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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, February 26, 2026

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Place Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldHStrR3fno>
- Official School Board page (FCPS): <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-28. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:12] This February 26, 2026 regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board will now come to order at 7:00 PM. Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence and a performance of the national anthem followed by a performance of every voice and sing by the Justice High School Chamber Choir under the direction of Miranda Lansbury.

[00:00:35] - I pledge allegiance to the flag.

[00:01:05] - Sing till earth and head the heart are rejoicing. high as the missing skies. Let it resound loud as the rose has taught us. Sing a song full of the

[00:01:41] hope that the present has brought up. Missing the rising sun of our new day be. Let us march on

[00:01:55] Oh, so proudly we hailed the twilight's last gleaming, whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight.

[00:02:30] O'er the ramparts we watched Were so gallantly streamed And the rocks bursting in Through the dark flag was still there Say does that star-spangled banner yet wave

[00:03:06] O'er the land A round of applause for our amazing students.

[00:03:39] If you would like to review a copy of this the meeting agenda, please see the back of the auditorium. To obtain copies of any items or supporting materials being presented tonight, please reference the QR code on the agenda or visit [www.fcps.edu slash board docs](http://www.fcps.edu/slash/board/docs). Tonight's meeting is being broadcast on Cox Channel 99, Verizon Fios Channel 11, and live streamed on YouTube and at our website www.fcps.edu

[00:04:15] slash livestream. Mr. Dunn has submitted a request to attend tonight's meeting remotely due to a personal conflict due to a professional obligation and is located in Mount Vernon, Virginia. I've performed an initial review of Mr. Dunn's request and having found it to be in compliance with the school board's remote participation resolution, I have approved the request. Mr. Dunn, please check your audio and visual. We see you. I can hear you. Can you hear me? We can hear you. Excellent. We now ask all board members who are physically present to vote on the following.

[00:04:50] All those in favor of confirming the chair's approval of Mr. Dunn's request. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, and myself. All those opposed. Dr. Anderson. Will the clerk please read the vote? 7-1. The motion carries. Thank you.

[00:05:20] Agenda Item 3.03, Custodian and Food Nutrition Worker Appreciation Month Proclamation. I call on Miss Lady for a proclamation. Whereas custodians are the first employees to arrive in the morning and the last employees to leave at night, and our custodians rise to the challenge each and every day to ensure schools are safe, clean, and ready to receive students, and whereas we honor FCPS's custodians, field custodians, and building supervisors who are responsible for the daily care and safe operation of all facilities and buildings on a year-round basis, school facilities represent

[00:06:00] a significant investment on the part of the citizens of Fairfax County, and FCPS custodial employees ensure they are kept clean and in good repair. And whereas by providing clean and safe school environments, FCPS custodians have a direct impact on the educational success of our students.

[00:06:15] And whereas FCPS custodians take pride in their work and seek additional training, leading to certification as professional custodians. And whereas we recognize that helping our children fulfill their highest potential begins with access to healthy food and balanced and nutritious meals at school.

[00:06:31] show these are often the most most nutritious and sometimes the only meals in the students day they improve student health making it easier for students to learn and erode inequality while focusing on exposing students to a variety of diverse meals and whereas food nutrition services is committed to serving every student by offering numerous programs to support student nutrition and academic achievement by serving over 20 million meals per school year and whereas we honor the 1400 FCPS school cafeteria staff and food and nutrition professionals who make these meals possible and operate the division's food services programs to ensure every student has access to healthy meals regardless of food allergies, medical conditions,

[00:07:10] or cultural and philosophical dietary preferences. These essential valued employees who prepare and serve school meals help nurture and nourish our children through their daily interactions and support our students. And whereas the hard work, contributions, and unending dedication of our food and nutrition services employees have been an example for all of us and for that the fcps community is extremely grateful now therefore be it resolved that the ferris county board recognizes february 2026 as custodian and food and nutrition worker appreciation month and thank these custodians and food and nutrition workers whose attention to detail compassion and high

[00:07:46] standards benefit all students employees and members of the fcs fcps community is there a Second. Second. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. I will call for a vote. All those in favor. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunn, and myself. That is unanimous for all board members. Agenda item 3.04, proclamation celebrating the 25th anniversary of McNair Elementary School. I call on Ms. Marin

[00:08:21] for a motion they just walked in okay okay whereas mcnair elementary school opened in 2001 to meet the growing needs of its community transitioning from a pre-k through sixth grade model to a primary school serving students in preschool through second grade and whereas in 2021 the opening of mcnair upper elementary school alleviated overcrowding by relocating students in

[00:08:57] grades three through six to a new site allowing mcnair elementary school to focus on preschool through second grade while expanding specialized programming including enhanced autism classrooms for kindergarten through second grade preschool autism classrooms early childhood class-based classrooms and inclusive pre-k programming and whereas at the start of the 2025 school year McNair elementary school was designated a title one school expanding opportunities for students through targeted supports including free and reduced meals um excuse me including free after school clubs for kindergarten through second grade that strengthen mathematics and science learning

[00:09:35] through problem-based instruction creative and critical thinking and the activation of student curiosity and whereas mcnair elementary school focuses on cultivating a safe inclusive and joyful environment where academic and social emotional excellence allow the youngest learners to thrive under the motto lifelong learners grow here the vision is realized through a commitment to fostering a sense of belonging mutual respect and a growth of mindset and a growth mindset rooted in perseverance by integrating innovative experiences and critical thinking into curriculum the school empowers students to embrace ownership of their unique learning adventures and explore

[00:10:10] endless possibilities whereas mcnair elementary school provides a holistic educational experience through diverse instructional and behavioral programs such as avmr conscious discipline and enhanced autism classrooms while fostering creativity and environmental stewardship through get to green and various fine arts performances and whereas the school cultivates student leadership and inclusivity through the daily mcnair morning news show the best buddies program and junior patrols empowering students to build essential life skills and support peer community and whereas a robust family and community engagement is sustained through strategic partnerships with

[00:10:46] organizations like asha josey and food for others alongside a collaborative pta that hosts multicultural events, STEAM Nights, and enrichment activities to support the school's mission. Now, therefore, be it resolved that we celebrate the 25th anniversary of McNair Elementary School, honoring its dedication to academic excellence, inclusive programs, leadership development, and strong community partnerships that continue to enrich the lives of students and families.

[00:11:12] And be it further resolved that we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the students, family, staff, and community members who have contributed to 25 years of excellence at McNair Elementary School. Is there a second? Second. Mr. Moon, I will call for the vote. All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunn, and myself. That is unanimous for all board members. Agenda item 3.05, proclamation honoring the 100th anniversary of Chester Book Elementary School. I call on

[00:11:51] Ms. Lady for a proclamation. Whereas Chesterbrook Elementary School opened its doors in 1926 and proudly celebrates its 100th anniversary, making a century of service to students, families, and the community. And whereas Chesterbrook Elementary School's history reflects the broader history of Fairfax County Public Schools, with roots in the Chesterbrook community formerly known as Lincolnville, including early schools serving African-American children beginning in 1906, and milestones such as racial integration in the 1960s that shape the diverse, inclusive school community it is today.

[00:12:23] And whereas, for a hundred years, Chesterbrook Elementary has provided generations of students with a nurturing and rigorous education, building strong relationships across the school community while encouraging lifelong learning. And whereas, Chesterbrook Elementary School is dedicated to providing a rigorous and enriching instructional program, including a full-time advanced academic program, Spanish foreign language in elementary schools, FLES, a comprehensive instructional music program, and a wide range of before and after school extracurricular activities that support the development of the whole child.

[00:12:53] And whereas Chesterbrook Elementary School promotes leadership, service, and community engagement through initiatives such as Student Ambassadors Program, including an Echo Team, Philanthropy Club, School Spirit Committee, Safety Patrols, and a student-led CES News Show, partnerships with Vincent Hall Retirement Community and St. Dunstan's Church and Peer Buddy Programs.

[00:13:13] And whereas Chesterbrook Elementary School proudly fosters strong school spirit and community engagement through meaningful partnerships with families, enjoying many traditions that bring chickmunks together, including funfair, family fun nights, community cookouts, and annual grade level celebrations of learning. And whereas, as a Purple Star School, Chesterbrook Elementary honors military-connected students and families and fosters an appreciation for service, citizenship, and civic responsibility, annually hosting Veterans Day speakers honoring the service of our military families and our Vincent Hall neighbors. And whereas, thousands of students have passed through the doors of Chesterbrook Elementary School and benefited from the dedication

[00:13:50] of exceptional teachers, staff, families, and community partners who work collaboratively to prepare students to be thoughtful learners, compassionate citizens, and future leaders. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County School Board hereby honors Chesterbrook Elementary School on the occasion of its 100th anniversary, commends the school for a century of educational excellence, service, and community impact, and extends its best wishes as Chesterbrook Elementary School continues its proud tradition of preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the future. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. McElveen. I will call for a vote. All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John

[00:14:30] Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself with Mr. Dunn away from the table. Oh, no, there's Mr. Dunn. Mr. Dunn, thank you, with Mr. Dunn. That's unanimous for all board members. I would like to welcome all those here to support the proclamation honoring the hundredth anniversary of Chesterbrook Elementary School to please

[00:15:00] join the board for a photo at the front of the dais. I would like to welcome all

[00:16:14] those here in support of the proclamation honoring the 25th anniversary of McNair Elementary School to please join the board for a photo at

[00:16:21] the front of the dais. I would like to welcome all those here in support of the

[00:17:14] custodian and food and nutrition worker appreciation month proclamation to

[00:17:17] please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais. Chair Anderson that

[00:18:50] is the last proclamation photo. That's the last proclamation photo. Agenda item 3.06, school

[00:20:02] anniversary recognitions for 2026. The Fairfax County School Board is very pleased to recognize the schools celebrating an anniversary in 2026. Please stand when your school is recognized. After all recognitions are complete, schools will be invited by region to have a photo with the board. Celebrating 40 years of excellence, Armstrong Elementary has a proud history of honoring the growth, achievement, and the caring spirit of their amazing students who remain the center of everything they do. The success of Armstrong is built upon the foundation of a

[00:20:38] caring and dedicated staff and a supportive, encouraging community that together ensure every child can achieve greatness. At Armstrong, they take immense pride in their inclusive and caring culture, which is designed to support the unique individual needs of every learner, from their specialized local level four AAP and enhanced autism programs to hosting the largest elementary school comprehensive services site, CSS, and FCPS, Armstrong serves as a model of diversity and dedicated support. As we look ahead to Armstrong students learning in a newly renovated building, we celebrate 40 years of Armstrong being a place where every student is empowered to belong, learn, and

[00:21:17] succeed. Originally opened as a neighborhood elementary program in September 1956. Today, Cedar Lane School proudly serves high school students with diverse needs. Their mission is to provide a structured and nurturing learning environment that supports the academic, social, emotional, vocational, and behavioral growth of every student. Cedar Lane School is a small school with a big purpose. A principal ferrish and STEM know

[00:21:51] students by name and support them to achieve their personal goals. The Panther community thrives through small class sizes and individualized instruction tailored to each student's unique journey now in its 70th year cedar lane schools to celebrate learning community and progress family connections community partnerships internships and hands-on learning arts athletics and academics all fuel the thriving cedar lane community congratulations presswood elementary school

[00:22:25] proudly celebrates 70 years of learning growth and community as the home of the owls open since 1956 Presswood has served a vibrant neighborhood anchor where a rich tapestry of diversity and commitment to academic excellence go hand in hand.

[00:22:43] The milestone honors a unique, multi-generational legacy as many families have seen parents and grandparents pass through these same halls, fostering a deep sense of tradition and belonging. Supported by dedicated staff and a close-knit community, generations of owls have been empowered to reach their full potential.

[00:23:03] As we celebrate this 70th anniversary, we honor Crestwood's storied past and look ahead with pride as they continue to inspire and nurture students for many years to come. Cub Run Elementary School proudly celebrates 40 years of learning, growth, and community as the home of the Cubbies.

[00:23:24] For 40 decades, not 40, four decades, Cub Run has been a place where young learners are encouraged to be curious, caring, and confident as they take their first step in their educational journey.

Guided by dedicated teachers and staff, Cub Run Cubbies have grown academically and socially in a welcoming environment that values kindness, responsibility, and respect.

[00:23:50] Families and community partners have been an essential part of the school's success, helping to create a strong sense of community and belonging as their school motto is, Together We Belong. As Cub Run marks the special milestone, we honor the many students, educators, families who have shaped its history and look ahead with excitement to continue a proud tradition of nurturing and inspiring Cubbies for generations to come.

[00:24:18] Eagle View Elementary celebrates its 20th anniversary, marking two decades as a beacon of belonging and academic excellence. Since 2006, the school has lived its vision that every student belongs and loves to learn, supporting military families as a Purple Star School and earning frequent FCPS CARES awards for its dedicated staff.

[00:24:41] Anchored by a strong house system, Eagle View fosters a true Eagle View family through programs like Lego Robotics and Math Olympiad. Community events such as STEM Night and Music and Arts Gallery Night and inclusive supports from pre-K through sixth grade as a comprehensive services site, ensuring every Eagle is supported, challenged, and celebrated.

[00:25:05] Since opening in 1971, Forest Edge Elementary School has served as a vital cornerstone of the neighborhood, honoring its unique open concept history while evolving from the ferrets into the majestic Forest Edge Eagle. The school's enduring legacy is built upon the dedication of its award-winning staff and a deep-rooted sense of home that frequently inspires former students to return as teachers and community partners.

[00:25:28] By integrating modern initiatives like the AVID program alongside traditional academic excellence, the school ensures that every student is equipped with the critical thinking and organizational skills needed for lifelong success. Over the past 55 years, the campus has transformed to include vibrant murals and outdoor learning spaces, reflecting a commitment to providing a premier, well-rounded education for all.

[00:25:51] Through a continued focus on kindness, leadership, and service, Forest Edge proudly celebrates its rich history while remaining devoted to the future achievements of every student. Forestville Elementary proudly celebrates its 45th anniversary, honoring a rich history that began in 1980 and came to life when students first entered the building in January 1981.

[00:26:13] From its early days organized in the Dell, Glen, and Vail Pods to today's modernized campus, Forestville has remained a welcoming, inclusive community where students are safe, supported, and challenged. Nearly 600 students from diverse backgrounds learn each day through strong academics, engaging specials such as music, art, PE, and performing arts, and leadership opportunities including student council, patrols, and Forest Vision.

[00:26:37] Beloved traditions like the school musical, field day, spirit weeks, Forestville Fridays, and enriching field trips continue to connect generations of Cardinals. With dedicated educators, strong family, and a PTA partnership, and a commitment to helping every child soar. Forestville's legacy of excellence continues to grow.

[00:26:55] I will invite you to stand. Glasgow Middle School, as one of the largest and most diverse middle schools in the country, Glasgow Middle School fosters an environment where students from around the

globe come together to learn.

[00:27:19] It is one of the only three middle schools in Fairfax County to serve students in grades 6, 7, and 8, offering a distinct three-year experience. Notable programs at Glasgow Middle School include AVID for college readiness, a wide range of after-school clubs and athletics, award-winning performing arts ensembles, and comprehensive support for multilingual learners.

[00:27:48] These programs reflect a sustained commitment to holistic student growth and success. Glasgow's dedication to inclusion is demonstrated through initiatives such as its nationally recognized Best Buddies chapter, mentoring opportunities, and an instructional focus grounded in international baccalaureate approaches to the learning.

[00:28:13] For 65 years, Glasgow has fostered a culture of respect, responsibility, and readiness that prepares the Panthers to thrive as lifelong learners and engage global citizens, as well as the Region 2 Principal of the Year.

[00:28:33] For the last 65 years, the vision of Herndon Elementary School B's has been to provide students with a safe, nurturing learning environment where all students will work to their full potential.

[00:28:49] Our community works hard to provide high-quality instruction, a safe environment, and develop goals with students. Parents and teachers work together as a community to prepare students to become productive citizens. We believe in our students, that each of them has unique qualities in the ability to learn, given opportunity and encouragement.

[00:29:08] With the proper guidance, support, and expectations, our children can have high levels of achievement. We believe in our teachers, who are highly qualified to support, encourage, and nurture each of their students to become high achievers. We believe in our community. Families are an integral part of a great school.

[00:29:24] We're excited to see what the next 65 years will bring to Herndon Elementary. Also celebrating 65 years as Herndon Middle School, we honor a campus whose roots run deeper than almost any other in Fairfax County.

[00:29:41] For more than a century, this site has served as an educational hub, beginning in 1912 as the original home of Herndon High School, where the first brick building opened its doors to the community. In 1961, when Herndon High School moved to Bennett Street, the Locust Street campus transitioned into an intermediate school for 7th and 8th graders, marking the beginning of Herndon Middle School.

[00:30:03] While the facility has been modernized over time, its mission endures. Today, Herndon Middle School proudly serves one of the most culturally and economically diverse student populations in the county, reflecting the vibrant Herndon community. Through strong partnerships with students and families, a culture of collaboration and fierce optimism, the staff ensures equitable access to rigorous, engaging instruction so all students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally as confident, curious, lifelong learners.

[00:30:39] Keen Mill Elementary proudly celebrates 65 years of excellence and dedication to student success. For more than six decades, Keen Mill has served as a cornerstone for its community, grounded in strong partnerships, high expectation for students, and a commitment to educating the whole child.

[00:30:59] Generations of students, families, and educators have contributed to this legacy, defined by professionalism, care, and continuous growth. The Keen Mill staff is committed to balancing high academic expectations with keeping a pulse on the social-emotional development of their students to ensure a sense of belonging for all.

[00:31:21] Keen Mill continues to honor its past while remaining rooted to equity, care, and continuous growth for generations to come.

[00:31:37] The board would like to recognize Keen Middle School on their 55th anniversary. At Key Middle School, expectations for student behavior are high, curiosity is nurtured, and achievement is celebrated. The board would like to recognize Principal Drew Campbell and Assistant Principals Sean Brown and Sherry Peters for their exceptional leadership.

[00:31:59] Together with Key's dedicated teachers and staff, they have built a thriving international baccalaureate program that equips students with the critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills essential for the 21st century. Students have numerous opportunities to enhance their classroom experience at Key Middle School, including the National Junior Honor Society, Drama Club, Soccer Club, and Model UN.

[00:32:23] Through strong partnership between educators, students, and families, Key creates a welcoming environment where all students develop into inquiring, empathetic, and knowledgeable young people. Lemon Road Elementary School proudly celebrates its 70th anniversary, honoring a legacy that makes the school truly unique within Fairfax County.

[00:32:48] Since opening on January 6, 1956, Lemon Road has combined strong academic achievement with innovative student-centered learning. As a level four full-time advanced academic center, the school offers rigorous instruction enriched by project-based learning, STEAM, outdoor education, and portrait of graduate portfolios.

[00:33:06] Flexible learning spaces, advanced technology, and a focus on social-emotional learning support the whole child. Lemon Road is equally defined by its strong community spirit, meaningful family engagement, deep commitment to inclusivity reflected in its history of integration and its designation as a Purple Star and Echo School USA Green Flag Award winner.

[00:33:24] The 70-year milestone celebrates a school community built on excellence, equity, and continuous growth. For 65 years, Mantua Elementary School has played an important role in shaping forward-thinking education in Fairfax County and enriching the lives of students, families, and the broader community.

[00:33:47] Opened on September 5, 1961, Mantua has a proud history of embracing change to better serve its students. In 1995, Mantua Elementary School pioneered a one-to-one technology initiative providing each student with access to an individual computer and helping redefine how teaching and learning could take place through thoughtful integration of technology, work that helped lay the foundation for instructional approaches used across Fairfax County public schools.

[00:34:12] Today, that legacy is reinforced by an exceptional PTA that strengthens community connections and offers unique opportunities including Virginia's only single school elementary basketball league. In 2025, Mantua was named a purple star school in recognition of its support for military-

connected families and students. Mantua Elementary is committed to fostering a school community of passionate staff and students in which curiosity, resilience, well-being, and joy thrive.

[00:34:41] Celebrating 65 years of excellence, Marshall Road Elementary School empowers students through innovative programs dedicated educators and strong partnerships with families in the community opened on september 5th 1961 marshall road played an important role in the desegregation of fairfax county public schools welcoming welcoming its first african-american students in 1963 during the early stages of fairfax county's long delayed desegregation process today marshall road is known for its culture of kindness and belonging serving a diverse community where students speak 48

[00:35:19] languages at home and represent a wide range of abilities and backgrounds. Marshall Road is recognized for enriching learning opportunities in STEAM, strong community service programs, and sustainability efforts including a school-wide composting program. Montrose Alternative Learning Center provides a non-traditional educational environment for Fairfax County public school students in grades 7 and 8. Montrose ALC's commitment to motivating teaching and empowered

[00:35:54] and empowering every student reflects its vision that all learners deserve the guidance encouragement and structured support necessary to achieve personal and academic success montrose also provides equitable student academic opportunities a positive school climate and promotes social emotional wellness including restorative practices which are utilized in the classroom to build relationships and encourage students' ownership of personal responsibility for their

[00:36:26] actions in class and in the school community. Small class sizes combined with a specialized curriculum allows teachers to customize instruction for each student. The center's commitment to fostering accountability and resilience ensures that students are equipped for a successful transition back to their base schools and are prepared to reach their full academic potential congratulations

[00:36:55] on 35 years celebrating its 70th anniversary navy elementary school stands as a testament to seven decades of educational excellence since first opening its doors in february 1956. originally designated by baloo and justice with just nine classrooms the school transitioned from its temporary home at the old florist school to a dedicated facility that was formerly inaugurated on a snowy afternoon March 1956. Since those early days when enrollment was set at just 250 students

[00:37:31] Navy has evolved into a premier 21st century learning community. Today the school maintains a rigorous academic environment where students consistently strive to exceed state standards through a technology-rich differentiated curriculum. This commitment to the whole child is evidenced by the integration of FLESS Spanish instruction for grades K-6 and a robust suite of extracurriculars including the Junior Master Gardeners and Dolphin Discovery Science classes. Supported by an active PTO and a long-standing partnership with Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, Navy continues to foster a community of trust and environmental stewardship ensuring its students are prepared to be informed, self-sufficient, and productive global citizens for the

[00:38:09] next 70 years and beyond. North Springfield Elementary is recognized for its engaging after-school programs and cultural clubs that expand learning beyond the classroom and for its strong partnerships with the community which includes pta-sponsored events such as movie nights bingo nights and heritage nights north springfield elementary was among the first in fairfax county public schools to earn a purple star school designation in recognition of its

[00:38:47] support to military families and is home to the largest special education preschool program in the division. A source of beaver pride at North Springfield is their signature musical, The Play, which rivals secondary school productions. It is that amazing. North Springfield maintains an award-winning eco club and student-centered programs such as project-based learning in a student-run news show. Traditions that include the top 10 mile race, winter sing-along,

[00:39:22] the gratitude wall, and kindness celebrations programs reflect a vibrant culture rooted in respect, belonging, kindness, and collaboration. North Springfield Elementary School proudly celebrates its 70th anniversary, honoring a legacy of community and student success.

[00:39:43] Old Creek Elementary School proudly celebrates 60 years of excellence as the home of the Bears. Since opening in 1966, Old Creek has been a cornerstone of our community, building strong relationships and a proud tradition of academic excellence.

[00:40:03] For six decades, Old Creek has supported the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student in a safe and welcoming environment. As a vibrant community school serving families across the Braddock District, Old Creek provides a comprehensive and inclusive educational experience, including an AAP program, enhanced autism program, and comprehensive services site.

[00:40:24] Old Creek envisions an inclusive community of lifelong learners and confident risk-takers who see challenges as opportunities to grow. Through engaging experiences, generations of bears have been prepared to thrive as thoughtful, curious, responsible, and resilient individuals. With pride in its history and excitement for the future, Old Creek celebrates 60 years of growing strong together.

[00:40:45] guanda road schools anyone from guanda road guanda road schools school marks 60 years of service as a specialized alternative high school located in the mountain district but serving students from throughout the county serving 100 students the school provides a family-like atmosphere defined by your small classes and integrated clinical support as a model for

[00:41:20] trauma-informed education, it prioritizes trust and resilience, creating a sanctuary where students feel safe to take academic risks. This mission is bartered by the Aspire program and a step of champion advocates, including outstanding employee winners from 2023 and 2025. Beyond the classroom, school fosters community through initiatives like Operation Gift Box, demonstrating a deep commitment to service under the new school leadership on the road continues its meaningful

[00:41:58] work in partnership with the parents and neighbors by prioritizing relationships over rigid structures the school endures ensures students find the safety necessary to own their diplomas and thrive as a confident contributing members of a society robinson secondary school proudly celebrates 55 years of excellence, tradition, and school spirit as the home of the Rams.

[00:42:31] Serving students in grade 7 through 12, Robinson has for more than five decades challenged learners to think critically, lead with integrity, and strive for their personal best. Generation of Rams have excelled in rigorous academics, athletics, the arts, and student leadership, building a strong culture of pride and perseverance. Dedicated educators and supportive families have helped middle and high school's years, preparing them for success beyond graduation.

[00:43:02] This anniversary honors the achievements, memories, and tradition that defines Robinson's legacy while looking forward with confidence as RAM continues to learn, grow, and lead in an ever-changing world. Celebrating 60 years serving students and families, Shrevevood Elementary School

fosters high achieving learning environment rooted in strong relationships and a sense of belonging. Opened on September 6, 1966, Shrevewood serves a richly diverse student community and is committed to providing equitable

[00:43:40] academic opportunities for every student. Among Shrevewood's many clubs and organizations is a student-run news crew that produces the daily live morning news show. I encourage you all to tune in. Good Morning Shrevewood, offering students hands-on experience in filming, production, and broadcast technology.

[00:43:58] Shrevewood is also supported by a very strong PTA that brings students families and staff together the school has been recognized for its commitment to positive school culture and environmental stewardship earning the designation as a positivity project green shield school and a green flag award from the National Wildlife Federation's Eco Schools U.S. program and in 2025 Shrevewood was named a purple star school in recognition of its support for military connected students and families

[00:44:27] Stone Middle School proudly marks 35 years of supporting students during the pivotal middle school years as a proud home of the Panthers. For more than three decades, Stone has helped Panthers discover their strength, build confidence, and develop a love of learning in a supportive and engaging environment.

[00:44:51] Through strong academics, word language, fine arts, and extracurricular opportunities, students are encouraged to explore interest and challenge themselves, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers and staff work closely with families to foster a sense of belonging and community that helps students thrive socially and academically.

[00:45:13] As Stone celebrates this milestone, we recognize the generation of Panthers who have shaped the school spirit and look ahead with enthusiasm to continue a tradition of growth, resilience, and Panther pride. Union Mill Elementary celebrates its 40th anniversary, marking four decades of excellence since opening in Clifton in 1986.

[00:45:39] Now a 21st century leader in STEM, digital literacy, and artificial intelligence, Union Mill engages families through events like Math and Science Night, Family Heritage Night, and Literacy Night, supported by a deeply committed PTA and parent community.

[00:45:54] As a Purple Star school, Union Mill proudly supports military-connected families while fostering inclusion through programs such as Unified Sports and the Bear Buddies Mentor Program, guided by the Portrait of a Graduate Framework and enriched by initiatives like Get to Green and the Advanced Academic Program, Union Mill continues to nurture academic achievement, leadership, and social-emotional growth for every bear.

[00:46:19] Waples Mill Elementary celebrates its 35th anniversary, marking more than three decades as a vibrant cornerstone of the Oakton community. Known for strong academic performance, the school supports every learner through a continuum of advanced academic programs and inclusive multilingual learner and special education services.

[00:46:44] Waples Mill unique spirit is reflected in its signature experiences, such as the student ambassador program, the annual fourth grade Broadway junior musical, Steam Night, and hands-on learning in the STEM lab. As a Purple Star school, it proudly supports military-connected kids, while

community traditions like the back-to-school block party, fall festival, and fun run brings eagles together, underscoring a long-standing commitment to academic, social, and emotional excellence.

[00:47:20] The board would like to recognize Whitman Middle School on its 65th anniversary. We recognize and thank Principal John Flowers and Assistant Principals LaTosha Watson, Michael Miser, Heather Wiggins, and Freda Woods-Lawrence for their leadership and for fostering a culture of excellence where students are empowered and expected to achieve their highest potential.

[00:47:41] At Whitman Middle School, learning comes to life through rigorous programs such as the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program, Advanced Academics Program, and Advancement Via Individual Determination, AVID. Whitman's robust extracurricular program inspires and prepares students for success now and in the future.

[00:47:58] As one of Fairfax County's first intermediate schools, we congratulate Whitman for being an enduring cornerstone of support for students and families throughout the Mount Vernon community. The board would like to invite the Region 1 schools, including Cedar Lane School, school staff and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:48:22] And I may ask my colleagues to remain in the front of the dais for the upcoming photos as well.

[00:49:39] The board would like to invite the region two schools, school staff and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:50:56] The board would like to invite the region three schools, including Quandah Road School,

[00:51:53] school staff and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:52:44] The board would like to invite the region four schools, school staff and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:53:50] The board would like to invite the Region 5 schools, school staff, and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:55:06] The board would like to invite the Region 6 schools, including Montrose Alternative Learning Center, school staff, and supporters to please join the board for a photo.

[00:56:50] Chair Anderson, that was our final photo.

[00:57:25] On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all the schools who came out this evening for their recognition of their school anniversaries.

[00:58:18] These anniversaries highlight a long-term commitment of the community to the public education in Fairfax County. Agenda item 4.01, community participation. The next order of business is community participation. We welcome all community members who are here and those who have signed up to speak this evening.

[00:58:35] Additional information about signing up to provide comments at school board regular business meetings and public hearings can be found on the school board website at www.fcps/schoolboard. During the signup process, community members acknowledged that they were informed of the Board's expectations for proper decorum when providing comments. These expectations are 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 a speaker's remarks.

[00:59:11] Audience members may not join speakers at the podium and should remain at their seats, including when recording or taking photos. We are grateful to those who have come to speak with us today and thank you for your cooperation. School board members will be listening but not responding. Madam Clerk, please call our first speaker.

[00:59:28] Anaki Basavaj Raju. Can I start? Good evening. My name is Anaki. I'm a junior at Falls Church High School and I'm here to talk to you today about the importance of installing more solar power on FCPS buildings. I'm a member of Falls Church High School's Get to Green Club and we've joined the FCPS Solar Schools campaign. We're trying to educate our community

[01:00:06] about the opportunities solar offers for our schools. So far we've given presentations to our PTSA and three elementary school PTAs. Part of our goal is to share the good news that solar panels have already started going up in several Fairfax County schools. In total you have approved contracts for solar at 34 schools and for that we'd like to thank you. And we've been doing this outreach in the community and from this outreach we found that students and parents are for the most part unaware that SPS is putting up solar and they're

[01:00:44] really happy to hear about me and my school solar campaign think it would be beneficial if the district would celebrate and publicize this process it would be amazing if FCPS could dedicate a page on the website to show updates on school solar projects and hold ribbon cuttings for when solar arrays get connected in the future. If you and the board decide to install more solar power on our school buildings, you would be actively lowering budget costs on energy and putting that time and money into more enriching matters that would benefit not just me, but every student in FCPS. Thank you.

[01:01:27] Allison Saron. Hello, I'm Allison. I'm a sophomore at Falls Church High School, and I'm also a part of the Get to Green Club. To expand more on the process, as Inoki just said, we are excited about the progress so far however there is opportunity to do so much more as you are all well aware fcps has 199 schools and centers many if not most of these roofs would be suitable

[01:02:01] for solar for example falls church has been undergoing a big renovation the past several years but we haven't heard of any intentions to install solar on our new roof we would like to see the district continue to put effort into adding solar to all suitable locations this is urgent because the federal tax credit that helps make these projects viable will disappear at the end of 2027 which means we need to work as fast as possible if we want to implement school solar

[01:02:28] on as many schools as possible. Thank you. Omar El-Aloi. Bobbi Monticella. Hi thank you so much

[01:03:03] I'm Bobbi Monticella with Mothers Out Front and since 2019 our teams of moms have been standing up here asking FCPS to protect our kids' health and their future in the face of climate change. And we've seen remarkable commitments and movement forward.

[01:03:20] Despite so many difficulties and tough realities, you've added 48 electric school buses to your fleet, creating cleaner air and healthier rides to school for hundreds of kids. You've scheduled 34 solar projects in the face of huge headwinds from our biggest utility.

[01:03:38] And there are net zero schools planned in the capital improvement plan. So thank you so much for all of that. But I also want to urge you to keep going, to stay committed to the JET goals that I was a part of creating.

[01:03:53] Our kids are exposed daily to pollution and toxins in both the indoor and outdoor air around their schools. And the older and less efficient these buildings and buses get, the more unsafe they are for our kids developing lungs and brains.

[01:04:09] show that asthma, lower test scores, cognitive impairment, and even cancer are risks we take with our kids' health when fossil fuels are combusted in and around school buildings and in school buses. This daily threat is in addition to the existential threat to their future in the face of climate change. I want to urge you to continue to look ahead and play the long game and find ways to make these upfront investments in sustainability that will save money in the long run. These savings can then be put toward educational programs rather than be thrown away on fuel and utility bills. Governor Abigail Spanberger has called for us to be

[01:04:49] efficient with the resources we have and making improvements that increase energy efficiency and building and vehicle sustainability is the first line of defense. So please, for the sake of our kids' health and their future, carry on with that mission. Thank you. David Keller. Good evening. My is David Keller and I'm a special education teacher at Poe Middle School. I'm here to discuss

[01:05:27] the involuntary transfer of ESOL teachers and assistant principals over the past few months. Due to factors outside this division's control, Dr. Reed, word on the street is that we've lost over 4,000 students between August and November due to a myriad of reasons including fear of ice, pauses on immigration, doge layoffs, or families relocating during the government shutdown.

[01:05:46] Because staffing is tied to FCPS and state mandated ratios, many ESOL teachers and assistant and principals have been involuntarily transferred as school changes on paper from overstaffed to understaffed. I'm not here to talk about that. What I am here to advocate for is that ESOL teachers in these uncertain times, especially two members of Poe Middle School who are told to fly away from our nest, were given inconsistent timelines and had to use personal leave to transition between schools. To be clear this is not a failure of my building's leadership. My administration is working with consistent board-directed guidance on how this process should operate and meanwhile as a SPED teacher I know that word in the street that we're currently overstaffed as well. And these transfers are going to occur,

[01:06:25] and they clearly will. There must be a consistent system. I propose that any employee who use personal leave during a transfer have that leave retroactively converted to admin leave. Moving forward, implement a standard five-day business transition, where two days to close out, say goodbye to their students, say goodbye to their co-workers, not spreading rumors while they're just leaving one day randomly, two days to pack up and clean their room, and one day to move in and on board on the at their new site these are uncertain times and they will likely grow more uncertain if hard decisions must be made then let them at least be made fairly with dignity

[01:06:59] and a consistent timeline thank you so much Susan Stillman thank you madam chair members of the school board Dr. Reed my name is Susan Stillman I'm a volunteer with the Virginia chapter of the Sierra Club I'm the co-chair for renewable energy I worked on the jet and it was a great collaborative exercise among school board members, experts in the community, and other folks that put

[01:07:37] together the proposal that you all adopted in 2012. You all made the commitment to reduce emissions by 2030, as compared to 2019, and produce 25% of your energy through renewable sources by 2030, and 50% by 2040.

[01:07:56] It would be interesting to know where the school system is in achieving those goals, because 2030 is right around the corner. It's exciting to see the net-zero-ready schools in the construction permitting phase and in the capital improvement program. The list of schools that are contracted for power purchase agreements to get solar, given the interconnection challenges and roof ages, is impressive.

[01:08:19] Building highly energy efficient all-electric schools is critical because energy efficiency stays with the building for its lifetime. These buildings are more comfortable and provide healthier air quality for the students. When a building is all electric and highly energy efficient, it's easier to provide renewable energy through solar and ground source heat pumps.

[01:08:41] I encourage you to continue to build new and renovate schools to high energy efficiency standards and continue to deploy solar as quickly as possible. School systems in Virginia that have gone down this path are finding the savings are significant. An investment upfront pays financial and health benefits over the life of the students and shows the school system's dedication to the future of the students in their care.

[01:09:08] Thank you. Erin Dial.

[01:09:35] Good evening. Estimates are that one in 10 high school students have difficulty focusing during the school day. For students with ADHD, it is almost nearly impossible for them to focus on the task at hand when they could be playing retro bowl, consuming inane low value content, or asking Google search.

[01:09:53] an AI response that they use in an assignment or the students persistently find ways to circumvent the restrictions. There's almost no SR&R consequences for misuse of tech during school except when parents flag it for the administrators, which is a huge disincentive. They have told us that they can't address all violations of the SR&R as it relates to tech except on a case-by-case basis. As a result, it's another game of whack-a-mole as parents flag yet another movie that's

[01:10:26] uploaded or a game, usually hosted on FCPS Google sites. Some of the teachers have simply refused to use Lightspeed during the class time because they don't have time, they don't have the bandwidth. What twilight zone am I in when for more than five years I have been begging reliance on tech and the distractions during the school day on the school-provided device and ask you to create better policies that will enable students to actually experience deep, sustained learning and

[01:10:59] focus. I brought these up many times, and the questions are, well, it's the district's responsibility, and the district IT staff says, oh, it's the school policy responsibility. So if this becomes a policy question, I beg you, please create policies to reduce the reliance on one-to-one tech, especially before high school. When I've addressed these concerns, I'm usually met with, well, tech is a part of your child's future. He should figure out how to learn it, but guess what?

[01:11:29] A car is, too, and I'm not giving the keys to a fifth grader. Thank you. Ilana Juergen Doniger. Hi.

[01:11:52] My name is Ilana Juergen Doniger. I've been an FCPS parent for almost nine years now. I believe strongly in giving back to my community and have done significant volunteering through the

years, including advocacy related to screen time and ed tech starting in 2018. I served for four years on a school health advisory committee, during which we spent a lot of time focusing on ed tech and hearing stories about the very inconsistent ways that devices are used from classroom to classroom and school to school.

[01:12:15] I'm sharing this background to explain that I've been following ed tech issues for a while and I'm also aware of the frequent cavernous gap between FCPS policies and their classroom implementation. Now AI. On February 10th, the school board had an AI work session where FCPS shared pro-AI slides that shared a theoretical framework for students to use AI in a way that would theoretically allow FCPS to prosper, prepare, and protect.

[01:12:39] The slides relied heavily on a 2026 AI and education report by the Brookings Institute. But not once in the presentation was anything mentioned about an important conclusion in that same report. Brookings summarized this conclusion in a very brief article overviewing its 219-page report. I quote, and this is a quote, After interviews, focus groups, and consultations with over 500 students, teachers, parents, education leaders, and technologists across 50 countries, a close review of over 400 studies and a Delphi panel, we find that at this point in its trajectory, the risks of utilizing generative AI in children's education overshadow its benefits.

[01:13:17] This is largely because the risks of AI differ in nature from its benefits. That is, these risks undermine children's foundational development and may prevent the benefits from being realized." That's from Birkings. I'm almost out of time, but to me, the biggest reason to keep AI out of kindergarten through 11th grade classrooms is the fact that these are the years when kids are developing neural connections and building their adult brains, and we should not be experimenting on this current generation of kids to see what their adult brains look like after their growing brains were weakened by AI-driven cognitive offloading for creative and academic

[01:13:47] tasks. Thank you for your time. Kay Chang. Good evening, Dr. Reed and the school board. Thank you for the time and care you've put into the complex boundary adjustment. I appreciate the responsibility you carry. I'm here to respectfully urge that transportation be provided for all high school students impacted by the change not just for the 69 seniors during the full transition period for families like mine this is about logistics we have two

[01:14:26] children at different FCPS levels one at Marshall and one at Wolf Trap without bus service to Marshall it is realistic it is it isn't realistic to drive to the high school return for elementary drop-off and still get to work on time in the afternoon we would have to leave work early to manage traffic and both dismissals that joins the workday and creates real financial strain Forcing families from public transit to driving, paying for parking and tolls, it is not sustainable.

[01:14:53] For families with children at all three FCPS levels, without flexible jobs or reliable transportation, the impact is even greater. Without buses, staying at their current school is not a true choice. It is a privilege determined by resources, not equity. Beyond logistics, rising sophomores and juniors face the greatest long-term impact.

[01:15:12] Sophomore year is when academic paths like IB take hold and students build confidence and leadership. Junior year is the most important year for college admissions. Grades matter most, and teacher relationships become recommendation letters. Stability during these years is essential. The IB curriculum at Marshall does not seamlessly translate into AP at Madison.

[01:15:33] Students who have invested in IB may not receive equivalent placement, and switching requires adjusting to different academic structures and learning. Seniors are important, but many can drive and can coordinate independently. The greater disruption falls on students who still have years ahead of them.

[01:15:51] The choice is only available to students with private transportation. This is not an equitable choice, and it is fundamentally against what FCPS stands for. Thank you for your consideration.

[01:16:06] Nadia Shutov: Hello, my name is Nadia Shutov, and I'm part of the Falls Church High School Get to Green Club, and I would like to talk to all of you about solar.

[01:16:24] I want to recognize that buying solar panels can be a real challenge because of the large capital investment that it typically requires. However, power purchase agreements allow school districts to install solar with no upfront costs. In other words, for free. Because the school doesn't own the panels in a PPA, the school district then buys the electricity generated by the panels. The cost of this energy is less than what FCPS would be paying Dominion, in part because of the 30% tax credit the solar provider is able to claim. This is how solar can be a money saver

[01:17:02] for FCPS. Even if you don't care about climate change, this seems like a no-brainer. The solar projects approved so far are estimated to save \$4.4 million, so why not use power purchase agreements on all suitable roofs in FCPS before the tax credit runs out? All of the money saved could be invested into classrooms and my education instead of going to pay electric bills. Thank you.

[01:17:32] Meg Lagara. Good evening, everyone. My name is Meg Lagara, and I'm also a junior at Falls Church high school and member of our get to green club where i'm here to talk about the fairfax solar schools campaign as well maximizing school solar is essential to achieving these climate commitments that the school board adopted in 2021 one being energy carbon neutral by 2040

[01:18:07] two achieving 50 emission reductions by 2030 and three producing 25 of county energy use from in county renewable energy generation by 2030 and 50 by 2040. furthermore even though they are not as visible as school solar electrification and energy efficiency are also essential to these goals when schools are renovated they should be designed to use the least amount of energy possible and they should be built without without new fossil fuel infrastructure every time you install a new gas boiler instead of a geothermal or electric heat pump you are locking in more emissions for many

[01:18:44] years to come gas also creates real safety risks and gas cooking appliances are associated with poor air quality therefore it is important to keep these factors in mind regarding school renovations and hopefully our FCPS community can work together to achieve these goals thank you for your time Andrea Keller good evening Dr. Reed

[01:19:20] and school board members tonight I'm here with my freshmen who are in the middle of their five-year commitment to pursuing their IB diploma we represent Marshall families for transportation equity a growing group of concerned families and phasing students in grades 8 through 11. We are real families, your clients, with full-time work schedules, multiple ages of children, childcare concerns, and defined resources. Without transportation we would need to assume an inequitable burden or simply not be able to afford our children their right to remain in their educational communities. We are here to support you,

[01:19:58] our representative leadership, in fulfilling your promises to our high school students and demonstrating your commitment tonight in excellence, equity, and opportunity. Our Marshall High School students are demonstrating excellence by fully engaging in their school communities and academic path.

[01:20:15] Our students need and deserve equitable access to transportation to ensure all students receive their opportunity for academic continuity and personal development. Without it, their education and very lives will be disrupted and their school communities will feel the effects. As a long, lifelong third-generation educator, I know the work we do is centered around what our students need. The meat of our work is not about initiatives, politics, or strategy. It is about our students. If we cannot agree on that, then our priorities

[01:20:51] are backward. Every person in this room cares about education. If we do what is right and best for our students, we know our students come first. To keep our priorities in proper order tonight, we are confident that each of you will support a reasonable opportunity to ensure that funding is in place for all our phasing high school students. I would like to invite students

[01:21:14] and families who support equitable transportation funding to please stand. Sarah Armstrong. Good evening everyone. My name is Sarah and I'm also a junior who belongs to the Get to Green Chapter of Foster High School. My heart has been warmed tonight by the presence of my peers advocating

[01:21:52] for solar panels in our county, where I've grown up and actually first learned about climate change. Perhaps the most poignant moment of that first lecture was the overwhelming feeling of helplessness that consumed me. I've realized since then, however, that many people in our own community have heavy hearts on this topic and care just as much as I do. This is my home. This is our home.

[01:22:15] My years in the classroom have taught me the importance of fighting for what you believe in, for what's right i believe we can have a clean future free of unnecessary pollution i want that for my loved ones my neighbors my classmates and future generations of students it hurts every day to see fossil fuels burn up our atmosphere despite having the technology to avoid this i want change i'm asking you all tonight to want this too because the truth is that only when we go solar

[01:22:43] can our future truly shine brightly thank you got peterson so mr peterson was on the wait list and we've now moved on to the wait list because one of our individuals did not show so i'm now

[01:23:15] calling waitlist individuals so we can we can move on to viviana and jacob hirsch hello i didn't think i'd get enough the wait list um first off um thank you all for the work you do for all of our students in fairfax county um i want to paint a picture for you um we heard a little bit from another another parent about this imagine being a parent of two students at two different schools

[01:23:49] that start at 7 30 and 8 10 followed by a 30-minute drive to their job in dc but that job starts at 7 45 or pick up at 2 15 and 255 but their job ends at 3 45 and is 30 minutes away i hope that parent has a great partner that can help that person is me actually i do have a great partner but can i ask her to do that for three years to help get our kids to school i don't think so um and think about single parents and people that just don't have as much flexibility. It truly is an equity issue.

[01:24:24] My daughters have transitioned through COVID, through leaving their school, Mason Crest, and it was a split feeder. So many of their friends went to another school. They transitioned into Glasgow and then to Justice, or the younger one is still at Glasgow in sixth grade.

[01:24:41] The older one is in ninth grade at Justice. They transitioned, made new friends, And it would really hurt to tell them they had to now leave the schools that they just transitioned to. There's plenty of people, some of them are here, there's plenty of people that are in a very similar situation.

[01:24:57] What I would say is what Dr. Reed is planning to propose today is a half measure. Well, actually, I'm a math teacher, so I can't even call it a half measure. It feels more like a one-seventh measure, because there's seven grades. A lot of people have been talking about high school. There's also elementary and middle school kids who would be affected by this.

[01:25:15] it's more of a one-seventh measure one of the seven grades are going to be getting transportation under her proposal it's not just seniors that would need this and not just their families so please vote for the amendment from dr. Anderson and dr. and miss Marin to fully fund and do seven sevenths which is a hundred percent of the funding that the students need and the families need for buses please play the video testimony submitted by Robert

[01:25:49] Rigby. Good morning. My name is Robert Rigby Jr. I'm a resident of Fairfax County. I'm also and have been for 27 years an employee in Fairfax County Public Schools. You may know that we have two employees unions, a National Education Association affiliate and an American Federation of Teachers affiliate. What a management dream that has been for 27 years. When one union says we want this, You can go to the other one and say, well, you know, this site will work with you and play one off against one another.

[01:26:28] Now we have the Fairfax Education Unions, and fortunately you only have one partner to play with or to work with. What's clearly going to happen when I talk to people in both the AFT and the NEA affiliate is merger between the two organizations.

[01:26:45] So you'll just have one employee's union, literally one employee's union to work with. that'll be so much easier um it'll be easier for everyone all the way around in the meantime when you make changes like these involuntary transfers that everybody has heard of you need to alert and get agreement from both organizations it becomes very obvious at this point if management is playing employees off against one another and when the merger happens people are going to remember that

[01:27:19] I know it's extra work for you. I know it takes extra effort. But you need to work with both organizations for agreement rather than confrontation or controversy. That falls to you. Thank you for listening.

[01:27:35] This year, please play the video testimony submitted by Stephanie Lundquist-Aurora. The Virginia Department of Education released a list of 40 FCPS schools requiring federal support.

[01:27:51] That is 20% of our schools. And despite Dr. Reed's repeated claims, that doesn't sound like excellence to us. Parents and community stakeholders share your stated interests in better student outcomes. To that end, we should be able to agree that budgetary allocations reflect improving students' academic success.

[01:28:10] But you seem to have a mess on your hands. FCPS has become a jobs program for central administration. While you cut 275 teaching positions last year, you paid \$272 million for the salaries of about 2,400 district administrators who are not school-based.

[01:28:29] When you add in their benefits, the district pays about \$400 million per year for central staff. There are at least 44 district administrators enjoying annual salaries of well over \$200,000. Superintendent Reed makes \$445,000 this year, plus a car allowance, and her chief of staff, Marty Smith, \$306,000. He's probably the highest paid government chief of staff in the entire country. Comparatively, the starting FCPS teacher salary is \$61,747. Your priorities

[01:29:08] are maddening to taxpayers. You lavish extraordinary salaries on detached administrators and allocate egregious payments to elite law firms, such as the \$4.4 million you've paid King & Spalding so far this year. Meanwhile, schools such as Rolling Valley Elementary and 39 others are identified as sinking. You are failing our children. You are in charge of a \$4 billion budget and need to start for taking that seriously.

[01:29:36] Use taxpayer funds responsibly to help the next generation achieve their dreams. - Please play the video testimony submitted by Michelle Durst.

[01:29:55] - I'm here to ask the board to roll back the use of technology in our schools, especially in elementary school, and pause the AI demonstration initiative. The National Education Policy Center states, research does not support claims that ed-tech platforms improve upon traditional low-tech schooling. Likewise, research does not support the efficacy of introducing AI into educational processes.

[01:30:14] Evidence is accumulating about the negative effects of young people's technology use on the quality of their education, their mental and physical health, and their privacy. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics, or AAP, recently issued its policy statement on the digital ecosystem of youth. They warn that the current digital environment is not designed around children's developmental needs.

[01:30:34] The statement highlights concern about attention fragmentation, reduced sleep, mental health risk, problematic media use, and the displacement of critical developmental activities like face-to-face interaction, physical activity, and deep learning. The AAP emphasizes that technology use must be developmentally appropriate and carefully evaluated for benefit versus harm, especially in school settings where exposure is mandatory, prolonged, and largely unavoidable for children.

[01:31:01] Some argue that technology is the future and children simply need to adapt. But when it comes to other aspects of development, independence, emotional maturity, we do not expect children to just adapt. We scaffold learning intentionally. We protect childhood development.

[01:31:16] The nation's recent report card showed historic academic declines and the downward trend beginning around 2013 when technology use increased. Working in the mental health field, I hear of growing struggles with focused communication and problem solving. These are foundational life skills. When I asked the county for evidence that the educational platforms being used are effective, I received industry-sponsored studies.

[01:31:38] History has shown through tobacco, vaping, and even aspects of the opioid crisis that relying on industry to prove its own safety or effectiveness does not protect children. Please prioritize child development over device deployment. This is not about rejecting technology, it's about using it responsibly intentionally.

[01:31:58] - Chair Anderson, that was our last public speaker. - Thank you, Madam Clerk. Agenda Item 5.01, Student Representative Matters. I call on Ms. McConan. - Good evening, Madam Chair and board members. I would like to begin with goal three in the proposed gradebook changes.

[01:32:16] I recommend that we do not pass goal three in its current form. The proposed gradebook shifts towards a skills-based model that in practice may prioritize isolated competence over sustained content mastery. While this model can work in some subject areas, it may not work universally across all disciplines.

[01:32:33] One of my core concerns is an incentive. Let's say I'm in AP Biology, and there are five skills the unit will fall under. I could do poorly on natural selection, receiving lower scores on three of the five skills. If I know Ecology is coming up, which is regarded as the simplest unit in AP Bio, what incentive do I have to go revise the lack of content knowledge when I'm not required to for my grade?

[01:32:53] With a traditional grade book, I would go and review the unit, then retake to not just improve my score, but my content knowledge. This example is applicable even when the next unit isn't easier. Not all classes directly build on all of the necessary knowledge from past units. I think everyone on this board knows students may not take the extra initiative if they are not being graded, no matter if it's regular classes or IB.

[01:33:14] In fact, grade books should not be making past unit mastery optional. Class should be prioritizing mastery of the content along with skills. With all the classes students have to handle, this will result in students prioritizing their grade over knowing the past content. Mastery should require accountability over time, not replacement by the next unit.

[01:33:33] This model, unless corrected to require content revision, can result in gaps in students' knowledge of the course. When we ask schools to implement a division-wide grading overhaul once again, we must ensure we have a strong backing, clarity and execution, and a clear process for revisiting or adjusting the model if it does not work as intended.

[01:33:49] The structure that works well with Madison works well because of the deliberate work put in over years to make the grade book clear, clear to students, teachers, and families. I've said this in past meetings and I will repeat it. We cannot achieve the same results they have in one year with so many different communities in high schools. Grading reform should be deliberate and not experimental.

[01:34:06] What works for one school will not work for all. I strongly suggest that each board member think about how grading will affect their schools and think from the perspective of students and teachers who are having their gradebook changed yet again without clear based stats to why. Now on artificial intelligence. I recommend that the AI policy being drafted clearly directs teachers not to use AI in the grading of student assignments.

[01:34:25] AI can be a powerful instructional support tool. However, grading is fundamentally relational and evaluative. Students deserve to know that their work is being assessed by a professional educator who understands their growth, context, and effort, not by an algorithm, no matter how well we are trained, no matter how well trained.

[01:34:42] The use of AI in grading raises questions about transparency, bias, and accountability that we have not yet addressed and can't fully since we do not build the algorithms of the AI platforms we may utilize. At the same time, students do not have visible, centralized AI guidance on the FCPS website.

[01:34:59] The student AI guide is still not viewable on the FCPS website. If we respect responsible AI use, we must provide accessible policies. I recommend that the board ensures that the student AI guide is clearly published on the FCPS website. The creation of a student AI honor code aligned with SRNR, along

with in-depth training, AI training for students that does not promote the already prevalent reliance on generative AI.

[01:35:21] To the expenditure adjustments in the budget summary, robotics can wait. It's nice to have, but it is not a necessity. Not all students do robotics. The money allocated to this can be used to ensure that all students moved by the boundary adjustments are guaranteed transportation, not just seniors. Imagine this from the perspective of a rising sixth grader.

[01:35:37] Because their parents may not be able to transport them, they would have to move because we don't provide transportation. For other grades, key developmental years, which are already hard enough, are moving students from the friends, teachers, and communities they've begun to grow accustomed to. The school traditions and activities they are excited to be a part of in the following years now hanging the balance.

[01:35:56] Do not put families in this position when we do not have to. It is not the equity we strive to promote. Prioritizing the extracurricular activity over basic transportation needs for our young students is a cruel choice but easily fixable by allocating this budget to transportation for all students. The boundary change is already hard enough.

[01:36:12] We should not be making it harder when we have the option to help. Finally, I want to address social media regulations within the SRNR. Student-operated accounts, particularly those representing schools, currently lack a concise and accessible framework. There have already been ramifications for this reflected in the TJ and Langley situations in the beginning of the year.

[01:36:29] I recommend the development of a clear structure that includes a plain language breakdown of expectations and accountability, guidance on crisis or conflict management online, transparency standards for leadership structure and password ownership. Student leaders are often navigating public communication without clear guardrails.

[01:36:45] That creates risk for both students and for the division. Preventative structure is better than reactive discipline. In summary, I strongly suggest the board does not approve the gradebook model proposed this year. We must create transparent, equitable AI policies both teachers and students, and our budget allocation must reflect the student and family necessities before all else, and we must modernize our SRNR to address social media realities with clarity and fairness.

[01:37:09] Thank you for your time. Thank you, Ms. McConaughy. Action item 6.01, 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 February 26, 2026. To the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the board during

[01:37:47] the closed meeting. Do I have a motion? Mr. Frisch. Do I have a second? Mr. McElveen. All those in favor. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Dunn, and myself, those opposed.

[01:38:08] Ms. Marin, can the clerk please read the vote? The vote is 10-1. The motion carries. Thank you. Action item 6.02, confirmation of action taken and closed. There was no action taken in the closed meeting this evening.

[01:38:24] Agenda item 6.03, action item, boundary change phasing and transportation decision. I call on Dr. Reed for a presentation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:38:46] I think we've got slides. So we've spent quite a little bit of time over the last week again. I know staff, and thank you, Andy, and I think Paul is here, right? Okay, Andy and Paul and all of our transportation team have spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to at least with our high school students create a different way than the traditional routing because the data that is on, and again, just for the purpose of the presentation, if the clerk would go ahead and move to the next slide,

[01:39:23] just want to summarize what we're talking about specifically. We currently looked at what we could do to create, for sure, a pathway for our seniors to finish high school. So we had 69 seniors impacted, and then if we keep going through the slides, I think they're posted for folks to take a look at if we can go to the next slide please and go ahead and go on to the next one I think we're in and let's go ahead and go to slide 6 slide 6 is really sort of where the data is so as

[01:40:02] we looked at this we were looking at trying to figure out ways to minimally get our seniors and that's where the staff presentation or the staff recommendation came in at 241,000 given our current budget transfer gap of 43 million so we felt like the staff and recommending that felt like that was something we could do with the current budget situation however I think the questions that came up right like if you're juniors and you happen to be the same bus stop would we not pick you up of course we would then the question is we not all juniors are at the same stops as all seniors so that really the team

[01:40:40] we really tried to work more creatively to look at what would hub routing look like some school divisions around the country call it depot routing it where it's not that traditional this bus stop routing that we might do with elementary and middle or our more traditional routes that have that aren't like neighborhood specific in the sense of you know the boundary conversation obviously we're having so we think actually within the reasonable bounds because high school students have a one and a half mile walking I think it's

[01:41:13] walking zone for school that we could create a hub or depot situation that would accommodate high school students for next year within those budget numbers and I know there are various solutions for what we would do if we needed to backfill those budget numbers but the team does believe that given the number of high school students currently particularly after the survey which we did that data is on the PowerPoint as well but not everybody who requested transportation when you look at the percentages there were many students that also said they could make it work if they didn't have it so we think we

[01:41:52] can accommodate high school students next year within sort of a more creative routing project pathway within the budget and again maybe have a fallback back if we end up with a need for funds somewhat to balance out on the backside so I think staff would like to amend that recommendation to include all high school with those provisions. Thank you Dr. Reed. I call on Mr. McDaniel for a motion and at this point I just want to remind my colleagues that the recommendation that's being considered is the recommendation that was originally put in

[01:42:30] the PowerPoint provided to the board last week so there will be some further discussion that happens But we're going to go ahead and start with Mr. McDaniel for a motion. I move that the school board adopt the superintendent's recommendation. Is there a second?

[01:42:46] I second. Mr. McDaniel, would you like to speak to your motion? I'll save my comments for the amendments. Thank you. I'm sorry, Ms. St. John Cunningham, would you like to speak to your second? No. Thank you. I call on Dr. Anderson for amendment to the main motion.

[01:43:03] Thank you. I move to amend the main motion to read as follows, that the school board authorized \$3.1 million in funding from the school board flexibility reserve to provide transportation to non-boundary current students for all tiers, which includes elementary, middle, and high schools.

[01:43:23] Is there a second? I second. Ms. Marin. Dr. Anderson, would you like to speak to your motion? Yes, I would. I want to be clear this motion is not to address transportation for students who are just transferring while we're using that mechanism in order to administer this process this is for our students who have been in schools and the boundary policy allows them to remain this is to provide transportation for that group of 60 37 that was just on the list here and the reason for this it's numerous I can speak on this for probably the next 15 minutes but I don't have 15 minutes

[01:44:03] so I'll try to be super brief one we have some mental health supports that we need to think about we year over year we review the student the youth survey and we talk about how we need for our kids to be connected the whole energy and even mantra of that survey is get your three because we know that helps support students how are students supposed to get their three when they are leaving an elementary school potentially that they have been in for six years if this is a k-6 and they're supposed to spend their last year at a brand new school how are they supposed to get their three

[01:44:40] if they're in my area and they've been in that middle school for two years and their eighth grade year has to be spent elsewhere because their parents are not able to support them through their own private transportation i i see this akin a little bit to giving food to somebody who's hungry but yet we're putting it in a tree 20 feet high and unless they're able to levitate themselves they have a ladder they cannot access this we have said our equity policy is clear it is our job to eliminate gaps eliminate barriers to access and opportunities and yet what was posted

[01:45:19] last friday what i was working on up until today will not do that it will create gaps it will create opportunity it will diminish opportunities and access for our students yes let's just be clear budget times are tight they are they are what they are but there is a way for us to make this happen budgets reflect our values we have said this on this board we have said this on every single board that i've every single year that i have been on this board so this is what i would value i will

[01:45:54] value this over the next few things that i'm going to share with you one um let me hope i find it one the board has spent um as you'll see on board docs has spent almost 800 600 000 that was allocated in 2023 to expand their office another 600 000 just very recently to continue that expansion and to also from what i've just learned this week help to improve the space here i would prefer to do transportation instead of spending the money on that kind of

[01:46:32] opportunity. And I think Ms. Komenen also raised this regarding the K-robotics, the K-12 robotics in the budget here. If we are able to take that \$300,000, we can afford this. But we also have money that is just sitting in the bank. Why are we keeping the school board reserves in the bank and not putting it to help the kids that are in front of us right now.

[01:46:57] I am struggling to understand that. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. And that was my time. Ms. Marin, would you like to speak to your second? So, Dr. Reed, to be clear, you are saying that you now have

funding identified to fund the phasing as per the boundary policy for high school students.

[01:47:16] Is that correct? No, what I stated is that we believe, and again, the team has been working, honestly, around the clock for the last week, after we received the survey results of the students who would request transportation to look at the most efficient possible way to route for students because they're not on a traditional route, if that makes sense.

[01:47:44] And so I think as they look at hubs and look at, as I mentioned, ways to provide transportation, sometimes it's getting students from a particular school or a particular hub bus stop to their base school.

[01:48:00] We're hopeful that we can do that within the budget, but we also believe that there is a need to backfill funds. Like we didn't find money. what we're trying to do is route more creatively and it's still going to cost money we just are hopeful we can do it within the budget as long as we have a certainty of the possibility of being able to backfill those funds. Thank you for clarifying so the way I see it is that the board had a lot of courage to do this comprehensive boundary review for the first time in decades and we made a commitment in our boundary policy to phase some of those grades to ensure a smooth

[01:48:35] transition. The decision to adopt phasing seven months ago did not stipulate anything that transportation was not part of that because we would think that naturally we would transport the children. The kids waiting today to know what high school they're going to go to, this is not how I want to do business and I think it's unnecessarily stressful. Look, this boundary process has things that we can learn from. I don't think anything we're doing in this process is setting precedent. This is, I think, the third vote we've had regarding this boundary change.

[01:49:06] There's certainly a lot of room for improvement, but for the board, you know, we're all about access. This is exactly what that is. So I'm glad that the superintendent mentioned something about, you know, bus students, if they're a junior, they would join the Marshall stop, because the first thought I had when I read this is, are our bus drivers going to have to essentially be bouncers to the school buses? I mean, how's it going to work when a junior at the same bus stop as a senior goes to the bus and the bus driver says sorry you can't get on it's just I don't understand it it's so operational we talk so much about operational versus policy this is like way out of our lane no

[01:49:41] pun intended so the vision that we set was we wanted kids in the high school grades and those transitioning grades to have a smoother transition for this time it is not forever it is for this small set of students so I do think we would be going against board policy the intention of it OK, it does have something in there about that we may adopt other phasing plans, but we got this on Friday at 5 p.m.

[01:50:07] And I don't understand why it's so last minute. If we had some more time, we could have talked about some other options. But we have not thoroughly discussed this. I think we just need to send our kids on the buses and and move on.

[01:50:22] I also think that we have Skyview next to deal with. Are we going to do this with the Skyview students, too? This is just too much, and it's unneeded stress on our families. I hope that the board colleagues can support this.

[01:50:39] I have not yet heard any, so I have talked with some colleagues who are an emphatic no to this. I have not heard a real reason to fully support funding the transportation. We have the money, at least half the money in the school board reserve. What is the real reason for not honoring the phasing outlined in the boundary policy that this board agreed to unanimously seven months ago right here?

[01:51:03] What has changed that we are not honoring what we all agreed to and would think is the way that this is going to happen with kids on school buses? Thank you, Ms. Marin. I call on Mr. McDaniel for an amendment to the amendment. move to strike the amendment its entirety and replace it to read as follows that the school board direct the superintendent to provide transportation to non-boundary current students for high schools consistent with the phasing policy and that end-of-year funding be utilized if the existing transportation budget cannot fund all associated costs is there a second second

[01:51:42] thank you miss lady mr mcdaniel would you like to speak to your motion uh briefly i'm a little winded this evening so i'll keep my comments brief i've been struggling with this decision since it came to the board a couple of i guess a couple of months ago now end up getting delayed i agree with the comments that have been made about the strive for equity and the strive to plug gaps in equity and the strive to address that but i also have to consider the fiscal reality in which we find ourselves you know the i did one of the slideshows that was up on the the screen The total cost for full phasing for all the different, I think, seven grade levels was over \$3 million.

[01:52:21] High school was \$1.35 million. And in conversations with staff, a hub model, a depot model would drive that \$1.3 million down further. And I think that to the greatest extent possible, being able to do what really made the decision for me was the greatest extent possible, being able to do that within existing budget constraints with the option to backfill if the need arises using end-of-year funding, That's where I landed in my mind to strike that balance between the need to plug equity gaps and the need to recognize the fiscal situation in which we are in.

[01:52:58] So that's all. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. Ms. Lady, would you like to speak to your second? Yes. I second this motion because as a board, we must balance our deep empathy for our families with our non-negotiable duty as fiduciaries of public funds. We've spent months listening to our community.

[01:53:14] We know that the bonds formed with teachers and peers are precious and we don't take the impact of these boundary changes lightly. However, we are currently facing a \$43 million budget gap between our needs and the projected funding from the state and our Board of Supervisors. In this climate, we must prioritize. I support paying for transportation for all high school students because they face the most complex transitions regarding credits and graduation and where the stakes are higher. Our high school students have created four-year academic plans that map to their postgraduate goals. Most of them have found their tribe within their current school, from Model UN and debate, to band, music, and performing arts, to athletics, DECA, and

[01:53:51] robotics. Our high school students deserve to continue with the academics and extracurriculars at the school where they are currently thriving. And as was stated earlier this evening, and as someone who has children who graduated from an IB school, moving from an IB school to an AP school or vice versa is an unfair ask. This isn't just about dollars, it's about opportunity costs.

[01:54:12] Every bus and driver we commit to a three-year phasing plan for all grade levels is a resource taken away from our broader goal of healthy start times. We cannot be in good conscience tell our middle school families that they must continue within 7 20 a.m. start because we prioritized optional transportation for others. We are fortunate to live in a county where every school is a center of excellence. While change is hard, our commitment to the long-term health and academic success of all of our close to 175,000 students must come first. I support this motion because

[01:54:45] we're making a choice that is both compassionate and fiscally responsible. Thank you. Mr. Moon. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair just wanted us to talk about all of this at one time that I'm going to address both amendment and amendment to amendment. I'm not going to support the amendment to amendment, but if amendment to amendment passes, I'm not going to have a chance to vote for amendment because there will be will have been amended by mr mcdaniel's second amendment

[01:55:21] uh i very much prefer a doctor a dr anderson's amendment over mr mcdaniel's so i am gonna vote no to mr mcdaniel's and then if that becomes the main motion i'm gonna i'm gonna vote no to the to the motion itself because because we are we are really doing injustice to our students we are forcing them we are forcing them to buy boundary changes board making that decision not the not the community members board makes those boundary boundary change

[01:55:57] decisions and then we provide it under our phasing policy rights to stay at their schools but if you look at there is one other policy we currently have we are obligated in my opinion We are legally obligated to provide the transportation for students who leave farther than a certain distance.

[01:56:22] And then this amendment amendment is basically denying the legal right, and I cannot go along with that. A little bit later on, we'll be also voting on the next year budget, which I will be supporting. And as I said at the last meeting, I'll be happy to support that.

[01:56:37] Even with, even with putting in close to \$18 million for the highest paid 1,400 employees in the school system. So if you divide that \$18 million, 1,400, for each of those highest paid employees, we are setting aside more than \$12,000.

[01:56:59] But I will support that because we need to pay them fairly, but we need to treat our students even more fairly. And this amendment is failing to do that. Next year, we are expecting 5,000 less students for overall.

[01:57:20] I bet that out of 5,000, about 3,000 students would have used the transportation. that there would be savings from not having to provide the transportation for those 3,000 students. Now, this is a much smaller group of students who deserve the right to be educated at their schools.

[01:57:43] They are exercising their right to stay there, but we are denying them. And what the amendment to amendment is doing is we will provide the transportation to older kids, older students, but not younger ones. I cannot go along with that.

[01:57:59] Mr. McElveen, thank you. So I'm going to begin with a question for our budget staff. So about a month and five days ago, January 21st, I had submitted a budget question, priority one, top priority, asking for the cost of our boundary study. Do we have any status update on that budget question?

[01:58:25] The budget question is still in process. Erica, I believe that it was with you. I believe that budget question is still in process. Okay, I will tell you, my decade-plus on this board, I've asked budget questions fewer than a handful of budget questions.

[01:58:48] I very much value staff time. I don't want to waste staff time on budget questions. But when I put in a budget question, priority one, I expect it to be answered, and it's been more than a month. We voted on the boundary study more than a month ago, and now we're being asked to vote on a budget tonight.

[01:59:05] We're being asked to vote on a transportation implementation plan tonight. it's untenable that we don't have an answer to that question. I don't see how I can vote for a budget tonight.

[01:59:22] I don't see how I can vote on this plan tonight without knowing how much we spent on our boundary study. So let me just begin with that. I want to echo what my colleagues have shared. I'm not going to repeat their words, but I think Mr. Moon's words are very wise that we cannot prioritize our older students to the detriment of our younger students who need our transportation and the safety that that provides more than our older students.

[01:59:50] So I will not be supporting the amendment to the amendment. I will be supporting the original amendment. Separately, I've heard argued at this dais tonight that after this board has postponed start times for middle school students, later start times for middle school students for more than a decade, that we now have a choice between funding middle school start times

[02:00:19] And this transportation plan that is also untenable. Thank you. Mr. Dunn. Thank you. I'll start with this. This should have been included in the presentation on January 22nd when the school board made a vote on school boundaries. This is inextricably intertwined with school boundaries. I don't understand how this could be separated out. It just reaffirms my decision to vote no on January 22nd because as I described I was not going to vote on

[02:00:56] an incomplete package and this is certainly part of that package and there may be other elements as well I'd like to ask the superintendent the numbers that have been provided here are significant but what I'd like to understand is whether this is the total cost or the annual cost because for example the the original amendment proposes you know the 3.1 million scenario, okay? So let's say I have a second grader at one of my elementary schools who was

[02:01:32] attending Fort Hunt Elementary but resides in an attendance island. That attendance island has been eliminated. So my understanding from the presentation that you've provided is that my second grader could stay at Fort Hunt through this and for \$3.1 million that would cover all of their school bus transportation through the end of elementary school is that correct or are these numbers and annual costs that you've put forward no sir I and I want to go back I think it's only the fifth and sixth graders so we

[02:02:06] wouldn't be addressing second graders if my recollection is correct so but the 3.1 million is the one year cost estimate for all grade levels for the coming year that's it's not the multiple year estimate there would be an additional set of dollars and recall that we have six hotspot areas that we're still going to be working through next December that we'll be bringing to the board in January that'll create obviously some more numbers for the

[02:02:45] following year in addition to the residual for this year so there is there should be less of a cost in year two? Well, probably the same cost, honestly, depending on what seniors will graduate, right? So there might be a slightly less cost, but it'll be probably similar in year two, a little bit less. Okay. I also wanted to address the amendment to the amendment. The amendment to the amendment, I feel, is not sufficiently tailored from a legal perspective because the way I read it, providing transportation to non-boundary current students for

[02:03:21] high schools. To me the way, if I wanted to attend a different high school and we have a board policy that says who gets school bus transportation or not, this has enough of a loophole that there could be high school students beyond the schools affected by boundary decisions that could request and

potentially legally obtain through lawsuit school bus transportation so i'm very concerned with the very loose nature of the verbiage which um potentially opens the door to a much larger number of students getting transportation and

[02:03:59] the cost potentially being astronomically higher um than that which is set forward in in um uh in in the uh in the presentation that you've provided um i'd really prefer uh if that is going to be adopted by a school board that there be very significant changes made to language to tighten it up so that it is specific to the school boundary scenarios that have been approved by the school board on january 22nd thank you dr anderson thank you obviously i will not be

[02:04:38] supporting the amendment to the amendment but i i did appreciate the conversations that i had with mr mcdaniel um this week so right now from what i understand dr reed you're going to find some way handle all of these high school students yes ma'am that's correct so that's going to be done is there a space for you to apply that same approach to the middle school students to the elementary school students i think we could try i can't commit to that this evening because we've been working

[02:05:12] pretty much full-time and the team again has put a lot of time and effort into sort of an unusual Routing model if that makes sense in high school students Are able to perhaps walk a little further than our elementary students are in that sense So we're going to be able to achieve I think more efficiencies But the team's going to continue to work on it. I think we share the commitment We're just struggling with the budget commuting the competing budget commitments right now. Thank you So if we were to take 3.1 million is for everybody if we were to remove the

[02:05:49] 35 that was just for high school now we're talking about 1.75 million dollars 1.75 million dollars in a four billion dollar budget here's what i'm willing to sacrifice i i said it earlier i think a little bit too quickly but i'm going to be a little bit clearer this board well not this board a previous board allocated six hundred thousand dollars in the school board reserve funds which has not yet been used to build out the school board office at Gatehouse. \$600,000. This board

[02:06:27] has allocated \$412,000 to finish that job. That is \$1.1 million right there. The robotics in your budget that you're going to talk about is \$300,000. It's great. But I, as one person, again, just speaking for me, I think that is a nice to have and not a need to have. That right there is \$1.4 million. I could go on in terms of all of my penny-pinching. This is not a problem that we

[02:07:03] cannot resolve. And it will be reduced across the next three years. And we're supposed to see efficiencies and savings from the boundary. And we're supposed to see savings from the middle school AAP centers, once that's put together in whatever capacity, we're going to stop busing all those kids eventually because right now we're busing kids for AAP all over the division. Those are savings we could actualize to help offset this. I believe if there's a will to do this,

[02:07:41] there will be a way because right now we are talking about 1.75 million dollars. It is cruel for us to potentially look at a student who's receiving special services, who has an IEP, who's connected with their school, with their community, who's now a sixth grader and we're saying you have to go elsewhere. I don't believe this is how we want to do business even in the

[02:08:12] most dire of budget times. Prioritizing students ahead of what we need as board members must be what we do. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Ms. Marin. Anderson, I would like to clarify. I just want to make sure we're clear on a couple of topics. Number one, students with IEPs, transportation is part of the

IEP team decision, and those transportation routes continue. Secondly, the high school 1.35, we're still going to be spending a significant amount of that money in some way. We're hoping to

[02:08:51] make it less, but that's why I think that we're looking for money to be backfilled. In other words, I don't think that 1.35 is completely going away. I think it's going to cost not an insignificant amount of that money, which is why I think the discussion is, is there an end of year to backfill that or not?

[02:09:16] And thirdly, in the second year, while this part of the boundary, it'll be slightly less, recall that we have those six hot spots that are coming to you in January that will actually add more probably than what we might save with the seniors rolling off. So I just I want to make sure and those numbers all still may be doable and all the same arguments apply. I just want to make

[02:09:39] sure that that we're clear on that. So thank you. Thank you, Dr. Reed. Mr. Mayor. So we're talking about school buses for kids. This is like the least controversial, most basic thing. The iconic yellow school bus, like what public education is known for. A majority of this board seeking to

[02:10:10] deny school buses to kids for an unstated reason other than general tight budget times. So some on this board are making the value judgments with this motion about which children are more worthy than others to deserve a school bus. It's the exact opposite of equity. As the board had previously specifically defined it in our boundary policy. I'm confused as to why we have policies if we're not going to follow them. I'm confused why the superintendent is proposing a solution that does

[02:10:46] not fulfill the policy. Voting to strip transportation to those eligible is damaging the credibility of this board and this school division. Can you see the headlines already? school board denies school buses to students. The directive in this policy is to provide the option for students and that implies that school buses are needed. Silly us for not putting that in the policy. The seconder of this motion has repeatedly asked the superintendent to provide a list of what may be needed to be reduced or cut in order to maintain commitments like collective

[02:11:24] bargaining. Where are the lists of options? The superintendent has given the board a directive. it's this or nothing what else can be reduced to get that three million dollars I still don't have an answer to the question what what is the reason for not fully honoring the boundary policy and I want the public to know this got posted on Friday at 5 p.m. publicly then it was the weekend I started my prep for this meeting on Monday around three o'clock I looked at Borduck's there it is no information in a Friday letter. No text or email, hey guys, this really important thing we've been

[02:12:02] waiting on, it's here. This is not the way we're supposed to do business and I want people to know that. Ms. McCona. I know firsthand how difficult it is to transition from schools. I left a private school that I had gone to my whole entire life to start at Lawrence Station Elementary School in fifth grade. I knew absolutely nothing about FCPS or the middle school or high school that I'll eventually be attending, but being able to stay in the pyramid since I've started since then has helped me immensely. I would be a much different person if I was redirected from South County Middle School to Hayfield or Lake Braddock instead of

[02:12:41] South County. The opportunities that are unique to my school would be close to me as will the community I grew up around. I do not think I'd be here on this dais if it wasn't for the support of my school community and that's not just to shout out South County. That's why I believe so strongly in the fact that we should allocate whatever funds needed towards transportation for students. Our first priority should be to

all of our students. We should be eager to slightly inconvenience the budget for the sake of our students. We should follow the policy that we have set plain and simple. We are fracturing trust with students when we do not have to. This is one of the conversations where I really wish I had the voting power to vote because I would vote against this amendment to an amendment. But I just want to end directly with a question to Dr. Reid, which I think most of the board has kind of indirectly asked during the discussion.

[02:13:20] If there's money in reserves and money that is clearly available for robotics, space improvement projects, and pay raises, what is the reason that those funds were not originally directed towards our boundary commitments that we knew were coming since the beginning of the fiscal year? Thank you, Ms. McConaughy.

[02:13:36] Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah, I think there was a question. I think that we had never committed to the transportation costs as part of the phasing plan. And that was stated at every community meeting. It is still something that you can budget for.

[02:13:55] Right now, we're \$43 million apart on the things we've already worked to try to reduce class size, for example, to try to support our AARTs being full-time, to try to support special ed department chairs at the elementary school level, and other initiatives.

[02:14:12] So I think that those, we're still going to have to look for a way in middle school, after school activities. We're going to have to look at a way to cut those things, even to get, to address class size right now, because we're, like I said, we're \$43 million apart.

[02:14:30] So trying to find a way to balance The very limited resources at this point I think that's where staff is at the place of thinking Really as we know all of our schools here in Fairfax County Public Schools are outstanding They're incredible schools throughout this boundary process Nobody was saying please let me you know take me out of my school to move me people are really excited about the schools whether the schools people are moving from or to i do think and the staff as we reviewed this high school is different in the sense that's

[02:15:08] a permanent record that's created the ap and ib discussion is legitimate a legitimate program decision so we're working very hard to try to figure out how to do that with a very limited budget and um you know i think often many things can be true at the same time right all of the ideas are outstanding ideas we just are not going to be able to fund them all and at some point we have to make a judgment and that's what the board is going to have to determine this evening i'll ask a follow-up question with my time um so what i'm getting from what you're saying is that you are willing to reallocate the funds for some of the projects

[02:15:46] described by miss marron and dr anderson and i know um miss marron was also asking for a list of those things that we can reallocate the activities from they're on the budget slide they're all the things we're hoping to fund this year so we could not fund any one of those things to do that. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. McConan. Mr. Dunn. Thank you. I wanted to ask the original presentation on transportation discussed, you know, a certain number of electric school buses

[02:16:22] that would be purchased versus a certain number of, you know, traditional diesel school buses that would be purchased, but that level of detail I don't see. Can you clarify, you know, does, Are these numbers involving the purchase of additional buses of any kind?

[02:16:38] So thank you, Mr. Dunn. If you go to slide seven, Madam Clerk, please. What we did, Mr. Dunn, is we broke down the data in diesel or electric. And we did go back to our school division policies.

[02:16:58] In fact, we did another legal review this afternoon just to confirm that we're still able to purchase diesel buses. And while the preference is still to go electric, there is still an allowance to purchase diesel buses.

[02:17:15] So the breakdown is on buy diesel or electric. And if you go to the high school, high school only on slide 8, again, similarly, it's diesel and electric. What we did do to try to save more money, if you go to slide 6, please, the term absorbing buses, the reason we could get down to a lower cost is we purchase buses and we're on an amortization schedule every year because we run 1,600 of them.

[02:17:52] So what we've chosen to do is not surplus 10 buses. So these will not be, these are going to be older buses. We're just trying to not add 10 more buses. We're going to use 10 buses that we otherwise would have surplused to save money.

[02:18:09] So that's why you don't see those costs for the high school, the \$804,620 there. If I may ask, does the cost for electric buses in slides 7 and 8 include the cost of installing a new charging facility?

[02:18:30] Because right now there are only two, and in historic conversations at the dais and conversations with FCPS leadership, they've expressed that the main limiting factor is the fact that there's only two charging stations, one in Lorton, and I don't remember where the other one is.

[02:18:48] Yes, sir. That's a great question. I think honestly, we've answered that both ways. So let me make sure we get a correct answer this evening. I think one of the biggest limiting factors is simply the cost of the electric buses. But Mr. Mewick, can you comment on whether these estimates include charging stations?

[02:19:08] Yes, ma'am. I can. This does not include the roughly \$50,000 for charging stations. Each charging station would cover two buses, and the locations are Lorton and Stonecroft. So, Mr. Dunn, if you weren't able to hear that, the \$50,000 for a charging station charges two buses, and they're not included in the figures.

[02:19:30] Okay. I imagine that the \$50,000 is just to install the charger itself, but there is a substantial amount of electrical work, I think, perhaps even a substation, sometimes depending on the size of the charging facility that might be required, which, you know, that might be an additional cost on top.

[02:19:47] Can Mr. Mioke address that? Yes, sir, I can. All that is included in that \$50,000. Okay. And how many charging stations would be required if we were to go with the electric bus option, just for transparency?

[02:20:06] Well, if we were on slide 8, since there would be 10 buses, we would need five charging stations because every charging station serves two. And on page 7, for all tiers, it's 48, so we'd need 24.

[02:20:23] Okay, so that's quite a bit additional money. Thank you. Yes, sir. Dr. Anderson, for a go back. Thank you. I did have a conversation with a colleague regarding the potential that part of the school board reserve funds would be potentially needed to help with some other programming, such as the middle school after school.

[02:20:54] but we have enough to do both and I guess I'd like to hear a little bit in terms of what and probably more for the public in terms of why would we not use those reserve funds to take care of an issue

that is before us right now we're just holding that off and and that's not really a question for you Dr. Reed we're just holding that in the bank and we know these students who have to transfer in their last years as an eighth grader or sixth grader, their academics will suffer, and then they'll end up needing all of the things that we're providing for

[02:21:32] students who have deteriorating academic achievement. That's what these reserve funds are here to do, to help us bridge gaps when we are faced with difficult budget times, and we're not wanting to do that.

[02:21:49] I'd just like to hear a little bit more there. Seeing no others, we're going to go ahead and call for a vote on the motion or on the amended motion that is on the amendment to the amendment that is on the screen.

[02:22:08] All those in favor, coming up on the screen, it's the amended amended. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, and myself, all those opposed.

[02:22:38] Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and Mr. Dunn. Will the clerk please read the vote? The vote is 6-5. The motion carries, so it is an amended amendment. Thank you. Ms. Marin, I ask you to stop, please.

[02:23:17] I will now call for a vote on the amendment, which approved will replace the main motion in its entirety, and it is on the screen. All those in favor. Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, and myself.

[02:23:39] All those opposed, Mr. McElveen, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and Mr. Dunn. Will the clerk please read the vote?

[02:23:59] To clarify, Ms. Marin is a yes, correct? I believe so. Okay. So the vote is 7-4. The motion carries. So now our main motion has been amended. Thank you. I will now call for a vote on the main motion, which is on the screen.

[02:24:15] All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, and myself. All those opposed. Mr. McElveen, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and Mr. Dunn.

[02:24:37] Madam Chair, I asked for a 10-minute recess, please. Absolutely. I was just going to say that. Thank you. Point of order. You need to explain what? Did the vote carry? Yes, I'm sorry. Sorry, the vote is 7 for the motion carries.

[02:24:53] Thank you. Yes, and we are going to take a 10-minute recess.

[02:29:29] Board members, please take your seats.

[02:38:20] Okay, bring the board back.

[02:40:58] Agenda item 6.04, FY 2027 advertised budget. I call on Ms. Dixit for a motion. I move that the school board adopts the FY 2027 advertised budget as detailed in the agenda item.

[02:41:15] Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel. Ms. Dixit, would you like to speak to your motion? Yes. I want to sincerely thank our school, our staff, and budget team for this tremendous work done on this budget and building a responsible budget in a constrained fiscal environment requires careful analysis, difficult prioritization, and a deep commitment to our students and employees.

[02:41:40] I strongly support the compensation increase included in the plan, as well as the key initiatives that advance student achievements, safety, and essential services. These investments reflect our shared understanding that our people are our greatest assets.

[02:41:55] I also want to thank fellow board members for their steady leadership throughout this process and express appreciation for our continued partnership with Board of Supervisors and other elected officials as we work together to advocate for the resources our student and community deserve.

[02:42:13] Mr. McDaniel, would you like to speak to your second? Around the holidays, there's a song that talks about Christmas being the most wonderful time of the year. In my opinion, it's actually budget season that's the most wonderful time of the year, so I'm a glutton for punishment.

[02:42:32] No, happy to second the motion. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. I know this is just the very beginning of our budget, and it's just a starting point.

[02:42:53] I do have to express my disappointment with the fact that we could not see a possibility for us to repurpose the \$300,000 for K-12 robotics into transportation for our kids.

[02:43:09] Again, robotics is great, but I think at this point, given our budget climate and our needs, it is a nice-to-have, not a need-to-have, and I'm going to support this budget tonight because it's just our starting point and we still have lots of opportunities at board members to make amendments moving forward we typically don't do it at this stage at least we haven't since I've been on the board but I know that the practice had been different previously and so some of those things will be what I am looking at depending on where we land after all of the budget dollars are

[02:43:44] in or rather funding dollars are in thank you thank you dr. Anderson mr. Thank you. This is always an interesting time of year and it's changed over time since I've been on the board.

[02:44:04] I'm looking forward to my budget town hall meeting with Supervisor Palczyk and I think about two weeks from now. And I'm supportive of the proposed budget because it centers the need to fulfill our collective bargaining agreements in their second year for most employees and in their first year for our principals and managers.

[02:44:28] And looking at the gap that we have between what's currently available for funding and what we're proposing in our budget, the most important thing with this budget is ensuring that, well, this budget process, not necessarily this document as Dr. Anderson indicated, this is just the beginning, but when we reach the end of this process, we will have to reconcile what's available versus what is needed for following through in our commitment to our

[02:45:03] collective bargaining partners and that continues to be my number one priority is ensuring that the folks who staff our classrooms and keep our schools operating are paid competitively and that their collective bargaining rights are respected.

[02:45:21] So I'm looking forward to the conversation with our funding partners and our continued advocacy in Richmond for additional resources for our schools and for our students and I'm hopeful that hopefully we'll have some surprises out of Richmond given the change in environment there but it's going to take more than our board or the Board of Supervisors to make that happen I hope anybody who's watching this later on YouTube and the twos of people who are joining us this evening for this

conversation in the auditorium will carry that message to the delegates and senators about how critical it is to ensure that our schools are adequately

[02:45:59] funded at the state level and as we always talk about when we have these budget conversations. That includes adopting the JLARC recommendations, which would bring our schools more than half a billion dollars in additional funding every single year. We would not be having to have this conversation every year. And I look forward to that continued partnership that has effectuated some progress on the JLARC goals, but we certainly have a long way to go. Thank you, Mr. Frisch. Seeing no others, I'm going to go ahead and call for mr moon sorry madam chair i'm gonna be quick i'll be supporting this more i'll be

[02:46:36] supporting this budget as i said earlier that that and also i agree with dr anderson that to see is just beginning of our long budget deliberation until until the end of may and i'm hoping that uh county board of supervisors will transfer a a fully fund us but at least more than what the county executive has proposed in his proposed budget but i am more hopeful to be receiving a more support from general assembly in terms of funding but with that said i still

[02:47:13] must point out the fact that we need to continue making investment in our teachers and provide them with a better support and higher salaries i'm sure dr re you will agree with that I think that's, I think nation as a whole, got to put that as a top priority.

[02:47:33] I think that's, we are missing the, you know, we are missing the point. We're just putting that as a local responsibility. I think this is something that I had shared at the last joint meeting with the county board of supervisors, that, you know, 2025, a 2025 National Council on Teacher Quality Reports points out that In Fairfax County, 42% of a beginning teacher's salary goes into paying for one-bedroom apartment, 42%.

[02:48:06] We need to remember that. Thank you, Mr. Moon. Ms. St. John-Cunning. First of all, I want to thank the staff for really doing an amazing job putting this budget together as a very basic needs-based budget.

[02:48:30] And I know a lot of the things that we had to trim next year were not included in this budget. And that trimming did impact us, but we were mindful of the fact that the economic situation across the state is a little bit different. And we were also advised that next year's might be tougher.

[02:48:48] So making those tough decisions is the hardest thing we do sitting on this board. But as I have always said, investment in our staff is the most important thing. Not just our teachers, but our custodians, our food service workers, our bus drivers, our family liaisons.

[02:49:07] Everybody that's in that school building is critical to the environment they create in the school building, as well as how they make their students feel and how they make the families feel. And I also want to mention that a lot of times, unfortunately, our central office staff gets dinged for saying, well, central office can be cut.

[02:49:33] I've worked in schools, and I can let you know that a lot of our central office people actually come out to our schools to support us or create the programming and curriculum to support us or provide the security that our schools need.

[02:49:48] So it may sound like because you are assigned to central office that you're actually not performing work at schools, and nothing can be further than the truth. And a lot of our staff and our

teachers really rely on a lot of our central office staff.

[02:50:06] And I really want to mention that because I think sometimes people don't see that importance. And they are critical members in our school system. And I think that it's the people in our county that really make the difference with our kids.

[02:50:23] So I support this budget because it really is putting the importance on the people that are supporting our students. And if we have good people supporting our students, our students are going to be okay. So I'm very happy to support this budget as it's beginning, and hopefully the state will come through, and we can have a little bit more flexibility.

[02:50:44] Thank you. Seeing no others, we're going to go ahead and take a vote for the motion that's on the screen. All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, can you please see, I can't see.

[02:51:06] Mr. Dunn is not left and myself all those opposed all those abstaining Mr. McElveen with Mr. Dunn away from the table will the clerk please read the vote it's nine zero one the motion carries thank you agenda item six point zero five strategic goal plan three report or goal three report academic growth and

[02:51:32] excellence I call on Dr. Reed for a presentation all right madam chair and members of the board we're gonna go ahead and talk through goal three this evening and let's go ahead and go to the next slide please at this point we're

[02:52:08] going to talk about excellence in language arts first and let's go ahead and go on to the next slide these are we're going to look at the reading sol pass rates for grades three through eight and our high school end of course exams and at this point we are continuing to make progress in all areas but we are and we actually have hit targets towards our 2030 goals obviously in three areas but this is a slide that we're feeling confident that we're

[02:52:45] continuing to move forward and that we believe by 2030 we are going to hit the targets that we are setting so that's our reading and I also want to just remind the board in the community that we have spent a significant time at a work session already reviewing a lot of these data charts so I appreciate the time and if the public watching tonight wants to see a more in-depth conversation we did have that conversation I want to say a week ago I I guess maybe it was two weeks ago the 13 thank you so it's been a couple of weeks ago but that

[02:53:24] work session I think is very illuminating because the board has an opportunity really to dive deeply into the data so let's go ahead and go to the next slide we'll look at the reading VAP pass rates and these again are grades three through eight in high school and you'll look across the bottom here we've hit all the targets I want to share that you know last year 84% of our reading VAP test takers achieved a passing score which is a very strong data point but I'm going to share later why this is actually a troubling data

[02:54:00] point in some ways too because the state we had to move a number of students who had previously been on this VAP assessment track into the SOL track rather abruptly and that's created I think excuse me some challenges I think for our students as they make that adjustment without really as much of an on-ramp I think as we had hoped that they would be able to have and that's with the new framework the new accountability framework so let's take a look at the API be English exam pass rate and again the vast majority here

[02:54:39] have met targets or making progress and we have a baseline in some areas for this data point let's take a look at the strategic priority the pass rate on the grade 3 reading SOL which is the next slide and we have 71 percent of our students pass the grade 3 reading SOL this pass rate increased two percentage points from the baseline and in every case student groups are making progress

[02:55:14] excuse me so let's look at the five strategies we have focused on for reading by third grade and these are if you will shared on this slide I think folks can read those the data is actually very promising with a number of these strategies which we have implemented this year in a number of our schools at least 29 of our elementaries we've moved to a walk to read model in third grade we've also enhanced the core reading instruction it's called ECRI was

[02:55:53] piloted last year with first graders it's a phonics enhancement to our core literacy program and it's shown tremendous results so we're we're very excited I think often the board asks what are your strategies what are the things you are doing to work to improve the scores and while we're seeing improvement in all student categories these are the strategies we believe that consistently applied will continue to take our numbers up so let's take a look at mathematics now we'll look at some highlights and in thinking about the math

[02:56:31] SOL pass rates we have grades three through eight in high school and of course these pass rates continue to increase steadily since the baseline and we have again overall met our targets in addition five student groups had double-digit gains from the baseline. This is actually an incredible progress slide particularly given that last year there was a change in both the math standards and the type of math assessment given. So even with those changes we continue to make progress. I want to look at the math VAP pass rates

[02:57:07] on the next slide. These again the pass rates over time continue to make progress overall and for most student groups. During the work session we talked about the state changes to this eligibility which means fewer of our students were able to access this assessment and as I mentioned earlier they're now expected to take the SOLs. When we look at AP and IB mathematics pass rates last year our students took over 12,000 AP or IB math exams and 79 percent resulted in a passing score that is a nine percentage point gain from the baseline that's

[02:57:46] incredible folks that's outstanding not only did pass rates increase but we also increase the number of exams given by close to four thousand so we have more students taking the exams and the advanced coursework and more students passing i think that's a data point to be proud of on the students passing math SOL with above grade level content, which is the next slide, thank you, nearly half of our students in grades 5 through 9 took and passed an SOL covering above grade level content, which surpassed the state average and other divisions in Northern Virginia.

[02:58:24] This includes our 8th graders who are taking Algebra 1 or higher. And you can see that 49% is higher than all neighboring divisions and well above the state average. think a data point to be really proud of and honestly you don't mind going back to that thank you Janet this demonstrates the incredible dedication of our educators we have staff who have stepped up and taken on coursework that they hadn't maybe previously taught they are working to get credentialed in an area that they hadn't maybe previously had this level of credential and that

[02:59:01] commitment and dedication is it's incredible it's what makes Fairfax Fairfax so I just want to make sure that I think our educators I know several of you this evening talked about that commitment

particularly in the budget to providing salaries that are commensurate with this level of dedication and effort but our students are working hard our families are supporting students in this work but again just a great data point for the school division as we look at the strategic priority which is making sure that eighth graders have a

[02:59:35] verified credit in algebra one last year we saw an overall increase by 10 percentage points from the baseline again significant we're continuing to see substantial growth this year and currently have just under 75 percent of our eighth graders enrolled in algebra one or higher big shout out to amy hunter who leads our math initiative work in our instructional services division her team our principals, and again, our educators, Dr. Ponce's office, just really a strong partnership there. Let's go ahead and look at the next slide. And just as I provided you in the literacy,

[03:00:15] this is the work that we're doing to increase Algebra I completion. And again, this is focusing on three particular strategies. We continue to support our students. It was exciting to think about our bridging program over the summer.

[03:00:33] I know I was talking to Interim Principal Matheny at West Springfield High School. I believe they are going to have 14 classrooms of algebra power-up this summer, and just a lot of excitement for our students having an opportunity to really challenge themselves.

[03:00:51] And so I really want to give them a big shout-out. Key takeaways, then, are shown on the screen. In language arts, we've seen progress from the baseline and our overall reading SOL scores and we have seen strong AP and IB English exam pass rates in our strategic priority of reading by third grade in our mathematics we've seen large gains from the baseline and our overall math as well performance even as many parts of the Commonwealth are not AP and IB pass rates and our strategic priority of students completing algebra 1 by 8th grade continue to move forward so this

[03:01:30] This year, we're seeing progress, and yet we acknowledge there are opportunities for growth, as there always will be. We remain committed to this academic growth and excellence for each and every one of our students. And, Madam Chair, this does conclude my report on the highlights of Goal 3 to sum up our work session discussion.

[03:01:50] Thank you, Dr. Reed. I call on Mr. Moon for a motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the school board will accept school for the strategic plan report for school year 2025-26. Thank you. Is there a second?

[03:02:08] Second. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. Mr. Moon, would you like to speak to your motion? Just briefly. As Dr. Lee stated, we had a work session on this one, a little more than one thing on January 13th, and we set aside more than two and a half hours to have a discussion, and we had a really robust discussion on this.

[03:02:26] And board members had a lot of good questions, and a lot of very valuable information was provided by STEM members, including you, of course, Dr. Reid. I appreciate that. So I am not going to reiterate what has been already stated by you this evening or at the work session.

[03:02:44] But for the public, and then as a reminder to my colleagues, an approving of the report does not necessarily mean that we are just happy with everything that the school system has been doing. That is not the case. We made the progress in a lot of areas, and I'm happy to see that in many areas we met the targets.

[03:03:05] But we still have a work to do. But with that said, accepting the purpose of bringing the report to the board is to provide the data, When the prior board adopted a strategic plan, they set six measures for the goal three, for the superintendent to report on.

[03:03:27] And those measures, as far as for the public information, I want to read those goals, those measures. The first measure is growth and performance in coursework, including GPA, IEP goals, and language acquisition. Second measure, growth and performance on state, national, and international assessments.

[03:03:46] Third one, successful completion of algebra 1 by 8th grade. Fourth, evidence of progression toward or completion of advanced coursework like AP, IB, and CTE. Fifth, annual growth in self-identified portrait of graduate skills.

[03:04:04] The last one, but not least, students reading on grade level by the end of third grade. This year's report focuses on excellence in language arts and excellence in mathematics. However, the report also contains all the necessary data for the board and public to have on all the measures that were contained at the end of the report as appendices, and I appreciate that.

[03:04:30] And as I said, we still have work to do, even though we have made a lot of progress, but the report also provides us with what kind of strategies we are implementing to achieve our targets. And with all that information, I hope the bold job is to make the resource allocations and make policy decisions and give directions to the superintendent.

[03:04:56] And I think the report was well presented, well prepared, and I appreciate our happy support. Thank you. The team has worked hard. Dr. Anderson, would you like to speak to your second? Yes, thank you. I do want to agree there was a lot of hard work that went into this, and that's appreciated.

[03:05:14] you know a report that speaks to the academic excellence of our students is one that I want to dig into and I did have the opportunity to do so at the work session we had plenty of time to do that so I won't believe that point with questions here because those were answered but I do want to share and raise the concerns that I do have just to kind of summarize a little bit for people who are watching now who may not have been watching during the work session back in January. There are a lot of good successes here and I'm glad that you were able to highlight that

[03:05:48] but I think I continue to be fairly dismayed with the achievement gaps that persist and in a lot of places widening and I'm just concerned about how we are better targeting some of those successes so they're not just happening across certain groups and especially in that meeting one of the things that I shared and spoke with Dr. Presidio thereafter, I am also kind of very concerned with the, not your tone per se, but with the general tenor of when certain groups don't achieve,

[03:06:27] it's the problem with that group. It cannot be. We cannot make those marginalized groups be responsible for their own failures when there are systemic reasons why those failures are occurring. So I will not be in support because I'd like to see a little bit greater effort into those achievement gaps and a little bit more urgency with supporting those who cannot be responsible for their own failures, as I've discussed before.

[03:06:54] And lastly, just in the key takeaways that you shared a little bit, again, highlighting the successes, why you said you acknowledged that there's more work to do. I'd like to see a couple of those things that we want to really be working on be part of that slide presentation.

[03:07:12] Yes, ma'am. Dr. Anderson. Ms. Dixit. Dr. Reed, thank you for the presentation. And it's an amazing report, a lot of data. And I'm actually very impressed with the overall progress. I think the slide which shows number 13, which shows our grade 5 to 9 have taken a grade level, above grade level math in 24-25.

[03:07:37] That's almost like double the state and then better than a lot of other counties around our area. So it shows FCPS is doing something right. We are educating our students and they're interested in math.

[03:07:52] because that shows that's why they want to learn the higher level. I understand the achievement gap. It's a fact. It's kind of the state of affairs. But I think a lot of things is just when the kid comes to school at five-year-old, some kids are already reading from home.

[03:08:15] They're already learning basic math and number counting. And some kids don't have access to that. So unless and until we do individualized education for each student, that gap is very difficult to, you know, bridge because you have to be the mother and the father of the child also who is basically supplementing what they're doing at home because this child is not getting that from home.

[03:08:41] So I'm hoping in the, as AI is becoming our tool, supporting our teachers, hopefully, and if they can do individualized instruction at a better level, I'm hoping in the next four or five years, that type of teaching we can provide to our students, and these numbers will rise.

[03:09:01] But I definitely am very happy to see progress in most of the section. Thank you. Ms. Lady. Thank you. Thank you for the report. really could just summarize my remarks as, wow, I mean, wow, this is great stuff.

[03:09:21] 79% pass rate on all, I think you said AP and IB tests across the board is just incredible. And kudos to the teaching faculty. When they started benchmark, it was hard. They put in so many extra hours.

[03:09:39] Similarly, with people preparing for math, but we do know numeracy and literacy are essential at all grade levels, but we certainly want our students reading by third grade so that they can then read to learn. I just want to mention again to the public that, you know, I have said this before, one of my campaign things I ran on was Pre-K for All, and as my colleague mentioned, it's unfortunate that it's kind of like I'm running the mile, but I'm a lap ahead. In some cases, I'm two laps ahead, and our faculty are doing great work. I also want to commend

[03:10:16] And your team in each region, at least I know in working with Region 1 and 2 and 5, that the extent to which, to my colleague's point, to drill down on certain demographic groups that are not moving like we want to, that I believe that they're doing that in great detail, by name, by need, by name, by strength, to try and make sure we target and bring all kids up to where we want them to be.

[03:10:45] But I think until, and I believe I did read recently, I think that Prince William is moving to universal pre-K next year. And, you know, at this point, you know, we're almost three times better than them in math. But I suspect that they're going to start closing their achievement caps with that investment.

[03:11:03] So if anyone's listening in Richmond, we need money. We need pre-K for all as a state. It shouldn't just be by jurisdiction. It should be something our state does because it's cruel, and it's not equitable in terms of access and where learning is.

[03:11:25] But great work, and again, I appreciate the drilling down on all areas to make sure we're doing the work and helping the kids. Thanks. Yes, ma'am. And I will share a national data point that across this

nation, we could provide universal pre-K for all children with 1% of our military budget.

[03:11:51] Mr. Frisch. Thank you. I just want to make another plug for universal pre-K. You know, in places where they've successfully tackled that, it has typically been a state-led initiative that brings it to every corner of the state because so many places just can't afford it, even wealthy places or places that are considered to be wealthy.

[03:12:10] I also think a little bit more context on some of the bones here is important. You know, the AP pass rate numbers are extremely impressive, and not just because we're leading the Commonwealth, but because our sample size is so much larger than the average locality in Virginia.

[03:12:28] Can you talk a little bit about the efforts that we make to grow the number of students who are taking these exams and how that is not having what one would expect on its surface, a depreciating impact on our ability to have students pass the exams.

[03:12:44] Yes, sir. And I think, Mr. Frisch, you're raising a point that's so important. I recently noted that we have some folks that have been critical around the SAT numbers, for example, for the school division. And across the Commonwealth, there are roughly 51%, 50% of students in the Commonwealth, I'm paraphrasing, that are taking the SAT.

[03:13:09] We have over 70, almost 82%, I think last year, I don't have the exact, but definitely in the high 70s of our students who are taking it. So we have at least 25% more students taking the SAT, and our scores are still higher than the state average.

[03:13:27] So imagine if only our top 50% of our students were taking it, our average score would potentially look different. And what I think about equity access and opportunity is when all children have a chance to sit for those exams, to have rigorous coursework in all of our schools, in every neighborhood across the county, we're going to see data like this.

[03:13:49] And to your point, our students took over 12,000 AP or IB exams last year, and 79% of those were passing scores. That's 12,000, right?

[03:14:01] So I want to really congratulate Dr. Ponce, Dr. Presidio, Dr. King for their work in making sure that, and Ms. Neal, in terms of the ABLE work that we've done, working with our high school principals and now middle school principals, to support pathways, rigorous course-taking pathways, because we know that it's the quality of that schedule that a student has that's going to be the determinant of post-secondary success.

[03:14:32] Additionally, even with our focused effort to have elementary school students piloting advanced math and our 8th graders in algebra, even growing those numbers, we're not seeing a decline in the pass rates on the SOLs.

[03:14:48] Can you speak to that? That's correct. As we're adding almost 20% more students in Algebra I, our pass rates have remained above 90%. And again, that goes to the strength of our educators and the work and dedication and, honestly, the talent of our young people and the support from their families.

[03:15:07] So we're very proud of our performance across the board. But I do think it sets up a tale of two students, right? Like we have persistent gaps that existed before COVID. In some places, we see very good signs of growth, and in other places, it's either stagnant or the same.

[03:15:29] And we're putting a lot of effort at the school level into addressing these. So I can only imagine where we'd be if that effort was not there. I'm curious if, you know, in addition to pre-K, which is not something that, you know, we're certainly growing our pre-K program, even with limited resources.

[03:15:46] But it's not something that we have direct control over our ability to really up that number. What more could we be doing in a focused manner to support schools, particularly where these problems are most acute? And this is not a problem unique to Fairfax.

[03:16:03] This is a problem in every school division in the country. So I think a lot of that work you saw in the theory or our strategy slides, I think making sure that our curriculum, that there's alignment between the written, taught, and tested curriculum and making sure that the supports for students who maybe are a bit behind grade level are connected to that grade level curriculum.

[03:16:29] Making sure that all students have access to grade-level curriculum. And that's been a strong push in the last couple years as Dr. Presidio's team has worked through our inclusion work. Making sure that every student has access to third-grade reading strategies and comprehension if they're in third grade.

[03:16:51] That they still then have time for support or enrichment. But that everyone has grade-level material. That's really important. It sounds like a simple statement, but it's critical for our children to continue developing because if a child's a bit behind, we're going to need to accelerate their progress. They can't just make a year's progress, so they're going to stay behind.

[03:17:13] My last question, when we look at school by school data, we'll find in some, when you kind of like neutralize the size of the numerator or whatever, you'll still find some schools surprising jumps in these gaps and some that are stagnant and somewhere it's not, it's going in the opposite direction.

[03:17:33] what are we doing to harness what we're seeing working you know again equalizing the numerators so that we're not just you know a 20 percent jump when there's a much smaller group of students but what are we doing to grab what we see working in schools in one part of the county with a group of students and you know put that to work for students in another part of the county where it might be helpful. So yes, sir. An example is the ECRI work we've been doing. Tremendous data results and also a tremendous commitment of funds for professional development, for the materials that

[03:18:12] our teachers need as first grade teachers. But I will tell you that, again, a shout out to our region offices. Our region assistant superintendents and executive principals have been doing walk throughs in their schools in instructional not just like walking through the school but instructional walkthroughs with principals and staff and so I think as we see and of course Mr. Sethi we're graphing our charts of outlier performance and where we see those we definitely want to go visit and replicate those strategies so the ECRI work we'd like to expand we have schools asking if they

[03:18:49] can expand it to second grade and right now budget wise we're a bit challenged although likely we're going to look at some of the achievement gap strategy funding for the ECRI and professional development because we know that's a winning strategy and I don't know miss lemon do you want to comment on the ECRI data and just what it's showing either you or dr. Presidio thank you so much yes last year we had the opportunity to expand to ten schools with the the ECRI I work and that was based on two schools showing just tremendous growth in first

[03:19:24] grade in one year and we're seeing that same come through as we have the VALS scores come in mid-year. We're what we're saying was we're growing the green and we're shrinking the red that means

more kids are on grade level and less children are at high risk. So once we find sort of those pockets it's like bringing it to scale across. So when we hear that like immediately when we were doing the reading transition one of the things we talked about was the distinction between staff who were trained up and could you train the trainer or could the trainer be a trainer I think I'm saying that right is

[03:20:00] the ECRI work something that we can grow within our school division that the volume of people who can train others to do it I believe so it's an intensive training for every teacher that picks that up and begins to work with it and the teachers who've done it which is why we started so small with two schools people were like seriously we are just doing benchmark but they we had two schools pick it up and run with it and at this point we couldn't pry it out of their cold hard hands because they think it's the very best strategy for that primary reading support but are we miss lemon working on a train the trainers I

[03:20:39] know you guys have some plans afoot that's not necessarily a model that is that we're allowed to do right now but we are exploring what other things we could do to expand quickly and because so many of the training is like coming into tier 1 it's like you learn this as a tier 3 small group but the teachers then pick that up and are able to transfer it into their regular classroom lessons so that has been super supportive but we are looking at

[03:21:13] additional ways thank you mr. Frisch asked a lot of my questions but one of the questions I did want to ask is as you're finding these areas of success and since we're talking budget where would you put funding if we had discretionary funds to close and I made a slip at our last work session meeting and I said academic gaps instead of achievement gaps and

[03:21:50] I thought about that and I said you know our kids are achieving they might not academically be somewhere. And I kind of like that idea better, that there might be some academic gaps. That doesn't mean that our kids that aren't there yet aren't achieving, because I think that doesn't represent where they're going in the work the teachers are going. So I'm going to use the word academic gaps. Where would that funding, what would that funding look like? And I think we just got an answer in terms of the training. Well, that is, I think, one of the things that we have identified schools that are receiving extra support right now. We have about 29 elementary

[03:22:28] schools specifically that have received extra support that are modeling the walk to read strategy which i talked about in the goal three report and i think we've seen a video about that so at this point the ecri work uh very much so we're we're in 10 schools plus two right so we're in 12. um we have 141 elementary so we have a room to grow here and the costs at each one I think that's one of the things you've all talked about early childhood in one way or another.

[03:23:01] We know that children close academic gaps faster younger, right? So the younger we can reach children with the reading, and in particular these first grade phonemic support, I believe, and the research bears out, that if we can close those gaps in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, those primary years, we're going to have less need for remediation as students go through the system.

[03:23:29] So I think that that's definitely a place we're very much so focused on with literacy right now. Thank you. And I, too, just want to make a plug for universal pre-K. And it's something that if a state like New Mexico, which is considered a poor state, can provide not only universal pre-K but is also starting to provide child care, I think the Commonwealth of Virginia can kind of look at a model that's working and we are

[03:23:59] by far a wealthier state than they are. Yes ma'am. Seeing no others, we're going to go ahead and take a vote for the motion that is on the screen. All those in favor, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Marin, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, myself, all those opposed, Dr. Anderson, with Mr. Dunaway from the table. Will the clerk please read the vote?

[03:24:34] 9-1. The motion carries. Thank you. Agenda item 6.06. Thank you, Dr. Eade. Agenda item 6.06, federally identified schools, TSI and CSI. I call on Mr. Moon for a motion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[03:24:52] I move that the school would approve the multi-year school support plans to be submitted to Virginia Department of Education for the 36 schools identified for targeted support and improvement tsi and that the school will certify the review of the csi planning year activities section of the multi-year school support plans to be submitted to the virginia department of education for the four schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement csi thank you is there a second i second miss marin uh mr moon would you like to speak to your

[03:25:29] motion you know madam chair uh i actually wanted to have this removed from the consent agenda for for the purpose of asking some questions, especially for the public. In light of the fact that over here this evening, there was a speaker who talked about these 40 scores.

[03:25:48] So if I could have, oh, Dr. Reed, should I ask you or should I ask Mr. Smith or someone else? No, I apologize. My notes were right here and now they're not. But I will try to find them here real quick. I can ask very, very slowly.

[03:26:05] Okay. I will try to do them from memory. Okay. I sent you some questions in advance. Yeah, you did. I will do one by one. I have seven questions. Could you explain how and why we came to identify the 40 schools?

[03:26:23] I'm sorry. Could I explain? How and why we came to identify the 40 schools? The CSI and TSI schools are identified federally, and they're connected to the new framework.

[03:26:44] i hand wrote them so they're connected to the new school framework performance framework and so this year for the first time there were new for example new standards or new requirements for our schools to meet in other words our end size was changed from 30 to 15 which means previously if we had 17 18 20 24 students in a group they were not part of the criteria in the performance

[03:27:23] framework and that was a situation that was challenging for a number of schools we had four schools identified as CSI and thank you three of those were our alternative schools Bryant Mountain View and the Adult High School and one was an elementary school so those were the four CSI schools and then we had 36 schools that were identified as TSI for targeted support and

[03:28:00] improvement and those schools are only in improvement status for one year and of those 36 11 of those were just based on participation numbers in other words we didn't have enough students participate because they were opted out to count the numbers they negatively impacted so I think that we didn't identify the schools the schools were identified federally and I can go into some more of the details I want to make sure I'm responsive to the question that was very

[03:28:39] response so this is something coming from federal government yes sir and the video as opposed to anything that we are doing differently that's changing the end size and and so forth so and the other the other item is that previously we had 11 semesters for our multilingual students to master english

prior to taking the required assessments these assessments and this data based on three semesters so a year and a half rather than five and a half years so that was a significantly different situation for our students and we're

[03:29:16] also very proud to say that with the work we've done and our multilingual student improvement that only two of the 36 schools had multilingual students only as groups that didn't meet the new expectation.

[03:29:32] And that is a huge win. Our young people worked so hard, and our staff worked so hard. And I just am very proud of that data point. You know, so am I. So am I. As a former ESL student, multilingual student myself, you know, expecting someone to be able to master English in three semesters, that's an absurd.

[03:29:56] Right. That's an obstacle. And so 40 schools out of about 200 schools we have in the county, they represent about 20%. Is that percentage high, very high, compared to other schools? How is that compared to other school districts in the Commonwealth?

[03:30:14] Well, so the Commonwealth had 24% of the schools across the Commonwealth that were federally identified. Our Fairfax County, we were at 20%, so we had a lower percentage than the Commonwealth. And I want to just walk us a minute through that because when you begin to break down the data of these 40 schools, four of them, as I mentioned, were CSI, but three of those are our alternative schools, which are some of our hardest working students and staff.

[03:30:46] And they come in often very credit deficient and often very grade level behind when they're coming to the adult high school or one of those other alternative schools. So if you kind of separated them, those previously used to be able to have an alternative accreditation path. And this is the first year that that alternative accreditation path was not available with regard to this framework. We do know that the VDOE is working on reinstating that. But if we pull those three out

[03:31:22] And we looked at the remaining, there were 27 other schools that were only students with disabilities that were the category, often because, recall I mentioned that we moved students from the VAP to the SOL track with limited support and a very short on-ramp.

[03:31:45] So that end-parent refusal for assessment, so that would be 27 of the schools. So if you take those 27 and the three that had previously been accredited, then now you're down to just 10 schools in Fairfax would only be a 5% of our schools that would be in support.

[03:32:08] So we really believe that while we have work to do, that the data is actually quite strong for us. And I also lastly want to mention that last year we had five middle schools that were on the federally identified list and all five middle schools are off this year.

[03:32:27] That is wonderful news. Thank you so much. So if someone to label those 40 schools as a failing schools, is that a fair characterization? No, sir. In fact, that's some of these schools have some of our strongest growth and we absolutely would not characterize these schools as failing.

[03:32:47] Thank you. Since, you know, BOLD is required to either approve or review these plans, I took my time to go through those plans, very, very lengthy documents. Lengthy documents.

[03:33:03] You know, one of the things that stood out to me was stakeholder engagement. I mean, plans all seem to emphasize upon the importance of stakeholder, you know, engagement. In many of the plans, I

mean, they mentioned they include, stakeholders include, you know, parents and students.

[03:33:22] But at the same time, I only saw very few parents and students actually part of that stakeholder's groups. Perhaps, you know, Dr. Reed, you know, when you have a chance to look at that and see whether we can find a way to include more parents and students as a part of a stakeholder.

[03:33:43] That's my request. Yes, sir. You don't need to respond. I'm all done, Madam Chair. I also want to just put a bookend on this to say that even though they have this federal identification, every one of our 200 schools was fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education.

[03:34:01] Thank you. Ms. Marin, would you like to speak to your second? No, thank you. I'm glad Mr. Moon had the opportunity to inquire. Thank you. Mr. Frisch? Yeah, I think it's a good opportunity to point out why we're here, and I think Mr. Moon was getting at some of this.

[03:34:20] You know a year ago this board was talking about the changes that were coming right we were complaining about the video ease new school performance and support framework and how they were penalizing school divisions when parents exercise their rights to opt out of taking as well that they were penalizing multilingual learners by limiting the time they had to prove their mastery of English and these are the fruits of those changes these are

[03:34:52] artificial impacts on our school system and yet we still thrive and so I'm hopeful that the new administration in Richmond will take a close look at what they've done here and let's not forget this was implemented partway through a school year without all of the and without all of the many questions that school divisions across the commonwealth had about what exactly was going on being answered there are some questions that still haven't been answered and so here we are and I hope that the the new governor and her eventual new board of education and our friends

[03:35:30] in the legislature will look at this and partner with school divisions to be much more proactive about engaging school division voice in the process of ensuring that we have high standards for every student and that we provide schools with the resources and time and tools they need to achieve those new standards instead of scrambling like they've made school divisions across the Commonwealth do.

[03:35:53] When we look at how we compare to other school divisions, I'm grateful that we're doing better, but I tell you what, every single school division in the Commonwealth would benefit if Richmond would pull back on this a bit and partner with everybody to get it right.

[03:36:09] I also, to echo Mr. Frisch's comments, JLARC has already identified concerns with the new framework and my understanding is that their concern is that they've over identified schools honestly so I know that I'm confident that as mr. first said that more work will be done thank you dr. Reed seeing no others we're going to go ahead and call for a vote on the motion that is on the screen all those in favor mr. fresh mr. McDaniel miss Marin mr. McElveen missing John Cunning

[03:36:47] Ms. Lady, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, Dr. Anderson, and myself. That is unanimous for all board members with Mr. Dunaway from the table. Agenda item 7.01, academic matters. All right, Madam Chair, this is one of the highlights of our, of my meeting. This evening I'm going to take a point of privilege and share a video prior to my academic matters that was shown last evening

[03:37:25] at Carter G. Woodson High School when we celebrated Black History Month last evening at Carter G. Woodson High School. And this particular video is very, I think, impactful. And I just, it's a

reminder that we need to celebrate our black history, not just in a particular month or a particular meeting, but everywhere and all the time. So I'm going to ask Dr. King, who helped put this video together to share a couple comments and then we'll

[03:38:00] see our video from last night. Thank you Dr. Reed. As we close out Black History Month, it's my hope that this video serves not as a conclusion but as a call to action. Our charge is to continue showing up for every child every day, ensuring that each student feels seen, valued, and empowered to thrive. I want to thank the board and Dr. Reed for your continued support of our students and for helping us create a school system where excellence is recognized nurtured and celebrated in all forms thank you and thank you mr. moon it was really really

[03:38:33] great to see you last night all right madam clerk if we could go ahead and show the video black excellence in Fairfax County Public Schools a legacy a journey a future before there were modern classrooms before there were textbooks filled with promise there were black families in Fairfax County

[03:39:06] public schools who believed. Believe that education was not optional, but essential, powerful, and worth fighting for. In the early years, black children learned in segregated schools, often underfunded, overcrowded, and overlooked. Yet inside those walls lived brilliance, resilience, and hope. Teachers taught not just lessons, but dignity. Students learned not just facts, but faith in themselves.

[03:39:36] Even when opportunity was unequal, excellence was not. When desegregation came, it did not erase the struggle. It asked black students and black educators to be pioneers, often walking into spaces where they were unseen, unheard, or unwelcome.

[03:39:56] Yet they showed up anyway. They showed up prepared. They showed up proud. They carried their communities with them. Black educators became anchors, mentors, counselors, disciplinarians, advocates, and champions.

[03:40:13] They nurtured generations of students who would go on to become leaders, scholars, artists, engineers, service members, and change makers. They taught through policy changes. They taught through cultural shifts. They taught through moments of progress and moments of pain.

[03:40:32] And still, they taught. As Fairfax County grew, so did the voices of Black Excellence. Students brought their full identities into the classroom, their histories, their languages, their dreams. They challenged expectations. They redefined success.

[03:40:50] They reminded the system that brilliance does not come in just one form. Today, Black Excellence in Fairfax County Public Schools lives everywhere. In classrooms and in cafeterias, in school offices and central offices, in principals, bus drivers, counselors, teachers, custodians, and coaches.

[03:41:12] It lives in students who lead with courage, in educators who teach with purpose, in families who partner with belief and pride. Black excellence is not just a moment in history. It is a living legacy. It is the courage of those who came before, the brilliance of those who stand here now.

[03:41:31] and the promise of those still to come. As we honor Black history, we also honor Black futures. Because when Black students thrive, when Black educators are valued, when Black voices are heard, our entire system rises.

[03:41:47] We celebrate the past, affirm the present, and commit to a future where every Black student and every Black educator knows you belong, you matter, and your excellence is essential. This is the story

of Fairfax County Public Schools, a story shaped by perseverance, strengthened by community, and illuminated by black excellence, yesterday, today, and always.

[03:42:16] Happy Black History Month! Dr. Reed, if I could just say I want to really thank Mark Jones and Mark Hoffman for helping put this video together. Our communication teams rock.

[03:42:37] Indeed they do. So I think you can understand why I thought it would be, you know, Nardis, well done. So for tonight's academic matters presentation, we're going to provide an update on the division's elementary literacy initiative with a specific focus on writing.

[03:43:05] What? Okay. As we have stated in earlier board presentations, we can go to the slide two. There we go. The benchmark has some key components for writing, and the division's new literacy curriculum really is having a significant impact on our students' reading achievement.

[03:43:25] But our writing, I think, also, I don't know, I know our board, you're very active visiting schools. And when we walk into classrooms and see work on the walls of the halls, the writing that I see this year looks just, it's really incredibly, I think, more robust than what we saw several years ago.

[03:43:46] And I just, I'm really proud of the hard work, again, our educators and our young people are doing with this. So there are three key components to the writing curriculum. They're on the slide. If you want to go to the next slide, just want to take a look at the impact this new curriculum is having on student writing performance.

[03:44:06] Each quarter, students in grades three through six are assessed on a writing task in one of three genres, narrative, information expository, or opinion, which is often called persuasive writing. And by comparing scores from last fall to this fall, you can see that the grade level performance has definitely improved from last year, and that students' writing proficiency is getting stronger as they advance to grade levels.

[03:44:32] For example, if we look diagonally down the rows of the displayed chart, you would see the third graders going to, from November of 24, Do you see how diagonally to the right, to the fourth grader, they go from 52% to 69%, which is a 17% increase in their assessment.

[03:44:50] And in grade four, a year ago, at 57% to 78%, there was a 21% increase. And this past year, with our fifth grade, there was a 23% increase in improvement in terms of end-of-year grade-level expectations for writing.

[03:45:08] that is significant and again demonstrates how hard our young people are working in our next slide we're looking at Lexia foundational writing skill improvements and again this is a four or five reading and power up literacy at middle school that includes word study morphology and spelling as well as grammar which honestly I mean I can talk math all day but talk grammar and I'm I'm going to struggle a little bit, I'm sure.

[03:45:38] But again, students continue to show impressive growth after just several months of using Lexia this school year. For example, students in grades K to 5, there are 23% more students demonstrating intermediate or advanced levels of writing. So we're, again, to the questions this evening about some of the strategies.

[03:45:59] What is the data? I think you can see that some of the strategies are showing really strong results. So, Madam Clerk, let's take a moment to see benchmark writing action in a first and fourth grade

classroom. I really appreciate that we're not just focused on reading, but also on writing.

[03:46:24] There's a separate time that's specifically set aside. The lessons are scripted. They enable me to model for students what it looks like to begin writing a piece, to continue writing, and then to give it a sense of closure. What's amazing about these resources is it gives me the opportunity to enrich my students that need enriching and support my students that need support and re-teaching simultaneously.

[03:46:47] They also provide a lot of anchor charts. There's one I especially like that has the five W's, who, what, when, where, and why. I was inspired by that, and I created bookmarks for each student to keep in their journal. This bookmark is to help me ask questions so I can write about things in my book.

[03:47:06] Another anchor chart I really like is I think, I speak, and I write. And that sounds so basic, but it's really helped them to get started because when they're faced with a blank page, having those scaffolds, knowing that they can say the words out loud and then they can write them down is really helpful. Probably the most powerful tool is the fact that the reading and the writing are integrated.

[03:47:27] I notice the connection between the two when I see students writing and they're applying that background knowledge they've acquired from the passages or stories that we've read and they're putting it on the page. They're using the vocabulary words that come with that benchmark unit in their writing.

[03:47:42] What I noticed this year that the writers that came to me from third grade were writers. For the first time when I said let's write, students put paper to pencil and were able to go. They asked me things like are we writing an informative essay or are we writing an opinion essay? Did you want that to be in the narrative form or can I write a poem?

[03:48:08] They are writing complete sentences, they're adding more details to their stories. I'm noticing that the quantity, they're writing a lot longer pieces. A lot of times, the first week of school, they'll just write a few words or one sentence. Now they're writing entire pages, even though I have not prompted them to do that.

[03:48:24] What I notice is the quality, the quantity, and the stamina for writing is 500 times better than I've ever seen. I look for students who maybe are not writing complete sentences yet, and so we might do a lesson on parts of speech, and how every sentence has, I call it a who and a do, with a noun and a verb.

[03:48:44] And I can use those grammar lessons from Benchmark to reinforce that. This has helped me ensure that everyone's on the right track, and that I'm able to meet the needs of every kid in the class. Benchmark really levels the playing field. It gives all students a strong foundation in things like grammar, handwriting, punctuation, so that all students are able to express themselves in writing.

[03:49:03] Everything they want to say, they're able to put on the page. I'm learning to have better handwriting. Before I used to add like too many details from the stories, but now I add details that only matter. And I remember to just contact schools and give credits to like where the stories are from and the facts.

[03:49:21] I know I've gotten better at writing because I've been spelling longer words. I've gotten better at writing in third person. I started writing two or three sentences. Now I write four paragraphs. I got better at using text evidence to support my ideas.

[03:49:42] That makes me feel very great because I can show my opinion and my feelings. I've been teaching for over 30 years, and for the first time in my career, I can honestly say that I have peace of mind

in my writing instructions.

[03:50:03] It's important for all people to be good writers because you can get into a good college with that, And I really want to get into a good college and job. And so I'm going to just say, here's our last slide on writing.

[03:50:21] The National Commission on Writing refers to writing as the neglected R. And I really think this data is important. The young man at the end of the video said it. It's important to have good writing skills. And I couldn't agree with him more.

[03:50:37] In FCPS, we understand the importance of writing for the future success of our students. I love that our students were able to voice their own improvement and success. And also just, again, I want to thank our educators. We've asked a lot of them in the last couple of years, especially our elementary teachers with the benchmark curriculum.

[03:50:56] It was a lot to learn and plan for. And I just appreciate the dedication demonstrated to be able to get the results that we're getting. So, Madam Chair, that is Academic Matters this evening. Thank you, Dr. Reed.

[03:51:12] Thank you. I'm pretty excited to see this because I know writing has been kind of the Achilles heel here. It wasn't well structured enough to be successful across all skill levels of students. And so this is this is very exciting. I particularly appreciated their use of academic language because that means they really understand what is it that they're producing.

[03:51:42] Question that I have that I think needs to be highlighted a little bit is regarding the key components, the explicit foundational instruction, the cursive, grades 2 to 6. Can you speak a little bit more in terms of how that occurs? Because this has been a new question that I'm being asked by parents quite a bit because now they have older children who cannot create a signature.

[03:52:08] And so they are wondering when we're going to bring cursive back so that their kids can actually read, you know, notes that they are leaving if it's not just a text. Can you speak a little bit to this? Yes, ma'am. I will give that a shot.

[03:52:26] Would you like to speak to that, Dr. Presidio? I still think cursive seems a bit elusive. And for, yeah, so Dr. Presidio. Yeah, I mean, I think just the short answer is we are excited to have this as part of the core curriculum.

[03:52:42] We had supplemental resources and materials prior to this adoption, but they weren't frequently used. And this is part of the core curriculum, so students are getting daily practice. And again, I'm just going to reiterate how thankful we really are to have the support of the board and the superintendent to do this language arts adoption.

[03:53:02] It was comprehensive. It was the first one we had done in 25 years. And you can see in the data the impact that it's having already. So we really appreciate your support in this investment because it's making a huge difference. But, yeah, this is daily writing practice, including cursive in grades 2 through 6. And I know as we've talked about homework for elementary school kids, a cursive worksheet makes a perfect homework assignment.

[03:53:24] Send that sheet home. I did have another question regarding the benchmark assessments for writing. I noticed here that you have, well, the data that is here is for levels 2, 3, and 4.

[03:53:40] One, who scores these? Are these just the regular classroom teachers? Yeah, they're scored in the classroom, but the teachers do compare scoring, and so they work to have inter-rater reliability on scoring.

[03:53:55] But, yeah, the data on the slide that we showed was from Unit 2 that occurred in the fall. And do you have this data with just levels three and four? We could pull it that way. I don't have it off the top of my head that way, but we could pull it for just level four or level three and four, whatever you'd like.

[03:54:17] I'd just be interested to see what the growth is for three and four. If you have that, that would be fantastic. And then the last piece is, and to refresh my memory, and I guess I'm just going to ask Dr. Presidio, the fifth grade writing assessment, that was made optional some years ago.

[03:54:35] Are we doing anything that is comparable to that? That was a fifth grade writing SOL. Yeah, I'll have to check on that and get back to you to see if we're doing something consistent in the fifth grade.

[03:54:52] Thank you. I'm excited to see that kids are writing extended essays and actually trying to find ways to articulate their thinking beyond a quick message. So this is really exciting stuff. Thank you. I also appreciate you noting the academic language.

[03:55:11] I think that's really important, and the children noting the context. And I will say, coming from a state that had a 5th grade writing assessment, 5th, 8th, and 10th, we had a much greater emphasis on writing than I noted when I first came to Fairfax.

[03:55:29] But I really appreciate how hard everyone's working, because whether or not the state tests it, it's important. And I think people know that. We used to have it, and I am not sure if it became just entirely optional, but I know it wasn't mandatory, so some divisions did their own thing, and it just kind of watered down a little bit across the years.

[03:55:51] The extended essay piece is really so exciting because I see this as a great trajectory for those who are in that IB work. That IB extended essay, you know, some of our kids are struggling at that high school level because the foundations were not there.

[03:56:06] So again, this is really good stuff. And even on the data slide that's up ahead of us, 91% of employers consider writing proficiency in the hiring process. I know for senior leaders and principals, we expect a writing activity.

[03:56:22] So I think writing is something, as our young man in the video said, that it matters. Ms. Dixit. Thank you, Dr. Reed. And these students could be future authors, right? So they can write.

[03:56:37] They can do anything. So I actually am really impressed with the growth and, as I say, 23%, 17 and 9. I have seen this firsthand in the classrooms, actually, in elementary schools that the students, the teachers have said that the writing improved from fall to spring.

[03:56:58] And the students are writing and very good at writing, too, because they're writing more and the books itself. So I saw that in the video as well. You know, some people have this great writing skill. Some don't have, like that.

[03:57:14] I guess they're more verbal and cannot write that well. But this can be taught. I'm not a big fan of writing myself. But, you know, when I need to write, I can write because I had that foundation skills to be able to write.

[03:57:31] And I agree with the cursive writing. I mean, when I was young, and I guess a lot of my colleagues will remember, Like, cursive was the thing, that's how we wrote. So I would love to see our students writing again in cursive. And I see that in some classrooms.

[03:57:48] I don't know how they get the skills, but some kids are already writing in cursive. But overall, this is a great success and improvement, and thank you for that. Mr. Moon. Dr. Ray, thanks for the presentation.

[03:58:04] I want to ask a quick question from a little bit different angle. is there a gender gap achievement gap between boys and girls in writing or language arts in early grades you know traditionally nationally we have seen that um our boys have tended to lag in writing i don't know that we've looked at that here miss neil dr prasidi have we looked at a gender gap in writing i don't know that we've pulled writing um data by gender that's some certainly something we can pull. Is that difficult to pull? Is that difficult to pull? I think if we

[03:58:43] were clear about what the request was, we can pull that information. Okay, just because I remember when my kids were small that they were slower than others. Well, we do know developmentally that fine hand coordination generally develops in young girls quicker than boys, but there are probably other reasons. It's not just a cursive. I'm not just talking about cursive, but actually writing composition.

[03:59:14] I probably was an outlier, which is why I went into chemistry. Okay. Because I was not, I don't enjoy writing per se either. So it's great that I have a staff of great writers. Thank you. I'm going to take a quick turn here because I can't not.

[03:59:33] So my favorite story of teaching the engineering students at Kansas State was that I had a student walk in and say, I'm never going to need to know how to write because I'm going to have a secretary that's going to do that all for me. Nice. And it was, it was a moment where we all looked at her and like, I don't think you understand how this works now. But what I love about this is that I've been able to see it real time with the tiniest person that lives in my house. We went from pretending that we couldn't read in second grade, literally, to now he has graduated Lexia as a fifth grader. So that was

[04:00:09] an awesome day that was very much appreciated in our house. But what I love about this, and I've talked about this with several principals and teachers around my district, is the fact that I can't wait to see what happens when we get the kindergartners that have gone all the way through.

[04:00:28] So when we get those kindergartners that started with benchmark from the very beginning, I can't wait to see what happens with the third grade SOLs and how it works with our strategic plan goal. So I'm very excited to just be able to see the growth in my own kid. And I will say that I have heard repeatedly, we still need a little bit of innovation to figure out how to catch those kids that we adopted just a little bit late. And that's always going to be the case, right? And as you guys always hear me say, the best time to plant a tree is 30 years ago or today. But I do want to make sure that we figure out how to get those core skills with those kiddos that maybe

[04:01:08] missed it because I have to tell you as a former English teacher the worst thing that ever my students would ever say to me is I hate writing and you don't have to love it it's just it's a tool it's a skill and with the advent of AI kids actually need to be better writers because they need to be discerning and be able to critique information that systems are going to provide for them. So I am excited to see where we go next and I can't wait to see how awesome our kiddos do

[04:01:41] next year. So thank you. And I think that's it. All right. Agenda item eight, consent agenda, our adopted rules of parliamentary procedure. Roberts 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 the public in advanced. 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

[04:02:17] the consent agenda? Hearing and seeing no objection. I'll make sure it gets to the screen before we move on. Hearing and seeing no objection, the consent agenda is approved. 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 for a future meeting. Agenda item 10, board committee

[04:02:48] reports, I call on Ms. Marin for a report from the Governance Committee. Yes, at its March 17th committee meeting, members will continue working on developing the first-ever policy regarding AI. The board reviewed a version from the superintendent at its February 17th meeting, and the next draft is expected to be posted on the board talks webpage by March 12th with the latest so that we can be ready in time. The calendar policy, so I hope members arrive ready to discuss many aspects related to this. I've already shared a briefing memo created by myself and Mr. Dunn and our staff

[04:03:27] that provides a comprehensive summary of practices from the past leading up to the present and areas that could be addressed in policy. Earlier this week, I invited each board member to schedule time with me to connect next week to hear their thoughts on AI and the calendar policies work. So I thank Mr. Frisch, Mr. McElvey, Mr. Moon, and Ms. Lady for scheduling that time already. We're also going to be reviewing some fiscal policies to keep trying to get through the backlog, and we'll continue to fine-tune our review process to keep work moving forward.

[04:03:59] Thank you, Ms. Marin. Agenda item 11, Superintendent Matters. I call on Dr. Reed for Superintendent Matters. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just, I think the last couple weeks, there's just been so much going on. Really appreciated. I've had a chance to get out and watch a number of our basketball teams playing and they're in playoffs now. A number of theater performances that have been incredible and music performances. I last night had a chance to attend the Black History Month

[04:04:33] celebration at Carter G. Woodson and today had a chance to have a soul food lunch and presentation at West Potomac High School and had a great time with students and staff there. I think that I also last evening had made remarks at the Art of Facts first annual event where we honor the visual arts of our Fairfax County public school students from across the county.

[04:05:03] And oh my goodness, the sculpture, the painting, the multimedia visual art is incredible. Our children have so many gifts. I also want to foreshadow a calendar topic coming up.

[04:05:19] While the elections have been sort of an on-again, off-again topic, our county elections committee did let me know this week, and I sent a note to the board, I believe yesterday, that April 21st appears to be a go day for the constitutional amendment election across the Commonwealth. And as that's the case, it's very likely that since 168 of our schools

[04:05:52] are identified as polling places, that we will likely need to close schools on April 21. We'll be sending out communication to the broader community next week. But again, it's going to be a Commonwealth-wide election. And because our schools in Fairfax County are used as polling places with

parking required the elections board has indicated that they believe there will be a high turnout for this election which requires parking and a lot of traffic in

[04:06:28] and out of schools during the day that we're not able to really adequately manage at the same time we have school so more information on that topic to come it does look like the june primary date for an election has been moved to August 4th. So we won't need to, at this time, amend the calendar in June. So that's my update for this evening. Thank you, Dr. Reed. Agenda item 12, board matters

[04:07:03] in alignment with board consensus. Due to the late hour, we're skipping this item for tonight. That means that on February 26, 2026, the regular meeting is adjourned at 11:07 p.m.



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