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Henrico County School Board Work Session, Thursday, September 12, 2024

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[00:00:04] Good afternoon. As we eagerly await the start of fall on September 22nd, can't help but feel grateful for the earlier touch of coolness we are receiving recently. The changing of seasons remind us of new beginnings and fresh opportunities. Today is September 12th, 2024, and we are gathered to begin our school board work session with the approval of the agenda. Is there a motion to approve the agenda. I move that the school board approve the agenda for today's meeting. Thank you

[00:00:41] Mrs. Kinsella. Is there a second? Second. All in favor? Aye. Say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. The agenda has been approved. We will now move forward for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Dr. Cashwell. Thank you Chair Atkins, members of the board and members of the audience.

[00:01:02] If you would please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. If you would please remain standing as you're able for a moment of silence, which can be used by those in attendance for prayer, reflection,

[00:01:33] or meditation. That concludes our moment of silence. You may be seated. The next item on the agenda is closed session. Is there a motion to go into closed session? I move that the school

[00:02:09] Board go to closed session. For the discussion of matters covered under item A2 of section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia in 1950 as amended pertaining to the request for religious exemption from compulsory attendance that would involve the disclosure of information contained in scholastic records concerning individual students. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Is there a second? Second.

[00:02:35] All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. We will now go into closed session. We will reconvene the work session at the conclusion of our closed session. We're back.

[00:02:55] We will now certify closed session. Is there a motion to certify closed session? I move that the school board certify by a recorded vote that to the best of each school board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Is there a second? Second. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. Closed session has been

[00:03:30] certified. Madam Superintendent. Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, members of the board. It is my recommendation that the school board approve the request for release from compulsory school attendance for student case numbers 24-25-RE-1 and case number 24-25-RE-2 based on bona fide religious beliefs and the names of the students are protected under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Is there a motion? I move that the school board

[00:04:06] approve the request for release for compulsory attendance for student case numbers 24-25-RE-1 and 24-25-RE-2. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella.

[00:04:23] Is there a second? Second. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. Dr. Cashwell. Thank you. For the next item, I'm recommending that we take an opportunity to review the proposed revisions to policy P4-06-007, Drug-Free Workplace.

[00:04:44] The proposed revisions to the existing policy provide additional clarity on HCPS policy and protocol as it relates to maintaining a drug-free workplace. There will be some subsequent changes made to Regulation P4-06-007-R, which is also noted in Board Docs for reference.

[00:05:06] And we would be seeking your approval for this policy change at our October 24th meeting. So are there any questions about this policy? proposed. Colleagues, if you have questions or feedback, feel free to yield the floor at this time. No questions or feedback at this time. Thank you. For the next item, I'm pleased to be able to provide you with a presentation on and an update on the progress and planned expansion of our

[00:05:37] innovative one-of-a-kind HCPS career ladder program for the 24-25 academic year. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair Atkins, members of the board, and Dr. Cashwell. My name is Leslie Hughes, Chief Learning Officer for Henrico County Public Schools, and today I'm joined by Dr. Tracy Weston, Director of Professional Learning and Leadership.

[00:06:00] Together, we will provide the board with an update on the career ladder, highlighting our progress and future plans. As we begin, it's important to highlight that the career ladder aligns directly with the division's strategic plan, Destination 2025, particularly the goal to recruit, retain, and reward high-quality employees.

[00:06:21] As a reminder for the board, a career ladder is a framework that enables employees to grow and advance within an organization. Recent data from career ladder participants show the program's positive impact. Educators who engage in these professional growth opportunities are more likely to remain in the profession, positively impacting student achievement through connections with high-quality educators.

[00:06:45] This retention effect has been consistent since the program's inception, underscoring the value of providing staff with personalized pathways for professional and salary advancement at no cost to the employees. For eligible positions, salary advancement is directly connected to career growth through ongoing professional development.

[00:07:07] In the summer of 2022, following extensive collaboration with staff across the division, Henrico launched the inaugural Career Ladder, a program created by educators for educators. Designed for teachers and other positions that support the instructional environment, this initiative represented a significant investment in Henrico's staff and remains the most innovative and ambitious effort for professional learning and educator advancement in the division's history.

[00:07:37] The Educator Ladder provides learning opportunities through participation in micro-credentials, which are prerequisites for the more advanced specializations. Eligible staff can earn up to three 4.8% salary increases.

[00:07:54] During the remainder of the presentation, we will provide an update on the success of the current Educator Ladder and introduce the second iteration of the Career Ladder to include additional positions and learning opportunities. The micro-credential program offers 20 to 30-hour competency-based courses and experiences on specific topics, providing personalized and on-demand professional development.

[00:08:18] With over 50 unique opportunities, staff can engage in three or more micro-credentials annually. These serve as both impactful, standalone professional learning and as a pathway to the advanced specialization program, recognizing staff for their expertise.

[00:08:34] Micro-credentials have no expiration date, and the approved catalog includes learning experiences staff may have completed before the launch of the career ladder, acknowledging and valuing previous learning. In just two years, the micro-credential program has had a substantial impact on professional learning.

[00:08:55] Since July 2022, we have awarded 1,450 micro-credentials, accumulating over 36,000 hours of professional development. Impressively, 20% of eligible staff members have earned a micro-credential, benefiting not only themselves, but also their colleagues, their teams, and most importantly, the students they serve.

[00:09:17] The results speak for themselves. 100% of participants reported overall satisfaction with their experience. These educators span a diverse range of experience levels, from those just beginning their careers to educators with over 30 years of service illustrating the program's broad appeal and effectiveness.

[00:09:39] With five years experience, and after completing two micro-credentials, staff can apply for a specialization, a 32-week cohort-based program. The program mirrors the rigor of a graduate course

tailored to HCPS practices. All work is tied to the unique context of the participants to ensure practical application.

[00:09:59] Upon completion, participants earned a 4.8% pay increase. In January 2023, the first two specializations, teaching and learning, and diverse learners, launched with 48 participants. By January 2024, the number of participants in Cohort 2 increased to 125, with four program graduates serving as adjunct faculty.

[00:10:22] In January 2024, also saw the introduction of a third specialization, trauma-informed educator. To date, 100% of applicants who applied to participate in a specialization have been accepted. In year three, we look forward to adding a fourth specialization focused on adult learning through coaching, mentoring, and leading professional learning.

[00:10:46] The specialization program continues to be remarkably successful. Participants consistently report positive outcomes, with 100% agreeing that being a part of the cohort has positively influenced their professional practice. The program's retention data is impressive, with a 95% completion rate.

[00:11:07] Additionally, 99% of participants would recommend a specialization to a colleague. Survey feedback underscores the program's value, with comments like, This has drastically increased my professional capacity and confidence, both as an educator and a leader in my building.

[00:11:25] I feel this cohort has reignited my passion for being an educator, and I think this is the best class I've ever taken in my 30 years of teaching. These sentiments truly capture the profound impact of the specialization program, with participants becoming our strongest advocates.

[00:11:42] One final quote from a current cohort member truly embodies the spirit of the HCPS career ladder experience. Thank you to everyone who had a part in developing this program. I think I've just been lost since COVID. I had tried everything the county offered to get my spark back.

[00:12:00] Going to the speakers at our forum, who were wonderful, etc., but nothing had worked. I felt tired and drained. Being with the course instructors and meeting with other teachers has been just so inspiring. I have told anyone who will listen, get into this cohort.

[00:12:15] The experience has been invaluable. We are very proud of the strides made with the Career Ladder to date, and we are equally as excited to share the second iteration, which includes three additional employee groups. In February, we announced that the Career Ladder would be expanded in the fall of 2024 to include classified employees in the following positions, office professionals, bus drivers, and instructional assistants.

[00:12:42] Like the Educator Ladder, this expansion aims to recruit and retain and reward high quality staff, many of whom are the first to greet our students in the morning and are their last school interaction at the end of the day. Also like the Leader Ladder, this initiative is grounded in growth through professional learning.

[00:13:01] As a preview of these opportunities, eligible staff were invited to attend the Elevate and Empower conference in August. Over 500 office professionals and bus drivers participated in the half-day experience. To accommodate schedules, two repeating half-day sessions were offered, each with multiple learning options available every hour.

[00:13:21] With so many topics to choose from, one morning participant even asked to return to the afternoon session, saying, there were just so many great sessions, I wanted to come back. While many attendees initially expressed uncertainty about what the day would hold, Their departing comments were overwhelmingly positive, including remarks like, I loved every session, and I've never experienced an opportunity like this before.

[00:13:45] The mini-conference was a great way to introduce personalized professional learning opportunities for classified team members. Now let's take a closer look at that ladder. The classified ladder will include full-time, non-exempt employees in identified positions.

[00:14:00] Eligible staff must be in good professional standing and have three years' experience in their current role. While there are similarities between the classified and the educator ladders, each is uniquely tailored to its respective employee group. As noted earlier, all HCPS career ladders are grounded in growth through professional learning, with learning opportunities specifically designed to enhance the job responsibilities of each group.

[00:14:27] The classified ladder uses a stacking approach to professional learning where participants accumulate professional development hours that lead to salary increases. For every 48 hours of completed learning, participants receive a salary advancement with the opportunity to earn six advancements, totaling up to a 15% pay increase.

[00:14:50] Most learning sessions are three hours, though longer options may be available. Sessions, such as the ones identified on the screen, will be available beginning this month. Completed hours are stacked to reach each 48-hour threshold. This approach ensures continuous, relevant professional growth, directly connecting meaningful learning to salary advancement.

[00:15:14] In February 2024, we also announced the inclusion of an additional group as a part of the expansion, school leaders. Like the previous two ladders, the leader ladder is designed to attract and retain high-quality administrators while emphasizing the importance of their ongoing growth.

[00:15:31] Participants must have three years' experience in one of the three identified school leadership roles and, like the educator ladder, must have earned two micro-credentials and be in good professional standing. Through this expansion, school leaders now have the opportunity for three salary advancements through any combination of receiving a doctorate degree, attaining national board certification, and participating in career ladder specializations.

[00:15:57] For the first year, the leader ladder will mirror the educator ladder following the same framework of micro-credentials and specializations, providing leaders with robust pathways for professional growth. Leaders will have access to many of the courses available in the current micro-credential catalog.

[00:16:17] The first specialization, Teaching and Learning, will launch in January 2025. This specialization is customized to align with the unique responsibilities of school leaders with learning experiences that reflect their pivotal role within the school community. Future learning opportunities and experiences will be designed based on feedback from focus groups and available division data.

[00:16:40] More information for both the classified and leader ladders will be available to eligible staff over the next few weeks. As we launch these expansions, planning for a third iteration is already well

underway. We look forward to coming before you in the near future to share ongoing successes of current programs and to announce additional positions to be added to the career ladder.

[00:17:02] In the initial review, the third planned expansion will include additional office professionals and transportation-related positions, as well as custodians and other members of our facilities team. Thank you. As we conclude this afternoon's presentation, we want to thank you for your continued, meaningful support for our personalized professional learning and your commitment to funding the career ladders.

[00:17:26] We've discussed the planned expansion of learning opportunities, and as you know, this requires an investment through the operating budget. Without your advocacy and support, this expansion and future growth would not be possible. By investing in this growth, we are not only retaining top talent, we are also nurturing a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in Henrico County Public Schools.

[00:17:48] As we elevate staff through a career ladder that nurtures growth, innovation, and collaboration, the ultimate impact is the reflection on our students. By investing in the development of our teachers and leaders, we create an environment where students can thrive, foster their advancement, prepare them for their future, and empower them to reach new heights.

[00:18:08] Thank you for your support. At this time, we're happy to take any questions. Thank you for the presentation. So, colleagues, I'll go first and share feedback, and then I'll commence to my left with Mr. Young, then Mr. Irving, and then we'll circle back around.

[00:18:28] Ms. Shea, you'll be last. I want to just share some thoughts I had regarding the career ladders and give you a few recommendations as well. So as you investigate potential areas for expansion, I urge you to consider a significant enhancement to our environmental services team.

[00:18:50] That's the word I use. I know in our division we use the word custodians and titles sound like custodian worker, custodian, custodian one. And I know that's what we use currently. But, Dr. Cashwell, I strongly recommend adopting the title Environmental Services Specialist instead and incorporating opportunities for professional development in this space as well because, first of all, it would be transformative.

[00:19:20] It would kind of bring us up to date as a division. And then also understanding that their work extends far beyond what we imagine, and it encompasses waste management. It encompasses sanitation.

[00:19:35] These are the things that affect our environment, and I feel very strongly that we need to take a look at environmental services, and that's the word I will continue to use. Thank you. Also, as we're looking at the career ladder in that particular space, I wanted to know how we are memorializing this journey.

[00:19:58] So how are we capturing it to share with others? well either one you can start well so whenever anyone in the division of learning engages in any kind of initiative we have an extensive project plan so as we're going through that's our work plan if you will so as we're working on that work plan we periodically pull out information to do white papers on and so that we have the information all in one place so that as we're expanding the ladder we can look back to say where we've been what's been

[00:20:34] successful and then also we're able to provide updates to our board the community our county managers whenever is necessary so it's sort of a working document as we go along both with the plan and then a working report if you will wonderful so here's the second consideration so with each ladder that we invest in. We work extensively with the focus groups within those areas. So the bus drivers, the office professionals, our IAs, our teachers, our leaders. And we take the feedback from them, and we, in that project plan, have that feedback. And then from that feedback, we begin to build out

[00:21:12] what those learning opportunities are going to look like. At the conclusion of each opportunity, and I won't even say it's a conclusion during, we are collecting data and feedback from the participants. So the program continues to evolve while we have a record of feedback from our first focus group that continues through each specialization, each learning opportunity.

[00:21:33] And I will say what the career ladder looked like when we launched in July 2022, which was a powerful career ladder. It has continued to evolve to meet the needs of the employee groups based on the feedback they're providing to us throughout the process. Thank you for sharing that because this is the second recommendation so of course the first recommendation is to include environmental specialists environmental services whatever word you'll take into consideration other than custodian to this to have this opportunity to and then the second one is really around the communication and

[00:22:11] making sure we capture it in a way that's easily explainable within the division and outside of the division. If we want to go out and just share some of this fantastic work, it would be nice to have a slick or a one pager. And if we don't want to do paper, a section on our website that's a quick snapshot of what this is and perhaps just a pictorial of the timeline on how it's evolving, how it's living, how it's growing. It does a couple of things. One,

[00:22:47] You know, it puts a nice time stamp on it of when we started, because that can actually answer a lot of questions. You know, how new is this? So putting the time stamp on there, some level of a timeline, also showing that as it evolves, that's important as well.

[00:23:04] And so those are my two recommendations as we move forward. It is good work. We know that there is so much more to be done. And as we capture this, as we move, it's nice to see it reflected somewhere.

[00:23:20] And so those were the two recommendations from me. And so now I will yield the floor over to Mr. Young. All right. Thank you. And Dr. Wesson, Dr. Hughes, thank you as well for the presentation. Recruit, retain, reward. I think this is amazing. I think this last slide kind of encompasses everything that the career ladder does.

[00:23:39] I do have a couple questions. I just want you to kind of break down some things for me. The first one, three micro-credentials, does that equal a specialization or does that allow you to now take a specialization? - That's a great question. It's a prerequisite. So a micro-credential is a smaller professional learning opportunity, 20 to 30 hours, where a specialization is actually a 32-week long learning opportunity.

[00:24:02] - Perfect, thank you for clarifying that. In my district, I'm hearing teachers talk about trauma-informed trainings that they do. I'm guessing it's a county thing that some of our teachers go to, so I'm happy to see that that is now a specialization as well. I think that's super important for us, and I did want to touch on slide, let's see if I can find it here, the eligibility slide 13. Is there a reason, or how can we get

our part-time employees? I want them to feel valued as well. They're still driving buses, they're still IAs, but is there a way to

[00:24:39] encompass our part-time employees, or is there something else going on there? I will say, and then I will pass to Dr. Cashwell that for each first year, it looks different. It's a pilot year. And then for the second year, we begin to include more employees. So I think that can be taken under consideration, but I will also. Yeah, I mean, certainly as we build the ladder, nothing's off the table. We continue to look at expanding it to employee groups, such as the suggestions that have been made related to custodial services and so on, employee groups, employment status, all of that. I do want to note, it may be helpful, while the career ladder is pay advancement based

[00:25:18] on participation and units, if you will, of professional learning, we offer professional learning to all employees. We currently have a professional learning program for our custodial. There's sometimes it's required training to your point, part-time employees are, you know, they can avail themselves of our offerings, whether they be mandatory or choice offerings. We have a really robust professional learning structure, which is sort of how all of this started, right? And understanding that as employees accumulate a number of these things, we wanted to replicate like in other professions or workplaces, you know, there may be opportunities to move up a ladder,

[00:25:57] if you will, with pay designation. So that's really what this career ladder speaks to. But I just wanted to put out there that quality professional learning is available to all employee groups, regardless of the latter. I think it's always important that employees have opportunities to engage in that. Perfect. All right. That's everything I had. Thank you guys so much for the presentation. Thank you, Mr. Young. Mr. Irving. I'll just echo Mr. Young's sentiments. Thank you for the presentation. It's great to get an update on this wonderful opportunity that we give to our employees. My question centered around, I guess it's slide four, with the 4.8% salary increase.

[00:26:36] So you said that you can get up to three micro-credentials per year. How does that translate directly into the 4.8% salary increase? It's a great question. So there isn't a salary increase with the micro-credentials. Sure. They are those standalone that lead to, as a prerequisite, to enter a specialization.

[00:26:54] The specialization completion is the 4.8% pay increase. Okay. So that could take up to two years to reach fruition or however long. Like, ideally, because you do the micro-credentials over the year, and then you have the 32-week course, which is probably the point of the year.

[00:27:10] No, I was just going to mention that we do take other learning besides learning that's given in Henrico County Public Schools as an equal to the micro-credentials if it meets the same standard, if you will. So we have many teachers and even some of our classified staff who engage in professional learning outside of what they do in Henrico County Public Schools, and we count that for micro-credentials as well.

[00:27:33] So some employees are able to move much faster through the micro-credentials than that specific time frame. So do we have a system in place that tracks all of this for them so they don't have to do anything on their end to say, I've met this criteria?

[00:27:50] We do. PowerSchool Professional Learning is how we track all professional learning in the division. And working with the PowerSchool team, we have in our professional learning suite is a way to track micro-credentials and specializations. so a transcript can be printed and submitted to HR as evidence for completion and for the pay advancement.

[00:28:10] Okay, so this would fall on the employee their self to monitor that and then bring it to you. It is somewhat in that they would have to print the transcript, but upon completion, the professional learning team is actually monitoring and is responsible for making sure the information is in PowerSchool Professional Learning.

[00:28:29] Okay, and then the slide... uh let's see i guess it's slide 14 the classified ladder i'm going to ask about the the up to a 15 pay increase so could you break down how like the imponents the components of that so with the six salary advancements it is and i may not have the number exact so i may have to ask mr wack or miss bolden to help it's six salary advancements upon each 48 hour threshold which is close to it's a

[00:29:02] 2.7% increase. 2.3, thank you, I appreciate you, 2.372% increase six times. And what is the time span by which that can be done? We offer sessions, we plan to offer because they begin this month, so it would be three hours each month if it is a three-hour course, but we are also offering some full day, that could be up to six or seven hours. But typically it would be a three hour that's offered over 10 months. So you're, but they also have an opportunity to bring in previous learning

[00:29:39] just as we did with the educator ladder. So some classified employees will come into the ladder with already having accrued hours. Okay. So what would be the, I guess, the quickest amount of time that that could be accomplished? I would say someone starting this month without accrued hours would probably be in that year to a year and a half timeframe. To reach the 15%? No, that would be okay. And that's going to be difficult to say because it really is going to depend on if they are participating in every learning opportunity every month throughout the course of a school

[00:30:14] year. And because it is intended to be a career ladder, they are spaced out more. So I would say the first salary increase would be in that year, year and a half timeframe. All right. I appreciate all that. Thank you. You're welcome. Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you. Thank you so much for this presentation. Truly a game changer. I mean, since July 2022, truly a game changer in Henrico schools.

[00:30:39] Is anyone else in the state doing this type of program in their school for their school system employees? Anyone in the state? Not at this time, but we are receiving numerous phone calls across the state and across the country asking what we're doing and with the presentations we have done at conferences, we are receiving a lot of inquiries about, talk us through how you did this and your success. Because school divisions are amazed that this is voluntary, that we have this level of participation in voluntary professional learning, even though there is

[00:31:17] salary advancement. I think that's what really sets us apart is that salary piece. We have school divisions, you know, who neighbor close to us and throughout the state who have career ladders and who have, you know, personalized pathways, but there are not any that tie that to the salary advancement. I would just add, and also because it gives me a chance to brag on the individuals in front of us and everyone who's been a part of building this ladder from day one, including our own employees who told us how this ladder would best serve them, which is what I think has made it so successful. When you look at the participation rates and the rates of recommendation, we know

[00:31:54] what teachers and our employees were asking for. A lot of systems have professional, robust, excellent professional learning that can stack for what are like in-house badges, if you will, or credentials. You know, I'm a trauma-informed educator. You know, you earn these things.

[00:32:10] What we heard from our folks is they would appreciate not only the monetary recognition, but to be able to have those serve sort of as like a mini master's degree or, you know, oftentimes individuals are paying for coursework, and many do, and we honor what's been earned outside in that way, but this is a no-cost way of getting that kind of an advancement with the learning in-house and allowing folks, you know, who have said, hey, I want to keep learning and growing, but I don't want to leave the classroom or, you know, I can't afford to go

[00:32:45] a university and get a master's degree so really offers that in-house scenario and then you know they have presented this we do have a page on our website under our careers page it's been highly successful from a recruitment perspective and of course a retention perspective and i've watched them i've had the pleasure of watching them at national conferences present on this and you should see the crowds that will fill the room when they share handouts and slides about this and We frequently get calls about a lot of things we're doing here that are innovative, but particularly the career ladder.

[00:33:19] So I just wanted to say kudos as you asked that excellent question, Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you for highlighting that. Well, I appreciate you just highlighting this. And this is just one of the ways our employees can learn, can have professional learning, right? But this is just so new and different and really in response to exactly what our employees said.

[00:33:39] And in that regard, I'm going to highlight slide 11 and just thank the team for being responsive because when we first introduced the latter, our team members on this slide, office professionals, bus drivers specifically, quite a few reached out to me.

[00:34:00] And of course, our IAs, right, looking for ways, looking for access and opportunity. What about us? How can we grow as well? So I wanna thank everyone for the investment and additional employees. And then I believe you said on slide 17, if you could highlight for me again, who's next?

[00:34:21] What groups are next? Because then I have some more comments. - Okay, we have for the third iteration, there are additional office professionals that their grades were not included in this iteration. And then we have transportation related positions, as well as Ms. Atkins, please tell me the title that you were using, environmental specialists?

[00:34:41] - Environmental services. - Environmental services group. - Okay, so, and when is that group expected to start? Are you in the planning, right, of exactly the feedback? - Data gathering, conversations, focus groups.

[00:34:57] - So when would you expect to start that? When would we expect that? - It is our hope and desire to start next school year. - Okay, okay. - The beginning of next school year. - I think they realize it's a budget contingent plan. But as we begin to look to expand and as they, by the way, mentioned in their presentation, a huge thanks to the board for prioritizing this as we've set forth budgets, because we really want you to see the tremendous impact you've made from this continued investment and, you know, the growth and the leaps and bounds we've made with this ladder.

[00:35:28] And it's our hope to continue to do that once we get those groups developed into the next year. I'm a believer in speaking it into fruition. So maybe if we speak about it now, it will be happening in fall 2025 for us. When I was thinking about, oh, let me just say this to our principals. I'm so grateful. If our principals, this has got to be in response to what our principals have actually said, though I don't know where our principals will actually find the time.

[00:35:58] So Dr. Cashwell, can you help me with that? I think one of the things that's meaningful about the career ladder, it was taking it was a structure to memorialize and honor much of the learning and work individuals are already doing. Right. So in other words, many of our leaders are earning their doctoral degree. They've they've taken that challenge on on their own. This offers an opportunity to earn additional compensation for that. They may be wanting to deepen their learning and whatever the topic may be alongside their teachers. And many times they're doing this anyway.

[00:36:30] It simply offers an opportunity to build it into the ladder with a compensation-related piece. And then just to circle back, so what you just said about the principals and associate principals and assistant principals, our other employees would have the same opportunity, right, if they have not already submitted that they'd had the coursework, maybe outside of Henrico Schools, right, to get credit, they would submit it to HR, correct?

[00:36:55] Yes, absolutely. Not to get to, I don't like to walk into HR, but just to make sure everyone's getting credit. And to the point that I think Dr. Hughes made earlier, there's actually a chart that lays out things you might have done outside of or during your time here that can count towards.

[00:37:11] And it's an extensive list. I mean, they've spent a lot of time really vetting, so they are meaningful things that have made the list. but trainings that might have national significance or particular significance to a particular unique employee skill set or licensure.

[00:37:28] Some of our employees that may not be classroom teachers but hold other professional licenses for providing services in the division that also count or qualify. So they've done quite a bit of legwork there so that employees can find out how their experiences may fit into the latter.

[00:37:46] I have to say I'm so impressed that even that our division is doing this. But even when I think about the private sector in business, when I was in business, I just have not seen this been really done to this degree where it wasn't some kind of just compliance.

[00:38:08] You know, you have to do this training, right, versus wanting to do the training and it being so responsive to what employees have actually said. right? They've said this and we're responding to it. So just thank you. And then I'm going to ask you about how do we value or offer something for another group of employees with different kinds of skill sets. And that's our C&M employees, as well as where do our ACE center teachers fit on which slide and in which category? Because if they don't, and they have plenty of different

[00:38:45] credentials right different than our educators because I really don't see them on a slide and when I think about some of their different credentials they're a different type of employee as well so I just want to know where they're captured they are captured in the teacher group and that's exactly that's a good way to name the broad example I was giving a people who hold other professional license or certification in an area other than traditional classroom teaching there's a crosswalk where they can, they are already included. So an ACE teacher, for example, who holds a certification or credential related to their skill set along with teaching, that would

[00:39:23] be equal to something else in the teaching industry. Those are accounted for. And then to the broader CNM and custodial, that is part of what they're looking at as we expand. So I think you named the groups and I think custodial was one of them and then we continue to work across all of our employee groups so the idea is to leave no stone unturned here but to be thoughtful as we're building it and as we're

including employee groups really working with them to and you know to make sure that we're building a ladder that's responsive to their

[00:40:00] needs but still always providing quality learning opportunities trainings and professional development for all groups along the way right and then how many have employees gotten turned away for example we're full sorry no to date 100 percent have been accepted 100 percent acceptance i love it i love it i love it thank you so much madam chair thank you mrs gonzola mrs shay thank you so much this has been a joy to watch come to life um those of us who have uh been on the board a while we saw

[00:40:34] as it almost launched and then backed up a little bit and then started to launch and now to expand. And the thing that kept coming to mind during this presentation was that it's a career ladder. It's not a job ladder. And so we're looking at really investing in our employees to grow their career, whether that be in the classroom or now with our classified positions or with our leadership positions.

[00:41:01] And so I know Mr. Baton always talks about job versus career, so that's locked in my head. But this is really growing professionals in their career. And I think that's a powerful thing, both for our staff and for our students being served.

[00:41:18] This has been, as you said, an intensive collaboration with our staff that it's serving. Like I said, you spoke to the almost rollout and then back up. And I think that is why it's so successful. It wasn't something that was a top-down initiative of this is what we want you to do.

[00:41:39] This has really been bred from specifically what our staff has asked for and being responsive and true conversation and teamwork together on how to make this happen. And I think that is one of the reasons that we see it be so successful.

[00:41:57] That is why we see these high retention rates. That is why we see the high satisfaction rate. And so just kudos to your team for this very real example of how in so many spaces we try to make that collaboration with the people that's being served.

[00:42:14] And we do so much of that, but people don't get to see it because, you know, of kind of the nature of our work and, you know, all that sort of thing. but this is such a good example of some of the things that Henrico County does every day to try to listen to our staff and respond and make our systems work for them.

[00:42:37] Because, anyway, and I didn't realize, and I really, really, really love how you're giving credits for previous learning. I think that's so important. And also other learning opportunities outside of just what we created.

[00:42:54] We have so many career educators, 15, 20 years, who have invested their own time over the years doing these types of learning. And so to say, I see you, I see the work that you've been doing, I'm not going to make you check my box.

[00:43:11] I know you already have this mastered, so I'm going to give you credit for this and move you up. I think that's very affirming to our professionals and the work that they've been doing and so important. So thank you for doing that, as well as, like you said, and all the other things that you could engage in now that might not be ours, but still fulfill this growing of skills.

[00:43:36] So I think that's important and I really appreciate it. I loved how you talked about how it's the rigor of the graduate course with practical application. I have a master's in education. I don't know, to be

honest, how much that really impacted my instruction, right? Like I think I gave grades in instruction. However, I don't think that this was because of my master's program because it was so disconnected from what was happening in the

[00:44:09] classroom. And so I love that this is that rigor, but happening alongside what's happening in the classroom happening alongside what our focuses are in Henrico and what a game-changer that is for our educators to have that duality of both the cerebral part but also the practicality part and how that grows us as practitioners. Again, what a gift to the students and to the educators because that's so personally fulfilling when all those cylinders are firing together and it's not

[00:44:46] just checking boxes or oh philosophically this might make a difference in instruction we're seeing it in real time that did make a difference or coming back and saying that didn't make a difference why didn't that make a difference you know those sorts of things so I have had teachers in my district who have participated in this national board all of those things share what a game changer this has been for them compared to being in neighboring districts in both their ability to support their family, but also to support fulfilling personal professional

[00:45:26] growth. And they said how important both of those things are from both just the practicality of living life, but also the joy of being a teacher. And so I wanted to share that feedback with you. And then, sorry, I'm rambling on, but I just have all these thoughts about how this really is a game changer for Henrico and our students and our teachers.

[00:45:50] And then just one point of clarification, because I believe this is a misconception, and I've heard it repeated by some people who have not fully explored the career ladder. But they, I've heard some people say that to get a micro-credential, all you have to do is click through a PowerPoint.

[00:46:10] Can you, you know, as professional development of old can sometimes be, right, can you kind of clarify what it might look like to get a micro-credential? What does that look, what are the nuts and bolts of that look like when I enroll in a micro-credential?

[00:46:26] So it's going to depend on the micro-credential, but all have a requirement of in-person sessions as well. And all have the requirement of providing evidence of transfer to practice. We do not have any micro-credentials that are simply asynchronous click-through.

[00:46:41] It has to have that human component, and it has to have transfer to practice. I really like that phrase, transfer to practice. I mean, also in person, there's a lot of benefits of being able to do asynchronous learning, right, and virtual meetings.

[00:46:57] It's very accessible. But there's nothing like sitting around a table with like-minded people who are passionate about the same things and exchanging ideas. And so I love that it has an in-person component, but I also love, you said transfer to practice.

[00:47:14] That's, I mean, that's changing the game, right? It's changing our practices. It's moving the needle in Henrico for our students and our staff and our family. So thank you for all of your work. I look forward to this expanding as we develop the careers of our workforce.

[00:47:32] Thank you. Thank you. And if you did not see or hear her excitement, I hope you have it now. Thank you, Mrs. Sheck. The next item on our agenda is the public forum.

[00:47:52] Citizens are invited to submit written public comments on any matter of concern about the school division for the board's consideration via an online form. Written public comments were received and shared with school board members prior to the meeting, and they are posted in their entirety in BoardDocs, which is located on the Henrico County Public Schools website.

[00:48:17] Dr. Cashwell. Thank you, Chair Atkins. The next items are consent items, and therefore they can be taken in a block. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Are any items in this block board members want to provide any feedback on at all?

[00:48:38] All right. Is there a motion? I move that the school board accept, adopt, approve, and or award items 8.01 through 8.28 on the consent agenda as presented. Thank you, Mr. Young.

[00:48:54] Is there a second? Second. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. These items have been accepted or approved. And I'm going to pause because there's some things in there that I really had been wanting to see Henrico do for a while.

[00:49:16] And so I'm just going to ask for grace and take that moment. I'll now move on to unfinished business. Colleagues, do you have any unfinished business? Hearing none, we'll move to the next item, which is new business.

[00:49:38] Colleagues, do you have any new business? Hearing none, I will proceed to the last agenda item, which is the announcement of meeting dates. The school board's next meeting is Thursday, September 28th, 2024 at 3 p.m. in the New Bridge Auditorium. Also, the meeting time may be adjusted as needed. This meeting is adjourned.



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