders leave wherever they are and they must come to this new school it just seems counter to that. So if there's some space to consider doing something that's a little bit more flexible with the 10th graders, I think it would relieve some of the folks that came here to

[03:59:43] speak to us earlier. Just going back to now the renovation queue. We have this school in order to relieve what's happening at Cernaville, etc. What does that mean for that renovation queue? And most importantly, I know we've been trying to update the criteria for the queue. There were vendors that were to be procured it seemed to be very very slow moving what is an update regarding the new criteria the vendors where are we new vendors oh the what we put on pause tonight not the condition

[04:00:20] assessment the renovation queue development the facilities assessment was the precursor to that but I thought you were looking for a vendor to complete all of that work because it was not possible for staff to do this internally so we did put out an RFP for the facility use condition the facility condition report and that facility condition report was going to feed a reassessment or an assessment of the current queue so I don't I will have to get back to you on where we are in the RFP process I don't want to inadvertently publicly say something if

[04:00:57] we're right in the middle of it right now so I'm gonna just need to get back to on that sure one of the things that I will say here and I know this is deeply unpopular but the landscape changes and I think we really need to revisit our existing queue because things have changed we have some places where seats are needed we are some spaces where seats are not needed and yet they were in the queue I hope that could be part of the condition as well the other question that I well I wanted to just share some comments regarding the pre case does the space that is

[04:01:29] below it for me it just screams it's asking to remain as a pre-k space it has its own little parking its own little entrance I just see that as a great opportunity to do something innovative where we could have some fee paying parents and that pre-k space as well as the other students we want to serve in order to have a more inclusive class I'll take a go back please thank you dr anderson mr mcdaniel a couple of questions for staff and then comments um yeah i don't need an exact dollar amount down to the penny but about what are we going to pay if we

[04:02:07] were to renovate a hike what's the average going cost to renovate a high school right now well i believe we set aside 381 000 to renovate centerville a thousand or a million i'm sorry 381 million all of us are a little uh anyhow we set aside i believe um it was over 300 million to renovate centerville high school okay and do we know about roughly what it would cost between the entire process to build and this is 355 000 square feet what it would cost roughly to

[04:02:45] build this if we didn't from the ground up yeah mr gordon yes ma'am per our cip for western high school we had budgeted for a plan roughly you know 400 430 million dollars and did that include land acquisition that's uh planning design permitting construction i'm not 100 sure on the land acquisition i do

not believe it so 430 to build plus it did not include land and land acquisition for something's own data center at 33 acres would be about 140 million dollars and 140 plus 430 is

[04:03:20] 560. so let's just call it half a billion dollars ish give or take had we not spent this money through a traditional bond, not an EDA bond, in our existing capacity to do that. Okay, I want to emphasize the relief that this building is going to provide because there's been some recent commentary on that, and I made these similar comments at our work session.

[04:03:42] Westfield High School is 100 over. Centerville High School is 200 over, hung up in a permit process for renovation. Chantilly High School is 270 over. but what is lost in these numbers is that between Centerville High School and Chantilly High School and Westfield High School, we have kids sitting in almost 60 trailers and modulars on those three campuses. And that kind of gets lost when people just look at CIPs and say, oh, you got plenty of capacity, just shift kids around. That would be a failure in my opinion. And when you look at the

[04:04:18] fact that, you know, \$200 million, even with some build-out costs for \$100 million, that's on the high-end, as opposed to half a billion dollars to build and acquire land on this site, I have a hard time saying that that's not a smart, fiscally responsible move.

[04:04:37] And even if we were to say, okay, we're not going to buy it, we're just going to renovate those three high schools, well, three times \$380 million is a lot more than \$200 million. That's about \$1.2 billion. So I don't know how anybody can say this was not a smart fiscal move to acquire the site to provide capacity relief at schools in the Hunter Mill District, schools in the Providence District, schools in the Sully District, and indeed some of the two worst overcrowded high schools sitting in the Springfield District.

[04:05:10] So I really wanted that to be out there on the record because I like to operate on facts, not opinion and conjecture and speculation. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. Okay, we're going to go to some go backs.

[04:05:25] we're going to start off with Ms. Marin. Agreed. There's no doubt this school is an asset for FCPS and for Fairfax County. You know there's no doubt. I think though we need to get straight on the board's process and commitment to the renovation queue and to how we do changes to publicly voted on bonds. That's really not clear and we need to address that. We also need a multi-year plan for this facility. While I share the excitement that some have mentioned about the possibilities and and I've been there, the most common themes I hear from constituents is, are you gonna move my kid

[04:06:02] in high school, is my kid gonna be able to play sports? When's the best, there's just so many unknowns. And so let's even play this out for a little bit. The timeline is that the programming is being developed into the start of the new calendar year.

[04:06:17] Well, we know that our high school students are already planning for their coursework for next year. And if not now, they're gonna be starting to do it in January. I know sports teams are training now to be on the team in spring. So how can I commit to this very nebulous approach that will change the trajectory of kids' lives?

[04:06:40] When I don't have the data about what's gonna be there, I don't have the numbers. Also, we as a board have done so much work this year, especially to improve approaches to school renovations that are more frugal in time and money.

[04:06:56] We learned about swing spaces where students and staff be moved out of a space so they wouldn't be living through construction and yet the board is being asked to commit students and staff to learning and working in a renovation the most often common i hear most frequent comment is this is too rushed and i agree um it's very fortuitous i don't what is i i think we need a multi-year plan the early childhood space is to die for to destroy it would be awful what can we do within the next year to prepare better and not throw

[04:07:32] people into what feels like an extremely rushed situation I don't have enough money and by enough information by the way with the permits currently the permitting is going to take 200 days well mr. McDaniel I are on a committee to work with the Board of Supervisors like we're starting that work next week to try and fix those things there's too much coming at us and I think that we all deserve better than to rush this Dr. Anderson thank you my last question and comments were around

[04:08:09] as we're talking about programming where do we fall in terms of the AP IB discussion that most of our high schools seem to fall into I believe that because of the proximity of South Lakes High School which is IB it's likely that the discussion for this particular high school is AP OK, I think is that going to be has that decision been made or is this open to community feedback?

[04:08:37] You know, I think it's certainly open to community feedback. I think that we also know that opening an IB school is a lot more expensive. And as we're thinking about budget and we do have a standard course, you know a standard course handbook or that all high schools all comprehensive high schools have to go with so my expectation would be that that curriculum is already set the standard coursework

[04:09:11] and ap and dual enrollment would be the logical course of study at the new school excuse me given that eight that IB is close and it's a lot more expensive and right now in our budget circumstance I wouldn't recommend that we would go that route at this time thank you do we have any sense of how many of our schools are AP and IP I mean I know we have some sense but I don't want to say off the top of your head what's the ratio of our high schools that are AP and IB many more AP than

[04:09:46] IB many okay thank you so given that you said one of the closest schools South Lakes is IB this would be AP what are Centerville and Chantilly in those places AP they're AP okay I just wanted to know if we're going to pull students from multiple schools that's also another argument for not bringing in kids who are already in programs as 10th graders because it may not match the programming that the school may offer I think that was one of the reasons we looked at AP because it matched the three most crowded schools okay the three

[04:10:20] but not all four and my last question is you had discussed very briefly some plans for the pool so that it could be accessed a little bit more with by other schools have we made any headway we can't use the pool till the permitting is complete. So as soon as we're able to get the 2232 permit, it was my intent that we work with our elementary schools on the western side of the county to provide water safety courses for our third graders, which is like a two-week. And I hope you can expand to the other side of the county as well.

[04:11:00] I did meet with our Park Authority, or is it Athletic Council, Park Authority friends. And that's something they're very interested in. We just wanted to pilot it in one place where we actually had control of the pool in terms of costs. But it's, you know, it's not swim lessons, but it's a water safety Red Cross

course that we would like to put as many third graders through as possible once we're able to permit the building. Thank you. I like that we're going with third graders.

[04:11:31] Yes, ma'am. Mr. Dunn. I appreciate the issue of trailers and modulars was raised because we have approximately 900 classrooms across the county and trailers and modulars and I think that's far too many and I think unfortunately I don't think we're going to achieve a sizable reduction in trailers and modulars through this comprehensive school boundary review which I think is unfortunate both for issues of environmental health and school safety so I just wanted to highlight that you know as we move forward that you know trailers modules have to be addressed not just in the

[04:12:07] western half but all over the county because we we do have available capacity and most of our schools and a previous chief of facilities once opined that we could get rid of most trailers and modulars in our county if we if we just rebalance students across the system now maybe that was back of the envelope but it's still an interesting data point because I don't think anyone I don't think there's any upside to trailers and modulars other than it can be temporarily increasing the capacity, but then that temporary increase often turns into permanent, which is not what

[04:12:44] trailers and modulars are designed for. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Reed. Agenda item eight, consent agenda. Our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure, Robert's rules, provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval by the board by a single motion. Many items listed have gone through board review and documentation has been provided to all board members and to the public in advance. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member prior to the meeting. The consent agenda items are on the screen. Is there any objection to approving the consent agenda? Hearing and seeing no objection, the consent agenda is approved.

[04:13:25] Agenda item nine, new business. The following are new business agenda items. There will not be a vote on these items this evening, but action is scheduled at a future meeting. Agenda item 10.01, Board Committee reports. I call on Miss Marin for a report from the Governance Committee. Yes the Governance Committee was so productive it was very exciting we've got some big policies coming through. I tried to let some of you know we have in the consent agenda tonight that we just approved we approved a bunch

[04:14:02] of policies so that's exciting I guess we can actually speak to the I think the most exciting one now, the A240? Yes, we could talk about it, yeah. So this policy will allow us to approach construction and renovation bids with much more flexibility for contractors to propose more cost-effective and frugal ways to renovate our facilities. This is huge. So thank you to this whole board for pushing this through and working it out, to our chief of facilities and our staff, because we are trying to be as frugal as we can with every dollar and this is a huge step

[04:14:41] for this school school board and school division to be able to do that so more to come and we have our next meeting isn't until december because we have a busy november coming up but this work is so important as i also mentioned you know there's lots of other policies we can do so um i will I will leave it at that.

[04:15:02] - Thank you, Ms. Marin. Agenda item 11.01, Superintendent Matters. I call on Dr. Reed for Superintendent Matters. - Thank you, Madam Chair. As I mentioned earlier, we had our very first student youth environmental council meeting last evening, and it was exciting to have our students share their passion for all things environment.

[04:15:25] And I'm looking forward to what they're going to bring off here in the future. also want to note that 49 fairfax county public schools were recognized for supporting military families so at this point 49 of them have been recognized for the first time by the virginia department of education and the virginia council on the interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children as 2025 purple star schools additionally 40 schools renewed their purple star designation which brings the total number of schools in fcps to now 145 schools that

[04:16:03] have a purple star designation nearly 75 of our schools we our goal is still 100 by next year but that's a really we're very proud of that to have our military connected youth be celebrated and be able to have our families welcomed in ways that are really special.

[04:16:27] I wanna recognize Spring Hill Elementary School where a number of us were able to attend their 2024 National Blue Ribbon School from the US Department of Education. And also visited a number of schools since last we met.

[04:16:43] Kilmer Middle School, Providence Elementary, Cardinal Forest. and uh there was one other crestwood elementary and really having a chance to be a part of seeing what they're doing with early literacy so very exciting along that line in kilmer i love the algebra scrabble if you haven't played algebra scrabble it's a hit and who wouldn't want to do algebra scrabble we've had a number of boundary review meetings um at robinson herndon langley Falls Church as well as others this week and then had a fun time at Chantilly High School's

[04:17:22] Newsies presentation was a great event girls flag football has started if you haven't had a chance to get out and see a game you must get out and see a game and thank you again to our Washington commanders was it a couple middle school cross-country meets last weekend and just want to share with the board so many parents grandparents staff really were so positive and thanked you as a board for having the leadership to get that program going and just really excited about the future and our middle school runners are oh my goodness high school coaches are very excited

[04:18:02] because there were some really fast runs last weekend so anyhow I'll leave it there thank you Madam Chair. Thank you Dr. Reed. Agenda item 12.01 board matters next on the agenda is board matters I will call on each school board member to speak in the order in the script. We're going to kick things off with Miss Dixit. So I'm going to speak at the speed of 1.5 so I can go fast. Please bear with me. I hope everyone had a wonderful Diwali filled with light joint celebration. This week we are recognizing National School Bus Safety Week a time to honor incredible transportation staff who brings

[04:18:42] Yes, who safely brings us to and from school each day. Let's do our part to support a culture of safety by reminding our communities that stop means stop. It was a joy to return to Bull Run Elementary School on Friday, the school my kids attended, and I spent 10 years volunteering, walking the halls, reconnecting with this principal Marotta and staff, and seeing all the exciting program in action reminded me how special this community truly is.

[04:19:07] I'm looking forward to my next school visit with Brookville Elementary School next Thursday with my colleague, Mr. McDaniel. Next Wednesday, I'm also looking to attend an event at Carlson Middle School, where students will plant a new native pollinator garden made possible through Get to Green partnership with Fairfax County R3 program.

[04:19:29] Congratulations to the Westfield Bulldog Band for their victory for the 36th Oakton Classic Competition, where they earned first prize, the 2025 gold winner award and the individual honors for outstanding general effects, outstanding visuals and outstanding color guard. Congratulations to also to Westfield High School cheer team for winning the Concord District Finals earlier this week.

[04:19:49] Good luck to all the schools that move on to the regionals. This Saturday, I'm excited to attend the new high school open house, Western High School Open House and TJ's 40th anniversary reunion celebration. If you'd like to join the open house, come learn about the site and explore all the exciting possibilities the new school offers.

[04:20:08] Thank you. Good night, everyone. Mr. McElveen. Yes. Ms. Marin. Yes. In addition to the Governance Committee, I just want to share a little bit about the legislative work we're doing.

[04:20:25] We are preparing to host, as many state legislators who will be in town, they seem to be getting called more and more down to Richmond, even though they're in the off session, but we We are planning to host them in November and I know colleagues on the board are preparing to tour our legislators around our schools to show them all the amazing things that's happening and the needs that we do have, so we really appreciate that partnership with our state officials for making those visits, as well as our local officials.

[04:20:52] We're always happy to bring anyone around who wants to come see our wonderful schools. The facilities work, as I mentioned, next week we're kicking off the Joint Facilities committee with the board of supervisors and through the research and and conversations we've been having you know i've learned how important it is to not only have our supervisors with the county and the school board with the schools but our park authority i learned a lot about our park authority and their role in the land use and having all three of these entities at the table i think is going to be really important not only the boards of each authority but the executives

[04:21:27] so I'm really interested to see where that can lead to help us kind of untangle some of the quagmires that have formed over the years because everyone wants to use our money most effectively for all of our residents so I'm really looking forward to that. I'm also headed tomorrow to honor Southlake's high school art teacher Marco Rando who is receiving the educator award from Arts Fairfax. Mr. Rando is the the energy behind the STEAM team which every year the students put a art installation of a sculpture on one of the Reston lakes and throughout the year learn all sorts of amazing lessons in art and engineering and collaboration and business so it's really

[04:22:08] it's a wonderful thing to be able to celebrate him and the work that his colleagues do together with the students. I'm also looking forward to joining some of the TJ celebrations on Saturday with a tour that's led by students and then zipping over to Western High School where it sounds like there's going to be quite a lot of people so like half the capacity of the actual school looks like will be there. I am curious though, Dr. Reed did mention that the just draft maps of boundaries will be available there and I would like to know where those will be online for those who can't be there and then of course going further. So thanks and have a great night.

[04:22:41] Mr. McDaniel. No board matters. Mr. Frisch. Thank you. First I want to thank everybody who turned out for our Marshall Pyramid and False Church Pyramid Boundary Review conversations.

[04:23:01] I also had the pleasure of attending the NAACP's annual Freedom Fund and Sneaker Gala with Dr. Anderson, Mr. McDaniel, and one of us may have won the sneaker contest. And, you know, it's certainly the one that has the shiny gold high tops.

[04:23:21] That would be me. I also had the pleasure of joining colleagues Ryan McIveen and Kyle McDaniel and Senators Saddam Salim at Freedom Hill Elementary School last night for their PTA meeting.

[04:23:36] We had a great conversation about a host of issues. I hope folks will join me under the Friday night lights tomorrow evening at Falls Church High School. we're getting providence district residents that uh feed into the school to come out for the game to support our athletes and our our football players our cheerleaders our uh dance teams the the band etc um and show their their collective school spirit and we'll be doing madison high school the week after um we've got boundary review meetings coming up for woodson fairfax on tuesday and madison mclean on wednesday and then i'm very excited to announce that two

[04:24:15] providence schools have been selected for a visit from nbc news personality tommy mcfly as part of the statewide tommy's teachers tour sponsored by the virginia lottery which highlights the extraordinary work of virginia's educators mosaic elementary and stenwood elementary are among those that have been selected and i'll be attending both events and with a very special guest at mosaic elementary school dr reed mentioned the purple star schools among the first timers in providence district we have freedom hill graham road mantua and oakton very excited about that

[04:24:52] and i i want to mention fairfax county's shark tank technology challenge several of us attended the ending ceremony last year and it was just a delight so if you are interested in having your students take part in the technology challenge the shark tank please visit the fairfax county neighborhood and community services website for additional details these kids were exceptionally creative and smart and it was just really great to be able to see them and i'd love to see more

[04:25:26] fairfax county public schools students participating and i hope that you will stop by halloween at the park in tyson's um for a fun-sized candy and other treats that are going to be handed out uh from four to seven for trick-or-treating live music food and everything else that you would hope at a halloween celebration um so with that i will say thank you have a good night dr

[04:25:55] anderson thank you i do want to say thank you to the samaritan's feet event which occurred at Annandale Terrace it's a wonderful opportunity where in connection with tourist bank they come in develop deliver a financial literacy program to all of the students k-5 and then after that they go into the gym where they get to select a brand new pair of sneakers with socks and a little bag it was just wonderful to see those kids really giving some of the presenters their

[04:26:33] their money's worth to learn about how to spend money So thank you to that organization for including Annandale Terrace into their good works. Boundary community meetings abound. False Church last Thursday, Annandale Injustice earlier this week.

[04:26:51] So thank you to all of those who've come out. And just a reminder, please go into the Explorer tool to include your feedback as well as sharing it with me. Last night we had the Poe Middle School AAP community meetings. And as I share with Dr. Reed, I thought Dr. Presidio and his team did a really good job of presenting not just the center program, but the school.

[04:27:16] That was not a component that I was anticipating, but it really did a good job for Dr. E. Cap to really highlight the wonderful things that are happening at Poe to welcome those potential new families. I had the opportunity to visit Wayanoke, Bailey's, and Beech Tree in the past couple of weeks, and I'm very grateful for all of the work of those principals and those wonderful kids.

[04:27:43] I do want to highlight last Monday I had the opportunity to participate and, well, to attend the DECA competition, which was at Oakton. Thousands of kids coming in in their finest suits just trying to sell their marketing wares. It's just so impressive, and I was just glad to be there as well.

[04:28:02] And my son participated, so I was happy from a mom's perspective, but he would not have me watch his presentation. I was banned from that. I am very excited. Tomorrow night, I'll be going to Columbia Elementary School for their bingo wean event, and I am the caller.

[04:28:20] I may not have won the shoes, but I've got the big prize. Mr. Moon. Thank you, Madam Chair. I participated in the Lake Bradock Secondary School's homecoming parade along with my colleague, Mr. McAlvin, last week, I enjoyed that.

[04:28:41] Even though I didn't get to participate, I was also able to watch Robinson Secondary School's parade on the side and trying to catch some candies being thrown by, you know, students from trucks. And last week, last week, I met with a delegation of principals from Nepal, you know, we have visitors from perhaps every country in the world wanting to learn from us, and three of our principals, you know, met with them to share what he offered to our students from this very diverse

[04:29:19] county and also a dr ponce was gracious enough to share his inspiring story about how he had been able to achieve american dream through education in the u.s and then thank you thank you so much talking about boundary we we we talk a lot about that earlier today i've been attending many scenario for boundary meetings few more to go before this is all over but thus far i was so you know grateful to see you know many participating in person and also virtually

[04:29:56] this weekend i'll be attending some of the activities at least some of the activities celebrating 40th anniversary of thomas jefferson high school for science and technology good night mr dunn uh it was a pleasure to meet with the principal and some staff at lorton station elementary and gunston elementary recently and it was an honor to be able to present to the gunston elementary PTA last week. It was great to see the turnout for the recent South County Hayfield boundary meeting and especially all the Gunston parents who

[04:30:32] came out to advocate vigorously for their community. I wanted to remind my constituents that the Edison Lewis pyramid community meeting is tomorrow Friday October 24th at 6:30 p.m. at Lewis High School and the following morning Saturday October 25th at 9:30 a.m. at Sandburg Middle School is the meeting for Mount Vernon High School and West Potomac I think we have seen throughout this process that the communities who stand up and advocate raise their voices their voices are being heard I think if you look at the

[04:31:07] changes from scenario 3 to scenario 4 that FCPS is being very responsive so if you have concerns if you have changes if you have particular outcomes you and community want to advocate for please do comment comment in bulk get your neighborhood your community to get involved and and come out to the community meetings which you can participate in person or online i was also pleased to

participate in a community meeting at hayfield with some of our fcps leadership and my colleague marcia st john cunning to listen to community concerns about

[04:31:42] the mold remediation that is ongoing. I think there was a good conversation and I think there's some do outs to the community so do continue to look at our newsletters and we will continue to stay engaged. I also wanted to congratulate the many of our schools that were recognized for the first time as Purple Star Schools including Laurel Hill Elementary, Groveton Elementary, Mount Vernon Woods Elementary and Key Middle School. I also wanted to congratulate schools being recognized for the second time which is includes West Potomac High School, Woodlawn Elementary, Silverbrook Elementary, Edison High School and Twain High School. There are also a

[04:32:22] number of schools being recognized for the third time which is even more amazing because it's not just our brave service women and servicemen on the front line serving it's their entire family as they rotate around the nation and overseas to support our national security so thank you to everyone who does serve in our military and supports our military and I hope all of you have a great night and a great weekend. Ms. Seizmerheiser. I will be kind given the late hour and skip for

[04:32:55] tonight. Ms. Lady. I'll do the same as I want to know who's going to win the trophy. And at 11:32 we are adjourned.



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