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Fairfax County School Board Meeting, Thursday, September 24, 2026

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

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[00:05:27] The time is 7:03 p.m. And this September 2024, September 24, 2026, regular meeting of the Ferris County School Board will now come to order. Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence, and a performance of the National Anthem by Annandale High School Chamber Orchestra

[00:05:42] under the direction of Annie Ray.

[00:08:10] Thank you, Annandale High School Chamber Orchestra. Let's give the students another round of applause. That was fantastic. Agenda 3.02 announcements. Chair, if you would like to review a copy of the meeting agenda, please see the back of the auditorium to obtain copies of any items supporting materials being presented tonight please reference the qr code on the agenda or visit www.fcps.edu backslash board docs tonight's meeting is being broadcast on cox channel 99 verizon fios channel 11 and live stream on youtube and our website at www.fcps.edu backslash live stream

[00:08:49] virtual participation miss dixit miss dixit has submitted a request to attend this evening's meeting remotely due to personal travel out of the country and is located in bogota colombia i have performed an initial review of miss dixit's request and having found it to be in compliance with the School Board's remote participation resolution and I have approved the request. Ms. Dixit, please check your audio and video.

[00:09:07] Hi. Good evening. Good evening. We can hear you. Thank you. I now ask board members who are physically present to vote on the following. All those in favor of confirming the approval of Mrs. Dixit's request. Ms. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Marin, Mr. Moon, Mr. McElveen, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Dannon, Ms. St. John Cunningham, myself. All those opposed. Dr. Anderson, the clerk, please read the vote. 10 to 1. The motion carries. Thank you. I now call on Dr. Reed Oh, I don't call on Dr. Reed.

[00:09:44] Okay, thank you. I can now call on Dr. Reed to provide some brief highlights of what's going on in our schools, our wow moment. All right, we have a few fun facts as a wow moment. So far, last year in the 25-26 school year, I just wanted to note that there were over 3,387,000 books checked out by students and staff.

[00:10:08] And you guessed it, our third graders checked out the most books last year with the total third grade checkout numbers at 535,829 books, which is an average of 43 books per third grader last year.

[00:10:30] I do want to clarify that the top five series were Dog Man. I don't know why they don't call it canine character, but it is Dog Man by Dav Pilkey, Diary of a Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney, Elephant and Piggy by Mo Williams, Branches by Young Jessica Young, and National Geographic Kids by Eric Zweig.

[00:10:53] And of the top ten single titles, seven were from the Dog Man series. And three are graphic novels by Raina Telgemeier. So there you have it, our data this evening. All right, we love our readers. Okay. Agenda 3.03 proclamation honoring National Literacy Month. I call Mr. Dunn for a proclamation.

[00:11:21] Whereas International Literacy Day was established as September 8th by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, in 1967 in Tehran, Iran, as a reminder of the importance of literacy as a human right. And in 2024, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution designating September as National Literacy Month, noting that literacy is the cornerstone for personal growth, economic opportunity, and a strong society.

[00:11:48] And whereas, on September 28, 2023, the Fairfax County Public Schools FCPS Division Superintendent presented on the Equitable Access to Literacy EAL Plan, which commits to using data to identify systemic barriers, providing a solid foundation in literacy, and deepening educators' knowledge of evidence-based literacy and culturally responsive teaching, which has resulted in training 2,500 educators in literacy intervention programs in school year 25-26

[00:12:20] and providing additional literacy training to over 1,250 teachers at the 2026 FCPS Summer Literacy Symposium. And whereas Fairfax County Public Schools' equitable access to literacy plan aligns with the Virginia Literacy Act of 2022 to ensure that FCPS aligns with the commitment to evidence-based and high-quality foundational literacy programs, yielding significant progress since the implementation, including a three-percentage point increase in the overall grade three SOL reading pass rate, an eight-percentage point increase in grade three pass rates for both economically disadvantaged and Hispanic student

[00:12:59] groups, and a rise in the division combined SOL reading pass rate from 77% to 80%. And whereas, according to the 2024 FCPS Division Literacy Plan, the district is committed to ensuring that students receive explicit instruction in reading and writing to achieve proficiency in literacy and eliminate disproportionate outcomes based on race, gender, zip code, ability, socioeconomic status, or languages spoken at home.

[00:13:27] And whereas this commitment has been made with the understanding that literacy is essential to human potential and economic success, as a 2020 Gallup poll found that the United States stands to lose up to \$2.2 trillion annually due to low adult literacy rates and low literacy creates a major skills gap in our workforce.

[00:13:48] now therefore be it resolved that fairfax county school board proclaims september 2026 as national literacy month and reaffirms their commitment to promoting reading and literacy as the catalyst for our students future academic success their preparation for jobs of the future and their ability to compete in a global economy is there a second second mr dannon i will call for the vote But all those in favor, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Mairn, Mr. Moon, Mr. McElveen, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Dannen, Dr. Anderson, Ms. St. John Cunningham, and myself.

[00:14:23] Jimmy Dannen is for board members. All right. What about Ms. Dixit? And Ms. Dixit. And Ms. Dixit. My apologies. Thank you. I'd like to welcome all those here in support of honoring National Literacy Month Proclamation, and please join the board for a photo at the front of the dais.

[00:16:43] Agenda item 4.01, community participation. The next order of business is community participation. We welcome community members who are here and those who signed up to speak this evening. Additional information about signing up to provide comments at school board regular business meetings and public hearings can be found on the school board's website at www.fcps.edu backlash school board.

[00:17:02] During the sign-up process, community members acknowledged they were informed of the school board's expectations for proper decorum when providing comments. These expectations are also available online and with the printed agenda and meeting materials in the back of the room. We ask audience members to be respectful of one another. Shouting and outbursts will not be tolerated.

[00:17:18] Please hold your applause until the conclusion of a speaker's remarks. Audience members may not join speakers at the podium and should remain at their seats, including when recording video or taking photos. We are grateful to those of you who have come to speak to us today and thank you for your cooperation. School board members will be listening but not responding.

[00:17:34] Madam Clerk, please call the first speaker. Student number one. Student number one. Akram Farhan. Akram Farhan. Kelly Henderson.

[00:17:52] Good. Good evening. My name is Kelly Henderson. I live in Annandale, having recently moved from Vienna. For the past 15 years, I have directed Formed Families Forward, a family-led nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting families who are formed through foster care, adoption, and kinship or extended family member care. While I am a professional special educator,

[00:18:26] I'm here today in my personal family role as mom to three young men, all of whom have benefited from FCPS. My youngest just graduated from Madison High School in June at age 22 with a standard diploma. I am speaking today about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders or FASD. FASD refers to a spectrum of neurobehavioral conditions caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. FASD is estimated to affect roughly 1 in 20 school-aged children. More common than autism, but woefully under-identified.

[00:19:07] September is FASD Awareness Month. Schools are often stretched thin when they work to meet the extra challenging behaviors that come along with students who have been prenatally exposed to alcohol. FASD affects the brain, not just behavior. Kids with FASD often have strong verbal skills, but

struggle with memory, abstract thinking, and executive function, which means they can look fine on paper but still be misread as not trying or being defiant by teachers who haven't been trained to recognize it or address it.

[00:19:41] We personally worked extensively with our youngest son's schools to find the accommodations, specialized services, and most importantly, the positive relationships with staff to support him over the years. Once a teacher understands that, excuse me, once a teacher understands the brain-based conditions and makes a shift towards evidence-based strategies that accommodate the neurodevelopmental needs of a student.

[00:20:16] Caitlin Hill Talley. All right. Good evening, Fairfax County Public School Board.

[00:20:33] My name is Caitlin Hill Talley, and my husband and I are proud alums of FCPS with our son now in kindergarten at North Springfield Elementary School. I was thrilled to see the progress made over the summer, taking devices out of kindergarten in classrooms and have subsequently seen our son thrive in school alongside his classmates a month into the school year.

[00:20:54] I would like to build off this momentum and encourage you to uphold the prohibition of devices in kindergarten and expand this prohibition through second grade. Additionally, I'd like to strongly advocate for screen time limitation in later elementary grades three through six.

[00:21:10] Following what was meant to be a temporary solution of distance learning during the pandemic, We continue to see the increase of technology in classrooms and the over digitization of school curriculums. Now that this approach to learning is not a necessity, we should use this opportunity to reassess and consider how we actually want our children and future generations to learn.

[00:21:32] We know firsthand how critical social and emotional development are in these early years. The emphasis for these elementary students should be focused on peer and teacher relationships, which cannot be taught through a screen. I want my child to be taught by a teacher, not by an ed tech product.

[00:21:49] 2026 has been a year of rapid progress across the country at the state and local level, with policies and legislation implemented regarding caps on screen time, prohibition of devices, and a thoughtful balance of digital and traditional instruction.

[00:22:05] I urge you to continue the progress within FCPS. Thank you again for your support and partnership, as well as the strides that have been made on behalf of pre-K and kindergartners across our county. I look forward to the continued progress of intentional technology approaches for FCPS students. Thank you. For turning back to student number one, as I believe she's now online, student number one, you can go ahead and unmute and begin

[00:22:42] speaking. Hello, can you hear me? Yes. Okay, thank you. I apologize. I've been having some technical issues. Good evening. I'm a sophomore at Oakton High School, and the thing I love most about Fairfax County is its diversity. I believe that our coexistence is what makes this county special and is why I'm proud to call it home. I wanted to share my experience and how the revision of the 9-11 curriculum has positively impacted me as a student. Last year, when I was a freshman taking

[00:23:17] AP Human Geography, my teacher didn't teach about 9-11 directly. It was covered in our required reading instead. As I was reading and taking notes, I came across the passage in Unit 4, chapter 8 that covered 9-11 and discussed terrorism which claimed that it would that it quote-unquote often has its

roots in roots in specific regions or countries and proceeded to name al-qaeda and follow up with how it has its roots among sunni muslims i was appalled due to the passage's implication and concerned about how the textbook's framing would impact how my classmates thought about muslims about people like me since for many of them it was among their

[00:23:54] first educational experiences hearing about Islam or Muslims. It is through this type of content that hate can be subconsciously learned. These biases that go unchecked perpetuate harmful stereotypes, prejudice, and deeply hurtful remarks towards students in our county. This year, however, I noticed something different. When my teacher in AP World History talks about 9-11 this month, I didn't have to feel the hurt of having such a tragedy associated with my faith as opposed to last year. The diversity and inclusivity is what I love most about this county, and having that use challenging harmful notions and making sure that students' voices are heard. Just like our

[00:24:32] county, the gardens that flourish most are those with a variety of plants, but that belief can't be achieved with hate and misconceptions. As a Muslim student, I'm extremely grateful to be in an environment where concerns such as these regarding the curriculum can be brought up to

[00:24:47] the board and acted upon like this one was. Good evening, members of the school board.

[00:25:20] I'm speaking tonight as a concerned county resident. There's clear and increasing evidence of the adverse individual and societal impacts of overexposing young children to digital content. While some support taking steps to curb this overexposure, others contend that the task belongs strictly to parents at home and not at school. I contend that this responsibility is shared and board members must not abrogate their duty or pass the buck.

[00:25:50] Do they have an invisible conflict of interest preventing them from restoring the balance, shifting away from the virtual, artificial worlds and back to the real world problem-solving? Suspicions of bias and conflict among residents stem directly from board and staff behavior.

[00:26:09] In the August 18 ETRC meeting, members identified a clearly biased conclusion derived by staff on a targeted survey design that is either incompetent or shameful. Yet we see no rejection of such efforts on the tech-driven push for digital adoption. No wonder it feels like the ETRC is fixated on promoting corporate tools like Google Workspace at Chesterbrook Elementary, rather than addressing student well-being. The Board must demand that the ETRC stop

[00:26:44] fabricating support for digital tech. Instead, they must direct the Committee to fulfill its core mandate, ensuring that technology is used intentionally and only when it genuinely enhances learning. That means tackling real priorities, establishing a whitelist-only device approach, and providing parents with a clear, straightforward opt-out for AI and laptops.

[00:27:15] Our children deserve an education grounded in real-world problem-solving, not corporate-driven. Jennifer Chang, thank you for listening to the community in making some meaningful changes in our kids' experience with technology in schools this year.

[00:27:52] Families appreciate the prohibition of devices for pre-K and kindergartners, the moratorium on generative AI, and the planning for more changes to be announced in November. However, I am still here today to speak about the proliferation of devices in our kids' everyday use in schools.

[00:28:11] That just goes to show how deeply entangled education has become with tech. In an in-service for middle school teachers, teachers were told only to use tech intentionally when it is enhancing learning. Yet moments later, we're told to teach only online textbooks and Lexia for the majority of the English curriculum.

[00:28:33] In elementary schools, 45 system-wide county assessments, which were previously printable and able to be given with pencil and paper, are only able to be delivered by Chromebooks this year. And that is in addition to the three iReady reading, three map math and three days of SOLs delivered also on Chromebooks so much on-screen testing and for what reason I bring questions as to whether it is better for an algorithm to compute my students progress can we trust our teachers to use their training and experience to assess our students instead if the plan is to be more intentional with tech why are we replacing precious

[00:29:12] teacher and student engagement time with individualized reading of Google slides using using gamified apps and taking more tests on those Chromebooks. Last night, I attended the superintendent's family vision group meeting where director Darnicia Semper said, "We need quality relationships with teachers for quality learning to occur."

[00:29:32] The more we put our kids in front of these devices where an app is teaching or testing them, the less relationships they are developing and the less they are learning. In the classroom, quality relationships and quality learning are nurtured through tactile materials, conversations, experiences, and discussions."

[00:29:57] JoLynn Sikonek. for this opportunity. I'm JoLynn Sikhanek. I have two girls in FCPS and two boys in waiting.

[00:30:15] I'm here today to ask you to codify an opt-out of gamified EdTech apps for all grades. When my child was in first grade, I learned about the Lexia requirements. This year, I requested my second-grade teacher to opt her out and supplied workbooks. While sympathetic, she said the ELA department said since Lexia is part of the guaranteed curriculum, we need her to do the required minutes for now. I repeatedly asked local admin, then literacy admin, for documentation on the requirements. The chief academic officer replied saying, there is not a board policy requiring students to use Lexia and shared Lexia marketing designed

[00:30:52] to convince schools to replace instruction with games. Yes, Lexia's website calls it a game. It's listed on the FCPS website as an approved supplemental material, not mandatory. I asked again to opt out. Two days later, my child is still using Lexia.

[00:31:08] Later, he said, though it's supplemental, my child still must be forced to use it. No documentation, no explanation for why other students have been able to opt out. Everyone thinks Lexia is required, but no one takes responsibility for imposing the mandate. Why are decisions made secretly without parental input?

[00:31:27] Why do we allow Lexia salespeople to enter our schools? Not all FCPS schools enforce these so-called requirements. How is that equitable? Once you get past the talking points, the studies paid for by Lexia do not add up.

[00:31:43] Standard interventions require a baseline of 0.40. RAND's independent study showed Lexia effect size of only 0.11, drastically low. In fact, it contributes to fragmented attention, the desire for visual

stimulation and instant gratification, conflates learning with quick wins and leveling up trades and trades long-term knowledge for short-term convenience we know paper and pencil is best please put an opt-out in

[00:32:11] Chris French good evening my name is Chris French and I'm the president of Northern Virginia families for safe streets in the wake of another FCPS student being killed by a person driving I'm here to ask you that you do more to protect our students as they walk bike and roll to and from school Now, admittedly, much of our county's traffic violence epidemic is out of your control.

[00:32:51] However, we urge you to take the following four actions. Augment the Safe Routes to School Program staff. Two full-time employees is not sufficient for a system as large as FCPS. Tackle the exploding kiss-and-ride traffic problem that has continued to increase since the pandemic and that endangers students walking and biking by putting them in the path of novice, distracted, and/or aggressive drivers.

[00:33:16] the pedestrian and driver safety education programs offered in our schools. Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets offers these programs in all Alexandria and Arlington County schools. And finally, address the findings of the new pedestrian and traffic safety assessment, thank you, and expand the reports assessment to include all FCPS schools. For those aspects of the problem that are outside of your control, we ask that Dr. Reed and all of you join with us and members of the community to demand that our local elected leaders and transportation officials address traffic violence through taking the following three actions:

[00:33:52] demand that our supervisors fcdot and vdot prioritize investment in safe streets infrastructure in and around our schools, demand the county expand the speed safety camera program into additional school zones as well as into high crash corridors, and demand that the county implement a new stop sign camera program within our school zones. All of those are within their authority. I hope again that Dr. Reed and the school board will lead on this issue and join us in this fight. Crashes are not accidents. Crashes are preventable, and I ask that all of you pledge

[00:34:28] to join with us in this fight. Thank you. Molly Sullivan. Hello, my name is Molly Sullivan, and I teach in the Springfield District, and I live in the Sully District. I'm here tonight to raise awareness about continued concerns about facilities. Two years ago at Liberty Middle School, almost the entire spring the elevator was out of service, which kept one student who was unable to climb the stairs from attending their second floor classroom. Last year at Union Mill Elementary

[00:35:07] School, our elevator was in and out all year, which again prevented some students who are not permitted or able to climb the stairs to access some of the rooms. Last year, Poplar Tree Elementary elevator was down from July until November. Currently, it is out of service and has been since August 25th, and as a direct result, a third grade teacher was recently asked to move of her entire classroom downstairs since the beginning of the year.

[00:35:32] It's also limiting other students from inclusion opportunities on the second floor. Last year I came before the board and I asked why the playground at Union Mill was renovated. Not a single person from this board nor Dr. Reed replied to me. I found out later it was to make it ADA compliant, which I'm all for.

[00:35:48] However, the rubber flooring that they placed on a portion of our playground only allows our students who have mobility concerns that make it wheelchair accessible, access to about 18% of our

playground. We need the equity and inclusion that FCPS prides itself on.

[00:36:04] The truth is that the elevators are only a symptom of the greater need that special education teachers, families, and students face each day. Where is their dignity, respect, support, and true inclusion? Where are the board members proactively checking in with your schools before school starts to make sure that they are ready to go?

[00:36:22] I know that many of you have replied to the Poplar Tree community, and while I do appreciate that, supposed to be more additional weeks in delay. I can promise you that as a member of SEPTA that I am dedicated to this and this advocacy for all students and I will be following up. I hope you do too. Thank you. Hannah Boyer. Good evening. My name is Hannah Boyer. I am an FCPS parent and an FCPS seventh grade English teacher. I'm here this evening to speak about reading in middle school.

[00:37:01] As of right now, there is no requirement for middle schoolers in FCPS to read a book. Our new English curriculum is almost entirely done through the online textbook from Hooton Mifflin Harcourt. What little isn't through the online textbook is through Lexia, another online platform. At the beginning of the school year teachers were gathered into a room and warned not to deviate from the provided curriculum. We were told we needed to stay on pace day by day with the curriculum. The curriculum does not include reading any novels or nonfiction books. I reached out for clarification from the ELA office a couple times and I

[00:37:40] was told that I could try to squeeze in some novels somewhere in class, but it was very unclear how that would be possible while keeping pace with the required curriculum. They suggested that reading could occur during a 30-minute independent work block that happens each class, but the curriculum includes activities in the online textbook and Lexia during that block of time.

[00:38:01] Everyone I've spoken to at Central Office has assured me that books are not banned, but I do not think that that is good enough. I believe that reading novels should be a standard part of all FCPS students' learning every single year. I do not think it should be a privilege only reserved for students whose teachers choose to deviate from the required curriculum. Reading novels, preferably many novels, preferably not online, is essential for student learning.

[00:38:32] It builds literacy skills, empathy, and a love of learning. Students cannot get these skills solely through short passages in an online textbook. The good news is that this is an easy fix. Our schools have stocked book rooms and libraries that are going underutilized.

[00:38:48] We can simply stop requiring daily use of online textbooks and start requiring novels. Thank you. Kristen Rohr. Good evening.

[00:39:13] My name is Kristen Rohr, and I'm the PTA president of Poplar Tree Elementary School. My oldest son attended Poplar Tree from kindergarten through sixth grade, and my younger son is a third grader there today. But my connection to Poplar Tree Elementary School goes back to the year it first opened in 1990 when I was a first grader.

[00:39:30] I'm here because our school has experienced two extended elevator outages in two school years. Last year, the elevator was out from July 21st to November 3rd, more than three months. This year, it stopped working on August 25th, and it remains out of service. We know that FCPS is working to repair it, and the current problem requires a custom-built circuit board, and Facilities estimates at least eight weeks to receive the part, complete the repair, and complete the required inspections.

[00:39:55] But fixing this failure doesn't address the larger problem. This elevator has been in service for 36 years. When it breaks, parts may need to be custom-made, and there are limited technicians available to service it. One repair doesn't prevent the next extended outage. Meanwhile, our administration and staff are going above and beyond.

[00:40:14] entire third grade classroom has been relocated downstairs and staff are continually adapting instruction and activities the school community is incredibly grateful for their efforts but accommodations are not accessibility and an elevator hour outage is particularly impactful at poplar tree because we are special education program site we have six self-contained k through six classrooms serving 41 students with autism intellectual disabilities and severe intellectual disabilities plus three preschool special education classrooms. FCPS's educational equity policy

[00:40:50] calls for safe and accessible school settings and universal accessibility for students with disabilities. After two prolonged outages in two years, we're asking FCPS to prioritize replacing poplar trees elevator now, not wait for future renovation that hasn't even been scheduled.

[00:41:05] We appreciate the work being done to fix today's problem. We're asking you to help us solve a bigger one thank you please play the video testimony submitted by stephanie lundquist aurora earlier this month chief financial officer lee burden who makes 305k this year told members of the school board that this would be a difficult budget year the district is anticipating a shortfall of about

[00:41:38] 154 million dollars among burdens recommended possible cuts were increasing class sizes by one student per teacher to save 35 million dollars over the year and reducing school staffing reserves to save an additional million dollars not an equitable solution when two in five of the district's economically disadvantaged students are failing their sols so let's talk about central administration the district pays 17 million dollars in salaries not including benefits for the district's 71 most senior administrators wow it really does pay well to be in charge of a

[00:42:17] virtually unmonitored bureaucracy. Dr. Reed, who pays a great deal of lip service to equity, makes \$470,000 a year, plus a \$12,000 car allowance. She also has around-the-clock personal security staff. By comparison, a starting FCPS teacher makes about \$64,000.

[00:42:37] That means Reed's compensation, salary, car allowance, and private security combined is roughly equivalent to 14 new teacher salaries. Three other central administrators make more than \$300,000 this year. How many more teachers could FCPS hire if it weren't paying all of these overpaid bureaucrats?

[00:42:57] A district that has lost enrollment and still needs a \$150 million bailout has no business protecting top administrators' \$17 million payroll while floating the idea of larger class sizes. if fcps wants taxpayers and parents to believe that fiscal year 2028 is truly a difficult budget year it should start by cutting the c-suite thank you please play the video testimony submitted by

[00:43:29] jacqueline bastosh hello i'm a parent of a kindergartner a second grader and a fourth grader at a mason district elementary school i'm here today to thank you for passing the edtech motions this summer and to give you an update on the response I've seen so far at my school.

[00:43:49] We recently had back to school night. The second grade teachers were very forthcoming about their support of a parent's ability to opt their children out of bringing devices home. They provided a great bingo card full of activities students can do at home, not on a screen. Likewise, I heard from friends who

have first graders. They said the presentations at back to school night were very supportive of a parent's right to opt their children out of taking home devices.

[00:44:17] They also made many suggestions on other things they can do that are beneficial to their children, virtually anything other than being on a screen. So this begs the question, if our first and second grade teachers are so supportive of devices not going home and being used by children for learning, why would that stance change within their classroom?

[00:44:42] Our first and second grade students deserve a screen-free school experience just like their preschool and kindergartners in the district now. These years continue to be such a critical time for the development. The data is clear and teachers know the truth.

[00:44:59] Less tech equals better attention spans, better working memory, better language abilities, better emotional regulation, better social skills, better executive functioning skills. Please support our teachers, support our parents, and most importantly, support our students and get rid of devices in first and second grade classrooms.

[00:45:23] Thank you. Please play the video testimony submitted by Alexis Monaghan. Good evening school board members. My name is Alexis Monaghan and I'm a parent of an FCPS preschool student.

[00:45:43] Tonight I'm asking you to prioritize developmentally appropriate learning as the ETRC finalizes its recommendations on devices, screen time, and ed tech. Please, first uphold the current prohibition on devices in pre-K and kindergarten and extend that protection through first and second grade.

[00:46:00] Young children need time for hands-on learning, conversation, physical play, reading, handwriting, and building relationships with their teachers and peers. These foundational experiences should not be displaced by screen use. Second, I ask FCPS to eliminate one-to-one device assignments in elementary school and store devices and carts for grades 3-6.

[00:46:23] Technology should be available when a teacher identifies a meaningful instructional purpose, not automatically placed in every child's hands. The United States, districts are reassessing their tech use, with some already eliminating technology in early grades. Although only anecdotal so far, teachers are already reporting benefits in student attention and behavior. FCPS has already taken the wait until 8th pledge, and Virginia has implemented a bell-to-bell cell phone ban. Both important steps forward in protecting our students' attention and learning. But we must go further. Our youngest learners

[00:46:59] deserve a strong, human-centered foundation built through relationships, hands-on learning, reading, and play, with technology introduced intentionally as they become developmentally ready. I urge the board and ETRC to make pre-K through two device-free and eliminate one-to-one devices in elementary schools. I'm grateful that you all are addressing these issues, and I hope you will put foundational learning first. Thank you. Chair Lady, that was our last

[00:47:34] public speaker. Thank you. Agenda item 5.01, Student Representative Matters. I call on Mr. Shostek for Student Representative Matters. Thank you, Chair Lady. I hope everyone's having a good evening. I know I'm repping the Hayfield Orange tonight on my tie, so I'm feeling really happy about that. Just start off the night by saying I'm really happy that I've gotten the chance to meet with more board members. That includes Ms. Dixit, Mr. Moon, and Mr. Frisch as well again,

[00:48:07] And I'm looking forward to continuing to meet directly with all of you and continuing my work on the board tonight. And I don't want to end up, you know, talking like a broken record or anything, because I know I've spoken about this issue with a lot of board members already.

[00:48:23] But I'd like to talk a bit about what I've noticed with the metal detectors this year. And I wanted to wait a little bit just to see if some of the issues with implementation I've been noticing were due to just the start of the year. But now that we're a month in, I feel a bit comfortable with definitively saying that they're not.

[00:48:41] I was recently able to attend the first meeting of the Student Advisory Council this year, in which, if I recall correctly, there were at least four delegates from across the county that got up and spoke about metal detectors and about the issues and concerns that they have with them.

[00:48:58] And there are a lot of broad issues with these that I could get into. When I was speaking with Mr. Frisch about this, I think we broke it down into three large buckets of their effectiveness, their implementation issues, and then some of the more broader social concerns with them.

[00:49:18] I recall at the SAC meeting that there was a delegate from South County that said that students are sometimes and often 20 minutes late to class because of these things. And so I would really caution the board and the technology team from trying to chalk down these issues to minor inconveniences of implementation because that is definitely not the case.

[00:49:44] And I know that there's a lot of things that I will not be able to know that cannot be presented. And I know that they have found weapons and they have done a limited job in that sense. But I think what we really need to be asking ourselves is in a school system in which these weapons detectors have been deployed for tens of thousands of students, what sort of threshold of finding weapons and of preventing a potential catastrophe outweighs all of these negatives that we're experiencing?

[00:50:16] And I know at Hayfield, to beat the line, you have to get there 30 minutes early. And this is not just that sort of, you know, implementation issues in that sense. There are issues with relationships between students and teachers because you can go into a school, your backpack can be flagged and searched by a teacher that will then teach you 20 minutes later.

[00:50:36] And I think when you have middle schoolers going through these, we really need to focus on some potential psychological effects with that and how that can protect class participation, trust in teachers, things like that. We have issues as well with just their system of enforcement because it's very easy to bypass them.

[00:50:55] It's very easy to walk when you get flagged. And I think when we have this sort of lackluster, inconsistent enforcement, that opens the door for a lot of other issues. I'm sure there could be racial profiling. I'm sure there could be a lot of other potential canaworms that's open with these. And I think that they have not been seriously or at least publicly evaluated enough by the board.

[00:51:17] And I just I know that the board has been, you know, dealing with a lot of other things recently. And I just really hope that this does not get sort of caught in the crosshairs and left behind because this is a serious issue. And it is not mild inconveniences when students are, you know, missing out on having their academics damaged by being late to class, on having their relationships with teachers damaged, on having to prove that they are not posing a danger to the school every morning when they walk in.

[00:51:43] And that's why I'm grateful for the opportunity to have met Mr. Frisch and to try to work on having these produce more of a welcoming environment for students. I know that they're, unfortunately, not going away anytime soon, but to be able to hopefully ease the pain here would be a great thing.

[00:52:00] And the last thing I want to say is that this, I feel like some of the recent sort of talk around these is, oh, there's 20 minutes late to class at SoCo or not being enforced properly at Hayfield. Let's go over to Hayfield and SoCo and see what we can do there. But what I really want to remind the board of here is that this is not a South County issue.

[00:52:20] This is not a Hayfield issue. This is not a Lewis issue or an Edison issue. This is a Fairfax County issue. And I think we need to treat it as one and solve it countywide because this is something that's really serious. And I would appreciate it if it were given a lot more attention.

[00:52:39] And I think that that's the big gist of things here. So I'll leave it at that and let everyone continue tonight. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:52:57] Gen item 6.01, superintendent's recommendation for pre-K and K tech device use presentation. I can now call on Dr. Reed for a presentation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[00:53:30] This is on new business tonight, so there's not a vote this evening. But I am going to go ahead and make the presentation. So let me just find the presentation here.

[00:53:45] So tonight's update really is going to be the recommendation around the pre-K-K device use and the recommendations coming from the Education Technology Review Committee, which I reviewed and modified somewhat and I'm bringing to you this evening.

[00:54:04] And then you will be voting on this at our next meeting October 8th. So if we could go ahead, I don't know who's driving this. Tiffany? Tiffany, thank you. So just to recap, in May of 2026, the board did establish the Educational Technology Review Committee, and the purpose, of course, is on the slide.

[00:54:30] And again, the committee does provide feedback on the current practices and monitors emerging developments that we are going to continue to discuss over the course of the year. The ETRC began meeting this summer. It's co-chaired by our chief academic officer and chief IT officer, Dr. Presidio and Mr. Sethi, respectively, and it provides a structured way to review technology practices through multiple perspectives, including those of educators, administrators, students, and families, as well as community members.

[00:55:03] So, in terms of how the ETRC works, this summer, the committee focused on topics connected to school board motions that were adopted in June and July. So, I think the agenda, essentially, for the ETRC in the summer was fairly established by time constraints for topics that the board wanted addressed prior to or right at the beginning of the current school year.

[00:55:31] The committee has been reviewing the issues, considering relevant research and implementation factors, and developing their recommendations. So the discussions have informed changes for the current school year. Two of these topics that the ETRC looked at the summer were the elementary at-home device opt-out and the personal device use during the day.

[00:55:54] Both of these changes were implemented at the start of the school year and the ETRC feedback was part of what informed this implementation at the direction of the school board so these are both of these changes have occurred and are occurring in the next line the ETRC also provided input on this year's

digital literacy approach each student is planned to receive four lessons that are focused on digital citizenship, media literacy, information literacy, and AI

[00:56:28] literacy. These lessons do not require students to use devices. Grade level objectives are posted on the website and quarter one lessons are available to families through Schoology. So families are able to see these lessons prior to their delivery if they want to talk with their student about them or after their delivery if the families want to talk about these lessons staff professional learning also addressed a concept of purpose before platform and meaning technology meaningful technology use for learning so that brings us to the

[00:57:06] pre-k device pre-k and k device access the ETRC reviewed the boards July 20 26 restrictions on the use for device use in kindergarten and the motion that was brought forward on this topic specifically asked the ETRC to consider this issue and so a significant part of the discussion at the committee focused on how the restrictions would interact with Virginia's early reading intervention requirements the committee supported including limited Lexia exceptions though there was not unanimous agreement among committee

[00:57:43] members so I will say and I'll get to my recommendation shortly but I asked our Education Department our chief academic officer to give us a little background on the requirements for this early intervention reading initiative so Virginia law requires that every student in grades kindergarten through third grade scoring and what's categorized as the high risk range on the Virginia language and literacy screening system to receive two and a half hours of reading

[00:58:17] intervention per week historically FCPS has met this requirement by coupling 1.25 hours of teacher-led intervention with 1.25 hours or 75 minutes of Lexia's computer adapted targeted support so it is I think safe to say I think when I asked you dr. Presidio the reading improvement plans or the reading intervention plans have been in place since 1997 is that correct or when did

[00:58:51] the when did this become a mandate that the required reading plans I think if you could use the mic try this one here okay that one's definitely working I'd have to get the exact date of when the Erie initiative was implemented but the state reading plans that we're talking about are part of the Virginia Literacy Act that's just a couple years old thank you so as we look at there's been a lot

[00:59:26] discussion about what Lexia is and isn't and I think there's still some debate in terms of research that's out there on the benefits and you know I think that that's a conversation that's going to continue with the ETRC and our literacy department I do want to take a minute this evening just to share what the intent here is in terms of the use of Lexia in Lexia each student completes a brief placement activity that would determine the starting place on their individual learning path as students complete different tasks the program adapts in real time in other words dynamically online to tailor a learning

[01:00:05] path that provides tasks targeted to students individual areas of need during this time teachers monitor student progress and provide additional teacher led lessons and skills that might need additional in-person instruction so one One of the things that teachers do use Lexia also to support in-person targeted instruction as well as paper and pencil practice for students.

[01:00:33] Teachers are notified about individual students who need instruction and that's a category I think you can see the left yellow arrow on particular skills that may occur within in-person lessons and

teachers access lesson plans as well as paper and pencil skill builders to provide additional teacher-led instruction in practice in these skill areas.

[01:00:56] You want to note that these slides do not represent actual FCPS student names or data. These are made up, but they are symptom, not symptomatic, that's not right, representative of what these charts look like. So as we look at a safety net for at-risk readers, Benchmark Advance provides core instruction in all areas of reading.

[01:01:18] might recall last board meeting we presented our literacy information the Lexia supplements is core with additional support in phonics on a logical awareness structural analysis fluence and automaticity comprehension and vocabulary very much so the science of reading concepts Lexia complements teacher-led evidence-based intervention programs and is intended to help teachers identify and address unexpected or persistent gaps in 25 26 this is a little background about our students now and data 30.6 percent of all of our

[01:01:58] kindergartners required intervention services there was a relative uneven distribution needing intervention across schools meaning some schools had more than 30 percent of their kindergartners and some significantly less the I guess Erie is what we're calling this early intervention requires an intervention group size of five or fewer students. In other words, these reading plans require that the instruction be in very small groups. At schools with higher eligibility rates, teacher-directed intervention alone cannot be delivered within the

[01:02:34] current staffing levels. So not using the team, the academic team did some calculations and determine that not using Lexia in kindergarten would require additional staff-led tutoring services that would have an estimated cost range between 325 and 1.6 million the Erie and Lexia use in terms of estimating need we do know that the board motion did give an exception for students who do have IEPs and our multilingual learners and based on our data from last year

[01:03:12] there's a lot of overlap between students that have IEPs and our multilingual learners and requiring reading plans so about 2,786 kindergartners that required Erie services would also be covered by the exception that the board has already moved only 845 additional kindergartners would be included if Lexi is allowed for students who require reading plans 50 percent of these 845 are concentrated in 33 schools you can see the data and then each of the remaining 109 schools have less than eight students that need

[01:03:50] the exception therefore one of the things as I reviewed it I felt like what we can do at least for this year is allow the as the board has indicated the limited exception for devices for Lexia only for students who have individualized education programs 504 plans translation purposes or multilingual support which the board has already indicated i am recommending that we allow an additional exception

[01:04:22] for kindergarten students who can access lexia for additional reading support however i am going to recommend it and insist that we provide families of kindergarten students that receive this additional reading support with an option to opt out of Lexia use if they really are opposed to that so and I have asked our academic office to look at options for next year if we are not going to make the exception for Lexia for reading plans if there's another way to do that and allow us to budget this year is already budgeted but allow us to budget for that next year or look at

[01:05:01] some learning models that you know might be more possible we're also piloting in some small groups um the ecree that we talked about at the last board meeting in some kindergarten classes so my hope would be that perhaps that's going to be a strategy that turns out to be as or more effective so that again that's um that relational uh interaction so madam chair that's the recommendation thank you dr reed at this time i now invite board members to ask any clarifying questions to provide comments as a reminder to my colleagues per board member agreement we will be using a timing system of two minutes for initial remarks and one minute for go

[01:05:38] go backs for all presentations that do not require a vote. I will start with Mr. Dannon. Good evening. I finally got my light up for my colleagues. So I'll start by saying that when I worked with some of my colleagues back in July in this motion, my hope was that you all would come back with this kind of nuanced, thoughtful recommendation, right?

[01:06:03] And things like the opt-out option is something that I hadn't even thought was on the table, and so I appreciate you and your team and the ETRC looking into that. And I also know from our discussions that you're committed to being intentional about device use, and we just spent millions of dollars on textbooks, so we can replace some device use.

[01:06:18] And I also know this is just a broader discussion that we need to have and something that encompasses, as you mentioned, budget issues and training and so forth. And then the last comment I'll mention to that regard is that this is something that feels very personal to me, and it's one of the reasons that I ran it for school board.

[01:06:34] It's one of the reasons I'm grateful my colleagues supported our resolution back in the summer that talked about how we support a human-centric education. So I appreciate all the information. I want to ask a little bit more broadly. So my understanding is that the vendor recommends that Lexia be used for 40 minutes a day if it could be used with fidelity.

[01:06:53] What's your reaction and thought on that as far as what they recommend versus what we have been doing? I think 40 minutes a day is too much. So that's my-- but I'm going to turn to our academic experts. I don't think we're-- I don't believe that's been our direction.

[01:07:09] but i'm going to know and i i appreciate the the question because it's really important i think for families uh and fcps to understand the guidelines for students that are receiving uh the erie supports via alexia is a maximum of 75 minutes per week okay um and so i've talked a lot with different kindergarten teachers and reading specialists and espets um edtech folks um and some one of the things that i've heard is that it's possible that we have this backwards in a way right where the kids who need who could benefit the most from lexia are not the tier 3

[01:07:49] kids because those kids i think would benefit more from from i've heard from that human intervention right and on the flip side you've got kids that are in tier 2 that are on the bubble so to speak that could benefit um from a program like this that could differentiate and so forth and help them bridge those gaps um i've also heard from kindergarten teachers that um you know it is wonderful job, and my mom was a teaching assistant, but as wonderful of a job as they do, it's very difficult in a classroom of 28 kids to be able to provide that detailed focus, is that my time, provide that detailed instruction, and so I'm just curious your thoughts on that as well,

[01:08:25] if you all considered flipping this, so to speak. So all of our kindergarten classrooms in Fairfax County public schools have an additional instructional assistant, so a classroom teacher and an instructional assistant so there are two adults I believe in all of our kindergarten classrooms and I think we do have kindergarten classrooms at 28 and we also have kindergarten classrooms at much less depending on what school across the county our enrollment patterns are really variable so I would say that there are when we talked through this and I know the ETRC spent a lot of time there are students who are reading what we would consider

[01:09:04] kindergarten level books but still have some targeted reading skills they need to develop that Lexia might be an effective tool and I think that's really up to that family and that teacher to determine what we've put in the recommendation is those students who need additional reading support so if there are kindergarten families and kindergarten teachers that feel like for example I'm not up on my current kindergarten literacy standards I know at the high school level we used to literal versus figurative language was a

[01:09:39] skill set that a lot of our students struggled with at times but but you know even though they were able to read that or deciphering main character characteristics or whatever the topic is that extra practice might be really beneficial as you saw the chart on Lexia where it drilled down into particular skills. So if there's an ability to practice a skill and a family and teacher support that, of course, we're going to trust the professionalism of our educators and our parents in that conversation. We just want to make sure that it's, you know, centered

[01:10:13] with the humans and that there is an intentional conversation with that. Thank you. Mr. McDaniel. Thank you. About a month ago at a work session, I got kind of pointed on this topic, and I'm going to be equally as pointed tonight. My first question on the slideshow, it said there was a delta of the financial cost to replace flexia with tutors, et cetera, \$325K to \$1.6 million.

[01:10:41] Well, that's a \$1.3 million gap. That's pretty big. Can you explain that? Well, I think that, how would I explain that? How would I explain that, Dr. Presidio? Let me see if I can help. And I appreciate the question because obviously there's a broad range there. I think our first problem is we're looking at, you know, trying to project from last year's data what this year's need might be. So, our students haven't even completed the VALS testing and won't complete it until later in October. So, when we attempt to estimate additional staffing

[01:11:16] costs, we're looking at last year's data, but we don't know if the distribution of students is going to mirror the distribution of students from last year. So, one of the things that we tried to mention in the slides is that there are a number of factors that go into trying to determine how much additional staffing a school would need.

[01:11:35] For example, how many students in a particular school and would need the additional support and what that distribution is not just within the school but in particular classrooms. So for example, looking at last year's data we've got some classrooms that would have more than 15 students that would need additional reading support. If you think about 15 students in groups of or fewer for 1.25 hours per week, that's pretty significant in terms of the additional staffing at that particular classroom and that particular school. On the other hand, if that school has a very small number of students, then the cost is going to be on the lower side. Another factor that

[01:12:12] could factor into this would be distribution in Title I schools, because Title I schools do have some additional staffing resources that might be able to offset any additional staffing cost needs. So I say all that to say it's actually really impossible for us to target the exact cost.

[01:12:30] So we tried to provide a range on the low end and what we believe probably would be the high end based on last year's data. I also was very clear that I wanted very reasonable numbers, too, as we talked about this, because I think sometimes there's a feeling that if there's a large number, then there's a forced choice.

[01:12:50] And it really shouldn't be in a situation like this. We want to try to make sure that where we could make those accommodations, we want to do that. And as Dr. Presidio said, there are a number of schools that have more reading specialists than others. And if we can make it work, then it wouldn't be a cost at those schools, but it might be at some others.

[01:13:09] I could drill into that for the next half an hour, but we'll save that for the budget conversation. Because I don't know, like, is the baseline \$325, and then we're thinking it goes to \$1.6? Is the baseline somewhere in the middle? the baseline 1.6 and it could possibly go into 3.325.

[01:13:27] It'll depend on how many kids actually testing and needing it. We also have historical data. I mean, the VALS tests are not going to shift by a factor of five. Meanwhile, the cost is shifting by a factor of five. Anyway, I have my time. And my last point, I appreciate the opt-out.

[01:13:45] I agree with that. You know, I ask staff if, and I need a clear answer on this tonight, can parents right now opt out of Lexia and ST Math. This recommendation aside, which I appreciate that your recommendation, but can they? Because I've got a conflicting answer from staff and staff is giving a different answer to parents and I've got it in writing and you and I, we had some conversations, so I need to know tonight, I and the public need a very clear direct answer. Can parents tonight, today, opt out of Lexia and ST Math? Yes, sir. Thank you. And has that been communicated to

[01:14:20] principles? I have not been part of that. The opt-out of a device has been, and if you need a device to do the ST Math and Lexi, it seems like that's an extension of that, but we will make sure it's communicated. It needs to be clearly communicated if the answer is yes. Yes, sir. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Dunn. As the son and brother of English teachers, I can testify that there's

[01:14:59] nothing more important than literacy. And so I'm so happy to bring the proclamation this evening because it really is the foundation of everything else in our society. If you can't read well, then you're denied access to the world and learning, economic advancement, everything.

[01:15:17] Is there any independent research validating that Lexia actually works? I think that's a great question. Could I provide a little information on that? Certainly.

[01:15:33] I just want to mention, because I think there's been a lot of discussion about this and we've shared, you know, different independent studies, but what we do know from our own FCPS internal data, when we look at kindergarten specifically, and we can talk about other grade levels as well, that students that start out in the high-risk category based on that VAL state assessment, right, and then receive additional intervention services,

[01:15:59] If they're using Lexia for the required 75 minutes per week, that those students have a much greater risk reduction than students who don't use Lexia for the required amount of time. In fact, the risk

reduction is double for the students who use Lexia.

[01:16:18] So our own data, and that's on the VALS assessment, it's not on a Lexia assessment that's measuring risk. So the risk reduction has a strong correlation to whether or not students are using Lexia at kindergarten. I feel like that I appreciate hearing that, Dr. Presidio.

[01:16:36] I feel like we need to put that into a report for the board because what we've provided to the board to date that I've been a party to has been Lexia's research. And that's not sufficient. And that's what I've shared. Mr. Dunn and I have talked about that.

[01:16:53] But I do think we need to put, if there's, you know, I think what you're describing is a significant point, so I want to make sure we get that in a report that we're able to share, because I haven't seen that shared yet. And I know the one internal research piece, Ms. Neal, when I read through that, it was really based, I believe, on our preschool Lexia data, but help me with that.

[01:17:19] Is that recollection correct? There are some studies that we've shared that have some mixed results, depending on the grade levels looked at, but I think, as Dr. Persidio said, perhaps we want to package all that up. Dr. Reed? So, I think more to come on that. Mr. Dunn? Yeah.

[01:17:35] It's mixed. If there is independent, non-Lexia-funded research, I haven't seen it, and I've looked. And I'd like to see that because, you know, for many years tobacco company scientists told us tobacco was safe, and that wasn't true as well. So we need to get independent validation because if it doesn't exist, then it raises the question of why are we using it?

[01:17:56] And sorry, just one more point, I'd also like to know not just Lexia in a vacuum, but have we done the research to compare use of human teachers versus Lexia? Because if Lexia is better than humans, by all means. But if humans achieve better results, I mean, we didn't have the internet or really widespread computers when this school system was known as the gold standard in public education.

[01:18:19] So what worked back in that day is the same thing that works today because we're still humans and humans are the best method of delivering a world-class education to every child. And what I see with this concentration of students in a small number of schools with a wider distribution for the tail end is that there are ways of delivering from an operational perspective this extra reading support, including potentially with the use of itinerant teachers, which is a model we've established for music and other programs.

[01:18:47] So there is definitely a way to achieve this. And in a \$4 billion budget, I would have to believe that we can achieve a \$1.2 or \$1.5 million investment to make sure every kid is reading on grade level. I do want to understand some of the language that you use, Mr. Presidio, Dr. Presidio.

[01:19:07] - I think that was your time. - All right, I'd like to go back. - Okay, thank you. - And I just want to comment. One of the other reasons, Mr. Dunn, I believe it was selected, why Lexia was selected, is it is on the VDOE, I am told, list of approved best practices. So, the Virginia Department of Education has, if you will, said that Lexia is a product that is something to use for children that are on reading plans.

[01:19:32] So that is also, it factors in. Thank you. In full disclosure, the folks to the right of me clicked their lights on when I was reading. So I'm just going to pick people. Mr. Moon. - Well, sure, I'm gonna speak quickly.

[01:19:50] The report that a doctor you are suggesting to a doctor procedure to prepare and present to the school board and community as well. Could you possibly, this is something I learned about a year ago in my statistics class, is correlation does not necessarily mean there's causality.

[01:20:13] So if you could note that in the report, Or whether we have data to support that there's a causal relationship between use of lexia versus improved reading level. With that said, when will fall 2026 VAERS testing will be completed?

[01:20:35] It's in process now, which is part of why I'm doing new business tonight for you to vote on October 8th, because we'll need to have something in place. But, Dr. Presidio, do we have a sense of when testing will be, or I guess it's screening, will be completed? Towards the end of October.

[01:20:51] End of October. And how soon thereafter do you think we can get a better sense of cost requirement to provide a tutoring services if the board wants to go that direction? So I think what we, it'll probably take just a bit, right, to get the distribution and the assessment of cost.

[01:21:12] Two weeks, a month, two days? Dr. Presidio, it'll be your department doing it, so what would you suggest? Yeah, I mean, I think we'll probably need some support from some additional departments like financial services and perhaps the research office as well, but I think two weeks would hopefully be sufficient.

[01:21:31] Okay, let's say that we have the cost from you by mid-November and the board decides to go a certain direction, providing more resources. How soon thereafter do you think they can be implemented? How soon thereafter could they be implemented?

[01:21:47] How soon thereafter you think tutoring services can be provided? I'm assuming that you're going to have to find tutoring services and also perhaps the tutors may need to be prepared to take on the task. Another month?

[01:22:06] Another great question. I think part of that, we'd have to collaborate with human resources to figure out what the hiring timeline and process would look like and what would be reasonable. I think we could do the training within a week. But, again, I'd like to consult with other departments to give you a more realistic timeline.

[01:22:23] So it sounds like it could be as early as December or some time thereafter? I think minimally we could start after winter break. But hopefully sometime, you know, it will depend on the schools. Some of the schools, I suspect, would perhaps have fewer numbers than others and may not need a plan and may not need HR support because they have support.

[01:22:46] It will just be a bit of a mixed bag. But I think we would try to shoot for December, but ensure that January we would have something. Okay, one last question regarding that is, so meanwhile, the students who were tested last year and deemed to be high riskers, they need to be continuously provided with reading intervention.

[01:23:08] Is that correct interpretation of the requirement? Well, since we're talking about kindergartners, they aren't tested until this year. So they're tested this fall, and once we know who they're going to be, then we would expect to want to try to do the intervention as soon as possible. So we don't have any students other than ML students and those with IEP to provide the lexia?

[01:23:31] They currently, because they're in part of the board motion, able to access that. It's our students that will qualify via reading plans, and as the data showed last year, that was about 845 students that didn't intersect, because students that are already having the exception would obviously have access today.

[01:23:52] Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Frisch. Thank you. A couple questions I want to drill down into. So we drilled into what intervention looks like a little bit with Lexia.

[01:24:11] What was it like before Lexia? Can you walk a little bit through what interventions were like? And I have asked that question because I, ever since I've gotten to Fairfax, they've used Lexia. So, Dr. Presidio, what were we using before Lexia? Well, we had a different computer-adaptive support program to supplement core teacher-directed instruction.

[01:24:37] So how far back would it have been that we were not using a device? So I'm conferring with Dr. Leipzig, who helps coordinate our literacy programs and is a former elementary principal as well.

[01:24:57] We're going to have to do a little research on that, but more than a decade. I appreciate that. And I'm not a throw the baby out with the bathwater kind of person, but I do want to see, you know, some numbers. It's my understanding that some schools don't use Lexia. Is that right?

[01:25:15] Some Fairfax County public schools. Or some entire classes may not use it. That I don't know. I believe guidance was given to all schools at one time. But again, I'll defer to Dr. Presidio. Yeah, I appreciate the question, and it is complicated because Lexia is used in different ways, so our discussion so far has been focused just on kindergarten for Erie, but Lexia in general is a supplemental program to our core benchmark curriculum that is used in Tier 1 and is also used to support students with additional needs, again, at the same level

[01:25:51] of no more than 75 minutes a week, so it is used in all schools. So when we say it's a supplement, it's a required supplement for the schools? A principal couldn't just decide that they're not going to use it? A principal shouldn't just decide that they're not going to use it.

[01:26:08] They shouldn't or they couldn't? Well, I don't know exactly every decision that's being made, but they shouldn't make that decision because it is a supplemental component to our core program. And the way that it's used is during student independent practice time as part of the language arts block.

[01:26:27] So while teachers are working with small groups of students to provide Tier 2 intervention services and more teacher-directed instruction in a small group setting, students go through a rotation. This is for core instruction. It's 25 minutes approximately per day at the elementary grade level, and there's different activities that they complete.

[01:26:46] Some is independent reading, some is additional paper activities, and then some is Lexia. And the way, again, Lexia is used is to provide targeted, individualized, personalized skill support to individual student needs.

[01:27:01] So it's computer adaptive. And then it provides teachers with assessment data, and that's what we were showing in those slides, about the skills that students need. And teachers use that formative assessment data to then design the activities that they use when those students come to them in small group settings.

[01:27:18] So, if one of the driving reasons that Lexia is helpful is because of manpower needs, is there a thought that maybe it's used for that issue?

[01:27:38] So, in other words, if there's a school where there are manpower needs, they help Lexia bridge that divide. If there's a school where they don't have the manpower issue, maybe they take a different path. Just putting that out there. And then the second kind of thing that I'm mulling over here is if we have a sufficient volume of parents opting out of Lexia for this purpose, shouldn't we be able to tell, and it wouldn't be a direct apples to apples comparison, but in a year or two, shouldn't we be able to show with data what kind of growth students are having?

[01:28:14] Now, you'd have to fine-tune it to the types of interventions that are being used, the levels that the interventions, the various needs, which is why maybe it takes more than a year, but you'd be able to do better comparisons of data with Lexia or without. I think all of that bears scrutiny, right? So I think that we shouldn't determine a resource based on available people. It should either be the right resource or we need to make sure we have the right people, in my opinion.

[01:28:46] So, I think that this is a topic that is timely, and I do think we need to figure out what – it's almost like a control and an active group, I think, to your point. So, are students receiving different types of interventions able to be as or more successful?

[01:29:05] And if so, we ought to have the most – And they're all going to have different – many of them will have different educators. I mean, there's a litany of different things that could complicate the thing, the number, but there's probably a way of trying to make sense of it without leading people to wrong conclusions.

[01:29:22] Thank you. Ms. Anderson. Okay, I'm going to talk fast because I have a few things to say. First, I want to say thank you for doing exactly what we asked you to do, which is take this to ETRC and get us some information back. Based on my calculation, we're talking about excluding 30% of the kids that are going to be our highest risk kiddos, and just using last year's numbers, and so that causes me pause.

[01:29:47] What I would love us to do is go ahead and move forward with the path that we were planning on doing this year until we brought the motion very late last year, and then actually do the study to figure out what we need to do to provide other interventions. I am going to advocate again for this being on a computer and not on a tablet.

[01:30:06] I think that we can find the 3,000 computers to use for these kids instead of having it be a tablet, which I have heard from lots of parents is one of the greater concerns. I appreciate the fact that you have said that now ST Math and Lexia is opt out for all kiddos.

[01:30:25] And so I appreciate the fact that we're actually going to put that in writing and move forward. I am going to hit pretty hard two things, though. First, this is a problem why state requirements cannot just be time-based. You cannot give us a certain number of minutes that we have to do something rather than have it be objective-based because we are solving a problem and the issue that we've got going on is that we've got a million things that we're getting from the state as to exactly how much time we have to spend doing each tiny little thing.

[01:30:56] And we are solving those problems with technology because people are people and we only have so many hours to do any of these things. And so I would encourage our lawmakers to pay very close attention to the fact that we have to be looking at this as what is really possible on the ground for our

teachers. And then the last thing that I'll say is we have to be tracking our usage with the apps that we're paying for. I want to know which apps are actually being used with fidelity across so that we actually can compare data from school to school and all the things and because we can't just go on the assumption that everybody's doing

[01:31:33] exactly because we're hearing anecdotally that that's not true. So thank you. Thank you. Miss Marin. So I believe this is the first recommendation the superintendent is making to the board about device use. As one member I desperately wanted this input earlier in the year when there was time to plan for a smooth implementation of any changes to device use. But the board voted no devices for kindergarten students parents were promised no devices teachers were told no devices now a month into school the superintendent wants to change this and it will be a burden

[01:32:13] on parents and staff this is the question are we protecting children because the overuse of devices at a young age is a public health issue and some including myself and doctors would say it's a crisis so the wavering about whether one grade level has access to devices is so far from the the heart of where we should be making decisions. Okay? At the heart is this, and I really wish we could accept this and proceed in a meaningful, truthful way based on data and what's best for kids. This school division never intentionally decided to give devices to elementary school children as a matter of instructional approach. Devices were provided as a matter of access during

[01:32:52] a pandemic. The FCPS school board has never decided what the role and breadth of device use is for student learning. This board, guided by expertise from the superintendent and her team, should be clear on what's best for kids developmentally, especially at this age.

[01:33:12] What does research tell us? Because I'll tell you, it shows that if a kid isn't reading by the end of second grade, then it becomes a problem. But you know what doesn't show up? If your kid has ADHD, like mine did, they're not going to read very well. And you put them on a computer, guess what? They're probably not going to read better either. What other research proven approaches can do the work rather than software and devices? And does the board retain the authority to represent parents in the community and have its decisions enforced by the superintendent? Does this board want to change instruction once the school year has begun? And I have two questions about data. Dr. Reed, how does data about the use and effectiveness of Benchmark Advance inform this decision to use a

[01:33:50] separate software for supplemental learning needs? I think the separate software for supplemental learning needs has been in place for a number of years. So perhaps, Dr. Presidio, you could share how that decision came to be or when that was determined. Well, Mike, excuse me. Yeah, I'm not sure if I understand Ms. Mirren's question. My apologies, Ms. Mirren. Were you asking about the comments that I had made earlier about the VALS data? May it be recognized? Yes. My question was about what data was used to make this decision? I think it's the decision to begin tablexia be a

[01:34:29] supplemental reading intervention, but maybe not. I'm not sure. - It's data about why is benchmark advanced not effective enough? - Well, I think that there's always gonna be a need, based on multi-tiered systems of support, that there always will be tier one, tier two, and tier three learners.

[01:34:51] Some learners are always gonna need a bit more intervention, or our students with IEPs are gonna need perhaps even more support to reach the same standards. So, the question is why choose certain products or certain strategies?

[01:35:06] And that's what I'm looking, because I think the Lexia decision was made. I don't know that I was here when that was made to actually be used as an intervention. So, what data or decision-making occurred when that was specific? Yes, I mean, that's a curricular adoption decision that we looked at as part of curriculum adoption to use that as a supplemental material in the ways that I was describing a little bit earlier this evening as part of the independent practice component because it provides formative assessment data that teachers can use to target that additional instruction, and it was approved by the VDOE, endorsed by the Institute for Education Sciences, so we were looking for

[01:35:43] a product to replace and to fill that need. I'll have a go back, please, to follow up. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. I'm encouraged to hear about the opt-out that is in place in Lexia and math, apparently for everybody, K-whatever, however is the grade that it goes up to.

[01:36:05] Can you speak a little bit to what happens when a student with a requirement as per Video E opts out of Lexia at the kindergarten level, and then what happens for others in other grade levels? Well, I want to try to clarify, because I think we might have misunderstood the earlier question about opt-outs.

[01:36:27] And I'm certainly happy to be corrected if I'm wrong about this. But the current process where we're at right now is processing through the Technology Review Committee board motions that were passed, asking for feedback.

[01:36:44] Obviously, we've got the kindergarten exception recommendation today that came out of the ETRC. The majority consensus from the ETRC was to provide an additional exception to the use restriction that the board voted on in July to allow Lexia use.

[01:37:03] We're looking at that today. As we're doing future work in the ETRC, we're going to look at additional opt-out opportunities, but we haven't collected all of that input yet. The only division-wide opt-out that we've provided is to take devices home at the elementary level.

[01:37:22] So we've allowed the opt-out for devices to go home at the elementary level. Discussions about additional opt-out of Lexi or ST Math are still under consideration, really, at this point. So the question that Mr. McDaniels just asked, you're saying that is not a yes.

[01:37:39] I'm saying, as the co-chair of the ETRC, and where we're at in the process, we have not made a determination or provided a recommendation to the board on that yet. and that was that was what the board had asked us to do after we did the kindergarten piece was to look at grades k or excuse me grades one and two so that's next up in the queue and we haven't we haven't completed that work yet i'm going to break this down a little bit further if i could just get yes or no answers that'll be great kindergarteners as per dr reed's presentation

[01:38:16] can opt out of lexia so the board hasn't voted on that yet so as of today so when we vote they they will have that option? - That's correct if that motion passes, yes. - So what will happen with those students who have opted out since they are required to have reading plans?

[01:38:34] - We're gonna have to find additional support services for that other hour and a quarter of services each week, and that's gonna look different. It's gonna require hiring some additional staff, perhaps, in some places. In other schools, they're gonna be able to do that with staff that they already have in place, so it's gonna look like a variety of different things.

[01:38:53] - Okay, thank you. Are students able to opt out of ST Math? - Not at this time. - I'm gonna need to intercede here. That it is my expectation that we're gonna find a way that if a student is not wanting to be, or a family doesn't want their student on ST Math, which is what, 15 minutes every other day or whatever.

[01:39:20] What is the guideline currently for ST Math? - I'd have to get the minutes. - We are gonna find a way to allow it. - So we're going to make it happen. We are going to make that happen. And ST Math is from what grades to which grades? That's at our elementary grades. So elementary grades, that's going to be available all elementary.

[01:39:39] Now Lexia across... It may take a minute to collect the right materials and make sure we have what our children need, but if we're going to allow opt-outs for devices to go home, sometimes Lexia and ST...

[01:39:55] Well, I don't know about ST Math, but Lexia was assigned at home as well. So I really want to make sure that we're going to be responsive and also give our staff the time to make the adjustments, but we are going to be implementing that. So you're saying you will find a way to provide families the opportunity to opt out of ST Math.

[01:40:12] That's correct. Are you also going to find a way to provide families with the opportunity to opt out of Lexia through elementary? We're going to have to have that conversation. think what we don't want to get ahead of is the staff's ability to have materials to provide support for students who are needing that so not available now but will be available after you've done some homework after there's further discussion also at etrc because i think one of the things that we're doing right now is we're essentially going to be asking staff in classrooms too to make

[01:40:48] adjustments right that they for several years have operated under certain assumptions so I think we don't want to get ahead of that conversation with staff and we also have some families or some students that are not going to benefit from being on ST Math or on Lexia and I think our staff and our families can work together to meet those needs but it's going to take a minute to make sure that we do that correctly so not available right now as we've had the speaker speak to us about with her personal children. Obviously, people are interested in this topic, so there are a lot of folks watching. I would like to better understand how decisions

[01:41:28] are made in the committee, ETRC, because I've received no fewer than four different messages while I'm sitting here that says, we don't really have input, we're just told what is going to happen. So I'd like to understand better how they have input into the decisions that come out of that committee. Yeah, so I think, you know, it's a large committee. We have 50 members on the committee, a broad representation. We're a large tent in Fairfax. So we have parents, community

[01:42:03] members that were appointed by board members. We have teachers and school-based principals on the committee, as well as some key central office staff. So there's a variety of perspectives and opinions. We discuss the issue. We discuss research. We discuss different options. And then basically what we're doing is allowing each individual member to weigh in on the proposed options that we have identified. And when we have majority consensus on a particular option, then we consider that to be consensus of the group. It doesn't mean that everybody agrees with it because, again,

[01:42:42] there are a lot of different perspectives. And there is an awful lot of work in front of us to meet some of the deadlines that we were given by the board for November. So we are going quickly. There's no question about that. And we're asking members to read things in between meetings. We're meeting during the summer. We met, I think, every two weeks. We're meeting approximately every three weeks right now. These are evening meetings. It's a significant time commitment for those members that are part of the committee.

[01:43:09] Sure. Is there transparency in terms of how that consensus is gathered? Because it would mean one thing if, let's say, all of the parents on the committee, you know, are the ones who are in support of an initiative, or if it's all the staff. Yeah. So we have the roles, and we have that information, and we're happy to share that. I mean, we have shared that in the past. We're happy to do that.

[01:43:34] I mean, with the committee, not necessarily with us. Yes, yeah, yeah. Okay, I think that was my time. I'd like to go back, please. Thank you. Mr. McElveen. Sorry. I want to turn to a different topic that was brought to us by speaker Ms. Boyer this evening, which is about literacy at the middle school level.

[01:43:58] She brought for us some very concerning information that I think has been seeping up to the board about the elimination of fiction and non-fiction resources at that level, which is very concerning to me. As you know, my dad was an employee at that level for several decades at the middle school level, eighth grade English. And what we saw over the years, going to Mr. Dunn's point about us in the past being the gold standard, was a whittling away of literature at that level and frankly at the high school level as well to the extent that he was you know at one

[01:44:38] time teaching Shakespeare teaching to kill a mockingbird teaching the great books at eighth grade over the years you know Shakespeare went away to kill a mockingbird left went away and he was left with whatever dregs of curriculum was still seeping into the classroom and you know And part of that is an issue of preparedness of students at that level, right?

[01:45:04] It's gotten worse over time, but at the same time, I think we need to be holding our students to a higher standard, and I don't know if you have a comment on that situation. I do believe that children need to read books.

[01:45:20] I mean, I started the meeting with data also to complement Mr. Dunn's presentation of the literacy proclamation, I do think reading short passages is not sufficient. And I think much of the passage reading has been prompted by standardized testing. And as a nation, I think our obsession with the standardized tests, which are all passages, and I think that somewhere along the line, we've lost our way, to be honest. And I think the ability to read a book, a novel,

[01:45:58] fiction, nonfiction, is critical, honestly. And I mean, there's a place to read journalistic writing as well, articles and so forth. But my understanding, and speaking with Dr. Presidio and the language arts team, is that novels are not prohibited. But I clearly heard tonight that there's a difference between prohibited and expected. And so I think we need to migrate back to some expected novels.

[01:46:28] And I can recall back in the day still arguing about which grade level got which novels, right? That was the big staff discussion. I remember Death of a Salesman. There was a big argument. Was it sophomore or eighth grade, depending on history. So I do think novels are important.

[01:46:43] It also gives us some common language as a community to talk about in terms of what we're reading. I think many years ago, the author selection was not as expansive and diverse as I might have

hoped for, but I think there's tremendous literature out there, and I definitely would expect us to begin exploring that.

[01:47:02] I know the team has a high interest in that, so I think it's obviously a topic we need to review. Well, and I appreciate what you're doing at the third grade level this year with bringing the joy to reading and all of that. I just hope that that is reflected throughout the whole K-12 spectrum, And I look forward to hearing a fix for the middle school issue.

[01:47:25] Secondly, as we get down into these issues, I was informed at the beginning of the school year that a fourth grade teacher had written to a parent. They had been communicated to that their maximum screen time for a day was two hours and that that did not include testing or whiteboard use or things like that.

[01:47:49] So, I guess that begs the question on my end, and this is in the slides, right, there has been staff preparation. Can you walk us through what the staff preparation is and how the communication has gone out about these directives? Well, I think that if we back up, let's see, to slide four, the elementary at-home device opt-out and the personal device used during the day, Those two, I know we were able to make those decisions quickly enough and communicate them before the school year started, I believe, with principals and teachers.

[01:48:27] And honestly, the personal device used during the day, I know I've spoken to several of our high school principals who are really feeling like that's been a very much bigger benefit even than they anticipated it would be. And so anyhow, and I also want to take a moment and apologize.

[01:48:46] I know we were slow in some spaces to respond to our students with IEPs who needed their own devices. So I think any time we make a turn in our practice, whether it's opt-out or we've got to understand that we are by enrollment larger than 11 states.

[01:49:02] So as the message gets through all the layers, sometimes we're not as quick as we should be. But we definitely want to make sure that we do communicate. And I think next year it will be much smoother now that we're sort of in this pattern.

[01:49:18] Now, the opt-out, the kindergarten decision hasn't been made yet, so we haven't communicated it yet. But recall that our commitment was not to hand out devices at kindergarten until the board makes the decision. So the moratorium is in place until you make a decision.

[01:49:35] The digital literacy has been communicated. The lessons are posted for community members who are watching. They can take a look at that. And the professional learning happened, I believe, on August 19th. Is that correct? Yeah, thank you. I'm remembering that right? Yeah, I appreciate the question. So we do not currently have screen time guidelines in place.

[01:49:55] That's one of the things the technology committee, of many things that the technology committee will be weighing in on and making recommendations. So in the interim, what we did, knowing that there were legitimate questions and concerns about overuse of devices in our schools is did professional development before teachers came back or before students came back during the summer with all of our teachers as part of the division-wide in-service to make sure that they understood that we introduced this balanced technology use framework it's purpose before platform so really encouraging the use of technology only

[01:50:31] only when there is a demonstrable benefit to support instruction and student achievement outcomes. So we provided guidelines and training around that, asked people to be really reflective about their practices, informed everybody that the board's in the process of developing policies that might ultimately codify in policy or regulation screen time guidelines.

[01:50:54] So since we don't have that yet, we wanted to make sure that everybody was very thoughtful about practices this year. Great. I realize I'm in time, but I'll make one more point and take a go back, and that is that I think what we need coming out of tonight is a very clear matrix, you know, grade level by grade level. Kindergarten, you know, you can opt out of Lexia. K-6, you can opt out of ST Math and screen time guidelines and all of that, because it's very confusing for everyone.

[01:51:20] Thank you. Ms. St. John Cunningham. Thank you. I appreciate the discussion that's going on, and I apologize for asking this question and not trying to ask beforehand. But with all the discussion going on, as we go through processes through the board, I always think about how are we going to fund it, how are we going to staff it, and how are we going to operationalize it.

[01:51:46] And given that a lot of these decisions were made at the last meeting of the year, when this type of a shift happens, what is a standard time to operationalize something like this? Because we went into recess and then we're back, and was that sufficient time to operationalize some of the things that we put in place?

[01:52:11] And then listening to these last comments, there's the perception out there that it was a done deal, that this wasn't going to happen, versus when we were waiting for the ETRC to come back with recommendations. And the idea of that matrix is a really good idea of what are we waiting for, how long will it actually take to operationalize something, and what is realistic?

[01:52:32] I think that it depends on the something, Ms. St. John Cunningham, when it's operationalizing an opt-out for take-home devices. it was creating forms and communicating to staff so there's not a great deal of time for something that's if you will more technical if we're talking about creating a new intervention program separate from lexia that may take a little time right a little bit of training a little bit of deciding who it's going to be um and a little bit of time because we still are screening

[01:53:06] kindergartners on that having said that the I think the the team moved really quickly through some topics the digital literacy the developing the teacher professional development that was all done honestly very rapidly so I know that they worked really hard to meet those deadlines and in terms of operationalizing a system-wide shift in terms of what's happening in the classroom we want to make sure we're including our educators in that conversation so I think that this year is going to be here a year I think where

[01:53:43] we're going to see kind of if you will waves crashing on the shore of this seems overwhelming and now I get it now it seems like I can do it and hopefully by next year we'll have smoothed I think a lot of the practices so I think Dr. Presidio I don't know if you want to add something to the timeline I will just say that one of the things we insisted on this year recall that We're working on an elementary math textbook selection right now.

[01:54:09] In the interim, one of the things we've asked, and Dr. Amy Hunter did for mathematics, this is relative to the ST Math question from Dr. Anderson, is the team put together some written materials in the form of a workbook, and they did it over the summer.

[01:54:25] Like, it's incredible the amount of effort they did to put that together, but that's going to provide materials we didn't previously have, So that hopefully will be a resource as we think about an opt-out for ST math in the occasions where that could occur. But we really wanted to have something that bound all grade levels across the division together.

[01:54:46] And I couldn't be prouder of our math team. They really worked hard. So I think we're trying to, we anticipated that that would be a need. So I think where we were able to anticipate that, and I think, I don't know if that's made it out to parents yet, the workbook.

[01:55:03] Not yet? Yes? A yes here? Okay, almost. So just what we have our... Okay, and back to school nights here. So that's a big shift for us, right? We haven't had that in mathematics yet. So anyhow, there is some work along those lines.

[01:55:21] Dr. Presidio, are we going to add something to implementation timelines? I think you covered it well. Thank you. All right. Well, I want to thank the team for doing that just because I remember being in schools

[01:55:31] and then all of a sudden saying the school board said you have to do this and everyone was like how are we going to do that you know is that realistic and so I want to thank the team for doing as much as they had and would just wanted to bring that up because of where the place I used to sit at and recognizing that sometimes it takes a little bit more time for it to be operationalized in a thoughtful way that is going to be a lasting way so I appreciate what the team is doing and what the ETRC is doing as well.

[01:56:02] Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Shostek. Thank you. So I want to go back to when I think it was Dr. Presidio who said that with the interventions with Lexia, that there's been a double reduction in risk for students when it comes to literacy.

[01:56:24] Can you touch on how, considering intervention is required, where did that data exactly come from? it being in or like who is not like dealing with that intervention if you know what I'm saying yeah no thanks it's a great question and does need clarification so first we're assessing students on the vowels that's a state literacy screener for kindergarten students I'm talking about specifically right now that assessment tells us the level of risk that a student might have for falling off track of being on grade level okay so there's different levels of risk so for

[01:57:01] those students that have the highest level of risk that would qualify for the Erie intervention services that we've been talking about, if the students in that category use Lexia for 75 minutes according to division guidelines, there was a strong correlation of reduced risk for that student group versus the student group who qualified for Erie services, high risk, but did not use Lexia for the full 75 minutes a week. So the amount of risk reduction was double for that group of students that use Lexia as part of, not solely, as a part of the component

[01:57:40] for the intervention services. Yeah, thank you. I will, like, just to clarify, my question was more about, like, how exactly were there a group of students that were not being given that intervention? Was that just, like, implementation issues or enforcement or something like that? Yeah, that's right. Okay, and then my next question here is that this is roughly 15 minutes or so a day, right, of the actual electronic time on Lexia for students.

[01:58:06] How exactly are the lessons being structured here? Because, I mean, to me, I mean, I know I'm older, so I'm kind of like a screen-ager, but to me that sounds like a very short amount of time, and I'm

wondering where exactly the, if there could be like some sort of summary of how exactly that implementation is going about with the lessons themselves.

[01:58:25] Like, how is that resulting in these increased literacy rates? Yeah, so again, Lexia is just one component of the intervention services. So, you know, we're not saying that Lexia is the sole driver, right, of what we're doing. Of course not. But the benefit of Lexia is it targets skill development tasks, instructional tasks, to students based on their individual identified needs based on the assessment that they take, right?

[01:58:54] So targeted, personalized, computer-adaptive instruction to the specific skills that students might need. One student, it might be early phonemic awareness. Another student, it might be fluency or comprehension skills, for example. So students have different areas of need.

[01:59:10] This use of Lexia is able to target instruction to those students. Additionally, it provides teachers with information about how students are doing on those personalized assigned tasks and lets the teachers know, basically it's a formative assessment to say, a student is not being successful with the computer adaptive instruction.

[01:59:28] And the teachers use that information to really target their small group teacher-led instruction when they work with those individual students. So targeted computer instruction and really supporting teachers to target their in-person instruction.

[01:59:44] Okay, so yeah, that was the, thank you for that. That was sort of the part that I've gotten my head around. I guess it's more so, is it sort of like a lesson and then like a quiz? Or how exactly is that part of it being like, because you're saying it's like it's a formative assessment.

[02:00:01] And so in that sense, how? Yeah, I think that's essentially the way that you could think about it. Yeah, it starts with assessment. Students do tasks. They progress through additional assessments, additional targeted instruction. Okay, thank you. On that note, I will say that I do really understand the concerns with technology, especially at such a young age.

[02:00:21] And I understand also the importance of parents having a choice in how their students are being educated, especially in early elementary school. But I will say that I do see, first of all, the financial benefits here of not having all this increased staffing and finding a way to support that across all these elementary schools.

[02:00:43] But also, I see the value in teachers being given this direct sort of indication of where exactly their students are struggling. And to me, I see roughly 15 minutes a day in the grand scheme of things as not a very great significant amount of time.

[02:01:03] Mr. Shotsky, your time is up. Oh, sorry about that. I was hoping you were wrapping up, but I wasn't sure there. I hate doing that, by the way. So I'm going to take a quick turn. You know, I think the one thing that this entire board agrees with is the importance of literacy and teaching reading.

[02:01:24] It's of paramount importance. You learn to read so you can read to learn. And I just want to make sure we keep that as the main thing because that is the main thing. I agree we definitely need some data justifying the use of Lexia.

[02:01:43] But I also recollect a gentleman coming and standing in Forrest during community participation almost in tears over the improvements that his child experienced by using Lexia. And we are

incredibly diverse and we are incredibly diverse economically in Fairfax County.

[02:02:01] And some are privileged to have in-home tutoring or parents who are home to augment learning at school, and some are not. Some come home to no one, and some are hungry while they're trying to learn how to read independently at home. So, I just want to say all that.

[02:02:23] I do believe this board is endeavoring to do what's best by children and also to allow parents to have input in terms of device use, and I think we're marrying that up nicely. So I just wanted to share that from my perspective, and I'm going to get to go-backs, and hopefully I have these all correct.

[02:02:41] I'll start with Mr. Dannon. Thank you. Do we receive funds from the state to meet the EIRI requirements, and how do we spend that money, if so? Yeah, we do, and that goes into school-based services and supports, yes.

[02:02:59] Such as, like, providing additional IAs, or what would that... It's used in different ways, but, I mean, for the budgetary conversation, with those additional costs, the Erie funds are already expended, so those costs would be on top of any Erie funding that we've already received and allocated.

[02:03:16] Okay. On slide 11, I saw the note about the cost. Is this essentially saying that if we were to spend up to \$1.6 million, it would take up to \$1.6 million to meet the state requirements without Lexia? Well, that's -- I'm going to call it a guesstimate, right, because depending on this year's student data it could be a lot less it could be very little in a lot of schools who may already have staffing so it really it's really going to depend on what this year's data spread is going to look like but to Mr.

[02:03:52] McDaniel's point I mean that's why we have sort of that range right now if although it's large but if last year was about 845 students distributed you know think in many of them were clustered in schools that already had extra staffing.

[02:04:09] I you know I think it may be a smaller number. I love estimates and ranges to get going. What would it look like to set up a team of volunteers, which I know they're done spices to assist teachers with this kind of work? I think that one of the things that's critically important about reading intervention is that it's pragmatic, it's consistent, and as well-intentioned as volunteers can be people have lives and children are going to need this intervention on a regular basis and I think that we want to make sure we have the best interventions in front of our children which is I think again going back to ECRI which I know is

[02:04:48] sometimes confused with the eerie but our ECRI work that many of our schools now are engaged in is incredible it's getting results it's human-centered and And we have a few schools trying it in kindergarten. So five schools, thanks, Diane.

[02:05:05] There are five of our schools trying it in kindergarten. I'm really hopeful that that may become what I would call a tier two intervention, even though it's going to be provided to all children. And our goal is to have fewer and fewer children who actually need reading plans, right?

[02:05:22] I think as we do our work better and better, we should have fewer and fewer needs to provide that level of support. Have you looked at what other jurisdictions do for this type of work? I think Fauquier uses something called SPIRE. We also use SPIRE kits, depending on what types of interventions.

[02:05:40] Even though you have a core curriculum, and I think this is what Ms. Maron was getting at, we do have a core curriculum. And for the first time ever, we also purchased supplemental curriculums for

our multilingual learners, which is why we've seen double-digit growth with our multilingual learners because we are using curricula that's tailored to support their literacy needs.

[02:06:02] And so I think at this point, we're always going to need some extra intervention, whether it's SPIRE or Fairfax has chosen Lexia in the past. There are other supplemental programs out there. Virginia has chosen Lexia as on their list.

[02:06:19] So I think probably other jurisdictions in Virginia utilize Lexia. Lastly, I know some of our committees have, like ACSD has a public comment portion of their meetings, and I recognize the ETRC is a superintendent's committee, so it works differently.

[02:06:37] Are there ways there or at other avenues for members of the public to provide inputs and feedback to you all? I mean, I get lots of emails, which are very helpful, but are there other ways for public comment to be made on this? I do think that we, I know that we do receive email, which I do forward on to both Mr. Sethi and Dr. Presidio, if it's information that would be relevant to ETRC um I don't know how you're utilizing public comment in that way or if you've you know right now they've been pretty focused on getting the tasks the board has asked to have done but uh I don't know if you have plans or thoughts on how

[02:07:12] that might be incorporated or if you want to get back to the board yeah I mean we we have an open mailbox that's on the ETRC website so a specific email address frankly that's not used as frequently is people just e-mailing us directly, but, you know, there's multiple folks that take advantage of providing input, and, you know, we try to include that as part of the discussion process.

[02:07:35] A number of community members have shared research with us about things that they want the committee to consider, so we share that research. That's part of the research brief, if you will, that we provide to the committee, and so there's lots of opportunities for folks who aren't on the committee to share their input and their feedback.

[02:07:53] I appreciate it. The last thing I'll say is I appreciate the work and the nuance of this and how hard you all have worked and the community members and so forth, and I think it speaks to at some point too we have to trust teachers with some degree of flexibility and so forth and guard rails to be able to do this the way they know it's best.

[02:08:12] So thank you. Yeah, and I think to your point, Mr. Down, that if we're going to take tools away, which a program might be utilized as we want to make sure we have something in its place before we do that. And I know our educators want to have a voice in that and I'm sure the team wants to work with that. Thank you. Mr. Dunn followed by Ms. Marin.

[02:08:35] I'd like to ask for just a plain English translation of when Dr. Presidio talks about there's a risk reduction, what does that mean in plain English to a parent? Does that mean the kid learns to read on grade level or what does that mean?

[02:08:52] It's a great question. I'm going to see if Dr. Leipzig can translate my comments into plain English. Thank you for the question. So our VALS creates three tiers of students.

[02:09:07] Some students are considered low risk, so essentially they're on grade level. Other students are at moderate risk. There are individual needs and skills that have some weaknesses, and our teachers are given exactly what that diagnostic information is to act upon it.

[02:09:25] And then there are students who are high risk. That means that they're not meeting that state benchmark expectation in the fall, and they will be required to have an individualized reading plan all year. And so when we looked at what is the impact of adding Lexia to a teacher-led intervention, we tiered it by that tier.

[02:09:47] So we looked at only the students who are at high risk in the fall, and we looked at what was the impact of Lexia being added to their teacher-led intervention. So there were three groups, essentially, of usage. There were students who were meeting the Lexia minutes, which is difficult because the teacher is meeting with the child every single day.

[02:10:10] And so to an earlier point made, sometimes it's hard to fit in the Lexia minutes on top of the daily teacher-led intervention. So for students who were able to meet with the teacher daily and get those Lexia minutes, the risk reduction, the percent of kids who were no longer high risk at the end of the year was, what did you say, 50% greater than the students who were not able to utilize Lexia.

[02:10:41] And we found that even some Lexia use also had a 25% greater move of students out of that high-risk category by the end of the year. Sorry, that's important. If I'm understanding, it's not Lexia alone that caused that reduction, it was Lexia plus humans.

[02:11:01] And we don't really know which had the greater impact. Well, actually, we do, because every single child with a breeding plan already has the human. So that part is the given. Does that make sense? And so the variable is how much Lexia was added to complement the individual, I'm sorry, the teacher-led instruction and intervention program.

[02:11:26] Okay, that's helpful. For the list of VDOE tools that are approved for use, Dr. Reed, are there non-digital tools that are available? Dr. Presidio, you were going to provide that list? Yeah, curriculum-wise, we use them. But again, obviously, additional teacher-directed instruction, right?

[02:11:50] I'm sorry, there's a list approved by VDOE. We've talked about Lexia appears to be engaged in lobbying to get on that list. So I'm just trying to figure out, like, does the list have a list of apps and a list of just paper resources that can be used so we could choose electronic or non-electronic?

[02:12:08] Yes, but the hard copy materials we already have. So, you know, Mr. Dan and I believe asked about SPIRE. We already have that program, right? But that has to be delivered by a teacher, right? Okay. Yeah. I also wanted to ask in the slides, it talked about children with IEPs, but the language of the motion was children with IEPs who require additional reading supports.

[02:12:30] And there's a reference in the slides to 2,600 children or so. Is that children who have IEPs who require additional reading support, or is that all children with IEPs in kindergarten? So that represents the students that already have the exemption because they have IEPs.

[02:12:52] So those are the students with IEPs currently in kindergarten. So they already have an exception, right? So it's trying to determine the additional number of students who would be impacted if the board were to support an additional exception for students for Lexia.

[02:13:10] And that's the additional number of 845. Dr. Presidio, I think Mr. Dunn was asking, are those students with IEPs, are the IEPs for literacy? Or did we just pick a number for students that had IEPs?

[02:13:27] I apologize. I'd have to do additional analysis on that because we'd have to pull the IEP goals for each of those individual students, which would take quite a bit of time, as you can imagine. Thank you.

Thanks. Thank you. Continuing on whether technology was intentionally selected as the desired mode of instruction.

[02:13:46] So a little background. The school division is supposed to renew its literacy curriculum every seven years. The board adopted Benchmark Advance in March of 2024. The last time an English language arts curriculum was adopted was in 2000 FCPS adopted Lexia in 2021 to help fill the absence of a sufficient English language arts curriculum.

[02:14:08] So the decision on benchmark advance was driven by the passage of the Virginia Literacy Act, which I personally advocated for in Richmond and here. We had a ton of resources that delayed. We spent a lot of time purchasing that curriculum and then a ton of time was added and Dr. Reed promoted this and we all helped to say, hey, teachers need to spend time learning this thing so i i don't know that i've heard what the deficits are with benchmark advance and are the supplements even being used the way they're supposed to because we know how inconsistent everything is even among the pyramids so so this is the bottom line the superintendent is proposing to add in a standalone tool where we have a comprehensive literacy curriculum um we're

[02:14:48] sacrificing structural quality because of staffing levels so just ultimately we give children devices that are proven to create deficits in development to make it for deficits in literacy that could be caused by a lack of staffing. I mean, let's just figure out which mole we want to whack and just, you know, we're just moving the problem around. Mr. McDaniel. Thank you. I think I was, I'm 99.9% positive. I was the only parent of a child that was actually impacted by the motion that I voted

[02:15:24] for to pull away iPads at the kindergarten level. And interestingly enough, my daughter, who's now a first grader, last year was marked as moderate after her first reading assessment. So I take this conversation very seriously. I want to again go back to where we were an hour ago, Dr. Reed, yes or no, can students today, can parents today opt their kids out of Lexia or ST Math?

[02:15:46] So. Because this is muddy. Yeah. Well, I believe they were, Dr. Presidio tonight says we don't have that as a plan yet, is that what I'm hearing? i expect that plan to be in place very shortly because if that hasn't been communicated to staff which is what i'm hearing then we need to make sure staff have something in place when parents do opt out but we will have a conversation and i will be back to you with a tentative timeline for that i'm going to make this very easy miss anderson and i are going to bring a follow-on motion on october 8th to the vote the board vote we have to have on this to make it very clear that parents

[02:16:25] have the right to opt out of Lexia and ST Math, and the conversation will be over at that point. And we can talk about timeline and logistics, but we're going to make this very clear. That's all I have. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. What is the cost of Lexia? That would be a Dr. Presidio question.

[02:16:47] I don't recall the exact cost of the contract or Lee. I don't know if. Yeah, we'd have to look that up. We don't have that. If you can just get that, I'm just wondering if we reduce that contract to some extent, can that help offset some of the costs that have been outlined here in these documents? The predictive assessments, I'm hearing about this a lot. Is this connected to Lexia? Can you speak a little bit about that? Which slide are you referring to, Dr. Anderson? Predictive assessments? None of the slides yet, and I might wait and talk about that with the next one, but

[02:17:25] I'm wondering, is it connected to this conversation in any way? If it's a no, I'll wait for the EL. Let's wait for the EL. Okay, I can do that. Is the committee over-tasked?

[02:17:41] Because it seems as if there's a lot for them to do in a very short time, and I understand trying to be expedient to get through things, which may be resulting in people and committee members feeling as if they have a voice. Are we over-tasking this committee?

[02:17:57] You know, I would say in my experience here, the agenda that we've set and the timeline that we've set for this committee is more aggressive than other committees. So then my wondering to you is, I know the board made some specific recommendations that they wanted ETRC to review, but there are other things that have come up where we have not made that direct ask that staff can just work on individually and outside of the committee.

[02:18:26] I would be wondering your reflection on creating that balance. Well, I think staff are very involved involved working through the timelines of the deliverables that the committee is working through, right? Like there's a lot that goes in to preparing the materials, the background information, the data, the research. So there's a lot that's going into that. So where we can, we are moving forward. As Dr. Reed mentioned, you know, we did a lot of work during the summer to prepare the, you know, new guidelines for digital literacy, the new lessons, the new curriculum.

[02:19:03] That was all internal staff work that happened. We did a lot of work to prepare for the staff in service to make sure that staff really understood how to make effective decisions about whether or not to use technology. So we're moving forward on those things that we think are in our purview and our purview alone.

[02:19:23] But there's also a lot of staff work that's obviously devoted to the work before the committee as well. Okay, and last question. Students who have IEPs or multi-language learners for which the board provided a carve-out, does that preclude their parents from opting them out of Lexia?

[02:19:40] It would not preclude them if the board votes in favor of that opt-out. Thank you. Oh, sorry. Thank you. Mr. McElveen. Thank you. Just a couple quick process questions, and Dr. Reed, these won't come as a surprise to you.

[02:19:58] What is the status of virtual participation on the committee? oh they're currently not allowing virtual participation I did get that note this week that makes it a challenge for my appointee I'll just say so that's unfortunate and then secondly how are we progressing and getting a roster of at least the public appointees that will be provided actually that has been put together we've provided the framework in last summer I think in the Friday letter. But I believe there is a plan to post those on the ETRC website, actually. But the

[02:20:36] non-student members specifically. Because I checked the website today and didn't see anything. And then finally, just a question about something in one of the slides about the digital literacy work, that feedback had been solicited and implemented from the committee. Can you give some examples of feedback that was given on that that was incorporated. The ETRC provided feedback on the literacy plan?

[02:21:02] Yeah. What was some of that feedback? Yeah, I think to do that justice, I'd probably have to go back and look at the notes. I mean, the general overall feedback is support for digital literacy instruction. I think we started in a good place, but we've obviously received feedback that we need to do more, but that

was what we could do for this school year and to start for this school year, so there's more work to be done. Okay. Thank you. Thank you. 6.02, Academic Matters. I now call on Dr. Reeve for Academic Matters. Well, thank you, Madam Chair. And this evening, I'll wait for

[02:21:41] Tiffany to pull up the Academic Matters. I'm sorry. That looked like a different. Thank you.

[02:22:04] So this evening, our Academic Matters is going to highlight our ongoing work to provide and improve access to high-quality grade-level instruction for every student. A central part of this work is essentially understanding by design, or universal design for learning, which helps educators anticipate barriers and design instruction that provides meaningful access and appropriate supports from the beginning.

[02:22:34] So this summer, FCPS invested in professional learning that strengthened educators' ability to apply inclusive practices in classrooms across the division. There's a strategic planned connection to goal two, and again, it's important to note that an inclusive school community promotes student safety, well-being, belonging, and academic engagement.

[02:22:57] The metrics identified on the slide will help us monitor whether students experience stronger academic inclusion, greater engagement, and in general, a more positive school climate. General Design for Learning has a proactive approach to lesson planning and a learning environment design and asks educators to anticipate student variability in reducing unnecessary barriers before they interfere with learning.

[02:23:25] The approach supports our commitment to educating students in the least restrictive environment by also strengthening access to general education classrooms and appropriate grade level content. It's an important part of improving academic access and school culture.

[02:23:43] So this summer, the summer inclusion required a lot of preparation and collaboration. More than 300 teachers participated in intensive two-day workshops. The conference we also had in July brought together more than 400 school-based office and central staff.

[02:24:02] And Dr. Shelley Moore was one of the presenters who we've had at our parent conference as well, a special ed conference. We, FCPS, also offer targeted professional learning on inclusive scheduling goals and strategies.

[02:24:20] And together, these opportunities help schools prepare for inclusive implementation at the classroom, team, and school levels. During the course of this year, professional learning will continue. inclusion school leadership team cohorts will continue to meet across the year and you can see the different strategies we've put into place we're also integrating udl strategies into the curriculum and finally our continued partnerships with udl and inclusion experts and consultants will provide schools with additional expertise coaching and opportunities for deeper learning

[02:24:58] so now let's hear from some of our teachers who attended these opportunities this summer And so, Madam Chair, if you'll play the video, please. - Why are you excited about today?

[02:25:13] - I'm really excited about today because I'm here with a lot of educators who are also excited to see Dr. Shelley Moore and learn more, see, about how FCPS can use UDL. - It's really important for our school to be here together today because we're a really collaborative group and we believe in being lifelong learners.

[02:25:31] So the more we can learn, the better we can serve our kids. - In a place where we think that we need to separate to support each kid, we don't need to separate. We just need to be more creative and help reach each student. - I think it's just putting a lot of things in perspective that I didn't really think of before.

[02:25:50] So I think that, you know, creating the questions also creates some solutions, so I think that's key. - I had been finding myself wishing that I had more knowledge about how to differentiate my instruction and how to be more inclusive in my classroom.

[02:26:06] For me, UDL is about basically learning and teaching with authenticity. And I found that coming to the conferences has let me feel more confident in my own identity as a teacher. - We're at a two-day UDL workshop, which is bringing universal science to learning.

[02:26:24] And what that is about, is about making our curriculum accessible to all of our students by incorporating support into the way that we do our planning. It really talks about leaning on our students' strengths providing opportunities throughout the school year for them to demonstrate their knowledge in a way that doesn't require them to do it in one particular modality. After attending the UDL workshop, I feel genuinely refreshed. It definitely gave me the energy and just the excitement that I needed for this year. I can't express how excited I was to come to my classroom after the UDL

[02:27:01] workshop and implement everything that I learned there it's a beautiful thing and it will make a brighter future for all of our students yeah I just want to say the amount of time that our educators are putting into learning new strategies new skills we're grateful that we have the incredible educators that we have here in Fairfax County and really appreciate the coordination from

[02:27:34] our teams. This is really important work among all the other work we're doing. And this work helps our literacy work be more effective, our math work, our science, because it really anticipates barriers to make sure they don't exist for children. So I'm really proud of the work that the team is doing in this. So Madam Chair, I'll take any questions that we have.

[02:28:00] would our visiting staff member please introduce herself well i am going to introduce miss kristin kelch who is leading our inclusion initiative our main professional development and curriculum designer and honestly the best professional development expert staff trainer and curriculum designer i've ever worked with so she took on this lead on this initiative from the instructional services department this is uh really uh i think work that's really near and dear to her heart did you want to say anything just real briefly no thank you for having me this evening um i would

[02:28:40] just offer to say that i learn so much when i'm working with our teachers and our administrators about what their needs are who their students are and one of our absolute primary focus is to take what their needs are and try to think about the professional learning and the supports and the resources that they need that are just in time that they can put into place into their classrooms directly and so this summer's opportunities was really to set those teachers up for success for the beginning of this school year and so when we talk about universal design we do talk about it around all of

[02:29:17] our students but we do think more intentionally about our multilingual learners and our students with disabilities and how do we increase access and opportunity in more inclusive settings, in our general education settings. So what's really nice is that this work bridges departments, and so this is a collective effort between curriculum and instruction, instructional services and our special education services departments.

[02:29:44] And so we're working very closely with all of our staff at the school level and centrally to make sure that we're in alignment alignment and in calibration to support our schools with the instruction. Thank you. Mr. Dannon. This is a really great presentation, and I appreciate seeing some familiar faces in the video.

[02:30:06] That's two meetings in a row. I've recognized some of the teachers. And I'm really happy to hear about the steps that you all have taken to help support inclusion. And I'm going to try not to get emotional as I read it, but the part where the teacher says that we think we need to separate to support each kid, but we don't need to separate.

[02:30:21] We just need to be more creative in how we support each kid. And, man, when I attended Dr. Shelley Moore's presentation, I think about that presentation from last year almost every day about how we can, you know, if we do it right, we can include kids and have better educational outcomes.

[02:30:39] And so I know a lot of work went into this, so thank you for all that. Made it through without getting too emotional. But, again, I'd love to hear a little more. I think on slide five, it talks about the curriculum integration that folds UDL strategies into central curriculum resources. Can you talk a little bit more about that effort?

[02:30:56] And I would love to hear from teachers about what they thought about that new curriculum. Yeah, so my previous work right before I took on this leadership role around inclusion was leading and supporting our curriculum work at the elementary level. And so I work very, very closely with our curriculum and instruction office.

[02:31:17] So across our content areas, I meet with them quite frequently to just ensure that we have shared language, shared alignment. And then we work to think about within our current resources, whether it's centrally developed, like some of our planning and pacing guide resources, or with our basal resources, we are providing very explicit strategies and guidance built into.

[02:31:41] And so one of our primary purposes is to help teachers to see that this is not something separate or it's one more thing, that these strategies truly are either A, strategies teachers are already using, so we want to affirm that, and or just really starting to think about are these strategies we only use for a few students or would all students benefit from this?

[02:32:05] And so just trying to make that more explicit within our units and our lesson resources. And we've gotten very good feedback. There's always room for improvement. And so we continue to work with our teachers. And one of the aspects in which we work with teachers is not only throughout the year do we support them in the classroom and we take and crowdsource things that they've designed to try to share those more broadly, but then we also look at opportunities in the summer to bring teachers together for summer curriculum development.

[02:32:34] So we want to make sure that the end user is a part of the process of the curriculum, recognizing they're the ones using it, and making sure that it's user-friendly, that it's meaningful, and that it's attainable and practical. That's really awesome. And I've heard from teachers time and time again on numerous issues about essentially they can make almost anything work, just give them enough time to work with it and to get that feedback and make those changes.

[02:32:59] So I really appreciate that, the thoughtfulness to include the end users on it. And I'll just note, too, I feel like it's been a little bit of time since we've heard about inclusion and the inclusive schools

initiative. And so I'd welcome this presentation and any future ones to talk about that. So, again, thank you all for your work.

[02:33:16] Thank you. I'm going to take a quick turn. I think UDL might be the best thing that happened at Fairfax County Public Schools, certainly since I retired, but probably in some decades. It's amazing work. The inclusion work is really can happen.

[02:33:35] quite easily when when one is sort of experienced an expert in this so i kind of have a question i'm sorry all the technology folks left but i'm curious to know about the intersectionality with technology and the work of espets when it comes to udl work in schools yeah i first will say that espets are viewed as instructional leaders in our schools and so um our first name as far as the inclusion work goes i'm really excited to share that just this week we kicked off our inclusion cohorts and so what that means is that every single school in our division

[02:34:10] is meeting for a half day of professional learning we are a cohort that will meet continuously over the year and each team is made up of the principal additional administrators and who they deem to be instructional leaders oftentimes the espet is included from the udl perspective i see them as leaders in the design. And so leveraging technology, whether we utilize either tools and or approved AI, such as Gemini or Notebook LM, to help look at ways that we can help teachers

[02:34:47] reduce their workload and increase efficiency in thinking about the strategies they're using based on the needs they're seeing in their classroom. And so it's just another tool to support them, oftentimes as like a coach, but the ESPITs are critical in helping our teachers to understand how to use these digital tools in meaningful ways for that lesson design. So I see them as leaders with that work. Thank you. I just want to elevate that because I do believe that it's allowing kids otherwise wouldn't access learning to access learning because we are leveraging technology. Yes, absolutely. Yes. So I also want to just give you a shout out. I hear

[02:35:25] fabulous things about you miss couch so it's nice to see you and meet you but thank you for this work and leading this work because I like I said I think UDL is the best thing that's come down because of the way in which our kids are accessing learning in ways they never did so thank you I think for the board and for those watching at home the example I often use which is just I hope very simple is after a really really heavy snowstorm we have a choice we can either shovel the steps first into the building or we can shovel the ramp and and when we shovel the ramp first everyone can get in spot on indeed thank you okay and now i'm

[02:36:03] caught on dr reid for a strategic plan update well i am thrilled to be able to share the strategic plan update this evening and this evening we're going to highlight the efforts of our custodians and the work that they do um and this is part of it's connected to pillar c uh around our workforce And I want to share what a vital, vital role our custodians play in Fairfax County public schools.

[02:36:30] And we can go ahead and go to the next slide, Tiffany, and the next slide. So one of the things that I think, again, talking about snow, it was my segway. Last year, as I drove around the division during our Snowcrete epic storm, thanks, Kristen.

[02:36:49] I will tell you, the people outside with shovels were our custodians, our school-based custodians, and they worked so very hard. At a glance, we have over 230 schools and offices that are served by approximately 1,400 custodians.

[02:37:08] We have over 29 million square feet that are maintained daily with over 14,000 classrooms and 1,200 restrooms and over 3,300 acres of land that we maintain. I don't know about you, but just maintaining restrooms at home is an issue, let alone having 1,200 restrooms.

[02:37:31] And I'm going to tell you, I've been in a lot of school divisions around the country in my career. But our custodians, they work harder than anywhere. We have some of the older buildings, the oldest that I've been privileged to lead.

[02:37:47] And yet they are kept so very clean. I mean, our folks take such deep pride in their work. So I'm just very proud of their tireless dedication to keeping our facilities clean and welcoming. Our staff highlights, you can see here the daily impact of our staff goes well beyond basic maintenance.

[02:38:08] Every day they ensure our physical environments are ready, support building safety and security through early morning checks. When the power messages, when we're receiving them all night long, the power on, the power off. It's our custodial staff that are the first people there that are able to confirm, yes, the lights are back on, or no, they're not.

[02:38:30] So they support extensive community use programs across more than 200 locations. I think we looked at over 500,000, Andy, community use events over the course of a year. And it's our custodians that are really supporting the work.

[02:38:48] So I'd love to see this work in action. So let's take a look at our team, Madam Clerk, if you'd please play the video.

[02:39:03] As we prepared to welcome our students back to school, our custodians were hard at work behind the scenes. From keeping classrooms, hallways, and cafeterias spotless to preparing our grounds, they helped create a warm, safe, and welcoming environment for everyone. Our custodians care for more than 29 million square feet of school and office space, including over 14,000 classrooms and 1,200 restrooms.

[02:39:43] FCPS facilities span more than 3,300 acres. That's larger than many municipal park systems. Simply put, without the custodian, FCPS cannot operate a clean, safe environment for the children to learn.

[02:40:00] They really are the unsung hero who work with a lot of pride and care that they put into all the work they do in the school building. I'm proud of my school. I started since 30 a.m. I check the building, the school is secure, because I want to make sure the school is safe.

[02:40:18] When I walk in the school, it looks like my second house. I want everybody happy for the kids and learn. In my field as a building supervisor, it makes me feel good to know that people can count on me.

[02:40:35] And this is a really demanding job, all days of the week, even on Saturdays and Sundays. They give 110% to the students, the staff, and the community. They're everywhere. They are the face of our community and our school, and they are the ones that keep us afloat on a regular basis.

[02:40:52] They not only care about our school building and our physical environment, but they care deeply about the people who they serve in the buildings. Here, we're all a family working together towards one goal. I've worked here 46 years.

[02:41:09] Being here so long, I know where everything is, and I know how to do everything. I guess what I love about my job is seeing the kids and the teachers. I guess I just like working here.

[02:41:27] This is most of the product. I'm treating the custodian in TJ, how to clean, how to shampoo, how to wash, strip the floor, so they can learn something from me. If you look around Thomas Jefferson, you'll really see it.

[02:41:44] You'll feel it. it's clean it's welcoming it's open and these things couldn't happen and i don't think people realize whether it's community activities or school functions they they couldn't happen without our custodians so the custodians they make it possible for our teachers and our staff to focus on what they do for kids to the people school board and the superintendent so we get a lot of support not another county don't have so i'm very proud to work the fcps this is my first school And this will be my last group.

[02:42:22] Excellence. Equity. And opportunity. Yeah, I think the video speaks for itself, but one of the reasons these strategic plan reports are near and dear is that we do cover the pillars, which are the people who provide so much of the support that enables our classrooms and our educators and students to do what they do every day.

[02:42:47] So big thanks to our custodians. Great job. Thank you. Mr. Frisch. thank you for doing this and spotlighting their incredible work um i've had an opportunity since my time on the board to don the custodian uniform twice once at mantua and once at shrevewood and help clean the school and it is incredibly difficult time intensive work that happens throughout the day but really kicks into high gear once the kiddos leave and you know the treat that

[02:43:25] What I got was being able to use the floor waxing machine, which is a bit like a Zamboni. So that was a real highlight. But getting to know our staff there, Ms. Fuentes at Mantua, Ms. Varegas at Shrevewood, was a great opportunity.

[02:43:44] And seeing how much the students enjoy talking to our custodians as well was also a highlight. But very much appreciate you taking the time tonight to spotlight this incredibly important work. And I encourage every student who might be watching, go to bed, but maybe on YouTube later.

[02:44:05] Thank your custodians and every parent, obviously, as well. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Dannon. Yeah, I really appreciate you all highlighting our custodial staff and having created a number of messes as a PTA volunteer and leading after school clubs.

[02:44:22] I remember the looks on custodians, on their faces, as I walked away from a big mess on the floor, and they, "Oh, we got it, we got it." And, you know, I happened to be at a school the other day, and they had a member of their staff was out in the parking lot helping direct traffic. I mean, it's incredible the work that they do.

[02:44:37] It was also great to see some of the Braddock District custodial staff there. I saw Mr. Agagiacom at Laurel Ridge and Mr. Alfaro at Robinson. And before school started, I went to do a visit at Terrace Center and to congratulate Ms. Ana. So Mr. High was the beloved building supervisor there for years.

[02:44:56] And when I asked my kids who their favorite staff member was, it was Mr. High and all of his friends, Mr. High. And so he left some big shoes to fill. And I saw Ms. Anna working incredibly hard over

the years there. And so I was very happy to see that she'd gotten selected as building supervisor. And there's a funny story to this, too.

[02:45:13] So as I'm leaving, at one point I asked, you know, well, what can we do as a board to better support you now? She's like, oh, I really appreciate it, you know. And we went into her office, and everything was perfectly laid out. They had supplies and so forth. She's like, we really could use a new weed whacker, though. Ours broke, and it's a problem.

[02:45:30] And so, you know, as I was leaving later on, I'm walking out of the building, and there was the FCPS facilities truck pulling up with a repaired weed whacker. And it really showed how much work and thought goes into all this. So kudos to you and your team for all that. And one thing I do want to ask, it kind of got mentioned in the video, is around the facilities condition assessment that's ongoing right now.

[02:45:53] I got to join one of those with one of my colleagues over the summer. Can you talk a little bit about what the facilities condition assessment is and how are we engaging our custodial staff in that since they know those buildings so well? Thank you, Mr. Dannen. Mr. Gordon, our chief of facilities and construction and design planning, is here this evening and can respond to that.

[02:46:16] I don't know if Mr. Davis is here, but Mr. Gordon? Hey, sir, thank you for the question. As we move forward with the facility condition assessment, so we're still in the process of conducting facilities. Stage your point of order. The germaneness of the issue.

[02:46:32] Yes. I apologize, Mr. Daly. Yeah, I think the topic is custodians, so thank you. That's a fair point. I will follow up by email. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Gordon. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you.

[02:46:47] Given that so many of our buildings are so old, it's really the effort of the custodians that make them look as nice as they look. I know the effort that goes into their work as a former principal. Your custodian was your best friend because you kept similar hours.

[02:47:05] And I hope that we can, in the very near future, show them how much we value them, not just in our words and these wonderful videos, but also in their compensation. So I just wanted to throw that out there. One of the other things that I wanted to highlight that, I don't know if it was captured there fully, the grounds that the custodians are also responsible for maintaining, there's a disparity in terms of some of the work.

[02:47:32] I have some schools that I represent in which there's heavy activity over the weekend, and so they come back on Monday to an outdoors that requires significant work more than maybe some other sites.

[02:47:47] I just hope that's part of the calculus in terms of the disbursement of, I guess, duties or personnel. But we do thank them, and I was very grateful to see that so many of them, they come into our system and they stay for years, 46 years.

[02:48:03] That is a lifetime of work for the custodian at Justice. And I thought for a minute that I was going to see one of my kids in the hallway in that video. They were probably in class. That would have been the best thing, the best place to be. Thank you. Mr. Moon. Thank you, Madam Chair, I, as the son of a school custodian for many, many years, I, Dr. Reed, I probably you remember this, the first job I ever had in the U.S. was to work as custodian.

[02:48:35] That was during my first year as a teenager, working part-time on weekends, eight hours a day, at the Alexandria Hospital. With that said, I think it was 1998 time frame, long ago, when Dr. Dominic was a superintendent, I had an honor to initiate, with obviously superintendent's concurrence, a program called Custodial ESL Management Program,

[02:49:06] where we would allow duly arrived immigrant custodians who desire to learn the language to have some time off during their working hours to go and learn and enhance their language skills.

[02:49:22] So that in the long run, first of all, they need to learn the language to do their job and also so that they could advance in their careers as well. I'm glad to see in the video, I mean, we saw a number of building supervisors as members of diverse workforce, but at the same time, I wonder about how diverse is it for the positions above the building supervisor's level.

[02:49:51] I mean, that's just something I have not been able to find the data, and I would love to find the data. And if we do not have ESL custodial management program anymore, I want to know what happened to it.

[02:50:07] If we don't have that, whether there's a way for us to revive that. And that -- yes, sir. And that program began in -- I'm sorry, 19 -- 1998. 1998. Okay. We will look into that. I'll ask Mr. Solomon to take a look at that, and we'll get a report back to you.

[02:50:25] Thank you. Mr. McIlveen. Thank you. That was a lovely video. communications team for great work on that, celebrating our wonderful custodians. You know, one thing I see on slide three is about the number of restrooms they clean a day, right? 1,200. My question to you is how can we get more of our restrooms open? We've heard a lot of concern from the community about restrooms being closed for safety and drug use reasons, and that's a major issue.

[02:50:56] sure so I know that the expectation is that students have access to restrooms on a regular basis miss Roman do you want to talk a minute about the direction that's been provided to principals on that yes it is the expectation that restrooms are open I know for supervision and other reasons that there have been in the past some restrooms that were closed but ensuring access to restrooms for students at all times is a priority and something that we're supporting schools with moving forward okay so we can take that message

[02:51:29] out and run with it. Is that right? I believe that is correct. I mean, restrooms are a human need, right? Children who need to use the restroom need to be able to use the restroom. So I know there's been some very clear direction. I know that our security teams have also worked with staffs to make sure that they have a rotation of staff. And Ms. Roman, as our chief of schools, maybe can comment a bit further on that. Yeah, I know it's something that we have our regents have been providing kind of individualized guidance to schools as we've heard about

[02:52:05] this but we will work with our principal groups to make sure that there is widespread understanding of that expectation and the support to be able to implement that. Well that's fabulous news so thank thank you for your support. Yes sir. Thank you and let's just be reminded we're talking about custodians.

[02:52:23] Ms. Anton Cunning. Thank you. This this just warms my heart I love to see this and And we can't forget the amazing job our custodians did this winter because we were all at home and they were clearing that ice and snow.

[02:52:43] And I think the most important thing to realize is, number one, the diversity of our custodial staff, which a lot of times complements the diversity of our students. And sometimes they are the ones that speak the one language that nobody else in the building speaks.

[02:53:02] And when we talk about having that trusted adult, a lot of times it's the custodian. And they take so, I've just, every school I've worked at, the amount of pride and dedication that I see our custodians take. You know, from when I first started and there was a custodian that was Grandma Rose, and she was everyone's grandma.

[02:53:23] I mean, people loved her at an elementary school. I'm just going to mention a few names so they can kind of look at this moment, I know that recently I was with Jessica, Sarah, and Annie at a school, and I think she's probably been a custodian longer than 46 years. So the dedication, the work, the pride, and I will echo what one of my colleagues said, which is they take our buildings, some of which are older, and they make them sparkle. And the pride that they have is just amazing. So kudos to all the

[02:54:01] work that our custodians do. Thank you, Ms. Anderson. I'm going to echo one of my colleagues and the fact that I was a PTO leader for a really long time before I came forward as a board member. And one of the things that I learned real fast is that you make really good friends with everybody in the main office and you make really good friends with your building manager because they were often the people that were still there at the end of an event and they were helping us get everything together so that everybody could get home. And we always caused a mess and they were

[02:54:38] always grateful that we were there. One of the things that we did as a PTO is that we would have all of the kids write thank you notes and we would make sure that everybody in the building got thank you notes from the kids during Staff Appreciation Week. And the custodians, particularly those who served lunch duty, we never had a problem making sure that kids recognized those trusted adults in the schools and so oftentimes they were in at least in our school it wasn't necessarily somebody that was from their same background but it was just such an awesome moment to watch like how much they cared for the kids and how much they know everybody um and so it was

[02:55:15] it's it's warming to hear us and watch us um call out all of our staff not just the ones that are the ones that we think about for staff appreciation kind of things so i really appreciate you guys doing this. Thank you. And a big shout out to Ms. Sylvia, who has kept my plants alive since I've come to Fairfax County. She's amazing on our fifth floor. So everybody give Ms. Sylvia a hand on the fifth floor. All right. Oh, the plants. She repots them even. She's amazing. Yes, our custodians are

[02:55:54] indeed amazing. So thank you for sharing this update. We are now up to agenda item 7.01 action item certification of a 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 ferris county school board convened a closed meeting on september 24 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 that closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the board during the closed meeting the board member believes that there was a departure from the requirements of the code of virginia section please describe generally the

[02:56:32] nature or type of procedural violation you allege without disclosing the confidential substantive content of the closed session discussion before the board takes a vote on the motion to certify close meeting compliance thank you do i have a motion to certify close meeting compliance mr dannin is

there a second mr frisch all those in favor miss anderson mr frisch miss marron mr moon mr mcdaniel mr dunn mr dannin miss dr anderson miss st john cunning and

[02:57:06] myself and that's unanimous for board members present with mystics it not attending closed does she want it was yeah mystics it I think abstentions I abstain yes thank you so I think that's a little 1101 all right thank you 7.02 action I have confirmation of action taken in closed meeting no action was taken in closed 7.03 motion to prohibit automatic license plate reader al PR systems. I call Mr. McDaniel for a motion. Thank you. I move to the direct

[02:57:45] superintendent to prohibit the installation, procurement, or leasing of automatic license plate reader ALPR systems on property owned by the Fairfax County School Board provided that nothing in this motion shall prohibit or restrict the installation operation or continued use of speed cameras or school bus stop arm cameras. Is there a second? A second. Ms. Anderson. Mr. McDaniel would you like to speak to your motion? Sure. There's been a lot of discussion about ALPR aka eight-flock cameras, that's kind of the 800-pound gorilla in the room, across not only Fairfax County, Northern Virginia, but across the country, and there's been bipartisan conversation about that.

[02:58:24] So this motion effectively bans those from being installed on FCPS-owned property, board-owned property, and fundamentally for me, this is about the scope and the mission of what we do as a division. It also addresses the significant civil liberties and privacy concerns that have been raised by constituents to me and folks across the country.

[02:58:46] We are not a police department. We are an educational institution. Our job, our mission, our focus, our budget dollars are about making sure that 177,000 kids get the best education possible. So there is a component of ensuring a safe and welcoming learning environment, certainly.

[02:59:05] That goes without saying. That's why I wanted to make it very clear, and I appreciate some of the feedback from my colleagues that speed cameras in school zones, school bus stop arm cameras, the cameras that we have in buildings now that are not AOPR, those are not caught up in this. I'll make that very clear.

[02:59:20] I don't think it very clear. We do not have these cameras currently. We've seen across the country significant privacy concerns about this technology. These are not your run-of-the-mill security cameras like you go in a place and there's a VCR in the back and there's a tape recorder and it's recorded and it's kept on the tape.

[02:59:39] This data is stored for an indeterminate amount of time. It kind of depends on who you ask. It depends on what press release comes from these companies. And the analytical ability on these is a powerful, very powerful tool. And I think one of the sheriffs in southern Virginia summed it up best when he said this is the most powerful law enforcement tool he has ever seen in all of his decades of being in law enforcement. And then in the next breath he said, "That being said, I'm still canceling the contracts for ALPR, and in this case, for him, it was flock cameras,

[03:00:15] because that is the danger, that is the concern around this technology. So the motion tonight is effectively to put a moratorium, a ban, indefinitely on these systems being installed on school property. I think there will be a potentially friendly amendment to further clarify this, but with that, I'm looking forward to the discussion tonight.

[03:00:36] Thank you. Ms. Anderson, would you like to speak to your second? Just quickly, I don't need to repeat everything that's been said. I do see this as a significantly different type of technology than the ones that we traditionally think of related to keeping kiddos safe in our buildings, or around trying to get to our buildings, because that's where we see a lot of it.

[03:00:53] So this isn't speed arm cameras, this isn't, you know, like, I'm sorry, speed cameras in school zones. This is specific to a very particular type of camera. So the motion is clear, and I think that it limits a choice, and it gives the superintendent and staff clear expectations about what the board thinks about this particular type of security measure at this time. And ultimately, this motion reflects a reasonable balance, preserving targeted tools that directly protect students while declining to place broader vehicle surveillance

[03:01:29] systems on our school property. So I'm in full support of this. Thank you. I now call Mr. Dunn for an amendment. Thank you. I move to amend the motion by inserting the phrase, including but not limited to flock cameras, after the phrase, automatic license plate reader ALPR systems.

[03:02:05] Without objection? Okay, that's without objection. So that will be the amended language that we will be discussing so mr. Dunn did you have anything else um yeah can I speak yes um yeah I just wanted to say uh that I appreciate the mover and the seconder bringing this motion I'm strongly in support of protecting our privacy especially the privacy of our students but I wanted to make sure

[03:02:41] and I worked diligently with the mover to ensure that we included exceptions for school zone speed cameras and for bus arm stop cameras because what we have seen in recent weeks is student safety is paramount and it's threatened by distracted and dangerous driving.

[03:02:59] So first of all, I encourage everyone to drive safely and take a moment. But I also want to make sure that as we seek to ban bad types of cameras and AI technologies that we are at the same time ensuring that we allow the continued use of speed cameras, school bus stop arm cameras as well as security cameras that maintain the security of our schools both during the school day and at all hours. Thank you.

[03:03:27] Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. I just want to make sure we have some clarification for the public who may be watching this. At current none of these cameras exist in Fairfax County on Fairfax County public school properties. Can you confirm that Dr. Reed? Yes ma'am that's correct. There are no flock I'll use in air quotes flock cameras on our buildings or property and none planned okay so not a plan so this is just kind of affirming the non-action

[03:04:05] that you know you had in place that is my understanding yes yes ma'am thank you secondly I want to make sure that there is still clarity that other cameras exist on school board properties our own cameras outside of the buildings and inside of the buildings perhaps across the street depending on how buildings are situated can you confirm that please so say that again we do have cameras that we are utilizing for security reasons

[03:04:39] that do exist within our secondary schools and certainly externally at our schools yes ma'am thank you and can you speak to where that data goes so we have a console which is operated by our internal office of safety and security and our chief safety and security officers here this evening mr. Lambert and I know at times when we I can give a recent example and I'm going to turn to him to maybe share more broadly but recently we had a gas leak as a result of a car accident

[03:05:15] very close to a school and we were able to get on the cameras the team was able to see where the staff were at that time was during the summer and be able to see video in real time or recorded that we're able to help make good decisions around safety but mr. Lambert correct we store all of our information on servers that are located within Fairfax County property we do not have any cloud-based storage of our data

[03:05:51] Thank you. And is that data stored indefinitely or for a certain period of time? No, we have a public record that we guarantee 14 days for retention. Often that amount goes upwards of 30 days before it's overwritten.

[03:06:10] I'm sorry, what was the last part? Upwards of 30 days, but we advertise 14-day retention period. Thank you so much. And while this motion is going to support not having such flat cameras on school properties, I do want to make sure that we are clear we have no such control about private property businesses that may utilize those cameras in great proximity to our schools.

[03:06:39] So it's not a blanket protection, because if we have other businesses that are nearby, there could still be opportunities for capture.

[03:06:56] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. McElveen. Thank you so much. And just to continue down the line of questioning that Dr. Anderson was pursuing, can you tell us, Mr. Lambert, typically what kinds of crimes could these cameras be catching if they were indeed to be allowed on school property?

[03:07:22] I'm not an expert on, I just can share what I understand them to be. Their camera, like other cameras, it's the software that really determines what they can do. My understanding is that they often interpret license plate data and vehicle data that can later be searched or queried against.

[03:07:44] Got it. Yeah, I mean, the questions that I get from the community are just that. What would we be stopping if we were to do this? So that's the only question I will raise. Thank you. Thank you. Miss St. John Cunning. Thank you. I actually received a lot of letters about this with people actually supporting this and I was happy to tell them that we had had a discussion and that I was going to support it. I think that as a society, our public values a certain level of privacy, our students and our families and our staff, as well as people that are visiting our schools.

[03:08:24] And yet we have some of the mechanisms within our schools that will provide the necessary security without going into some of this technology that, to this point, does not have guardrails. So I'm very happy to support this. I'm very glad that it was brought, and I understand that it is a preemptive move, but because it is a preemptive move, we know that this is just something that we're not even going to look at.

[03:08:49] We can only control what we can control. we can't control buildings that are on the other side of the street but i think this will give some level of security to our families and to the constituents that wrote me that that we value their right to privacy and that's important thank you i'll take a quick turn i just want to reiterate to the public that this division the staff have never discussed bringing these cameras there's it's never even been a discussion point and so this is not happening because there was a fear or a thought

[03:09:29] that these cameras were ever going to be purchased um so i just want to make that clear that the school system was never ever thinking that way um and yes it is preemptive um it did create a lot of traffic i just want to make sure people understand that the traffic is in support of the motion and not

because there was a fear that we were moving in a direction that was going to not be good for for our community members in the safety of all of our students so um at this point i will call for the vote on the amended main motion which is on the screen all those in favor miss anderson mr frisch miss marron mr moon mr mckelveen mr mcdaniel

[03:10:08] mr dunn mr dannon dr anderson miss st john cunning and myself i do not see miss dixit miss dixit is also a yes so i think that's uh unanimous all 12 board members thank you All right agenda item 7.04 award of contract synthetic turf field replacement at South County Middle School. Given that this item needs to be postponed again I ask for unanimous consent to postpone this item until the October 8, 2026 regular meeting. Seeing no objections we will do

[03:10:43] that. This item is postponed until October 8, 2026 regular meeting. Agenda item 7.05 contract for purchase of specialized computer hardware and related support services. I call Ms. Dixit for a a motion? So I move that the school board approves award of the sole source contract in the amount of \$684,000 for the purchase of specialized computer hardware and related support

[03:11:17] services for exceed QINC in financial partnership with Connected DMV and the Fairfax County Development Authority. And I authorize the division superintendent or the director of the Office of the Procurement to execute, deliver, and administer the contract on behalf of the school board. Is there a second? Second. Mr. Dunn. Ms. Dixit, would you like to speak to your motion?

[03:11:47] Thank you, Chair Lady. I'm pleased to move this item because it's more than a hardware purchase. It is the moment Fairfax County Public School puts a working quantum computer in front of our students. Quantum computing is not a distant theory. It is the next foundation of computing And the race to build is happening right now in national labs, in universities, and in companies around the globe.

[03:12:13] It works on entirely different principles than the computer most of us use every day. And it promises to crack problems that today's machine cannot touch, designing new medicines, new materials, and new ways to secure data. The countries and communities that build a workforce fluent in quantum will lead the next century of science industry innovation.

[03:12:36] And that must be here in the DMV, where quantum promises to provide real economic development for Fairfax County. So most students in America today will not touch a quantum computer until graduate school, but if ever, ours will do in high school.

[03:12:51] They will write real problems, programs, run them in real hardware, and see with their own hand what the future of computing looks like. The change is what a Fairfax County student believes is possible for themselves, and it puts our school where they belong at the front of the pack.

[03:13:09] So tonight, I'm proud to offer this motion to approve four qubit gate-based quantum computing system delivered, installed, and funded at Skyview High School as part of its educational pathways. Skyview will serve as the school division's K-12 anchor for quantum education.

[03:13:27] Student and educator from across FCPS will have access as we plan to bring system to schools throughout the county. This is a very big deal. Our school system may teach their student about the, other school system may teach their student about the quantum future, but tonight's vote, Fairfax County Public School will put that future in our student's hand.

[03:13:50] - Thank you, Mr. Dunn would like to speak to your second. - Yes, thank you. I'm very proud of the school board because over the past three years, we have worked diligently to ensure that the historic uh promise of a world-class education for every student is fulfilled and that has required major change initiatives in a number of respects and this is only the latest and a lot of that is due to the leadership of Dr. Reed who has worked so hard every day to make sure that we are bringing a strategic thinking to the educational services that we deliver across the county in 200

[03:14:28] schools to 180,000 students. I believe that this investment, which is significant, will help to restore the leadership of Fairfax County to become, again, the gold standard in public education. And I also appreciate my colleagues who are bringing the follow-on motion to ensure that the benefits of this investment are not limited only to Skyview High School, but also to other schools across the county so that all students have equal and equitable access to this amazing resource, which will help to ensure that STEM education in our schools is at the forefront,

[03:15:07] the leading edge of technology development and technology research so that our students can collaborate not just at the high school level but with colleagues and peers at universities and nonprofits. And I appreciate the investment by the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority because this is not just about education. This is about workforce development. This is about not just learning the technologies of the future, but applying it so that businesses here in Fairfax County can help to leverage those technologies to grow our economy because the economy and our

[03:15:42] schools is the foundation of our quality of life. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Marin. Well, I support advancements in learning and intentional use of technology that propels students to their highest potential to meet opportunities after graduation that we are only dreaming about right now.

[03:16:02] As a large school system, I believe we must think about the investments that provide access to our students first and foremost, and partnering with our business community and local government is essential. I have a few questions about this purchase that I'd like to ask of the superintendent. The first is, I'm aware that there are two partners with Fairfax County Public Schools, Connected DMV and the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority.

[03:16:25] What is the dollar amount that each of the three partners is providing over the lifetime of this initiative, which I believe is three years? Thank you, Ms. Marin. The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority is contributing \$100,000 towards the project, and Connected DMV is contributing \$150,000 in-kind services as part of the professional services agreement that the board will be discussing at a future board meeting.

[03:16:58] Thank you. And in what part of the operational budget is this funding coming from? The funding for this project is linked to the opening of a new high school, in this case. As we open new buildings across the division, and we haven't opened a new building in a number of years, this is the first one in 20 years, but there are logistical funds for program development that are utilized, in particular for career and technical education,

[03:17:29] As well as the development of advanced science labs, imagine welding centers or auto mechanics, cosmetology. There's equipment that is required to build those programs out.

[03:17:45] And in this case, quantum has been something we've talked about for quite a while with regard to our new western high school. And so this is part of the, the funding is coming from the logistical set

aside to open the new high school.

[03:18:03] So I didn't hear what, I'm sorry, I didn't hear what part of the operational budget it is from. Is it from a specific set aside for Skyview? And if so, how much is that set aside? Yes, ma'am. It is coming from the logistical set aside for Skyview.

[03:18:21] I don't know that I have the logistical budget for Skyview with me this evening, but we can get you that information for the program development. Well, I think that's really, really critical. Like, how much is this amount of that logistical budget? And again, where is that money coming from, from the whole operational budget?

[03:18:41] I don't believe I've ever seen a logistical budget. And I do have to say, you mentioned that we're, the superintendent mentioned that we've been talking about this for a while. don't believe we had a public conversation about what this looks like in our classroom I did well I also want to ask about I wanted to ask about how it was determined that of the 26 high schools that all have career tech programming how skyview was selected what the criteria were for that so our partners that you've already outlined that was a predisposition of our

[03:19:16] partners as well as at this point as we're placing the hardware we are gonna we are in the process of building out the outbuildings at Skyview and it's an opportunity to build out from the bottom up to make sure that the in particular the outbuildings that we're able to outfit classrooms from the very beginning rather than having to go in and tear out space and re renovate so We're hoping to optimize our renovation funds because we already have to build out those classrooms.

[03:19:53] And in this case, it was also a part of the recommendation from those that are supporting the funding and partnership. Well, in absence of a plan, I have questions like what is the coursework in place at Skyview for students to use this immediately?

[03:20:10] How are faculty and students being prepared to use this upon a delivery? Is there a professional development plan? I'm not aware of any of that. So I think that that's a big missing piece in order to authorize a purchase. I also want to raise that just this week, George Mason University announced that it's leading our region with the acquisition of specialized hardware.

[03:20:30] And that's where the momentum is. And so I wonder if that leadership at GMU, if that meets the needs identified for the superintendent, you know, to have graduate school level hardware, You know, can't FCPS students continue to use the dual enrollment program that we already have in place with college professors who are even more deeply experts?

[03:20:52] Why not just partner with GMU and have them drive it rather than our school division footing a bill? That would be a question for the superintendent. We are currently partnering with GMU and we don't currently have a dual enrollment course because there isn't current high school curriculum in the United States for the quantum related to this particular unit that we're talking about this evening, so we're excited to partner with GMU.

[03:21:25] I've spoken with their college president, Dr. Washington. I attended a presentation that he spoke at this week, and we're looking forward to partnering with them. I would have enjoyed seeing that presentation as well.

[03:21:40] I just don't -- I have an experience that I've been brought along to understand what this is. the superintendent said there isn't a curriculum for this particular unit so we're buying a device in an extremely tight budget time for a program where there's no curriculum so like I think the board needs to discuss how do we be innovative in a time when we have very limited dollars and like how many students are going to benefit from this what's it going to take to up to scale it up we know that we have some schools that don't have any career tech offerings i put the slide up last time like for medical we have three regions without that so i'm

[03:22:19] not clear on the process you know even though there's money for starting up skyview there's a lot of things i would imagine that skyview needs to be started up but i also haven't received a report about what's happening with that startup um i just also want to highlight that i i disagree with uh this being posted just hours before this discussion i i don't think that's in the spirit of the policy. The policy says we may do that, but it's unusual. It literally says that in the policy. So I don't feel this is on the up and up, and it's unfortunate because this is exciting. It

[03:22:52] could be, but I don't think it's being done the best way. Thank you. Mr. Dannon. Yeah, I'll say most of my questions here are just around the cost and so forth, and I'll preface this by saying that my wife and I have been small business owners for about 13, almost 13 years now, and so we've gone through difficult financial constraints somewhat akin to what you know we're dealing with now as a school division um but i also recognize that and this is my wife's wisdom here saying you have to continue to invest in the future right um and so um can you talk a little bit more about where the scps funds are coming from is this brand new funding that's being allocated or is

[03:23:30] this funding that's already been allocated yes sir this is funding that has already it's been set aside allocated for the program the building out of instructional programs at the new high school as you know the current enrollment is only 9th and 10th graders so as the school evolves to having 11th and 12th graders we need programming for our juniors and seniors so we've had a set aside to make sure that we are able to develop that programming and as we first began the

[03:24:08] conversation about Skyview quantum aerospace rocket propulsion were the real topics that we were building the program around so it's an opportunity to take funds that we have to that we set aside to build out programming we're choosing quantum as the program because it's so critical that we prepare our children for their future and honestly not our past and um quantum has been taught at tj for some time and we're now moving to a more hands-on uh with the ability to utilize and actually have

[03:24:46] students see not just um contemplate but actually see the atomic interactions and we're you know when you start looking at science at the atomic level this is really groundbreaking for our children to have this opportunity and we're also looking at it as possibly an academy option at least in the early years so that students from other high schools will also benefit and as we build out the curriculum we want to make sure we can bring it to scale across the entire division so we're thrilled to be able to craft and develop a curriculum with the Feynman Institute and for those

[03:25:26] was watching you know Richard Feynman was a Nobel physicist and as someone who's studied and taught physics it's so incredible to think about work that we studied years ago about this possibility and now to see it come to life it's just a it's an incredible opportunity for our children and for the school division and the county. It is and for those like me who are unfamiliar with quantum it's once you go down

the rabbit hole learning about it and yet potential applications it's huge so you mentioned teaching about this at TJ. Can you speak a little bit more about what we've been

[03:26:01] teaching, if at all, about quantum already? Well, so the development there has been a number of years. Quantum's not a new content area or a new topic. It's the tools that are making it more visible for children, or for our students, our young people. And the quantum computing, we have a tremendous program at TJ. We don't necessarily have that across the county. And one of the goals of the program is as we begin having the hardware where students can actually work with it, we really want to, within the next five years, bring that to scale across

[03:26:38] the division. So we'll be coupling what we've learned at TJ with what we're partnering with GMU, with the Feynman Institute connected to Caltech, and our community. We have a number of community industry partners that we're going to be looking at internships, externships, apprenticeships, as we really develop a workforce learning pathway anchored here in Fairfax County that will support an incredible future, really, for our, you know, our community and our nation.

[03:27:07] I appreciate that. Can you speak a little bit more about, you know, as I understand it, lately folks are able to submit code remotely to quantum computers, so they don't need to have one on site, right? Can you talk about the benefits of having one of these on site in an educational setting? Well, as this becomes more prolific in industry, it's going to be important that young people are able to actually work with the tools imagine learning welding without actually having ever handled a torch or ever you know created a hot weld so i think just the ability to be hands-on with the tools and in particular the tool we're discussing this evening um is a

[03:27:45] game changer for our students now this tool it's more than i ever spent on a computer are we are we getting what are we getting for this is this some top of the line or is this something that's more like what are we talking about so the description is attached to the board item but it's essentially a four qubit machine that has had two peer-reviewed studies and is currently being utilized in universities in europe and then last question how is this going to be used so i know it'll be located um you know if we prove it would be located at skyview um would it be able to be accessed by other students around the county and so forth we're looking at developing it

[03:28:25] in part as an academy program as we begin i think because of the uniqueness of the tool we will likely look at even what's possible evening weekend intercession or seminars we're looking at a summer quantum camp type model where students not just at skyview would be able to benefit i also think that given the opportunity to anchor this technology here the partners that we believe will be working with us we're going to be able to hopefully bring this to scale at least regionally across the school division because it's really a science that all students ought to be able to

[03:29:04] experience i appreciate that and i can tell a lot of thought went into this this wasn't an impulse purchase so to speak this is something that you'll have planned out and making sure addressing these types of things. So I appreciate that. Thank you. This really is a commitment as well on the part of Connected DMV and our Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. And quite honestly, it's a stake in the ground our governor has placed with the Virginia GO initiatives with the recognition that quantum is really going to be a key to Virginia's future as well as our nation's.

[03:29:38] Thank you. Mr. Moon. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to support the motion. However, I have a number of questions for public, as well as for my colleagues. \$684,000 for a computer. That's what

people can say that that's a lot of money.

[03:29:59] We may be able to tout that we are the first one in the country, in the U.S., for public school, K-3 to our public school system to have a computer like that. That being able to tout that is one thing, but setting aside that kind of money to purchase this is another.

[03:30:19] So why this high-capacity computer is needed? You said 4 qubits. Why not two or three, which is, might be, I think there are schools around the world that have two and three, not four.

[03:30:36] So why do we have to be the first one to get the four? So for the type of work, one of the things we've talked about this evening, for example, with Lexia, is where are the peer-reviewed studies, where's the research. And what we know in the particular unit we're talking about this evening, the four-qubit unit, there are two independent peer-reviewed studies that are connected to the unit that we're looking at purchasing and it's important that we look at peer reviewed research when we're looking at anything we're doing honestly that is

[03:31:11] involving our young people but that for the curriculum that we're planning to have our students work on the four qubit is the ideal size I do want to note that the Fairfax County EDA is partnering with a hundred thousand dollars to support that purchase and we so I think that it's important also to know that in time we'll be able to build on to that and increase the qubits so we're excited about that eventually I'd like to make sure that we have a path backwards even through middle school and that's a place where

[03:31:50] we might look at a two-qubit machine, for example, at a more developmental grade level? You know, earlier you mentioned about potentially, you know, on a reasonable basis within Fairfax County School System, we might be able to purchase more quantum computers.

[03:32:10] And I hope that, you know, if we have, you know, funding to be able to do that, certainly I could support that. However, I'm not going to be able to automatically say that it's going to be the same computer from same manufacturer because, again, \$684,000 computer is, some could argue that that's a catalog for, if on any level, and whether in this kind of financial, you know, budgetary situation, the school system is in, whether that's the message you want to send out that

[03:32:45] we're going to have more of \$684,000, you know, computers throughout the county. But I'm happy to try with this one, with the support from our partners. And I hope that partners, you know, for me, you know, \$100,000 from EDA, there's nothing.

[03:33:05] You know, they certainly could have done more. They could have paid \$584,000 and we pay \$100,000. Yes, sir. And the other thing about this particular unit is we're able to put it in a traditional temperature room.

[03:33:20] So it doesn't require a cryogenic environment, which will enable us to maintain it at a lower cost than some other types of models. Thank you. Mr. McElveen. Well, it is a rare and extraordinary opportunity to invest directly in the future and lead the world.

[03:33:43] And today we are excited to do exactly that by welcoming to Fairfax County the first ever quantum computer in a K-12 school anywhere in the world. I want to congratulate Dr. Reed for presenting FCPS with this opportunity to lead, and also the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority for their leadership alongside of us.

[03:34:06] This investment gives our students a chance to engage with one of the most consequential technologies of our time and prepares them to shape the world that lies ahead. In doing so, most importantly, we are reaffirming FCPS's tradition of innovation and excellence, returning our school system to the gold standard it has set in decades past and must continue to set for the future.

[03:34:31] I also look forward to joining with my colleagues in ensuring that students at all schools throughout FCPS will have the opportunity to access quantum computing opportunities. And I'll also say that while this is a moment to invest and to lead, I hope this also is a moment when we work together with our county partners to attract the corporate support and funding that this system so desperately needs to main our other nationally renowned programs like world languages, the humanities, music, theater, arts, and other curriculum in which we desperately need to continue to invest and innovate.

[03:35:10] So congratulations to our system leadership and to this board for taking what I think is a monumental and important step. Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. Just a few quick questions. The program at TJ that you talked about, they do not have a quantum computer, correct? How do they handle their classes?

[03:35:33] So I think there's a lot of theory, and I know, Dr. Presidio, I'm not sure if you're as familiar with the curriculum there. It is such a highly specialized curriculum. I'd probably have to get you some additional information on that, but I think Dr. Reed is right.

[03:35:52] the application, I think sometimes it's even limited at TJ by the technology infrastructure that they do have there. Thank you. You talked about in the early years potentially making this an academy at Skyview. How will it be handled before we get to that academy stage? Will it be an elective? How do you envision that working at Skyview? I think the academy stage will be simultaneous with its origin, because we're only going to have juniors next year at Skyview, right?

[03:36:27] Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. So we won't yet have seniors. So I think it would be really important that we have an opportunity, academies being available for juniors and seniors that can come from other schools to participate in that coursework. But yes, of course, it would be an elective course thank you the contract that we're voting upon today speaks to the hardware can you speak to the other expenses that will realize this program fully so there is a project management services option that we're going to talk about at a future board meeting it's not on the agenda this evening but that

[03:37:07] outlines a partnership with connected DMV the American Physical Society with the Feynman Institute and other partners to make sure that we have an advisory board for the program that we have space this industry is really growing in the Northern Virginia area and so the opportunity to make sure that we have built-in apprenticeships internships externships and so and also as we develop a curriculum that's hands-on with this tool that can

[03:37:44] actually be used in high schools across the world is really an opportunity for us to develop and so all of those pieces will be dovetailing as we work through the use of this really dynamic science tool sure do you have any sense in terms of what the commitment would be financially to realize those other pieces currently the commitment would be two hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually. We are exploring, or we will be, before we bring it to the board for final

[03:38:17] approval, partnership planning with GMU. I think that's been raised already. George Mason University, in my conversations with Dr. Washington and their rector, Sumit, their monies, part of their

grant is to connect to K-12 educational programming, and so we see a natural tie to some of the work that's going to be implicit within that \$250,000 bucket around professional services.

[03:38:52] Thank you. One of the things that I want to make sure that I share is that I fully support bringing quantum science and engineering into our schools. Oh, but before I get to my comments, I forgot one last statement, I mean, one last question.

[03:39:08] Is the goal to eventually have a quantum computer in every single high school and middle school? I don't know if I heard the latter clearly. I think as the technology evolves, like all technologies have evolved, I mean, think one of my favorite movies is Hidden Figures, right?

[03:39:25] And when the first computers came, they were huge. they took up whole rooms and eventually we know what computers look like now you can look at a graphing calculator that does a lot of the calculations that were being done at that time so I think as this technology evolves we're going to see more compact and less expensive units that eventually we'll be able to provide at other levels within the organization but minimally I think we want to make sure that there's regional access in each of our regions and ideally

[03:40:02] we will have quantum computing units in all of our high schools and secondary schools I do think the path and track to support that level of computing needs to be prepped through middle school at some point and I think our there's a lot of quantum work in communications materials textiles cryptography that may or may not always require the unit, but there's projected within the next several years an 850,000 person gap in employment around quantum industry

[03:40:40] topics. I recently, at the event I was at this week, one of the data points was that there will only be one qualified employee for every three positions that connected to quantum. So I can't think of a time that's more important for our young people to have skills to be able to go out into the world, not just when they leave us, but while they're still with us, to experience this incredible science movement. Thank you. This hardware that is being purchased currently through this motion, do you anticipate that will need to be refreshed after

[03:41:20] some period of time there is within the cost that we're talking about there is a service and upgrade item built into that i think some of the these machines are so new that i'm not sure i can predict what types of upgrades they may or may not need but that is built into the cost basis so we can it will be upgraded for how many is for in perpetuity or for a select number, for a select period?

[03:41:54] - I don't know what in perpetuity is going to be, but I will get back to you on in perpetuity on that one. - It would be interesting to have that information. - Absolutely, yes ma'am. - Just to know that we are not going to need to have the same layout.

[03:42:12] I also have to highlight that in a moment where we are discussing budgets being very tight. Just very recently at a budget meeting, we talked about central offices slashing 5%, we talked about increasing of class sizes to potentially meet the demands.

[03:42:34] We talked about not being able to afford crossing guards and we don't want to assume that from the county. We've talked about a number of things. How do we quantify, how do we ensure that our public understands this is the right spend? Because I'm not sure that I understand that.

[03:42:50] when we have basic needs that have not yet been met or will be challenges to us this year, it's hard to be all in with investing into the future when basic needs are in jeopardy.

[03:43:07] - So I think that the partnership work we're gonna be able to do with GMU and other partners that I believe will be forthcoming are gonna help support the ongoing costs for this. And the reality is the dollars that we're going to be using for this are intended to support the build-out of programming at Skyview, and we're going to have to spend dollars to build out programming at Skyview.

[03:43:34] So whether it's quantum or whether it's going to be welding or cybersecurity or drone development, there is going to be an outlay, a capital outlay, for some type of equipment that, you know, discussing quantum tonight but it would have to be something um for skyview it's not money we're taking from other schools this is money that was set aside to open and develop programs for that particular high school was that my thought okay um i'm sorry you were looking at me if that was my bell again just going back to my original comments and i'll just finish and not take a go back

[03:44:14] i'm in strong support of bringing this kind of technology into our schools of offering our kids this kind of application my concern it's not the educational value of this technology itself my concern is whether or not this is the right time to invest in such an infrastructure george mason university just announced their own quantum program which i believe we can do a great job with collaborating with them in order to bring some of these experiences to our students and not necessarily make this investment right now doing this tight

[03:44:52] budget time. That was your time. Thank you. Mr. Frisch. Thank you. So we've already heard that Governor Spanberger is leaning into quantum and so are our friends at the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority through their partnership with us. And the jobs are beginning to arrive too in our own backyard and they are hiring now. State officials say that there are more than 1,100 quantum related jobs currently open across northern Virginia. Companies decide where to locate

[03:45:27] based on where the talent is. A pipeline that starts in our high schools is an economic development asset for Fairfax County. Government contractors are moving toward quantum and many are right in our own backyard. Booz Allen and McLean, Letos and Reston, Northrop Grumman and Falls Church.

[03:45:46] They are all making enormous investments in quantum. These companies employ many Fairfax County families, and they are building their future around quantum. Our students should be prepared to walk into those jobs. The issue is the bottleneck around people, which is exactly what our schools produce, people. At a House Science Committee hearing, the head of the National Institute of Standards and Technology said of quantum, we're in a workforce shortage, plain and simple. And we're not just talking about PhDs, though I do hope that some of our students

[03:46:21] go on to get their PhDs and become thought leaders in the industry. We're talking about engineers and technicians at all levels being needed. And the pipeline runs from certificates to degrees to advanced degrees. So students who grew up in Fairfax County and stay here can pursue a real chance to take advantage of this opportunity. The Commonwealth is investing. Companies in our own backyard are hiring. And this is an investment that positions Fairfax County students at the

[03:46:53] start of the pipeline. And I'm happy to cast my vote in favor. Thank you. I'll be brief. I think this is an incredibly exciting opportunity. As someone who used to work at TJ from 2002 to 2006, and we're

helping students select classes in artificial intelligence and quantum mechanics and DNA science, and I had students researching facial recognition technologies and backup cameras on cars and an artificial sort of like blood source in the battlefield that's actually

[03:47:29] a saline. And seeing it all come to fruition just blows my mind. We need to be in the forefront of what's happening. We have to be innovators. We have to be creative. And the workforce learning is huge. I would say one area of Fairfax County has to grow is in internships, externships, and apprenticeships. And I do believe that this is going to help open a lot of doors in that direction. So Ms. Marin for Gobek. Yeah. So, you know, what I observe is a desire for being the first K-12 school division to own a quantum computer. And I know, I can see how that distinction

[03:48:06] is exciting for some. I'm eager to understand it better and to develop the kind of pipeline of funding, coursework, and access for students to actually be able to do this stuff. You know, we're also in a shortage for medical jobs. And we already know how to implement the access to those programs. And we have a local public university leading this work. Would it be a bigger return on our investment to require more math of a certain type? I mean, the superintendent is doing work on course taking patterns. You know, she's elevating kids to take that algebra one. We know that students are going to need higher level math and science to even access

[03:48:42] the kind of work it seems that such a purchase would allow for. And I believe I heard that this is for an elective course so um and if it's to be an anchor for future business then fcps should be paying far less if anything you know if we're being asked to be an economic incubator you know i see the connection between educating students and strengthening our economy but i don't think our public schools should put this bill um i'm also really concerned about jeopardizing funding available to start up skyview i don't know how much money has been allocated to get sky view up and running as a basic high school let alone one with an academy and special programs

[03:49:22] and so i don't know how an amount of nearly three quarters of a million dollars impacts the budget and plans um the way i see it's a significant and really unallowable oversight of the superintendent to not present the board with a full picture of the finances how can we know what to spend when we don't even know what's in the bank look i'm a very savvy shopper when it comes to purchasing for myself and my family i'm going to be scrutinizing the purchases I'm making with other people's tax dollars and I have to say this is another example of what I spoke to in executive limitation eight last meeting the superintendent has reduced or eliminated the board's ability to make

[03:50:02] informed decision because it's already been said and done and the announcement is already planned for after this meeting thank you for time okay I will now call for the vote on the motion which is on the screen all those in favor? Ms. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Mr. Moon, Mr. McElveen, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Dannen, Ms. St. John Cuning, myself, Ms. Dixit, are you still on? And Ms. Dixit, all those opposed?

[03:50:31] Ms. Marin and Dr. Anderson, any abstentions? I think that was everybody. So could the clerk please read the vote? 10-2, the motion carries. Thank you. I now call on Ms. St. John Cuning for a follow-on motion. I move that the school board direct the division superintendent when expansion of this specialized computer hardware and related support services program to additional school is deemed viable and consistent with potential program assignments to utilize Lewis High School as the first school for

[03:51:06] expansion. Is there a second? I second. Thank you. Ms. St. John Connie, would you like to speak to your motion? So yes, first of all, I'm really excited that the first motion passed and the reason I'm bringing up this follow-on motion is because it's a strategic move that follows the last meeting where we looked at providing programs for schools that are under enrolled this would help increase enrollment at schools like Lewis and other ones across the county I really want to thank my my colleagues who

[03:51:43] partner to make this move very quickly there was a lot of fast-moving information and i want to thank the leadership team for answering questions telling us that this was a possibility and how we can move forward with this i'm really excited that the possibility of this being something that we could provide to students on the eastern side of the county and not just the students at lewis the way we envision this is that other students from the other schools that are on the eastern side of the county can also participate this means that we would have a school on the western side of the county and the school on the eastern side of the

[03:52:20] county where students that maybe don't necessarily go to that school will be able to come in oh come in and and be able to um to participate i'm sorry i thought you were telling me that my time was up so um i know i know that uh i sign off my um all of my letters with learners today and leaders tomorrow and I think that this is us looking at our learners today that will become our leaders tomorrow and the fact that we as leaders today are making investment in our learners is something that I'm really happy about and I'm

[03:52:58] really urge the rest of the board to to look at this as the first place to go where we will have an equitable ability to provide access to our students thank you. Ms. Anderson, would you like to speak to your second? I would. So I've repeatedly said Springfield residents attend 14 different high schools in varying numbers. So I'm not an at-large member, but there are moments that I feel like I am. And I have 10% of Lewis High School. I believe this special school needs as many champions as we can find. So in addition to the other four

[03:53:35] magisterial members that serve this community, I am so grateful that other members of the board are in support of the urgency to find a solution for the under-enrollment at Lewis. As we look towards potential programming options for the Lewis community, this motion is meant to help frame those decisions and provide a valuable opportunity on the east side of the county in a school that could potentially will have the space. So I am exceedingly excited about the possibilities that are here. I think that it'll take us a few years to get everything in place that we need and I'm hoping that the stars will align and that this will be able to coincide

[03:54:14] with that in a few years after we get things established at Skyview so I'm exceedingly excited thank you Mr. Moon regrettably I'm not going to be able to support this motion being equitable is one thing however great distinction big distinction between this following with previous motion is this previous motion superintendent even though she was not able to tell us how much has been set aside she assured the board that there's enough funding set

[03:54:53] aside for programs at a new high school at skyview and that quantum computer for qubit was going to provide that program for skyview so we have a money set aside for this one lois we do not have a money set aside so i am unable to commit to do even though the language says deemed viable when we're going to make that decision deemed viable we don't make a deemed viable decision until we pass the budget and but we're going to discuss about the program options what she's

[03:55:32] going to bring a superintendent was supposed to bring us with options by the end of october if i remember that correctly i don't know when we'll be discussing and making decisions i don't even know what options she's going to be i'm not going to prejudge what the super Indian ground i don't But I want to direct her to bring certain, you know, certain options.

[03:55:51] If I wanted to do that, I could have done that the last meeting. I didn't. We are letting superintendent do her job and then board deliberate at that point. It is premature. I want to support Lewis High School as much as possible, just like the maker and the seconder of this motion.

[03:56:11] but we are again again almost seven hundred thousand dollars and ongoing expenses of one to the tune of 250 000 that's a million dollars i cannot make a commitment right now and and once this motion passes this will be seen as a giving directive to superintendent put the program and purchase that computer and that's not what i can commit at this point when you are faced when we

[03:56:43] all know that we are going to be dealing with a very top budget here thank you mr dan um yeah just briefly i'm really glad that my colleagues brought this up and they say great minds think alike because when i first spoke with dr reed about this um one of my first questions was can we what about bringing this to my area neck of the woods and i too have students at lewis and um you know i appreciate all the thought and plan that's gone into this you know i recognize that skyview is a natural fit given the funds have already been allocated and they're looking for some type of program like that but i also really appreciate that my colleagues brought were direct enough

[03:57:21] to bring this forward and i think it shows how much we care about fixing the enrollment issues at lewis and and so forth so i'm very excited to support this and thank you all for your foresight bringing it forward thank you dr anderson thank you just looking for some clarification This vote is not saying that we are going to allocate any dollars to Louis at this point.

[03:57:48] What I believe it is saying is if and when we get into an expansion stage, Louis should have first consideration. Is that your understanding, Dr. Reed? Yes, ma'am.

[03:58:04] And that consideration does not come with any timetable. It could be five years. It could be 10 years. Is that your understanding, Ms. St. John Cunning? Ms. St. John Cunning, you may answer.

[03:58:23] So there's not a timetable. I believe that there's going to be an appetite for this to grow quickly, as Dr. Reed has expressed that this expansion is something that she's looking to go into all of our schools. I think the appetite is going to be there. I think that now that we're discussing this, there will be possibilities for funding.

[03:58:44] Thank you. And this would be as an opportunity to draw greater enrollment into LEWIS? Correct. A question that I have that I did not think of when we spoke earlier, because I don't think I knew it at that time, but if we're adding a quantum computer into every high school, why would that be a draw to LEWIS in terms of enrollment?

[03:59:06] I think the ability to scale this up is going to take a little bit of time. So I think that the idea likely we're going to have to move in a pilot, pilot-proof scale model.

[03:59:22] We'll likely move from Skyview to maybe one or two other schools next would be my guess before we move to more of a cluster of schools and then all schools. So I don't think we're going to go from one to all overnight.

[03:59:38] I don't think that's going to happen. I think it's going to be more so one and then maybe one or two more, and then it's going to be maybe half of them, and then maybe the other half. I just don't see us moving them to all schools right after one. Sure.

[03:59:54] So the attraction to increase Lewis's enrollment is likely to be short-term. Maybe, maybe not. I think there's so many science topics that spread from quantum that as we look at other program options, And I don't want to get ahead of the team that's going to come back.

[04:00:14] And I think we've set aside time on the November 10th work session to talk about some programs. But I do think right now we know that some of the transfer outs at Lewis High School are to go to a STEM academy at Edison.

[04:00:30] And if the ability to put quantum ends up marrying up with a similar type of academy that could be at Lewis, then obviously students wouldn't be transferring out. And that's a significant number of students, we're told.

[04:00:45] So I think that it isn't even so much about drawing students to Lewis as it is keeping the students who are currently assigned to Lewis feeling like the programs there are going to meet their needs so they're able to stay in their neighborhood school.

[04:01:03] Sure. Thank you. You raised Edison. Is this going to be coupled with the STEM Academy from Edison at Lewis? That I don't know. that's something the committee is you know you've directed me to have us come back with program options before November 12th so I know the team is working on all types of possibilities and I don't want to get ahead of that but I know they're working on a presentation for the work session on the 10th. Thank you and as I share with Ms. St. John Cuning earlier I will never stand in the way of people or school board members advocating for things for their schools I because I do that very

[04:01:42] loudly and very often and so i am going to be supportive of this motion but i want to ensure that this does not make any commitments that we're you're going to come back with a full plan for us to have an approval with whatever path this takes is that an accurate description yes ma'am thank you when i read when in uh miss st john cunning and mrs anderson talked to me about this my understanding is that this is a prioritization of an expansion plan that is yet to be forthcoming.

[04:02:20] So that's how I read the intent of the motion. - Thank you, Mr. Krish. - Is that my time? - I'm sorry. - Did you have more questions? - Was that my time?

[04:02:35] - Oh, I thought, my apologies, I thought you were done, I'm so sorry. - Were you done? - I was not. - Oh. - Keep going. - You seem like everyone-- - Dr. Vincent, I'd like you to have all of your time.

[04:02:51] - It's fine. - Are you gonna wanna go back? Okay, well, let's use the rest of your time then, now. It's okay. Please continue. Mr. McElveen. Well, I am happy to take Dr. Anderson's time. So I will say, looking at the language here, I appreciate what Dr. Anderson just elucidated, because it does very explicitly, contrary to what Dr. Reed says, make a commitment that Lewis High School is the first school for expansion of this program.

[04:03:26] So I don't think what you just said is indeed how the text reads. So I think, like Mr. Moon, I don't want to prejudge our October conversation because, as I just said, this does commit us to a specific program at Lewis when we've already directed staff to bring us back options for next month.

[04:03:50] I am 100% behind finding good opportunities to enhance Lewis High School and the programming there. But this may be it, this may not be it, and I think we're going to have that more fulsome conversation next month.

[04:04:07] I also want to say that what this staff has done over the past six years or so to develop a leadership program there has been fabulous. And I think leadership should be part of the direction for that school.

[04:04:28] And as I've said in public settings before, I think, and this again, we can discuss more in October, I think establishing some sort of leadership magnet school along the lines of Maggie Walker would be an ideal solution for Lewis.

[04:04:45] To that end, I also worry about what this motion proposes and how it might cannibalize the programming at Edison High School. More than a decade ago, we worked with Dr. Garza, Mr. Moon, and I were on the board at that time, to bring programming to Edison because we were seeing the same kind of flight that we have seen at Lewis.

[04:05:09] And that program at Edison has been very successful. It has stopped the flight, and that community has embraced it. So I would not want to do anything now that would hurt that program at Edison, even if this is a commitment for down the road, because I'm very committed to maintaining that strong program at Edison and for that community.

[04:05:33] So I'll leave it there. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Dunn. I wasn't planning to speak, but I feel compelled to by the conversation.

[04:05:46] All 12 of us on this school board and every FCPS leader on that dais have a collective responsibility, not because of our own actions in the past three years or under this superintendent, but because of the historic actions of previous school boards and previous FCPS leadership that systematically deprived Mount Vernon High School and Lewis High School of equitable opportunities for their students, absolutely destroyed and undermined the foundations of these high schools.

[04:06:18] schools. And that legacy continues to this day. And when you speak to these communities, when you speak to the staff, when you speak to the leadership of these schools, if you speak to the alumni, the boosters, people who put in X number of hours every day, every week, every month to volunteer for their schools because they're so passionate and we've heard their testimony, then I just want to foot stomp that we have an absolute moral obligation to help these communities and help these schools and there will be a financial commitment because I'm going to insist on it and I'm going to fight for it because these schools deserve it.

[04:06:56] We say we're all in favor of one Fairfax and equity, but this is where the rubber meets the road, right? Tough budget situation. I'm sorry. Every year I've seen for the past 25 years in this county has been a tough budget year.

[04:07:11] There's never been a year where we've like, oh, let's burn some money because we have too much. I mean, when has that ever happened in any level of government ever? So this year, like any other, we need to remedy the historic wrongs.

[04:07:27] This school board, I'm so proud to be part of because we've taken on the hard challenges like school boundaries and the other issues that have been left to fester for decades. And this is definitely an

issue that needs to be solved, not just conceptually, where we talk about it and then put it on the shelf to gather dust.

[04:07:44] This is a time when we need to act and act now, and I'm so proud that I'm part of a school board that I know will act and make sure that these are remedied, not all at once. Everything has to be phased in and there will be transitions. But the point is that these communities will finally get the justice and the equity that these students and communities have deserved for so many years, but have been disregarded and ignored for far too long. Thank you.

[04:08:12] Thank you, Ms. Merrim. I would love for this board to do deep work to examine secondary course offerings to see what's financially possible, what's needed for workforce development, and how it can be accessed by the most students who want and need the education. But making piecemeal decisions is not how we steward this system for years to come. It's not how we get to equity. We have that opportunity in November when the secondary coursework offering is on the agenda. November 12th, it's on consent, secondary work plan. And for, I believe this will be the third year in a row, I will pull it from consent because it's not just another rubber stamp. And if we're serious about

[04:08:49] access and equity, we will do the work and examine it. Every year, the superintendent asks us to rubber stamp a list of course listings. But again, I go back to that slide that I had pulled up a meeting or two ago. Why do we have three regions with no medical courses? We cannot just make decisions how people feel. We need to make decisions based on funding, workforce trends, staffing needs an actual feasibility plan from the superintendent would be really nice you know as my colleague said the board is awaiting recommendations from the superintendent

[04:09:26] about course expansion for lewis so perhaps that will include quantum computing but we still have limited funding so we need to see a realistic plan the way i see it um this is both a rudiment a rudimentary proposal and an empty promise um kind of like dangling a morsel to the school community that has prostrated itself before this board just to have basic programming so i don't feel good about it at all and i don't think it's the way to go thank you um i'm gonna do this in

[04:10:03] order go back since i see like two lights still on so mr i'm sorry miss dixit thank you sorry i'm just trying to get my camera on um so i i wanted to just say the community which has been waiting for lewis to get more programming i'm i'm sure certainly they'll be here happy to hear this news these are not empty promises made by board these are actionable items which will work and if they know majority of the board is going to support this and i would also say that i will say the

[04:10:40] magisterial members are in full support of that so i do not see you know any reason to go against something a magisterial members are so support you know interested in that um and i i'll i'll so say you know more opportunities for a student why to stop that and why to come in that way so i'm with full it's a full support of this motion thank you mr moon for go back uh thank you madam sure i must to uh respond to some of the comments made by a board member with a passion bombon

[04:11:19] district and franconia district the boards prior boards over 30 years have not failed them Tried, tried. They have tried hard. And there have been board members representing, who represented those school districts.

[04:11:53] Districts worked really hard to support all their schools. So I cannot let go when their work is being dispersed at this table. We still got a work to do. We still got a work to do that I agree.

[04:12:08] That's where we should put the focus on rather than denigrating somebody else's work. prior boards work thank you dr anderson for go back thank you just a couple of things um just going back to the language of the motion can you perhaps put it up please i i'm not sure if a verb that is in the motion is congruent with the questions that i just asked dr re just a little

[04:12:44] while ago where it would be consideration because that last piece says to utilize lewis high school as the first um school for expansion um for me that's not a consideration that is a firm stake in the ground i just want to make sure that there's clarity there because again i don't think it was consistent with the conversation we just had during my first turn yes sir i think it's or yes ma'am i think it's clear i didn't have the language in front of me i knew it was contingent on the expansion actually being viable that they would then be the first school of the expansion

[04:13:20] yes ma'am okay thank you um and secondly one of the things that i think has to be part of the conversation because this entire effort is to draw more kids to to lewis i really want to be sure that when and if we get to that place that there's a plan that's going to actually support that draw because i'm not sure if this is going to yield what we think it's going to yield but that's a future conversation. Having said that, I've already said this at this meeting at this

[04:13:56] dais, our commitment to equity has to span all aspects. It's not when it suits us. If we are going to be committed to equity, we have to show it and transport our kids to schools that are being phased. We chose not to spend those dollars, which were not much more than what we just spent tonight so if we're going to be one fairfax all of the good things we have to be we have to apply that in every aspect so it's a little challenging for me to sit here to hear that this is the one

[04:14:34] equity issue it is absolutely but there have been others where we've been very inconsistent in our activities and in our actions um as well as thank you that was your time well i'm going to take an extra 10 if that's okay because I let go of my time earlier but I try to give it back to you but yes you can take an extra 10 seconds thank you now I lost my I don't know I lost my oh here's what I wanted to say and also I want to call out that we have to be consistent and our deference to magisterial members and

[04:15:13] I'm just going to leave it there thank you miss a John cunning for go back so So I want to be perfectly clear, one of the things that I've said before and some of my colleagues have also said is fundamentally every school needs to have a strong basis and this motion is to help increase enrollment but more importantly to make sure that the The students, Lewis, that are enrolled there now are having access to this high coursework,

[04:15:51] this level of programming so that the students that are there are successful. And so this is not just to increase enrollment, which is something that we want to have happen. At the basis, schools like Lewis, schools like Mount Vernon, schools like Herndon, like Annandale,

[04:16:13] Their programs should be robust, should be strong, so the population that is there right now are getting access to this high-quality programming, the high-quality courses, so that they can be successful, so they don't feel that they have to pupil place out, and so that other people might want to come in if it's a specific program.

[04:16:34] We cannot provide every program at every school, but we can start by looking at our under-enrolled schools. And we know that the reason that some of these schools are under-enrolled is because there is an unfair and unjustified bias against these schools.

[04:16:50] I've been in these schools. My colleagues have been in these schools. These schools are great. There is an unjustified bias. But if we can make sure that those kids that are there now are getting the best of the best, then I consider that a success. Thank you. I'll now call for a vote on the motion, which is on the screen.

[04:17:10] All those in favor? Ms. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Dannon, Dr. Anderson, Ms. St. John Cuning, Ms. Dixit, Ms. Dixit and myself.

[04:17:26] All those opposed? Ms. Marin, Mr. Moon, Mr. McElveen. No abstentions. Clerk, please read the vote. 9-3, the motion carries.

[04:17:45] Thank you. We're going to take a five-minute break. Five-minute bio break, only five minutes.

[04:21:55] Four members, please take your seats.

[04:25:43] Okay, we are back. Agenda Item 8.01, Instructional Program EL-9, Monitoring Report. Each year, the school board assesses the superintendent in part on the basis of the school division's reasonable progress towards achieving the 2023-30 strategic plans, goals and adherence to a set of 13 executive limitations found on pages 16 to 33 of the Board's Strategic Governance Manual.

[04:26:14] Superintendent provides annual reporting, excuse me, annual monitoring reports to the Board for each executive limitation. The Board then votes on whether the provided report is in compliance or if corrective action is needed. I call on Dr. Reed for a monitoring report and executive limitation 9 instructional program.

[04:26:32] Thank you, Madam Chair. and I this evening I'm going to actually keep the cover photo up for a minute because I just it's one of my probably my favorite photos of our students so when we get back to that madam clerk I'm sorry this evening I'll be presenting executive limitation nine as chair lady indicated which discusses instructional

[04:27:10] programming for those of you watching online the entire report is attached for your reading pleasure all right I think that it's a fleeting there we go I know this is one of my favorite pictures and I just it's a clearly means that our

[04:27:46] students love our instructional programs but it's just to me it's just a vibrant example of how how amazing our young people are that they make magic every so if we're ready let's go ahead and go to the next slide executive limitation nine is around instructional programs and at the time of this report to the best of my knowledge information and belief I've gathered information and evidence from our various departments our senior leadership team is reviewed that I believe supports compliance with the board's executive limitation

[04:28:25] associated with this topic and we'll share some highlights this evening so in terms of new or newly updated curriculum i want to start with a few updates here during the 26-27 school year we are implementing a standards alignment plan in language arts grades 3 through 11 and mathematics grades 3 through 6 to strengthen our support student mastery of our standards of learning we're also going to be initiating our water safe fairfax in the 26 27 school year which

[04:29:04] is an integrated program it includes a high school elective course that incorporates lifeguard certification for students the training of high school students to serve as water safety ambassadors and a classroom based water safety instruction for students in grades three four and five Last year, we launched

five Montessori early childhood classes, and this year, we've expanded the number of classrooms and added a site.

[04:29:34] We're trying a tuition model at one of our schools because we'd like to do some Montessori expansions with a balance of tuition and non-tuition schools each year, and we're trying to figure out the feasibility of that financially moving forward.

[04:29:52] So further, in our new or newly updated curriculum, with our math materials, we've had high quality instructional materials adopted in middle school, which for grades math six, rather it occurs at our three middle schools that have sixth grade or our elementary schools who have sixth grade through algebra two.

[04:30:16] We're very excited about that. Early thoughts on this. Staff really appreciate having concrete materials. Additionally, several actions are put into place to support our elementary math. I mentioned earlier this evening the elementary math workbooks, which are new this year.

[04:30:38] and again big shout out to dr. Amy hunter and her team really outstanding work the automatic enrollment for identified students into math 6 advanced and the expansion of algebra 1 honors in grade 6 so these are all new and updated curriculum materials now as we look at new or updated accessibility we've made great strides in this area we have health education lessons that support access for students with disabilities that are being implemented

[04:31:13] in grades five and six and this is something that we've had requests for for several years and I'm very appreciative that we were able to complete these are universal design for learning strategies you've heard this evening we've had significant professional development and this continues to be integrated across offices and departments with our professional learning and curriculum resources honestly that alone would be a huge lift for the division and that's just one of multiple initiatives right now and professional learning and

[04:31:49] coaching to support inclusion continues this year with a focus on leveraging inclusion school leadership teams to improve practices across all craft classrooms dr. Presidio and dr. Edmonds heard have phased this work I think very thoughtfully and we have different cohorts but in a very short order our entire division will have had the training and be really transformed in how we serve our students with disabilities and the quality of

[04:32:24] instruction that's really good for all students so we think about the student experience we've also worked to create more comprehensive experiences the staff is beginning to engage communities of identified middle school AAP Center schools in fact there was a meeting this evening I think on middle school AAP expansion this year we're also thrilled every second grader in Fairfax County is going to be visiting a public library and which means that all second graders are gonna have that opportunity this year in many places as I've met with our

[04:33:03] parent parent groups over the course of the last couple years many parents don't realize that the public library is free that if we live in Fairfax County that's a program we have access to so we're really excited Natalie Lorenzi in our library office and instructional services and her team and I'm going to tell you our librarians are forced to reckon with so our elementary librarians have worked really hard with Natalie and the central office team to really create an experience I think that our second graders are going to benefit from and

[04:33:39] big props to the Fairfax County library team because they've really gone out of their way to make sure that our student visits are going to be incredible they're going to get to see what happens when you turn a book in and where it goes and it's I'm really looking forward to a great experience for them also this year As a result of feedback from the board, Dr. Presidio and the team have made sure that all elementary schools with a grade 6 are expected to participate in the annual 6th grade all-county choral festival.

[04:34:22] You might think that's not a significant shift, but it has been. There's been a lot of conversation about that, but we're very excited to provide those opportunities for our children. The ETRC has been established, as we've discussed this evening, so I don't think I'll rehash that.

[04:34:40] Students are participating in four required digital literacy lessons this year, which will be new, and those are listed for you on the slide. And that, Madam Chair, concludes the summary of the monitoring report for Executive Limitation No. 9 Instructional Programs.

[04:34:59] I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you. Mr. Krish. Thank you. I think the real gem in this report is our work on math. And I wanted to give you an opportunity to talk a little bit about the report talks about the work to strengthen alignment with instructional programming for math in grades three to six with an eye towards aligning with the SOL.

[04:35:32] That coupled with the work that's been done to prepare younger learners in math as a means of getting them into higher level math by middle school and in elementary school. Can you talk about the impact that is having on testing in our school system?

[04:35:50] Thank you, Mr. Frisch. And we are exceptionally proud of our progress. First of all, I'd like to note that over the last several years since COVID, we've gained 19 points division-wide in our math SOL scores, which is extraordinarily significant.

[04:36:08] It's the first time we've hit 80% as a division since well before pre-COVID. And same with our reading, although we're really going to double down on third grade reading this year. You're going to hear a lot more about that. But two years ago, we had 50 sixth graders enrolled in algebra.

[04:36:26] Last year, we had 671 that took the Algebra I high school SOL exam with an 100% pass rate. We had a number of, I don't know that I calculated. I know I was at Haycock Elementary meeting with Clark Levine and Liz Beatty, and we had, I believe, 11 perfect scores at Haycock.

[04:36:47] so I'm sure there were multiple other perfect scores across the division, we had many of our sixth graders actually score in the advanced range. I think 669 out of 671 might have been in the advanced. So this year we have over 1,600 sixth graders enrolled in Algebra I.

[04:37:08] So the trajectory of that work, coupled with the increase from 50-plus percentage of our eighth graders in algebra to 86% of our eighth graders in algebra, is significant.

[04:37:25] The pass rate last year for those through middle school, our middle school algebra pass rate was at 95%. So we believe, number one, that's due to the incredible work of our educators in the classroom, under the leadership of Dr. Amy Hunter and that math team, the efforts of our students and families to support them, but it's truly, I think, transformational for our students.

[04:37:53] And really, our math work is one of the reasons why our earlier topic around quantum, why we're such an ideally suited location for that level of science, because really, mathematics and quantum

are intertwined.

[04:38:10] So we're thrilled with the progress that's moving forward. And we're looking forward to the team that's selecting our textbooks for math at elementary. I can't wait to see what they come up with. Well, and, you know, for all the noise out there about what's happening in public schools, this is what's happening in these public schools.

[04:38:31] You mentioned textbooks. I do have a couple questions about what the board approved in July. I think there's some confusion in the community about what the board voted for in terms of textbooks. Can you provide some clarity on what texts the board approved and for what grade levels?

[04:38:51] Happy to do that. Yes, sir. I also want to just echo what you said about the power and promise of public education. It's happening here. And it's due to this board and your leadership and the quality of the educators we have in our classrooms. So there's a lot to be proud of.

[04:39:07] For me to be trumpeting math success, math was not my strong suit in school. So it's a big deal. Can you talk a little bit, though, about what the board approved so that we have some clarity in the community? And then follow that up with what is the plan for getting it to getting, you know, textbooks, physical textbooks into the hands of all our learners, math learners?

[04:39:30] Yes, sir. So we, the board approved physical math textbooks for Math 6 and Algebra 1 through, I believe, the Algebra 2 trig, Algebra 2 books, all have to go up through, but textbooks, titles had been approved previously for like AP calculus and so forth but the they are textbooks algebra one textbooks I have seen some of those already delivered to classrooms and we want to make sure that any student who's enrolled

[04:40:08] in an algebra one algebra two geometry that they have textbooks by now mr. or dr. Presidio do you want to confirm that please mr. works just fine as well I I think I appreciate the question, Mr. Frisch. I think the confusion is that we purchase centrally and deliver centrally to the schools the textbooks and materials for Math 6 through Algebra 2.

[04:40:34] Then those high school what are referred to as elective courses beyond Algebra 2, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, other courses, schools receive in their operating budget at the school level funds to purchase the available materials that were approved by the board based on the projected enrollment that they have in those courses.

[04:40:54] So they have the funding to do it. We support, obviously, the purchasing process, the delivery process, and those materials are hard copy materials in those courses. Is there any chance that they could fall short in a subject somewhere?

[04:41:10] There is a chance, but we have the available funding if a school was short, maybe their enrollment exceeded what their initial projections are to be able to get them the necessary materials. All right, so up next is elementary math.

[04:41:25] What's the timeline on that, and what comes after that? Yes, sir. The timeline is I believe the committee is meeting this year, a selection committee, and I would guess that sometime this spring the committee will announce that they have a certain number of, well, I'm going to let Dr. Presidio enumerate that.

[04:41:46] I'm not directly involved in the process. No, but you've got it correct. It is a lengthy procurement process. you know it takes about six plus months there's a lot of complexity to make sure that you know we're working with procurement services to get all the appropriate vendor materials considered but our goal would be to bring a recommendation budget dependent to the board in the spring to adopt elementary hardcopy materials and by hardcopy we mean textbooks thank you my apologies I literally fell asleep at the switchboard here and I got a little out of order so So I call Mr. Moon for a motion.

[04:42:30] I thought we were going to ask questions first before, but I'll make a motion. I move that the school board finds that the superintendent is in compliance with the executive limitation number nine instructional program. I further move that the school board approve the monitoring report based upon the superintendent's reasonable interpretation of executive limitation number nine instructional program as outlined in the strategic governance manual.

[04:43:00] Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Dan. Mr. Mu, would you like to speak to your motion? Could I also ask questions before I speak on my motion? Yes. Thank you. I sent in some questions in advance to Dr. Reed and Dr. Presidio, and thank you for providing responses, but I thought it was worth sharing the same responses with my colleagues and public, so I'm going to ask you those questions.

[04:43:32] I think it is Virginia Code that requires top 25% of the students taking SOL math tests to be offered advanced math programs, correct? It's a recent requirement, is my understanding.

[04:43:53] I think the legislation was passed in 2025. That's correct. The implementation date was July 1, 2026. So that was very recently done. Would you be able to tell us what that universe is? So we do have a policy that we've developed that's working its way through the approval process and that will come to the board at some point we believe probably this fall but regardless we worked with all of our families who met the eligibility criteria as outlined in the recent recently enacted law to

[04:44:31] inform them that they had automatic enrollment opportunities and advanced math so that would be students who would be rising sixth graders and eighth graders so current sixth and eighth graders for this year and many of our families were already enrolled in advanced math because the legislation requires the top 25 percent of the state's student performance on the SOLs many of our students were already enrolled in advanced math courses but there were some additional students that qualified for automatic enrollment so we work to inform all those families They do have the opportunity to opt out and not accept advanced enrollment if they would pursue not to do that.

[04:45:11] But our practices are already operationalized in place, and a board policy, as I mentioned, will be forthcoming soon. Okay, thank you. I think a report also provides information regarding number of students in virtual setting, virtual learning setting, as opposed to in person.

[04:45:29] Would you comment upon that? Because I've been hearing from parents about quality of programs perhaps in a virtual setting and not as satisfactory as in an in-person setting.

[04:45:44] Yes, sir. I know that I saw those numbers come across my desk. I think Dr. Presidio has the numbers of virtual versus in-person. What I will say is, based on the data last year, there really wasn't a discernible difference in the performance on the SOL from the virtual students and the in-person students, which I was frankly surprised about.

[04:46:12] But we really want to minimize the virtual because we want to maximize the number of staff. Dr. Persidio, can you give us the numbers? I think the numbers were for this year for the sixth grade

expansion. Yeah, so for this current school year, approximately 1,300 students are in person for sixth grade algebra, and about 300 students are virtual.

[04:46:32] The main reasons for those students to be in the virtual setting really are that the particular school that those students are attending might have had a very small number of students that qualify. So in some cases, fewer than five students at a particular school would make it very difficult to staff a section that small.

[04:46:50] Additionally, a complicating factor is in many of those schools, well, actually in all of those schools that are in a virtual setting, they didn't have a certified teacher yet to be able to offer the class. So we're continuing to work to ensure that all schools have certified teachers. And our hope is that in the very near future, if not even as early as next year, we'd be able to offer in-person experiences.

[04:47:12] As Dr. Reid said, the learning outcomes are very consistent. But the student experience, I think, is preferential to receive that instruction in person. And I just want to point out when we say didn't have a certified teacher, we meant certified to teach algebra.

[04:47:29] Correct. Yeah. Thank you. I'm glad to hear that outcome seems to be no differences in the outcomes, but the experience that student is feeling because you don't have, you know, in-person contact with the teacher.

[04:47:48] a lot of times that is as important as the outcome and I'm glad to hear that by next year that we will be able to hopefully all these using the current number more than 300 students in 55 different schools with a similar in-person setting yes so that's the intent we're also hoping that as students progress through the curriculum we'll see some of the enrollment numbers and some of the schools rise to make it easier to staff and our AART's have been really

[04:48:23] supportive and in many cases work with those groups even though they're online you know I always had a question regarding multi-level classes especially world language classes but since we have a work session coming up I'm gonna I'm gonna wait until we have that work session to ask you you know how to help students who are in multi-level classes how we can provide them with the best learning experience I'll wait until that work session yes sir who with that if

[04:49:02] you want me to speak on my motion it's it's gonna be very brief that exactly exactly limitation not required the superintendent to ensure that FCPS maintains an instructional program aligned with our strategic plan provides innovative and rigorous learning opportunities, ensures equitable access, promotes consistency across schools, uses research-based practices, and effectively measures student progress. This monitoring report describes the

[04:49:37] business work in each of those areas. I'm not gonna go into every area, but if If you read the report, it's not the outcome, but the report provides all the information in those areas.

[04:49:53] Therefore, I believe that you have complied with the exact implementation number nine. Thank you. Mr. Dannon, would you like to speak to your second? No, I'll just take my regular turn. That's fair.

[04:50:09] It's your turn. Well, look at that. Oh, great. I really appreciate all the work. When I first opened up this report a week or two ago, I had to do a double take. 21 pages of six-point font and and all of it is a lot of work that happened this past year so I appreciate and recognize all work that the staff have done I'm

gonna talk a little bit about the math piece of it and I think slide four talks about the math curriculum so have all schools received their textbooks that were purchased and then the second part of that is what's the is what's the

[04:50:47] intent behind these I mean I've heard some students where their teachers have you're bringing it home and use it as a resource. Others, I guess, are being used in the classroom. What's the, is there a set way to use these? - Are you talking about the math textbooks? - Correct, yes. - They should be used as math textbooks. - Sure, are we talking with daily instruction or brought home as a reference?

[04:51:04] Or I guess, does it depend by subject? - I would expect that a math textbook would be used for daily instruction. - Okay, appreciate that. - Is that, I'm assuming. - That's absolutely correct. It's the core instructional resource to provide instruction to students.

[04:51:23] I acknowledge that with every resource, it takes time to adopt, and once people start to use it, they recognize the value in it. I know we've talked a lot about rigor, and I've spoken to my colleagues about this. I feel it was probably the second thing that got me running for school board was my firm belief that we need to be setting high standards for our kids and then give them the resources to meet them.

[04:51:44] We talk about quantum and AI and things like that. It demands expert, higher-level thinking and reasoning and so forth. All that said, I also want to say, too, I appreciate the push for algebra in eighth grade.

[04:51:59] And I had heard a lot of concerns about that, and I know we spoke about it, and I very much saw the light about how important it was that we make sure every kid takes that. I have still gotten a lot of concerns around algebra in sixth grade, and so I want to ask a little bit of questions about that. The main concern is that there are, from what I've heard from math teachers, is that there are kids who are genuine math progenies who do great and should get math six.

[04:52:23] I sat at the presentation last year with kids who took it and loved it, but I've also heard stories of kids who have taken it, struggled so much because they weren't ready for it, and dropped out or had to retake it, felt like they were a failure at math. Can you speak to those concerns and what we're doing to address that? Sure. I think the decision to take algebra in sixth grade really needs to be made by the family in concert, you know, with advice from their student's teacher i will say that in many many in fact most school divisions around the

[04:53:00] country sixth grade is in the middle school so it's unique to have 143 different sixth grade experiences in the elementary school and when sixth grade sits in the middle school a student who's ready for algebra or geometry or algebra 2 or algebra trig can just walk down a hall and take the course sitting in sixth grade at an elementary school i think the reason mr moons brought up the online we don't necessarily always have enough students

[04:53:34] at a particular school or a teacher that's even credentialed to teach algebra available so i think the lack of available algebra certified teachers for a long time has likely been a bit of a barrier for us to expand access but it's not that unusual for sixth graders to access algebra one in fact you know for aap level math students it is the natural course to be in so i do think

[04:54:07] if a student is not ready though they should not be you know in algebra one in sixth grade it is an advanced math track so hopefully as you know teachers become more familiar with the curriculum and families will be better able to offer feedback to families about that.

[04:54:27] I also think right now, since we have textbooks for sixth grade, I think that's going to help families stay with their students too. It's easier to understand where our children are when you have a book and you can kind of look back a few pages and say this is what we're supposed to be doing.

[04:54:43] But for sure, not all sixth graders should be in algebra. That for sure is true. Okay, and I recognize we're in a weird spot where, I guess, a few years ago, the state started adding more into Algebra 1 without taking anything out. And I've heard from teachers that there's a lot of things now that are taught in Algebra 1 that would be considered Algebra 2 concepts, right?

[04:55:04] Can you speak a little bit more about why it would be important for a child to take Algebra in 6th grade and why their families might want to wait until 7th? And I say this as a parent of a 5th grader that's in AAP. I see. so this is a little research. So I will say a couple things to respond to that.

[04:55:24] I think that number one, people always, no I shouldn't say people, there's a feeling sometimes you have to have algebra one before you can take geometry. In many places it's taken concurrently. There's not a, you know, there's nothing about algebra that you need to, particularly in geometry, but a student taking algebra in sixth grade would be able to go to geometry in seventh, algebra two in eighth, pre-calc in ninth, AP, calc AB in tenth, BC in eleventh, and multivariant calculus, the kids call it

[04:56:00] multivar, linear algebra, DIFIQ or differential equations, AP stats, all those courses are still available. So if you're really thinking about being on an advanced math track, sixth great algebra really is the lead in for you to get up through some of those opportunities in the advanced math. We talked about quantum earlier. It's going to really benefit from some of the opportunities likely you're going to want to be in algebra probably no later than seventh grade, right? But even depending

[04:56:35] on what level of quantum you want to work with, there'll be opportunities. So I think but it depends I you know it's not for every student but for a lot of students math is their Friday night lights yeah and I remember taking pre calc in eighth and I get my concern is that there could be a cohort of kids who maybe took algebra in sixth or seventh you know American you've done a lot of work in the elementary math as well so I guess my concern is I'll finish with this is around those kids in the that are in maybe ninth tenth eleventh grade that are struggling in those more advanced courses and what resources we're offering them to help kind of catch up and build those foundational skills?

[04:57:15] - So regardless of where a student takes algebra, whether it's sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, 10th, right? They might still struggle in a more advanced math. So I think that we always wanted, the tighter our curriculum is and the more aligned it is and coherent, the less struggle there's gonna be, I guess is a quicker answer to that.

[04:57:43] But I do think that the elementary math, as we pick the proper, the very best, I think, researched math tech starting in kindergarten, we'll see fewer gaps, if you will, moving forward. And it's, yeah, so I'll leave it there.

[04:58:02] Thank you. Dr. Anderson. Thank you. I'm going to move away from math for a little bit and speak about language arts. Can you speak to how we can provide greater opportunities for novels and our curriculum for language arts?

[04:58:20] I think that at secondary, you know, for example, if you're in an AP lit class, you're reading novels. I mean, that's part of the curriculum. So I think that the time is present to teach with novels.

[04:58:38] The middle school experience that was described this evening does not match what our literacy team has shared, that the direction is. But I do think that at elementary, the ability to read books, we certainly are advocating for that and celebrating that.

[04:58:58] So that needs to continue through middle and high school. I know, Dr. Presidio, I don't know if you have a minute to address novels in middle school. I think one of the concerns we had had was, do we need to purchase sets of novels again? But I do think there are many book rooms across the division that actually have novels present.

[04:59:17] And I do think it's important to read novels. So what's our play, our game plan here, Dr. Presidio? I think, you know, I appreciated the comments tonight from the public comment period. I do want to be clear about a few things.

[04:59:34] And I think it's important to understand, first of all, that we have a really strong belief in FCPS and having a coherent curriculum implemented with fidelity in every school and every classroom. So in 2020 was our last middle school language arts adoption process.

[04:59:51] And we adopted a core curriculum, the HMH curriculum, and that included purchase of novel sets to supplement the HMH textbooks. The middle school standards of learning at the state level include proficiency and exposure to a variety of different text formats, not just novels, nonfiction text, all kinds of additional standards related to vocabulary development, grammar instruction.

[05:00:20] So if we were to just teach novels, we would only be addressing a small section of the required standards of learning. We have time in our instructional block to cover the required standards of learning using the HMH materials that take about half of the instructional period.

[05:00:38] And an additional half of that instructional period is available for additional instruction, novel studies, for example, book studies, and other opportunities to read full-length text. I think what I heard tonight, though, is a perspective from a teacher that I think we need to follow up more on and collect more feedback from teachers about maybe some of the implementation issues and challenges to make sure that our understandings match with the actual experiences in the classroom and to also reiterate the expectation that novels are not optional.

[05:01:10] They are part of the core curriculum, and that's why we purchased them in 2020. Thank you. I also want to share as a parent who just finished six years of middle school across two kids, novels were not part of the curriculum in the way that you're describing in any way. It was lots of short text, and I understand expository text. We need to have all types, but that part did not happen in the way that you've described or that we would expect, particularly in what's supposed to be rigorous AP programming. So I want to leave out there. I want to go back to the question that I had earlier regarding adaptive assessments. I've

[05:01:49] heard some concerns about that. I am not sure I understand what that is. Is this the common assessments that have been changed in some way? So I'm not sure I exactly understand your question. The first thing that I would say is if you're referencing the use of computer adaptive assessments, and we heard some public comments earlier this evening about the number of computer adaptive assessments or digital assessments we do have a large number the majority of our assessments in the school division are digital developed on and delivered on the computer there are some psychometric reasons and advantages

[05:02:29] to digital assessments for example they're more efficient they're adaptive to how students are answering questions so the assessment link that a student experiences can be shorter in nature so they can complete the assessment more quickly and we can get more valid and reliable student information additionally and I think as you all know many of those assessments are required at the state level in a digital format so SOLs or other testing vendors that we use SAT, PSAT, AP tests those are all in a digital format

[05:03:03] but there are advantages as I mentioned in terms of testing time additionally there's teacher workload support because those are scored electronically and the teachers don't have to score all of those assessments by hand and they also can get the information back more quickly and typically are provided with additional analytical information about how they can address student learning needs so the variety of our assessments are in a digital format but we do believe that there are advantages I appreciate that thank you into that end would it be possible to have a listing of all of the assessments that are being taken by students

[05:03:42] whether they be physical documents or done digitally? Yeah, we can work on that. Okay. And I think I misspoke. Rather than adaptive, I was supposed to refer to the predictive assessment pilots that is happening.

[05:04:00] Can you give some information about that? That is happening, I believe, in 22 schools. Excellent. Thank you. So our predictive assessment pilot is really working with a consultant partner, the district management group, which is an affiliate of Harvard University, to really try to understand how we can improve the assessments, the common assessments that we give, our internal assessments.

[05:04:27] So not things like SOLs or the VALS assessment, but the common assessments that we develop and use to determine whether or not students are mastering the content that we're teaching. Those are really important because those assessments drive instructional decisions that teachers make.

[05:04:45] And those assessments have been very difficult for us to develop internally that would have predictive value in terms of how students might do on end-of-course outcomes or end-of-course SLLs. So we've been partnering with the district management group in this pilot to develop the capacity to have more predictive common assessments.

[05:05:07] Also, trying to get those common assessments in a shorter cycle again so that we're not over-testing students. We want to reduce the amount of testing time and get more valuable information and more predictive information to support teacher planning and instruction.

[05:05:23] And that's what the pilot is about. So those schools in the pilot are not taking the typical common assessment. They're taking this new format that you just described. That's correct, yeah. Okay, thank you. One of the constant concerns that I receive from teachers is the fact that we have so many assessments that are administered that very often they lose a lot of instructional time.

[05:05:51] I've raised this before. How do we evaluate the need for all of those assessments? Like, what's the loop with teachers in terms of giving feedback to their utility? Yeah, so there are a lot of assessments.

[05:06:06] But when we think about the instructional process and the instructional cycle, we really think about curriculum, instruction, and assessments. And our assessments need to provide value to help teachers tailor their curriculum and tailor their instruction to student learning needs.

[05:06:22] So assessments are a key part of what we do in terms of our classroom instructional practice. But we do have a lot. There's a lot of state-required assessments and things that we would, in many ways, prefer not to have to give. We think that the real value of our assessments are in the common assessments that give teachers immediate feedback about student learning needs that they can respond to as quickly as possible, and then also the assessments that are part of our MTSS, our multi-tiered system of support, those assessments that allow us to identify students that are at risk for potential learning gaps and to be able to progress monitor the additional supports that we're providing to students.

[05:07:01] So all of our conversation about Erie earlier today, having the assessment banks that will help us understand if those additional interventions and services that teachers are providing to students are actually benefiting and producing student learning outcomes. So our internal assessments are very, very important, but when you pair that with the large magnitude of external accountability assessments, it is quite a bit.

[05:07:27] And I wonder if there's something we could take off of the plate. Well, one of the things that we've been successful with, and it's very small scale, but is having local flexibility to provide alternative assessments in lieu of the state SOLs.

[05:07:43] So for social studies and science at some grade levels, we're able to use our internal assessments in lieu of the SOLs. If we could scale that up and we continue to advocate for that and have greater assessment flexibility, that would really, that would benefit a lot. Sure. As you know, I've been sharing these reports with my community, and a question that actually came up that's kind of attached to the assessment piece is what happens during the last month of school.

[05:08:09] Obviously, there's a huge focus on these assessments, but there's also the growing concern, at least I'm hearing the growing concern from parents about that time that being utilized very well once the assessments have been administered, that it's a lot of movie watching, et cetera.

[05:08:27] What can you share about that? Well, I think probably the answer is going to vary a little bit based on the grade level.

[05:08:44] So if you think about AP tests, a lot of those do happen earlier in the school calendar. Many of those are happening in May. So in AP courses, there's probably more time at the end of the course than there is in terms of other grade levels where you're looking at end-of-course SOLs that typically run farther into the spring.

[05:09:04] so i think there is some some variation on that um you know one of the things that we've done in those ap and ib situations is to really work to try to determine what additional extensions of learning can happen after the test because we don't believe that that end of course test is the end of learning so there's a lot of project-based learning opportunities that happen application of knowledge that can happen and schools work really hard to maximize that instructional time, but I'm sure we could continue to improve those practices more consistently throughout all of our schools. I would love to see that being addressed in some of these reports

[05:09:41] because I know that's been raised quite a bit. A huge component that I know I've talked about, particularly as the board went through the grading policy, is the rolling grade book. I see in the documents that this year it's happening everywhere. I could not tell you how difficult that is for me to absorb because

the intent behind the rolling gradebook is not exactly the practice of our schools it has become more disadvantaged more of a disadvantage to our students than a support so I'd like to address that more

[05:10:18] in my go back thank you but I'd love to hear any feedback that you all have you're gonna do a go back on that well I think the initial response would be just for the community's knowledge and information when we recently updated our grading policy. Part of the updated policy was to have a consistent gradebook that would be used across all of our high schools because some use different gradebook types. Some used a more traditional, some used a rolling gradebook. The majority of our schools, or at least the majority

[05:10:53] of our teachers, were using the rolling gradebook. We worked really hard with a secondary grading and reporting committee over the course of two years to try to determine what we thought was the most appropriate consistent gradebook type and we chose the rolling gradebook and we've been working to implement that over the last two years so we put it in this year's EL because this is the first year that all schools and all teachers at high school were required to use the rolling gradebook to make sure that it's used effectively to support instruction and one of the big benefits of the rolling gradebook is that students can continue to improve their

[05:11:30] learning right if implemented consistently and implemented well we provided professional development this past year for our high school teachers on how to design effective assessment practices and how to utilize the rolling gradebook in accordance with our policy. So we've been really trying to attend to making sure the implementation is effective. Thank you. Mr. McElbeen. Well thank you for the report and I'd love to see concrete actionable action taken.

[05:12:02] sixth grade all-canny chorus can you tell us how that's being rolled out I believe there was a message that was provided from the instructional services department yeah we've communicated in multiple venues staff in service with principals in writing it's included in a written notice the requirement for all schools to participate we're supporting schools to make sure that that can happen and monitoring that over the course of the year I want to press a little further on that because I think that's probably

[05:12:41] been the action that's been taken in past years and it hasn't worked out so how are we going to ensure at each school level that we are indeed going to be facilitating cohorts to go to the well there are requirements for the teachers to participate right there's rehearsal requirements for example there's meeting some initial meeting requirements so we'll be able to work with the chief of schools office and the region offices to make sure that if any schools don't attend those events that we're able to provide them with the support to make sure that they participate well before the actual

[05:13:17] events in the spring great well I do want to just express my thanks to both you and dr. Presidio for making that happen so quickly much appreciated thank you mr. Dunn thank you I have several questions first this is related to the instruction because it's when the instruction happens. Loudoun County just adopted a school calendar that starts August 28th and ends June 1st. Do you have any thoughts on that compared to our calendar? They must have fewer days off. I think, well, they voted to maintain the cultural and religious holidays, so I'll do a comparison and then come back to you with more questions. I look

[05:13:56] forward to it. Yep, more school calendar analyses. So there was some discussion of sixth grade and elementary school and and there was a motion for middle school configuration and do you have a timeline for coming back to the board with a recommendation on or in a plan even multi-year multi-

decade plan for middle school configurations I do recall the motion and I think the team that's working on that who's heading that up the middle school but that's a collaborative effort

[05:14:31] regions facilities is going to be one of the major components and instructional services will support that initiative as well but we've not developed a complete analysis of what's possible yet I think the timeline question is what you're asking one right yeah when I'm going to come back with that it's a great question I'm hopeful that we can have something at least the timeline drafted um in the next few weeks um i know the um cip intersects uh with that and the aap center

[05:15:12] moves are going to intersect with that right as as we place aap centers in every middle school that's going to realign enrollment across middle schools so i think that it's a it's like a um one of those rubik cube sort of puzzles right we do this initiative and then that initiative and then the numbers look different again and then we have to look at them again so give us a few more weeks to get a plan written but i don't think we're going to be coming back before the new year in

[05:15:45] terms of 27. can you talk a little bit more about the dashboards i feel like the dashboards that are available to principals now to track student progress and various things are not sufficiently conveyed to our constituents, and it's a really important innovation I think you brought to our school district.

[05:16:04] Right. I think the dashboards, well, I think they're critical. I mean, we've made progress in initiatives in ways we couldn't if we didn't have those. And big props to Mr. Sethi and his team, Ms. Neal and her team. They've worked miracles.

[05:16:19] Having said that, the dashboards all include real students and they're real data. So the ability to have visibility beyond the safety, the data privacy environment is obviously going to be fiercely protected because these are our children.

[05:16:39] But I think maybe we can figure out a way to, because we have attendance, we have graduation rate, we have algebra rate, we have assessment, predictive assessments, common assessment data, immunizations, those types of things. so i think it's i guess we could try to find a way maybe in an el presentation to put something up that wouldn't have student names in it that maybe is a that is a thought i know you've raised that before so we'll give that some thought i i do appreciate the commitment to make sure that all elementary schools uh participate in the sixth grade all choral concert because it's an amazing

[05:17:16] event and you know to ensure equitable participation some my schools historically have not participated and so I look forward to seeing their participation. I did want to ask about the Water Safe Fairfax. That's a wonderful program because we can help many children avoid drowning or near drowning incidents. I have one of my children nearly drowned so I take that very seriously. What could be done to extend it beyond Skyview? I know we've talked in the past about the George Washington Rec Center in the Mount Vernon district and making you know, the water safe training program available there, I think you had had some

[05:17:53] issues connecting with the leadership at the county level. And I was wondering if anything I could do, the school board could do to help expand this so all children across the county can benefit. So a couple different things. There are several tracks of this water safe program.

[05:18:10] The WSI course or the lifeguarding course that we're offering at Skyview because we have a pool is something we certainly could explore at other pools in the county. The third, fourth, and fifth grade

classroom-based water safety instruction, we want to begin to implement across the county because that doesn't require a pool.

[05:18:32] Dr. Miriam Lynch, who works at TJ, who's the swim coach for Howard University, is a national leader in this work. So we're working to integrate her work into actual force work at each elementary school.

[05:18:46] Additionally, Jay Cole, who is the head of the Park Authority, and Ray Lynette and Ellen Riley are working, along with Andy Muick, on a plan in several parts of the county to get third graders, not just in the dry land work, but into the pool for at least a couple days so that we can teach water safety in the pool eventually to all third graders in the county.

[05:19:15] And so we're trying to pilot that in several pools. And I don't know if anyone here has an update on that. I think not yet. But I know that there was a recent meeting with Jay Cole. I know I met with Jay and Ray.

[05:19:31] And we were trying to have it in three locations in addition to Skyview to actually get third graders in the water. Dr. Reed, I have some updated information. Thanks, Frances. yeah we have we're working with the schools but we have identified possible schools and pools where the students could go the actual water part of it would be more in at in the second semester with the dry land program in the fall and we should be able to finalize it very soon and then and we're

[05:20:07] looking for, you know, funding for it, but it's, we feel it's doable and we'll be able to find the funds. Yeah, Dr. Ivey is, that's right, you're working with that team. I know we have transportation.

[05:20:24] Yeah, transportation has confirmed buses that, and routes that we can use. And J. Cole, I think, thought she had some support financially or did that not happen not at this time okay oh there you go uh i also want to ask about the literacy instruction um i've grown somewhat concerned about our selection of benchmark which was you know a balanced literacy program that was then re-engineered to be science of reading but it's not pure phonics like just fly or other programs and so i wonder

[05:21:02] if you know especially with the conversation around lexia and these tools we're using and just do do we have as a school board sufficient understanding of what's actually happening with this literacy instruction and and so do we have data now that we're in our third year i think of the implementation of benchmark showing how we compare to you know students in mississippi or other states that have achieved, you know, record improvements in literacy instruction, especially among minority and low-income students.

[05:21:37] I'd like to see that comparison because if benchmark is not getting us where we need to go, adopting something that's not pure phonics, that's, you know, still even now, a combination of phonics and other things might not be, I don't want to continue for seven years if it's not going to get us where we want to go literacy wise i think those are good questions i don't think there's a perfect curriculum right out there but i do know that benchmark i believe is on the state list and been researched the interesting thing about all of the different reading scores of all the different states is that all the states are using different

[05:22:15] tests so there isn't like a reading sol that every state tests similarly so i think that For us, three years means that this year's third graders, if they've been with us, have had it since first grade, but they didn't have it in kindergarten, right?

[05:22:38] So next year, a year out, will be the first time in a fourth year that a student likely could have had it from K through three. But I do think we're having to supplement as we would, and that's where ECRI in some places is really showing some results.

[05:22:56] you fly as you mentioned Orton Gillingham if there are extra supports needed but and what I think the biggest one of the biggest benefits of benchmark that I've seen year over year is the amount of writing our students are writing significantly more in elementary which they weren't previously recall that we had teachers talk about not teaching things we didn't have that curriculum and I don't just mean handwriting I mean writing so I think that's been a huge bonus so but I think we can pull data that's comparative yes

[05:23:34] thank you dr. Anderson for go back thank you the grade three in the water program that you talked about I just want to raise the fact that I hope that program comes with all of the protections to remove the barriers for certain students in terms of participation I just want to make it's not one more thing certain populations cannot access yes ma'am thank you So goggles, hair, towels, et cetera, will all be.

[05:24:00] All of the things, especially the hair, for certain folks, it's a big deal, and it can be a problem. The Montessori expansion, can you speak to that a little bit in terms of what's next? You mentioned a couple of schools here. What we want to do is evaluate how the tuition-based model works.

[05:24:16] And if we can match a future expansion with a tuition-based and non-tuition-based model, can we make both budget neutral in terms of programming so i think as we expand we also have a certain amount of montessori i want to say coaching or professional development that hopefully we can bring to scale because as more people become montessori trained we have less of a drag on the system for expenses to train if that makes sense so

[05:24:55] Our hope is that we're looking at expanding one school this year, and we're hoping, based on that data, maybe to do two next year. And I think we had an expansion plan, so I think the board has seen that. And so far, Ms. Roman, do you want to comment on the current expansion?

[05:25:14] We have 25 students. Well, we had five classes in our first year. This year we have seven pre-K classes, two K-1 classes, and an additional pre-K class at a new site. Can you also share the schools for the next year if all things go well?

[05:25:31] Off the top of my head, I don't recall which two they are. That hasn't been identified for, yeah. Well, we have written, I think we have written them down. I just can't remember what they are tonight. I'd like to think I remember one of them, but I want you to confirm that because Sleepy Hollow was one of the ones. I was going to say that, and I think it is, but I, again, we haven't talked probably with our staff yet or gone into the, talked with the community.

[05:25:53] So that would be something we'd want to have those conversations first. Thank you. If you recall back in last March, I had a conversation with you, Dr. Ponson, Dr. Presidio in your office to raise the concerns that I had that were shared with me regarding the pilots of Carnegie and Amplify for mathematics.

[05:26:12] Those pilots that happened, you know, without really notification to the board because I learned about it from the community and the concerns that I had raised to you were their misalignment to the Virginia standards. They were aligned to the Common Core standards, and there were gaps in terms of what needed to happen.

[05:26:34] Long story short, what I've seen in my quick evaluation of how those schools performed this year, math scores went down significantly in all of those areas. Is that your analysis as well? I don't think so.

[05:26:49] know Dr. Ponce when he looked at it the schools it's my understanding had materials but still had access to the division pacing materials so we're able to intertwine those those weren't exclusive materials but again Dr. Ponce's department oversaw that I would say that just recently we got a note about someone who wanted to keep using the materials from last year because they found them more rigorous and I can't recall which one of those two pilots was one of those two so I would have to go back and get the data from that department yes I would

[05:27:25] love that analysis because again I've just gone and evaluated what I can using what's publicly available and I find that stopping those pilots seem to make sense because the data is not showing that they had the impact that I think we had hoped for yeah I don't know that they even went full year to be honest some of them started very late they weren't I don't believe either one of them we're done for a full calendar year. Okay. Um, the grade six that you all talked about for, um, algebra, that was virtual. Is that a synchronous? Is it all student self-paced or

[05:28:01] are they just virtually accessing another class? I believe there's an actual teacher because it's through Edmentum. So there's an actual teacher who's live. And then there's also a teacher in the room with them. Okay, and then the last thing is the planetarium, that list that you have in terms of matching schools up, can we have access to that? Yes ma'am, we can. In fact, I came up in a conversation today, we're looking at how to make sure we get, we're not sure what grade level yet, but getting those planetariums back in working order for our elementary students in particular.

[05:28:39] Very good, thank you. Yes ma'am. Okay, seeing no more lights, I will call for the vote on the motion which is on the screen. All those in favor? Ms. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Ms. Marin, Mr. Moon, Mr. McRavine, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Dannen, Dr. Anderson, Ms. St. John Cunning, and myself. And I think that Ms. Dixit went to bed.

[05:29:00] So I think that's 11-0. Annually, the board will review each executive limitation at the time the monitoring report is provided to determine if revisions are needed, where members may offer amendments to executive limitations at any regular meeting provided they send a final amendment language to the board and clerk at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which it is being considered.

[05:29:22] At this time, as no amendments have been submitted in advance of this meeting, executive limitation 9, structural program, was placed on the consent agenda for approval later in tonight's meeting to maintain the current language for the year ahead. Agenda item nine, consent agenda, are adopted rules of parliamentary procedure.

[05:29:38] Roberts rules provide for consent agenda listing several items for approval of the board by a single motion. Many items listed have gone through board review and documentation has been provided to all board members and the public in advance. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member prior to the meeting.

[05:29:53] The consent agenda items are on the screen. Is there any objection to improving the consent agenda? Hearing and seeing no objection, the consent agenda is approved. point out new business the following are new business agenda items there will not be a vote on these items this evening but action is

scheduled at a future meeting uh agenda 11 board committee reports i call miss anderson for report on governance okay for a really fast update um we met on september 15th we talked about our revision plan um related to the governance manual

[05:30:29] for edits in terms of just the formatting to make it a little bit more accessible for everybody we have five more policies that were moved to the board for consent they're on new business tonight we talked about the timeline for the ed tech policies i um i got 21 more policies posted on september 18th for the october 27th meeting and i have 22 more that are ready to go when when we get there so we're moving right along thank you for that update in accordance with board consensus due to the late hour we will skip board matters this evening we will do the same with superintendent

[05:31:05] matters unless dr reed you have something pressing that needs to be shared okay so the meeting is now adjourned at 12 29.



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