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Henrico County School Board Work Session, Thursday, October 10, 2024

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[00:00:03] Good afternoon. Today is Thursday, October 10th, 2024, and we will begin our school board work session. Dr. Cashwell. Thank you, Chair Atkins, members of the board, and those who have joined us for our meeting today. We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance, which is going to be

[00:00:23] followed by a moment of silence. If you'd please stand. I pledge allegiance to the flag. And if you would please remain standing as you're able for a moment of silence. And that concludes our moment

[00:01:00] of silence. You may be seated. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. The next item on our agenda is the approval of the agenda. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve the agenda for today's meeting. Thank you. Is there a second? Second. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed?

[00:01:35] The ayes have it. The agenda is approved. We will move along to the next agenda item, which is closed session is there a motion to go into closed session i move that the school board go into closed session for the discussion of matters covered under item a1 of section 2.2-3711 of the code of virginia 1950 as amended pertaining to the assignment appointment promotion performance demotion salaries disciplining or resignation of specific school board employees thank you mrs shay is there a second second thank you all in favor say aye aye any opposed the ayes have it

[00:02:14] we will now go into closed session we will reconvene the work session at the uh conclusion of our closed meeting we're back colleagues we will now certify closed session is there a motion i move the school board certify by 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 defined in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

[00:02:53] Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Irving. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. We will now certify closed session. Dr. Cashwell.

[00:03:09] the first item i have for members of the board is a presentation related to our ratings for accreditation for the 24-25 school year as released by the virginia department of education and of course these are based on data from 23-24 school year dr grant we'll get us started thank you good afternoon madam chair members of the board and dr cashwell the virginia department of education recently released state school accreditation ratings today dr hinton and miss

[00:03:44] seeley will present an overview of the accreditation process school performance outcomes and discuss the measures in place to support ongoing school improvement efforts madam chair members of the board and dr cashwell one of the primary strategic goals of destination 2025 is to attain academic excellence. To achieve this goal the plan outlines the implementation drivers or actionable steps directing the school division to assist schools in creating and executing school quality plans aimed at achieving accreditation and other objectives. Key indicators such as school

[00:04:24] accreditation ratings serve as a metric to gauge our progress towards academic excellence. Each year schools receive state accreditation ratings based on their performance and progress in key academic achievement indicators including English, math, and science. In English and math, performance is evaluated based on the number of students passing SOL or other approved state assessments or showing growth across multiple tests. Chronic absenteeism, defined as the percentage of students

[00:04:59] missing 10 percent or more of the school year, is also an accreditation indicator for all schools. high schools have additional factors influencing their accreditation ratings such as graduation and completion index dropout rate and college career and civic readiness the college career civic readiness index indicator measures for the graduating cohort student preparation for college and careers while in high school credit is given for advanced coursework such as AP, IB, and dual enrollment course completion, CTE courses and credentials,

[00:05:36] JROTC coursework and credentials, work-based learning, and service learning experiences. Each indicator is assigned a level of one, two, or three based on school performance or progress towards benchmarks, calculated annually or over three years. A school's overall accreditation rating is based on the performance levels of the indicators. This slide provides a summary of each accreditation indicator detailing the percentage and count of schools at each performance level. Notably, a significant majority of our schools achieved Level 1 in English and Math

[00:06:16] when considering all students collectively. However, upon disaggregating data by achievement gap groups, more schools fall into Levels 2 or 3. Furthermore, compared to last year, we have seen improvements in several indicators with an additional 16 schools achieving level one in chronic

absenteeism one school in the graduation and completion index and eight schools in ccric taking us to 100 for the english and math achievement gap indicators student groups are

[00:06:51] also assigned levels based on their performance and progress the overall rating for each indicator is determined by combining these group ratings when analyzing school performance by group we observe that a majority of schools achieve level one across all groups in english however compared to other groups more schools are at levels two or three in the black students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged groups nevertheless there has been an increase in the number of schools achieving level one compared to the previous year for some groups

[00:07:26] specifically both the multiple races group and the students with disabilities group have seen a gain of six schools achieving level one since last year when examining the group data for math we observe similar trends to those seen in english compared to the previous year we have either maintained or reduced the number of schools at level one across all groups as previously stated a school's overall accreditation rating depends on the performance levels of the indicators schools

[00:08:01] achieve accredited status if all indicators are at level one or two. If any indicators reach level three, schools may be classified as accredited with conditions. The Virginia Board of Education determines whether a school receives denied accreditation based on its implementation of a corrective action plan. This year, all Henrico County Public Schools have achieved accreditation with 78 percent accredited and 22 percent accredited with conditions we are delighted to

[00:08:38] announce that two schools have attained full accreditation this year we have the pleasure of recognizing james gordon principal of glenly elementary and dandre lightfoot associate principal of rhina high school who are here with us this afternoon please join us in congratulating them and their communities for their efforts in this achievement five schools went from accredited to

[00:09:14] accredited with conditions due to having at least one level three indicator as you heard earlier the process for achieving the three levels is nuanced so results varied by school and circumstance with some at level three for science math achievement gaps chronic absenteeism or dropout rate. I would like to highlight that BoardDocs includes an attachment with accreditation details for all of our schools. Furthermore, this information can be accessed through the Virginia

[00:09:45] School Quality Profiles on the Virginia Department of Education website. Lastly, the Virginia Department of Education recently approved a new school performance and support framework, which outlines a comprehensive approach to evaluating and supporting school performance across Virginia. This new framework will first take effect for school ratings in the 2025-26 school year based on data from the 2024-25 school year. The new process aims to simplify and improve

[00:10:21] how schools are evaluated. It addresses the current overlap between state accreditation and federal accountability systems, introduces a broader range of performance designations, and focuses on both instructional inputs and student learning outcomes.

[00:10:39] Schools will be rated in categories ranging from distinguished to needs-intensive support based on weighted metrics such as mastery, growth, and readiness for elementary and middle schools and mastery, readiness, and graduation for high schools.

[00:10:54] Federal support designations will also be applied where necessary. The Virginia Department of Education is in the process of developing training and materials to support school divisions with

understanding these changes, so additional information about the new system will be shared as it becomes available. At this time, Ms. Sealing, Director of School Quality, will provide an update on the process being used in both the division and schools to support improvement efforts. Good afternoon. The Foundation for Any Meaningful

[00:11:32] Sustainable Change is a process that not only establishes the need for that change, but also aligns the change with research-based best practices and a system for monitoring implementation and impact. The Virginia Continuous Improvement System, a process, is the system that guides the work for schools for accreditation and accountability. Grounded in improvement science, this process provides schools with a systematic approach to identifying and implementing their school quality plans. The process was introduced by the Virginia Department of Education in anticipation of this new accountability system that will take place or take over

[00:12:11] for the current accreditation system. All school principals, associate principals, and many central office staff have a foundation in improvement science and are working collaboratively to implement the 24-25 school quality plans through the use of this process.

[00:12:28] In addition to the continuous improvement process, the work of school quality is now guided by the Virginia Support Framework. This framework contains four research-driven critical domains. academic supports is the first domain in this domain schools and divisions focus on the use of high quality instructional materials and routines that are built around optimal instructional practices staffing supports is the second domain it focuses on schools and divisions focusing on recruitment practices that lead to hiring placing and retaining high quality teachers and principals with critical expertise in the schools and classrooms most in need of

[00:13:07] support. Organizational learning supports is the third domain. Schools and divisions in this domain identify logistical and organizational practices that are necessary for creating an optimal learning environment. Finally, school climate supports is the fourth domain. In this domain, they seek to build bridges between school and home, remove barriers to learning, and assure greater school attendance and engagement. As a result of these changes, the yearly strategic plans schools are creating in response to their accreditation results and the vision they have for their schools are now called school support plans.

[00:13:46] The plans are built around these domains and implemented through the continuous improvement process. In the spring of 2024, the staff from our Department of School Quality met with a team from each school to begin the implementation of the continuous improvement process.

[00:14:03] During that time, each team conducted a needs assessment, then matched those needs to research or evidence-based strategies in order to create their school support plans. Because the domains are so critical to the work of schools, it was easy to identify best practices already in place within Henrico County.

[00:14:21] Here you see a few examples of how work we are already doing aligns with these domains. The academic supports domain has a natural fit with the teaching and learning framework, which encompasses the HCPS aligned curriculum and the HCPS instructional model.

[00:14:36] In the Staffing Supports domain, we see a need to retain high-quality teachers with critical expertise. One of the best resources we have for this are our Instructional Coaches, including our Content

Coaches, ILCs, and Teacher Fellows. The Organizational Learning Supports domain expects schools to have practices in place to create optimal learning environments.

[00:14:57] One of the most significant ways we can do this is to implement the newly revised Teacher Support and Evaluation System. The research is clear on the impact of strong professional learning and teacher retention. Finally, the school climate supports domain expects schools to create environments that assure greater school attendance and remove barriers to learning.

[00:15:16] Two of our best practices to support this area are multi-tiered systems of support and positive behavior interventions and supports. While these expectations from the Virginia Office of School Quality may seem like yet another new thing, they align seamlessly with the work we are already doing and place a focus on the critical need for strong systems and processes at both the division and school levels.

[00:15:38] That concludes our presentation, and we are now happy to answer any questions that you have. Thank you so much for the presentation. I'm going to commence to my right with Ms. Shea. All right. Thank you so much. I appreciate it. This is a lot to digest.

[00:15:57] I think particularly looking at the landscape over the last, I guess I've been on board five years and how much things have changed and continue to change. I think it's hard to understand where we have improved and where we have seen, you know, the opposite of that when all of these metrics and all these goalposts are changing. And so can you help me just understand just some of the changes we've seen to the accreditation model in the last like year or two, whether that

[00:16:35] includes the standards and the actual tests or how we're evaluating how we fit. Can you just paint a little bit of a landscape on what might look different this year? So the accreditation model itself has not changed. What they introduced last year was a process for implementing and monitoring this, what we were calling school quality plans. We now call school support plans in anticipation of the model changing next year and going to the accountability model

[00:17:06] that Dr. Hinton shared on this slide. So over the past five years, the indicators have remained the same. English, math, and science. English and math also currently have measures for student groups.

[00:17:23] Right now, those groups have to have at least 30 students in them at each school in order to count in that school's accreditation. At elementary school, the other indicator is chronic absenteeism. At elementary and middle, at high school, it's dropout, on-time graduation, and college career and civic readiness. So that has remained the same. They've also added after, I guess it was after COVID, the ability for students to show growth and the school to receive credit for that in their accreditation. And if I might add to that, and I know Dr. Hinton, you may want to add

[00:18:00] as well. So while generally, as Mrs. Seeley said, the model hasn't changed and there's been some nuance with growth. I think your question also spoke to the actual standards being taught within each content area and whether the test specifically had seen any changes, in which case the answer is yes to some of those in courses and so on. Yeah, I appreciate that. It's, like I said, it's just, it's hard to, I mean, we've got over 70 schools, right? So we're all trying to digest the nuances of changing tests, changing assessment, but also changing community needs within 70 plus

[00:18:40] different communities. So lots to wrap our head around. I know this is just one piece of a lot of things we use to assess where our students are. What are some other measures of student achievement

that our school leaders and that you as a division kind of keep an eye on to keep a pulse on for students beyond just the SOL scores? We have benchmark test checkpoints from our benchmark

[00:19:12] test in addition to iReady data that we utilize for our intervention groups, in addition to alexia that we use to support students based upon their reading level and small group intervention tailored to each individual student. Whereas before we might have looked at just groups of students, we're making sure that we target each student regardless of where they are from our special ed students to our students with disabilities. That's helpful. And is it possible

[00:19:50] that we're seeing students who are successful in some of these other academic metrics that may not be as successful on the SOLs or vice versa? Yes, the SOLs are just one snapshot in time, but we do see growth in the other, how can I say, other tools that we use to assess students.

[00:20:15] So this is not telling the full story of our of an individual student, much less a whole school or a whole division. Yes. So we've seen successes at quite a few of our schools, including our two schools who are joining us.

[00:20:33] Gentlemen, congratulations again. What what a wonderful like SOLs are just a snapshot in time. But I would assume you all are seeing progress on all those other tools and metrics as well to make this big of a difference. so thank you. As we look at our schools, like these two who have had successes, are we gleaning best practices from those and how we can push out in other schools that may have some of the similar challenges that these gentlemen have overcome? Yes, we are, and we're using EBI's evidence-based interventions to target specific subgroups that are having difficulty. For example,

[00:21:10] our L students, we have resources specifically tailored to them for our SPED students also, and just for all of our students who might need tutoring or remediation in specific areas or SOLs.

[00:21:26] We're trying to be more targeted in what we provide for our students, but most importantly, We're making sure that we are monitoring what we have in place to ensure that we're seeing growth. And if we're not seeing growth, we come back, reassess, and change it up if needed by individual student.

[00:21:50] We also have structures in place at the monthly principal meetings, the monthly opportunity principal meetings, and the monthly associate principal meetings for those principals to collaborate around the practices that they are implementing in response to their accreditation data.

[00:22:09] Thank you. And I noticed this year from a parent perspective that instead of using the Virginia growth model assessment measures, I can't remember, that we're using iReady assessments instead. I know the report as a parent that came back, I will say, was much more understandable and digestible for my inner individual student.

[00:22:33] Do we see the potential for those I-Ready assessments to measure as well as or better than the Virginia growth assessments did, or is it just different? We should be able to see growth because it is aligned to the Virginia SOLs.

[00:22:53] Great. I think that, oh, I did have, when we look at the looking forward, not looking forward to, looking towards the new model, I see it's got mastery and growth. What does readiness mean?

[00:23:11] So it changes depending on the level. So readiness for next year will be chronic absenteeism for elementary school. At middle school, it will be chronic absenteeism as well as advanced coursework

and math. And then in high school, it is a 3E, or employed, enrolled in a listed framework, chronic absenteeism, and then a version of the federal graduation rate.

[00:23:45] Thank you so much. That's all for me. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you so much for this presentation. I agree with Mrs. Shea. It is a lot to unpack, what what is now and then what is coming and I just want to thank you once again not just the principals of Oriana High School and Glenley Elementary but your entire school your staff your community because it wasn't just you though you're here representing today and I can't wait to hear more detail from Dr. Cashwell about exactly what you were doing to achieve to achieve

[00:24:22] this progress. Once again, congratulations. So all of our schools now, Ms. Seeley, all of our schools, regardless of accreditation status, participate in the school support plans. They do. Have all of our schools found this to be meaningful?

[00:24:42] Yes. So we created the plans in the spring after we did the needs assessment. And then each month, we've been meeting with the schools to check the progress of their plans to help them implement the initial steps of getting them started and our initial feedback on this new process has been very good i think because we were ahead of the curve in teaching the improvement science behind it that it wasn't such a surprise to everybody when this process came out um there i've heard from other school divisions that they didn't do any of that foundational work and this was a drastic change for them. So I think because we were explaining the theory in terms of how change

[00:25:21] happens and the process that you use to monitor that change, and we have put the schools into what we call PDSA cycles. So for each strategy that they have, they are checking, how did the plan go? What did we do? What does the evidence and data say about how it went? And what are we going to do next? Right. Not just our schools that are required to report back, right, but all of our schools. Well, that's good to know because if you read articles coming out, the DOE projects that 60.5% of schools are off track or would need intensive support according to the accountability

[00:25:55] system that's coming. Yes. Do we expect anyone who's been in rooms close to the state superintendent are our superintendents or a leadership team speaking to the staffing crisis we had prior to the pandemic? Are they speaking to the antiquated funding model that we've had? Are they speaking to the burnout that we've had that we are just struggling to come back and address? Is anyone

[00:26:30] speaking about this in the rooms, perhaps the unintended consequences of changing a system like this at this time? Anyone? I can speak generally to during the input sessions that were held at this when the state was looking to adopt the new model and then the efforts. You know, you did hear advocacy around some of the topics you just brought up, right? Is this setting the stage for more teacher burnout, inadvertent pressure on schools and systems when we're just in recovery mode still from the pandemic and see some unprecedented staffing shortages, not just in

[00:27:08] our state, but nationally and recruit, retain reward areas with teachers. So I think it has been a topic, you know, for us as our team has worked to forecast what's coming. I think they've done a really good job, you know, educating our school leaders who will, of course, work closely with their teaching staff to understand certainly the framework and the measures that will be in place, but to keep the main thing the main thing, and that is students. We certainly, our expectation for academic excellence is not going to change. It has not changed, and that our focus on the

[00:27:47] individual students and making sure that we're meeting them where they are. We have tools to do that. You've got to hear about some of them, and it's not simply the SOL test. That'd be one snapshot, which is often a year behind when the teacher's getting ready to plan for meeting the needs of a student what are those real-time measures to help us understand what student needs are and then how are we leveraging our curriculum resources remediation resources tutoring to meet the students needs and help them grow so those expectations for academic academic excellence and growth haven't changed and won't change no matter what the model is or will be but to your point that that has been a hot topic and certainly something I think we're

[00:28:27] sensitive to at the central level I know our principals are sensitive to as they're helping set the stage for changes as they're coming. Thank you for that, because I'm extremely concerned. I mean, just this year with the new math standards and the new reading standards and the new benchmark program and the feedback being received, it's like there's so much new, not that we can't do it, but there's so much new. And that's just a lot to your point. It won't deter us from pursuing excellence, but it is a lot, so I'm glad to hear those conversations are

[00:29:06] happening in rooms to which we're not in. Do we anticipate any changes with this new accountability system in terms of assessment remediation? For example, now there's a range where students can retest. I call it an almost pass, for example. Do we expect any changes to that? So we are hearing some information from the state, but we haven't gotten a lot of clarification around having more guidance in terms of what remediation should look like.

[00:29:45] So we're waiting for more information from them on that. But I will want to kind of to piggyback on Ms. Shea's comment around readiness. As the accountability model continues to expand over the years. They are going to be adding in some additional 5C performance tasks that will be part of our assessment program. Not this year, but potentially the following year. In lieu of or in addition to? Like more testing or less testing? At this point, it would be in addition to from what I have heard, but we're still waiting for a lot of those details. Can't wait to hear

[00:30:24] some of our students who need it most are going to be impacted. And speaking to that, do we expect funding models to change? When I was reading about our new system, instead of fully funding all Virginia schools, now it's going to be targeted funding.

[00:30:43] Can anyone speak to the funding that we're expecting? I don't think, again, I don't have a crystal ball. And I know much is still in development, particularly the budget at the state level is yet to be determined going into the next year where this accreditation conversation would be part of the equation.

[00:31:03] But, you know, I think there has been and will continue to be targeted efforts for schools meeting certain criteria in the framework. In the current framework, we've seen that with SIG grants and so on. And then I think in the future, we would hope to see some of that, more of that.

[00:31:20] Of course, to your point where you were quoting from an article that foreshadowed the percentage of schools that might fall into these categories. I don't know what that will mean from the state's point of view as to how much funding they'd be able to leverage to schools falling into those improvement categories if that number increases astronomically. So I think it's yet to be determined what kinds of supports would be available in terms of funding for targeted assistance. And then I would just like to thank every single employee across our entire division for the work that they do

[00:31:58] because they've all worked very hard and I know in some of my schools where we were green and then perhaps you know chronic absenteeism got us which some of that is beyond our control or where we've made improvements in the math and reading but yet we're still continuing we need to make improvement in science Because of the lack of labs, for example, during the pandemic, I just think all of our employees, all of our leaders, our entire team has done tremendous work, and we still have more work to do, but just I could not be more proud of our division.

[00:32:36] That's all I had, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. Mr. Young. Thank you for the presentation, everyone. Before I get started, I just wanted to say how proud I am of Glenley Elementary School, reaching full accreditation, making a significant accomplishment, not only for the school, but also for the entire Fairfield community.

[00:32:59] Glenley's dedication to fostering academic excellence while serving as an opportunity school shows that we can achieve when we commit to providing equitable resources and support our students. And Mr. Gordon, if you don't mind, I know Christy says she wanted to hear later, but I would love to, if you don't mind, coming up and just telling us some of the great things that you've done at Glenley for me, if you don't mind.

[00:33:25] All right. Hello, everybody. Hope you all are doing well. Thank you for this opportunity to highlight Glenley and our awesome staff, our community, our scholars. Shout out, of course, to Dr. Wilkerson. Shout out to a mentor coach, Dr. McQueen, and also the awesome leadership team members here.

[00:33:45] but it takes a village. And so, Mr. Young, you've been, I call the building, the school, the streets. You've been in the streets with us, you know, doing visits. You've been there for volunteer breakfast to support. Also, Dr. Roscoe Cooper as well, from his support as well. And everybody's just been an all-hands-on-deck kind of approach. And so, we go every other month into the community at St. Luke and serve food with Feedmore. You'll see us out doing bus visits to encourage families to send their scholars to school. And then every Friday, we do something they call it AAA, that stands for Attitude, Attendance, and Achievement, where we acknowledge our scholars. So we just take an overall holistic approach. And thank you again for all of your

[00:34:22] support. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you so much, Mr. Gordon. And what I'm hearing is that a holistic approach is working at your school, whether it's out feeding the community or handling the academics in school. So I definitely appreciate your efforts there. And then I guess back to the presentation, how are we leveraging the success of a Glennley or even in Verona to inform best practices for improving performance at all schools in Henrico County.

[00:34:51] Just like Ms. Seeley mentioned earlier, during our principal meetings, our leadership meetings, we're working together to give them that professional learning to help them go back and implement it in their schools.

[00:35:06] Like for example, this past elementary principal meeting, we took a deep dive into our DARE data that Ms. Hinton provides for us, where we were able to talk to principals about tiering their students, so that they could offer targeted remediation and supports for them based upon their individual needs using evidence-based practices.

[00:35:36] And another thing we work with our principals with is how do you leverage the reading coaches and the ILCs that we have in the building? They are gurus in their particular areas and going into the classrooms with teachers, providing that support with all the new resources that we have, leveraging that so that they then can work in their PLCs and help one another.

[00:36:05] Thank you. And you mentioned our reading specialists. And maybe this is a question for Dr. Cashwell. But what I really want to know is, can we provide some sort of specific budget item that was recently approved that's addressing some of these issues? I heard reading specialists, because that's new this year. But what other items was in the budget that we have budgeted for to kind of address some of our issues?

[00:36:29] I can speak to some of this. So certainly we tier our supports and staffing to schools based on need every budget cycle. And so whether it's opportunity school positions that we know, you know, we heard mentioned before, you know, some of our schools have additional master teachers through the teacher fellows.

[00:36:50] The way we provide resources, whether it's through additional Title I funding for additional staffing, both at the classroom level with additional coaches and specialists, along with our system-wide reading specialists. So, I mean, every budget we build, we're differentiating the supports based on school needs.

[00:37:07] So we're looking at things like accreditation data, staffing turnover rates, all of those factors that we know make a difference in what the supports are that are needed. So, and then I think this was brought up before about, you know, targeted funding that comes particularly for remediation efforts.

[00:37:28] So, state remediation funds and then any additional, do you want to speak to SIG grants or sort of what that looks like and how that's targeted and assigned from our budget? Sure. So after federal identification happens each year, which that happened two weeks ago, then the schools that are federally identified for support will be offered the opportunity to apply for what we call SIG grants, school improvement grants.

[00:37:54] And depending on their identification, those grants range anywhere, at least they did last year, from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for the year. Our training on that opportunity is next week and the week after. So from there, we will learn how much funding is available and the kind of requirements around accessing that funding.

[00:38:15] Because federal identification focuses on reading and math intervention, then that funding is targeted around providing additional supports in reading and math. That could be programmatic. It could be programmatic. staffing. And that would be in addition to whatever supports we'd all already put in. So I think there are some opportunities ahead to continue to leverage. And we always take advantage of every opportunity such as that. And just to follow up on that, are we prioritizing placing our top supports like our math coaches and our reading specialists in the schools that are struggling

[00:38:50] the most rather than those that are perceived to be performing well? Yes, we are. In addition, thank you guys for also giving us the extra instructional assistance that has given our teachers an opportunity, especially on the elementary level, to have a longer planning period so that they can have an opportunity to plan for Tier 1 instruction and also remediation for students.

[00:39:16] Gotcha. Ms. Burton, if you can go to slide 8, maybe you all can help me. I just want to know. I'm looking at middle schools. Is that slide 8? Oh, gotcha. We are accredited. Yeah, keep going.

[00:39:33] Accreditation status summary. No. Right there. Yeah, there we go. On slide eight, what factors are causing middle schools to lag almost 30% behind elementary and high school students? And I would say middle schools across the state are struggling.

[00:39:49] But here in Henrico, we are really honing in on our middle schools. They had started making progress before COVID. COVID hit, we started seeing a decline again with our middle schools. For example, today I was at Elko Middle School.

[00:40:06] Yesterday I was at Fairfield Middle School where we are doing learning walks. The division of school leadership, the division of learning with Dr. Hughes, her team, my team, coming together, going into the classrooms, observing, coming back, sitting down, talking about what can we do to continue to provide those supports.

[00:40:32] And so because we're seeing it with our own eyes, we can give that immediate support or additional funding or resource if a school needs it. And middle schools this year also have reading coaches in all of our middle schools. We haven't always had reading coaches in our middle schools.

[00:40:51] Yeah, I think that's important. And then if we could go another slide, Ms. Burden, because I want to talk about our subgroups. and even if it's not up there, black students are lagging behind 19 times than white Hispanic Asian students in math.

[00:41:07] How are we addressing this? - Through our comprehensive knee assessment, our schools that are having difficulty in those particular subgroups, we talked about earlier using those evidence-based research strategies to help support our students.

[00:41:24] Like for example, today I was at Elko and I was able to go into a classroom to see where usually you have a classroom maybe 20, 25. This was a smaller targeted group of 10 kids with a teacher and an interventionist that was providing that targeted support in the area of reading and math.

[00:41:47] Very similar to the structure that has always been in our elementary schools, we're really seeing it in our middle schools working with our middle school principals to develop a master schedule that supports the intervention where it is not in the regular tier one instructional block.

[00:42:07] Thank you. And I'm glad to hear that. The last thing I wanted to hear was the kids. And I didn't hear that. I heard how we get into answers that we really want. Because I hear so often that kids can't, kids can't, kids can't. And the reason they can't is the reason that we must.

[00:42:26] and what I'm hearing is that we are on track. Are we on track? Are we seeing improvements? Because sometimes these accreditation numbers don't tell us the true story. So are we seeing these improvements? Because just seeing a three, I don't know how close a school is to getting to a two.

[00:42:43] Or if a school is a one, I don't know how close they are to being a two. So are we seeing these improvements outside of one test at the end of the school year? - Yes, we are. - No further questions. Back to you, Madam Chair. - Thank you, Mr. Young.

[00:42:58] Mr. Irving. Thank you for the presentation, folks. So yeah, I wanted to start with the slide that Mr. Young had talked about with the accreditation status summary for the elementary, middle, and high school. I do think that the middle school numbers are staggering, right? And you think this is a nationwide

thing, which if you correspond the age of those students when COVID hit, they were in elementary school. And I think we understand as teachers in elementary, like those basics that you learn at that point are something that you have to have foundationally. I mean, I teach high school and my kids can't do math like you

[00:43:37] can't. Some of them can't do. I mean, many of them can't do just percentage based math. And that's the skill that you learn in elementary school. So I think that systemically there is something larger that's going on here where it would be irresponsible to just point blame at specific buildings and saying you're failing these kids when this is something that's happening everywhere to everyone all around the country. So I think it's important to highlight that because we can easily look at the middle schools and saying, what the heck is wrong with our middle schools? And that would be unfair to the people who work in the middle schools because Lord knows I can never teach middle school. I could do elementary and high school, but middle school

[00:44:14] is very tough. So I just would be remiss if I didn't point that out because it's, I think sometimes when we look at these numbers, it is more systemic in nature than, you know, we want to take it first glance. The second thing is, so I want to go to the weighted framework for the new school performance and support framework. I think that's the next slide. So do we know how the weighting, the new weighting framework was established? Like how are the percentages determined? And is there an empirical backing for why they are what they are?

[00:44:53] Has the state provided any of that information? At this point, I have not seen any direct information from them. We are still waiting for a lot of details from them. I know that the State Board of Education had a lot of conversation around the waiting, but I'm not 100% sure in terms of kind of what guided that discussion.

[00:45:14] So it could just be that they just said, this looks fine. I can't speak to that. I mean, I'm not asking to speculate. I'm just saying, like, is there empirical backing that says that, for example, but we shouldn't count growth at all for high school because our kids are just not supposed to grow when they are 15 to 18 years old.

[00:45:33] - Again, I can't speak to the rationale for that. I know that in terms of the weighting, that they did talk a lot about mastery in some of their guiding principles. They really were focusing on every student reaching mastery and that was an important component and you can see that certainly laid out in the way that they've weighted that indicator.

[00:45:54] Yeah, I think to me as a high school teacher, that's obviously very concerning when we just expect teenagers to have mastery of material and know just their improvement in it just doesn't matter at all. So in terms of state support, because I see for the new performance categories, if you're in the on track, off track and needs intensive support, it says schools may have access to general state supports.

[00:46:27] schools will receive additional support from the VDOE and schools will receive intensive support from the VDOE. Could y'all lay out for everybody what it looks like when the state comes into a building? Like, like I'm mechanically, I want people to really understand what it looks like for the people who are within that building who have to. So we, we have not had the state in the buildings for quite some time. Um, and right now what we are seeing are structures being built by the Department of Education, like the domain structure that I shared, and then developing

[00:47:01] supports within those structures. So there was a press release that came out a couple of days ago regarding some funding around reading. And it specifically speaks to these performance categories. And it's a grant that the VDOE has taken that will then, as schools are identified in either off-track or needs intensive support, those resources will be made available to those schools.

[00:47:26] What we are hearing from the Office of School Quality is they're pulling back and working with divisions and not necessarily even working at the school level anymore. Right now, the only school level contact are with our federally monitored schools that are in comprehensive monitoring versus two years ago where any school that had a red indicator was meeting with the VDOE twice a year.

[00:47:50] So they are now pushing on the divisions to use their resources to support the schools. And then the support from the BDOE will come through the division. So in terms of compliance for seeing that that's actually happening, what is what is that expected to look like?

[00:48:06] Sure. So right now, last year, the 24 schools that had either red indicators or yellow indicators in English all or math all, we were required to submit their school support plans to the state by June 30th. This year, one of two things will happen. Those 24 schools, if none of those indicators change, we will do an audit on their school support plan by December 30th and submit that audit to the VDOE.

[00:48:34] For the schools whose indicators changed, they will then need to update their school support plans and submit those plans to the VDOE. So right now it's a certification that Dr. Cashwell signs off on, that we have completed the plans.

[00:48:50] Certain plans go to the state, other plans stay locally, and we monitor all of them. So I guess it is great that we haven't had the state coming into our buildings, but in anticipation of the future changes, I just kind of wanted to have it laid out for everybody what exactly it looks like in terms of the extra work that is put on the people within the buildings to prove that you are doing what your support plans say that you're doing.

[00:49:16] And then, so could you kind of walk us through that a little bit? And I would just note, I think to the point that you're making, the amount of central support at the division level that we have had to build a structure for in order to take on the role of assisting our schools through what is a labor-intensive process and hold true to it with fidelity so that when I'm certifying and the division certifying that these steps have been made, there's a high level of support and accountability and monitoring that happens. And the work that Dr. Grant and her directors and Anne-Marie Seeley and her team

[00:49:51] have taken on together to support this has been significant. And that lift for every school division in Virginia has gotten heavier and heavier as the shift in the way supports have looked has changed. And I think, again, looking to the future and seeing where more schools may be in categories that are showing need for support, there is a question as to what does that look like? How are divisions maintaining those structures? Because while we want to do everything we can to take the extra lift of reporting and paperwork and plans off of our school principals

[00:50:31] and their teams you know that it falls there are requirements there that then fall to the central team to work in tandem with our schools so we actually do the compliance paperwork for the schools yeah so the department of school quality has 11 folks that are assigned to schools individually anywhere from four to nine schools and we do the compliance paperwork so they can focus on the process and the

instructional leadership in the building um and that some some of the cumbersome lift that you're talking about is just that technical paperwork.

[00:51:01] Yeah. And what I'm talking about, and also as well, because I've sat in these leadership meetings within my own building and talking about what it looks like when they come in and they expect to see like lesson plans on a specific unit that they are testing. And then, you know, we've had it laid out to where if you have even eight pages for one day of class, that may not even be good enough. So they don't use that process anymore. What you're referring to is called academic review. And when this new process and framework came out, they abandoned the academic review process. And we do not use that process with schools anymore. Great, great. And to piggyback on what Ms. Kinsella said about the report about 60% of Virginia schools, I'm just thinking, how is

[00:51:40] it logistically even possible to, because it seems like they're just going to outsource all that to the divisions, which puts, you know, how are we even going, like, how is it even feasible if it's going to be that many schools that would come under review and have to have state support?

[00:52:00] How is it even feasible to do that logistically? The manpower that would be required of us if they're offloading their compliance of meeting these standards onto us, how is that even feasible? So we are fortunate that our school quality department has, as I said, 11 members that are serving the schools to do monthly meetings, to meet with the school teams, to help them through the process of implementation and monitoring. Um, and so we are already lifting the 72 schools and we have been for the last four years in terms of having each school, have a plan

[00:52:38] meeting with those schools. Um, so that, that lift on us will not be a change though. I think it's fair to say, we don't know what's ahead in terms of reporting, uh, and you know, what will be required of schools falling into the various designations or what would be required of divisions. We grew our team very purposefully to lend the support that's needed in the structure that's out there now and certainly, you know, will work to adapt. But I do think it's fair to say it's been a strain on the division and resources and figuring out how to best maximize those to

[00:53:13] spread them across schools. I think Mrs. Seeley would note that she and her folks as well as Dr. grant and directors and all of our folks in teaching and learning are very busy supporting this effort, and it is an all-hands-on-deck scenario. The good thing is that we have systems in place. We did not abandon school quality during the pandemic. We continued, even though it was tedious, but I think many of our schools are seeing the benefits of we didn't give up,

[00:53:47] We continue the process, and they are, I will say, it's different than it was back in 2020, and they're focused on the process and not the product. Yeah, and I appreciate all that greatly. I think being ahead of the curve on this and anticipation of what the changes are going to be is paramount.

[00:54:07] And I, you know, I think I have the personal luxury of being the only person who's actually sat in a building level accreditation this year on what we anticipate for next year. And I think to what Ms. Kinsella said about worrying about staff burnout and what that's going to be, I experienced that in the meeting, just listening to all the changes.

[00:54:26] And these are department chairs who are, you know, arguably the most committed people within buildings. And, you know, hearing people say that job at Capital One is looking very good, like that's

extremely concerning to me. And I, you know, the goal of a thing should be to actually do something that we think is beneficial.

[00:54:44] And I think when you are trying to make determinations based off of things that are measuring, that are being measured by tests that are changing every single year and not even the same thing that they were initially created to be, I think it puts us in the state and our children and our teachers and everybody just in a bad position.

[00:55:04] And I, you know, I worry greatly, but I hope that we can, you know, do whatever it is to that we can to blunt the impacts. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Before jumping into questions and feedback, I just want to say thank you overall to the team.

[00:55:25] This isn't new to the team and you've been in the trenches. So it's important just to acknowledge you and your team. And while we're doing acknowledgement, I'm going to ride the wave on over here and say congratulations to Glenn Allen and Verina High School.

[00:55:47] And I sat to think about what did I want to say, so I wrote it out so that I wouldn't go on a tangent because we have other things to discuss. When building trusting connections that fosters positive opportunities, students will strive to develop their own potential.

[00:56:07] and they will practice being brave and brilliant at the same time. And I think receiving accreditation is a reflection of that. And so thank you to you as administrators. Thank you to the students.

[00:56:24] Thank you to the families. And thank you to the entire villages that are wrapping their arms around everyone because all of us want to see our children succeed. So thank you. So now I'll turn this way. as well, and I'm going to take a little bit of a different approach to the presentation, more of a solution-oriented perspective regarding the data that was shared in the presentation.

[00:56:53] Based off of what I've seen, heard, and read, I am anticipating significant changes, and specifically on targeted schools, and I'm just going to be honest about that. And I recommend that the district initiate an educational equity audit specifically focused on Black students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.

[00:57:20] We do have a trend in Henrico County Public Schools. it is certainly getting better. But an educational equity audit will allow us to really identify root causes so that when there are these changes that happen very frequently, if we really understand the root of the problem, then we can solve half of the battle and don't have to continuously fight it. In addition to that, I think that the areas of focus within an educational

[00:57:54] audit that I would recommend. And of course, we have experts that will explore to make sure that this is something viable and something worthy to do. Those areas specifically are around instruction, student support services, and enrichment. And enrichment is key. Understanding all of those other activities that happen within the school and around the school that help motivate, build character, all of those things. Another area is leadership. And then the last one is financial management. I'd love to have that particular topic incorporated in an educational equity audit to

[00:58:33] help understand, again, targeting specifically black students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. If the teams are not as familiar with an educational equity audit as you explore. There are two other schools that have done this successfully.

[00:58:53] One of them is the Jamesville-DeWitt Central School District. That is based out of New York. The other one is Ames Community School District, and that's based out of Iowa. So that gives you just two points of reference as you explore to make sure that this is something that would be a good fit for Henrico County Public Schools. The other thing I think each board member touched on, which is the frequent changes in measurement and guidance from the VDOE, it really does complicate long-term strategic planning and hinders the ability to achieve sustained academic goals.

[00:59:30] Right now, you can have one school be accredited this year, the next year accredited with conditions, and we hope not accredited at all, but when the goal continuously changes, you can't sustain. And so I'm curious, Dr. Cashwell, as a division, we are going into understanding it better.

[00:59:52] But what are we doing to help families and communities understand the mass of what I believe changes that we're going to undertake over the next couple of years so that when a family member sees results that may not appear to be favorable because it's a one point in time test, specifically with SOLs, who don't get an opportunity to see the growth within testing.

[01:00:15] How are we bringing our families along in the conversation? Yeah, and I think that's something we've had to do all along, and particularly coming out of the pandemic in years where there were SOL tests to lean on and there weren't, and looking at growth and what did it mean for students, and helping make sure that our teachers and school principals, kind of where the rubber meets the road with students, equipped to have data points and measures that they can speak to for each and every child, whether it's the iReady assessment.

[01:00:43] We heard a parent perspective from a board member about those frequent touch points that help parents follow along and know really where their child is academically, so really helping continue that conversation and getting families familiar with those touch points.

[01:00:59] And then coupling that with as this new framework comes on board and, you know, it would be premature for us to say a whole lot and you've got a high-level picture here but certainly as this comes to fruition more and we've begun to formally train our principals and our teachers with more specifics as they develop that will allow us to work with our families as well and so I think there have been lots of changes over time with dashboards for families the way they receive SOL data what does it mean at the elementary level when you're not passing a test

[01:01:34] versus what does it mean when you're in a credit-bearing high school course and their end-of-course requirements. And so there's been an awful lot to message along the way. Some of those may not change, even with the new school rating system, what it means for the individual student may not change a great deal.

[01:01:53] But there will be plenty of work to do, to your point, to bringing the community along with the conversation as well. and we'll wanna make sure our school principals and teachers are really well versed and equipped as well as to tell their story, which they do a great job of now and understanding some of the pieces you brought up here, which is this is a moment in time, this is certainly based on SOL testing from a year prior for our accreditation this year, and the degree to which they're able to point to and hold up other measures that they want families particularly really tuned into, particularly related to reading and math performance and other content area performance.

[01:02:31] So, as we know more, I think that will help us develop our plans, but certainly have not underestimated, to your point, the crucial need to bring the community along in the conversation. - Can I add to that, Dr. Heshwell? In grades K through three, schools have to create a reading plan for their students.

[01:02:53] And so parents that have students that are at risk, they will be aware of those plans, And based on those plans, there will be a monitoring system in place through our Unified Insights. And that's related to the Virginia Literacy Act requirements.

[01:03:10] So I think what we're asking parents to pay attention to is a lot and our educators. And so we'll try to do our best to continue to compartmentalize. What's important to know about your student and their performance in the grade level or course they're in today?

[01:03:26] and then when you're looking at school system performance, like how is Henrico Schools doing overall, how is Glenley Elementary doing, for example, and looking at perhaps a new accreditation framework that we've helped build some context and understanding around that.

[01:03:42] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. And it's this idea that's floating around specifically, you know, for the communications team, I would say, is perhaps we can explore some ways to make the verbiage simple so that families can understand. If you're not in the weeds or paying attention to VDOE or school board meetings, you may only pay attention when you see something in the news or SOL scores and then you have a perception of an entire school based off of a

[01:04:19] news article or some other source. But I think we can change the narrative if we can really look at this from a different lens in explaining in very simple terms this is how we have gotten here and perhaps there are changes to come and maybe that happens at the school level maybe we do it division-wide but I would implore our communications team to take a look at what's possible. And then the other area that I had been noodling over in thinking about root causes and student outcomes

[01:04:54] in academia is around nutrition. I know this is a very different take on looking at this academic data. However, nutrition impacts cognitive function, brain development, and energy levels. I would like for us to take a look at, well, first, let me ask the question, and then I'll give the idea for you to explore. So, Dr. Cashwell, based off of your understanding of requirements for nutrition. I'd like for you to share that first. And then the second question is going to be,

[01:05:30] do you feel the food served within all schools across Enrico positively promotes good nutrition practices? So all of the meals served in our school cafeterias meet the requirements for sugar content and so on. And that is heavily regulated. And we've actually seen some changes going into this school year. So in order to participate in and receive federal funds for school nutrition programs were required to adhere to those guidelines. And so as far as promoting an interest and instilling, hopefully, in students who are taking the lunches and breakfasts that

[01:06:07] are offered a joy for more fruits and vegetables and fresh items, because there is some choice as to what's chosen on the line. And while every item there may meet the nutritional requirements as it's supposed to, we do want to encourage more fruits and vegetables and farm-to-table and all of that.

[01:06:27] You've seen over the past years, we've reported out some really great data around the unlimited fruit and veggie bars and those sorts of things in our school and getting kids really excited about helping themselves to more than just a doled-out portion in the school lunches and cafeterias.

[01:06:45] So lots of exploration there. Great data coming out of the schools who have tried that, looking to spread that, as well as getting students involved in taste tests and judging menus and bringing some new items to date. I was in a high school the other day where a student was telling me all about a certain kind of noodle bowl they were very excited to see come on the menu.

[01:07:08] And so I think within the nutritional guidelines, yes, those are met. We want students to enjoy the food, enjoy the lunch, perhaps be more apt to help themselves to those fresh fruits and veggies more often. So I mean, that's a work in progress for us working within the guidelines that are set for us.

[01:07:30] I appreciate your response. And I was intentional because I wanted you to lead that we have some very specific requirements around what can be offered. So that's number one. However, I will be brutally honest that I am concerned about physical and cognitive development when it comes to nutrition within our schools.

[01:07:54] And that I understand the connection between quality nutrition and the requirements. I'm hopeful that we can explore ways.

[01:08:10] We have some good ideas happening right now around the fresh foods, the fresh vegetables in certain schools. We have the pilots in certain schools. We have got to find a way to make sure that the food is being practiced in a way and served in a way that excites our children to eat it.

[01:08:36] Even when we're taking and students are taking a point-in-time test that meal that they are served for breakfast is important before they take that test and if we can find wonderfully ways to entice them to eat it one because it hopefully it tastes good but to really educate them on the importance of nutrition to eat to have the energy level for the brain development i think it helps with the outcomes as well and so So this is a very different approach.

[01:09:09] It's not data specific, but I'm really focused on root causes. So regardless of whatever changes, if we are addressing wellness along with equity, when situations change from the VDOE or the environment, we are poised to do well.

[01:09:30] And so those are just a few of my recommendations for you and your team to explore. I appreciate all that you do. I do have one redirect, which is Ms. Shea. Thank you. I have one question for you all that I missed, which was you administered a new teacher evaluation system. Could you share just a little bit about what that is? I'm not sure what the comment was made about the evaluation system, but I can jump in and speak to the teacher evaluation system. Oh, it's the best practices, it's leveraging the

[01:10:08] evaluation system in support. And so you may know, you know, we follow the teacher evaluation system as is required by code in Virginia. And those standards are set forth and consistent across public schools in Virginia. And one of those is a student growth measure. So, you know, there is a focus on no matter what course or grade level you teach, whether it's SOL tested or not, this idea that you're held accountable to student progress and student performance and there's choice as to what measures are used there. So I think that's one piece of this puzzle that, you know, teachers

[01:10:44] are focused on that idea of growth and student performance throughout that evaluation process. But beyond that, it's making sure that lesson planning and delivery are content aligned and aligned to best practices that result in student growth. So I think that's why this piece is important here and for administrators who are enacting the evaluation process and doing feedback and observation

reports that they're doing so in a manner that's aligned with best practices that are then aligned with those standards that then lead to student achievement. So I think that's

[01:11:20] why it was mentioned as a piece of the puzzle here and then how we're supporting and training administrators around that. Thank you. That's helpful. And then I wanted to briefly take a page from my colleague in the Fairfield District's book and put, and perhaps put our building lover experts on the hot seat a little bit that are, that are here. Feel free to like wave me off and be like, I'll email you later if you don't want to be in the hot seat. But looking at y'all's successes, have there been particularly impactful budgetary supports or budgetary or extra positions that have been particularly impactful in moving the needle for

[01:11:59] students. You can wave me off or you're welcome to the microphone to share with us as we look towards budget season and how we can really make a difference for y'all and all of our schools. Yes, thank you for that question and thank you for the support of our district leaders. I can say firsthand that having a teacher fellow provided to our opportunity schools has been tremendous.

[01:12:22] That teacher specifically at Verona is like a spy house for our teachers to, especially new teachers, to be able to come and, you know, do some peer observations and take whatever, you know, they see from those observations into their classrooms. More specifically to the staff and support, we're focusing on leveraging the robust programming that we have through New Teacher Academy along with, you know, our teacher fellows, our coaches to continue to help develop our new teachers in hopes of creating strong classroom management along with best instructional practices to create a sense of connectedness and belongingness, which will in turn hopefully retain teachers.

[01:13:01] So, yes, I've seen tremendous support with budget support. Thank you so much. I appreciate that. That's all. Mrs. Kinsella. Given the success that I looked at in our data, do we anticipate adding additional opportunity schools?

[01:13:23] Do we have any on the radar, perhaps? When we set forth the criteria and brought that into the budget, it's a three-year cycle. And so we did adjust the number of schools to bring Highland Springs Elementary on board, given the shift in their programmatic and support structure.

[01:13:39] So that's something we would evaluate as we finish the third year. But certainly, you know, we're always looking at additional supports and meeting needs and, you know, what those best practices are as we've learned from our opportunity schools and the positive impact.

[01:13:57] we're monitoring that, making sure we're looking at data to make sure that these investments are paying off and the difference is being felt. And anecdotally, and looking at the first year data, they absolutely are. And I think you just heard testimony to that. I sure did. And I just want to say thank you to the team because initially feedback just inadvertently to me about Opportunity Schools was that we had so many resources, but we didn't really know what to do with them or they weren't as well coordinated. So thank you for coordinating them because they're certainly yielding results, positive ones in our schools. Madam Chair.

[01:14:34] Thank you again for the presentation and all of the hard work. Dr. Cashwell. Yeah, that concludes one of our Destination 2025 presentations related to academic progress and measures. For the next presentation, we're going to take a different slant and provide an update related to college and career readiness data, which looks at the division's cohort graduation and dropout rates, as well as our career and

technical education certification, and of course we'll look at outcomes there as well as spend some time talking about strategies that are in place to

[01:15:10] continue to improve efforts and meet student needs on that front. So some of the same presenters and a few new ones coming to the podium. So Dr. Hinton, I think Dr. Grant's going to kick us off. Today Dr. Hinton, Dr. Farrell, and Ms. Anderson are pleased to present our annual update on college and career readiness following the recent release of the four-year Virginia on-time graduation rates by the Virginia Department of Education.

[01:15:41] Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board, and Dr. Cashwell. Two key goals of Destination 2025, our Division's strategic plan, are advancing academic excellence and fostering equitable access for all students. We track our progress towards these goals using several metrics, such as on-time graduation rates, dropout rates, and attainment of career and technical certifications.

[01:16:08] Each metric is analyzed through an equity-focused approach to identify disparities in representation among different student groups. The Virginia on-time graduation rate is calculated using individual student data tracked over time, accounting for student mobility, retention patterns, and adjustments for students with disabilities and English learners who may require additional time to earn a diploma.

[01:16:37] Students who achieve a board-approved diploma are considered graduates, while those earning GED certificates or completing high school without a diploma are not included in this category. In 2024, Henrico County Public Schools celebrated a total of 3,820 graduates, equating to 91% of students who entered 9th grade in 2020 earning their diploma.

[01:17:05] Among these graduates, 59% received an Advanced Studies or IB diploma, 39% earned a Standard diploma, and 1% earned an Applied Studies diploma. The overall graduation rate for Henrico County Public Schools stood at 90.7%, marking the highest achievement since the onset of COVID-19 in 2020.

[01:17:29] This trend was also mirrored at the state level. The cohort dropout rate encompasses former students who do not remain enrolled throughout their four years of high school, as well as those whose status is listed as unconfirmed, indicating a reported transfer to another division, but discontinued public schooling instead.

[01:17:52] It's important to note that this dropout rate calculation is not the inverse from the graduation rate, as students who have completed a GED are neither considered as graduates or dropouts. In 2024, Henrico County Public Schools reported 278 students as dropouts or unconfirmed.

[01:18:11] The dropout rate remained steady at 6.6%, marking the lowest rate since 2018 when it was 5.3%. In comparison, Virginia as a whole saw a slight decline in dropout rate of a little less than one percentage point from the previous year.

[01:18:29] To analyze this data across student groups, our division employs an equity index formula. This index helps to pinpoint groups that may be underrepresented or overrepresented. Scores below 1 indicate underrepresentation, while scores above 1 indicate overrepresentation of a group.

[01:18:51] When examining the equity index for on-time graduation, we are pleased to find that most of our student groups are fairly represented in the data. However, as previously noted, we continue to

observe underrepresentation among our Hispanic and English Learner students in this indicator, which is consistent with state-level patterns.

[01:19:14] Nonetheless, we have observed improvement for both groups since 2018-19 school year. When examining the Equity Index for dropout rates, Hispanic and English Learner students continue to show overrepresentation both within our division and across the state.

[01:19:34] There also remains a persistent over-representation of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students in Henrico County and statewide. Comparing to data from 2018-19, the first year of our strategic plan, we have seen some progress among Hispanic, English learner, and economically disadvantaged student groups.

[01:19:57] At this time, Dr. Farrell, Director of High Schools, will provide detailed insights into the supports and strategies implemented to assist students in meeting graduation requirements. Good afternoon.

[01:20:13] Our schools closely monitor early warning indicators such as attendance, grades, and student discipline. By identifying signs of academic or behavioral struggles early on, we can provide timely support to students who need it. This approach includes personalized support through intervention teams, including home visits and in-person meetings with families to establish and enhance strong relationships and collaboratively set individualized goals. We offer students a wide range of flexible recovery

[01:20:47] options for those who are behind on credits. These include block scheduling, virtual courses, and evening school programs. These opportunities ensure students have multiple pathways to catch up and stay on track to meet their academic goals.

[01:21:05] I want to take a moment to highlight our school division's commitment to supporting on-time graduation for students with disabilities. The Exceptional Education Department collaborates with high schools to develop master schedules that include courses aligned with credit accommodations offered to students with disabilities.

[01:21:25] Additionally, Exceptional Education students can earn verified credits through locally awarded verified credits or special permission locally awarded verified credits, which allow those who struggle with SOL tests to demonstrate mastery through alternative documentation and work samples. To ensure staff are equipped to support student success, professional learning has been provided to high school exceptional education teachers, coordinators of assessment and remediation, and middle school exceptional education teachers on diploma pathways along

[01:22:01] with training for principals and school counseling directors on the limitations of the applied studies diploma. We believe these collaborative efforts will help increase the percentage of students with disabilities who graduate on time. In addition to our targeted support of on-time graduation for students with disabilities, we are equally focused on ensuring English learners have access to the unique resources and supports necessary to graduate. Beginning in the 22-23 school year, Tucker High School launched a newcomer SLIFE program specifically designed

[01:22:38] to support English learners, particularly students with limited or interrupted formal education. This program is part of a broader initiative as Freeman and Hermitage have also launched newcomer programs this school year. The program focuses on building language acquisition, social-emotional

learning, and study skills and increasing student and family awareness of school and community resources.

[01:23:05] The program has already yielded positive feedback from students and additional field trips for cohort students have boosted engagement, participation, and continued enrollment in high school. Additionally, among this cohort, we have seen increased enrollment in ACE programs and students in cohort have outperformed their SLIF peers with regard to credits earned and growth demonstrated in language acquisition. By providing these targeted supports, the program is poised to positively impact the graduation rate for English learners, ensuring they have the tools

[01:23:43] and resources needed to achieve academic success. We look forward to building on the success of the program and evolving it to meet student needs. At this time, I will turn the presentation over to Robin Anderson, Educational Specialist for Workforce and Career Development, to talk about CTE and HCPS. Good evening. Last year, we awarded 5,660 industry certifications and state licenses.

[01:24:17] It is important to remember that most of these certifications test a deeper understanding of subject matter and are based on the student's ability to apply concepts to solve problems. We continue to work to ensure that the certificates we offer our students are meaningful.

[01:24:35] Last year, we offered 68 different certifications that are directly connected to the courses and are meaningful certifications as the students continue their education. Successfully reaching graduation is often a result of multiple factors that connect the students to schools and their education.

[01:24:58] For students who earn, or excuse me, for students who are CTE completers, The graduation rate continues to trend upwards with the completion rate of 99.94%. That's 1,703 of 1,704.

[01:25:15] This is something we continue to celebrate. There are several factors that contribute to the success when CTE, excuse me, students and their courses, they gain and build confidence in their abilities to succeed. The hands-on approach leads to practical problem solving.

[01:25:32] Other important factors that lead to CTE students to success is their relationships. Our CTE teachers, because of the nature of the course and their experience in the field and the student's interest, can form meaningful relationships with students that help motivate and encourage.

[01:25:50] Failure is not an option. Last year, Henrico County reported 4,213 high-quality work-based learning opportunities. This was an increase of 106.7% over the 2023-24 school year.

[01:26:15] According to the VDOE, work-based learning experiences must meet three criteria to be deemed high quality. One, relate to students' career goals and or interest, integrate with instruction, and perform in the partnership of local businesses and organizations.

[01:26:33] In March, we are adding an internship fair for all Henrico County Public Schools juniors. the if fair will showcase student internship opportunities with local employees we know through such high quality work-based learning experiences that our students will be better equipped to graduate enrolled enlisted and or employed this complete concludes our presentation and we are happy to answer any questions thank you so much for the presentation

[01:27:08] i will begin to my left with mr irving thank you all for the for the presentation this is a A great update on all of the happenings with on-time graduation and college and career readiness. I think I've stated previously my views on on-time graduation, and I think that it's not a useful measure for many

things, just given how we can't simultaneously believe that all children are different and have different needs, but also expect all of them to graduate on time.

[01:27:41] And then when we do, I think inevitably you have children who are not actually prepared to graduate because their needs weren't met. throughout the process because they are chauffeured through because graduation grades can't decline below 90% or something's wrong, even though, you know, those things exist anyways. And I think it's, you know, when we get too tapped into outcomes rather than what's actually going in to produce the given thing, you know, you invariably have kids who can barely read at a fifth grade level who are graduating. And, you know, I think that it's, it's not fair to the students and it's not

[01:28:19] fair to people in the buildings. So I, you know, it's great that we are where we are, but I do think that it's maybe not a useful measure for the state or really anybody. The thing that I'm concerned about is our Latino students and English learners and their over-representation in terms of graduating on time and the dropout rate. And I, you know, I see that myself as a teacher who has a lot of English language students and I think it's you know almost certainly due to when we get high

[01:28:56] school students who are sometimes 17 and 18 years old and don't speak any English and then they come here like what do we expect you know it's it's we want to help them in every way they can but for somebody who's 18 years old and is sitting in class with people who are way younger than them and they don't speak the language it becomes extremely difficult to give them reasons to come to school in a way that feels more valuable to them than just going to work a job and make money for their family. And I'm worried that this could be compounded by the new accreditation standards that are changing with, you know, how and just what that says to our students when you come here

[01:29:33] and originally you're given as schools 11 semesters before these students test count towards the reporting requirements down to three. So I could have a student who is, you know, 18 years old from El Salvador who comes here. And in the next year, he's expected to show mastery on SOL tests. And growth doesn't matter at all, which is, as we know, is more important than anything for these students. And that just feels remarkably unfair to me and could potentially increase the

[01:30:09] dropout rate that we see amongst these students. And I think that would be a travesty. Another thing I'm also worried about as it pertains to these groups of students is the new accreditation standards also change the reporting requirements and drop them down to currently, you know, you have in order to report subgroup data, you have to have a certain number of students within the building for it to be statistically significant to actually report. And I believe they're dropping that down to 15 students now. So schools who historically have not had to report subgroup data for these students potentially will in the future, which could lead to increased trends in

[01:30:46] these things. And I just find that concerning. And I think like it doesn't actually help anybody that these changes are happening in a way and I think it's actually just going to hurt our students and it's going to hurt our teachers and our families and it's it's it's depressing to see the career and technical education I'm a CTE department chair so I love the graduation way for that I do think that that's a great way to engage students who may otherwise not find school to be their thing and maybe give them purpose in a way that leads them to see the light at the end of the tunnel and want to reach there because they know that something is out there for them

[01:31:25] where they can have a good living and live a valuable life that has meaning to them. So I'm, you know, I love to see the CTE numbers and I'm glad that we continue to expand enrollment for those

programs because I do think that they're incredibly valuable. So thank you. Thank you, Mr. Irving. Mr. Young. Thank you for the presentation. Dr. Farrell, when you were talking about monitoring warning indicators and personal life support, I believe it was on slide seven. Is there some sort of list that these high schools have of the kids that you guys are, I guess, have these indicators that you kind of address throughout ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth

[01:32:04] grade? Absolutely. All of our high schools have spreadsheets with the students and all the critical information necessary to make determinations on what supports they need. Okay, and then when we talk about the, I guess, the 278 students that dropped out, I'm assuming all are over 18, correct?

[01:32:22] I'm not certain. It varies. Some may be 17. Okay. And then, so are these kids, do we know, or do we have any data, were they on this indicator list? So do we know that the indicators are, the list is working and we're able to offer the in-person meetings, the home visits, student discipline, grades, attendance.

[01:32:44] Do we know if it's, do we have any data that's sort of supporting that these warning indicators do keep our students in school? Or are these just kids that sort of fell through the cracks at some point? a little bit of everything some fell through the cracks early on in high school some came to us very late with uh you know either no credits or small numbers of credits and just kind of disappeared so it really does vary we do a great job of utilizing our list to to target students and families for example over the last couple years we've gotten started really early with connecting with students and families like over the summer just making sure that they felt welcome

[01:33:23] them coming into school, making sure that their families understood, you know, what was needed to keep them on track for graduation. So our lists have been working very well, particularly with the systems that we have in place for our intervention team. Yeah, and are you seeing it as more of new students entering into Henrico County, or are we looking at sort of children that's been with Henrico County, like K through 9, 10, 11, 12, like been with us the entire time?

[01:33:45] Are we seeing like kids from other districts sort of coming in and then they end up sort of dropping out or? I think it's a little bit of everything. It is a little more challenging when kids come to us late, but we've certainly had some students who were with us due to, you know, just different circumstances who weren't able to complete high school. Okay, okay. Well, thank you for that. CTE seems to be doing amazing, 99.94%. I don't think it gets any better than that. I have a student that's a CTE student now, and more than just seeing that there's something to do when he graduates, you see the confidence sort of build in other areas. All of his grades are extremely good

[01:34:23] right now. I'm proud of him. But you do see that confidence being built in our CTE students when it comes to their other classes, their core classes. So I just would like to keep seeing that expanded, give more kids opportunities. But other than that, thank you all for the presentation, Madam Chair.

[01:34:40] Thank you, Mr. Young. Mrs. Sherry. Thanks so much. So one question around the internship fair in the spring. I'm really excited to see that. I know it can be hard to make those connections for students and businesses and that sort of thing. How are we recruiting, getting the information out to businesses for that? And is it just for our traditional CTE fields or is it broader into other fields as well?

[01:35:10] It's open to all of the students in Henrico County in the 11th grade, and the goal is to reach out to businesses that are included in all 17 clusters. So that would encompass quite a few different career opportunities, so no child left behind.

[01:35:27] Thank you so much. Appreciate that. And then I just really wanted to give affirmation for the newcomer program. I have heard so many tremendous things both on the macro scale, but also just individual student experiences that will just, I mean, just so moving to hear on how it is changing lives for these students.

[01:35:52] And I noticed in our other accreditation report, it looked like Tucker had made some significant targeted improvements with their dropout rate, which I think, as we've dug into in previous years, had a high correlation with EL dropouts.

[01:36:10] And so would you say some of that success is due to the newcomer program? Absolutely. You know, because that goes directly to Mr. Irving's point. Those students that he was talking about at one point, those are a lot of them that this program is serving and meeting their needs.

[01:36:27] And like you said, getting them to graduation, getting them the skills they need. And so I'm really excited to see it expanded to Hermitage and Freeman this year. I've heard some really great feedback at Freeman on what a game changer it has been, both for the specific students in the newcomer program, but also more broadly for the other EL students the EL community in Freeman and broadly for the Freeman community. So I'm really excited about this program. I'm really looking forward to each year as we not only impact more students and more families, but we learn more from it on what the real change mechanisms are there and how we're

[01:37:07] able to broadly apply that, you know, some other places in the division as well. So thank you so much. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you. I would just like to highlight one more time on slide three that our on-time graduation rate is the highest it's been since the onset of the pandemic maybe it's like is that three slide three yes um back up to 90.7 we are slightly below this state um but I'll take it we're back to where we were um so kudos to everyone in the division

[01:37:43] as we mentioned earlier. On the cohort dropout rate on slide four, 6.6%. It's the lowest since 2018 when it was, I think, 5.3%, the speaker said. What can we do better to support these students and families? I know we were talking about the newcomer program coming to

[01:38:17] Hermitage. It's been tremendous at Tucker. Was it Freeman and Hermitage? I'm sure would this type of program also do well in some of our middle schools or at least some of the concepts of it because they've said in the reading I've been doing, just paying close attention to why our students are dropping out, trying to understand it or why they lose interest in schools and they're not successful. It says that the transition years and really the middle school years as they experience

[01:38:55] failure are critical. Absolutely. I think for our English language learner students at middle school, there are certainly some components of the newcomer program that makes sense. And that's that wraparound set of supports, not just the academic support. What's unique to the newcomer program and as it speaks particularly to dropout rates is you know these are students who are nearing the age to complete high school so 17 18 over age they're students with limited or interrupted formal education even in their home language so they may not be literate in their

[01:39:32] home language there may be a number of transition students have occur been through with their schooling and I think Mr. Irving was speaking to that you know an individual who may be 18 turning 19, needing, you know, to come in and finish up that work in high school. But the gap is significant, not just with language, but just access to having had a formal education. And so those supports are really

unique to that age group, you know, that sort of that shift to the adult learner in addition to the ELL supports. But certainly what we're seeing across the board for our students who may

[01:40:11] not necessarily be newcomers, but need that English language support, that those middle school years are critical for all students, you know, as far as a transition, but keep as particularly with our EL students and keeping them on track to graduate and completing coursework. So then realizing, I gave the wrong reference as to this, this is the cohort dropout rate that where it's 278. We actually don't know in all circumstances. So apply my comment about the middle schoolers and the newcomer program to our graduate on time graduation, right? That

[01:40:46] maybe that would boost success there. Apologies for misleading everybody on that. No, I think there's a connection to both, right? So the reason students may leave us and become dropouts vary. We certainly know with our students, our English language learners, some of the subgroups we saw with Hispanic students are students who were coming in with limited or interrupted formal education close to the age of 18, having to make difficult decisions about work or school, finding sort of that gap to accessing the high school education greater than what felt could be overcome. So these newcomer programs have the counseling and wraparound supports to really help

[01:41:26] individuals access something that makes a little more sense to them given their age, their background in formal education, and so on. But certainly, to your point, middle school is a key place to get students on track, especially as they may begin earning credit towards graduation and so on. And then moving on to slide seven, we've already covered the newcomer program success.

[01:41:53] And again, I can't wait to see it at Freeman and Hermitage. And then the concepts applied elsewhere through the division. It mentioned that a lot of our English learners are going into CTE programs. Are there perhaps other programs they may be interested in outside of just CTE, perhaps music, drama? I mean, how do we know that CTE is for them? Or do we just not highlight music has

[01:42:27] been successful? I mean, have other programs not been as successful as CTE? No, sure. We just didn't highlight it for this particular presentation. And a lot of that is determined by student interests, Right. So, you know, when our administrators and teachers and counselors sit down to talk to students, to a large degree, they've overwhelmingly expressed an interest in CTE programs.

[01:42:52] Okay. I mean, I'm aware of the benefit of CTE. To Ryan's point, I'm a CTE parent as well, and I've seen how it changes the viewpoints, even to the comprehensive schooling, because they're so excited to go to their CTE program.

[01:43:08] Sure. I'm also a CTE parent. Do our English learners have support when they are in CTE? Yes. With translation, I mean, what level is actually admitted into CTE and what supports are available for our English learners?

[01:43:29] Currently, each ACE Center has EL support. We have two EL teachers that support those students there. In our schools, of course, the comprehensive high schools, the CTE team generally has a strong relationship with our exceptional ed and our EL departments to make sure that the students test, classroom tests can be translated.

[01:43:54] I, as far as credentialing is concerned, I make sure and provide those departments with what accommodations the VDOE allows for whatever certification test they're sitting for. Okay. And then you just mentioned it, certifications and credentials, 5,660. I wrote it down because it's so significant. And then

we offer 68 different certifications. These are all relevant. Are these in response to what is the industry saying they're relevant, the 68 different certifications? Is it industry that says that? Is it the students? Is it a combination?

[01:44:33] Combination. For more of our trade programs and our ACE centers, those are truly specific industry credentials driven by the industry. For those that are in a comprehensive high school, it's a decision based on the VDOE, what is approved. And our specialists work with our instructors based on the curriculum to provide the best credential that matches the curriculum that we're giving. Okay. And then to follow up on that, what is the value, in your opinion, and Ms. Anderson, of passing a certification for employment.

[01:45:07] Like, what is the value of that? Beside the fact that, of course, it's a graduation requirement for those students seeking a standard diploma, I'm happy to announce that 26 students in our division this year took advantage of the Virginia Department of Education ruling that if you are a CTE completer and you pass two industry certifications, you can substitute that for your laboratory science SOL.

[01:45:32] So those 26 students, by their work and hard work in credentialing and CTE courses, passing two or more certifications, allowed them to walk across the stage in graduation. Yet another benefit to CTE, right? Especially when our science scores have been a little bit lower coming out of the pandemic.

[01:45:55] Let's see. What else? Okay, so what are we doing? Let me see. That may be... Nope. Here we go. The high-quality work-based learning experiences on slide 10.

[01:46:18] The experiences on the left, this represents CTE students only, CTE and comprehensive high school students. Both. Both. Thank you. And 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th?

[01:46:36] Yes. All right. Thank you so much for the presentation. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. I'll also share that I'm interested in understanding the timing of dropouts, students dropping out, and if there is a way to explore how to get that data. The timing is important. The difference between a student starting in kindergarten and deciding to drop out at 11th grade versus a student that has transferred into HCPS perhaps at 10th grade and drops out at

[01:47:12] 11th grade really is significant in understanding the data itself. A little bit of the integrity of the data, I would say. So if there are ways perhaps of contacting the student, if you have that contact information after they've left HCPS to get it or whatever ways we can, I think it would be an advantage to better understand what the story is behind the dropout rate. The other question I have is, do we know how many of our students pursued a GED and received

[01:47:49] it? I don't have that number in front of me, but we do have quite a few students who take advantage of that opportunity, that pathway. Thank you. I would be interested in that because that's something to be celebrated as well. So getting a GED is a pathway for some students, and sometimes it is the best pathway, and I would be curious to know just what that number is, so that when we're discussing all of the different pathways into adulthood, into those E's, enrolled, enlisted,

[01:48:22] and employed, it's important to know that as well, so I am interested in that. I do have questions around our English learners. I would love to learn a little bit more about the community resources that are available to our English learners.

[01:48:42] And if you have that grade, if not, you can get it to me at another time. We can share. It would be more time than we could share with you here. But just not only between our Welcome Center and the resources there, but the school-embedded resources. Thank you.

[01:48:58] You also mentioned, and it may have just been language being used, but you said there were specific unique tools available for English learners. Would you share with me what that is and how they're used in practice?

[01:49:17] We can get you those as well. I know our instructional team and our ELL team will have that handy, but these would be things like whether it's services provided directly through an ELL teacher for translation, resources, dictionaries, those sorts of things.

[01:49:36] If it's in a career and technical education field, we heard some of those supports that would be accessing that certification in their language or whatever might be allowable for those tests they'd be sitting for and any resources they'd need to study for those.

[01:49:51] Thank you for that. Specifically what I'm thinking of, so you have a student that requires ELL service. That same student could also require an IEP. So I'm really digging a bit deeper to understand the layers of some of our ELL students and what the unique tools available for them are.

[01:50:13] So as you're doing your research, I'd love to get that feedback as well. And then also achieving a 99.94% CTE completer graduation rate is remarkable. Continue to celebrate. We have challenges that we have to address, but it's also important to celebrate the wins, so continue to celebrate that.

[01:50:38] I also believe one of the ingredients in this special sauce is trusting relationships. And there's something very special around the trusting relationships within CTE. And I wonder if that's been captured in order to share in other settings.

[01:50:58] Yeah, relationships matter. We know that when students feel more connected to school, they tend to perform better, and that's reflected in students who are members of clubs, who are part of athletic teams. Yeah, relationships matter.

[01:51:15] And I would point out some of the research that's looked at this phenomenon nationally where, you know, students who are able to show what they know or are able to do with something that's performance-based or real. So think about the kinds of assessments for a skill or a trade.

[01:51:34] They're often hands-on and showing an authentic skill versus a paper-pencil test. And while some of that may be involved with some of the certifications, what we know about best practice for learning, that when it's authentic, it's relevant, and there are multiple ways to show mastery that matters.

[01:51:50] I think that speaks a lot to our Henrico learner profile and those skills that beyond the academic we're really looking to instill in our students, in our classrooms, and lean on those best practices even outside of career and technical education. There's much to be learned about, you know, that structure. And while I know we just saw a presentation on state accreditation, and those were different kinds of tests, it just shows the difference between what you measure matters and how students are afforded opportunities to show a valuable skill and what they've learned. Thank you for that. I just also wanted to

[01:52:29] share some thoughts in this space. My son is very excited to participate in CTE at Highland Springs and in listening to his conversations with some of the students that are already there for me, I, you

know, the bright light went on and the thought was that clear values guide behaviors and the values and when I'm over in the building from the educators to the staff to the SROs,

[01:53:01] The values that they are examples of really do guide the behaviors, the excitement to walk into the building. And so maybe there's something right there around demonstrating very clear values. In other words, I'm practicing what I preach and students paying attention are practicing or emulating what they see. And I just wanted to give that to you because maybe perhaps in some way shape or form that one ingredient in that big pot of sauce could be helpful in sharing that

[01:53:38] broadly and so that is all that I have so thank you so much thank you thanks again to our presenters and we'll certainly follow up with the board related to questions for which we promised to follow up the next item we are pleased to have an opportunity to share a review of the schematic design for the rebuild of Kwiakasen Middle School, for which we will be seeking your approval of that schematic design later on the consent agenda, but wanted to provide an opportunity to review the

[01:54:11] schematic design and answer any questions you might have. Thank you so much. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board, and Superintendent Cashwell. We are very excited to bring yet another project before the board today for schematic design approval.

[01:54:31] Our 2022 bond referendum included the rebuild of Cuyacuson Middle School. This project will replace the existing middle school and be a community school with a family and community engagement hub. The replacement building will also include the next middle school innovation center.

[01:54:52] With me today is Chris Brown. He is an associate with Moseley Architects. We also have Stephen Halsey, a principal with Moseley Architects, sitting in our gallery. And Moseley is leading our design team for this project.

[01:55:07] I'll now turn the presentation over to Chris to review the schematic design. Thank you, Susan. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board, and Dr. Cashwell. Thank you guys for having me here today. We are very excited for this opportunity to work with Henrico County to rebuild Cuiacuson Middle School.

[01:55:28] Today, we'll begin by giving you a glimpse of our process and really look at how we use collaboration as a tool to steer this successful project. Then we'll look at the schematic design for the new middle school. This design is a direct product of that collaborative process.

[01:55:45] It's a roadmap that will be fine-tuned as we continue into design development and finally produce construction documents. And last, Susan will give us an idea of our next steps for the project. The existing Cuyacuson Middle School sits on a 41-acre site fronting Cuyacuson Road.

[01:56:07] To the west lie apartments separated from the site by a natural creek. Single-family homes line the northern border. And the property stretches east behind neighboring Pemberton Elementary School and touches Pemberton Road. Fire Station 9 is located directly across all the sites, all site access from carpool, buses, and visitors is currently achieved from Cuyacuson Road.

[01:56:33] The existing building is situated on the southeast corner of the site and is bordered by parking and athletics. There are significant grade changes present on the site, but the large flat area currently serving as a multi-purpose athletic field quickly presented itself as the best opportunity for this same site replacement. With this as our charge, we moved towards our collaborative workshops. So the first of three

official design workshops began back in February of 2024. We gathered a group of stakeholders and tasked them with uncovering

[01:57:08] the important values of the educational and community landscape to inform our design. Four groups developed floor plans and presented, discussed, and debated each other's work. The plans were then developed further by Mosley's team and presented during additional workshops to uncover trends used as a roadmap for the school. Overall, there have been several iterations that blended ideas presented during these design workshops. These plans, coupled with continued feedback from the project team and educational leadership, led us to the site plans, floor plans,

[01:57:45] and general building massing that we will see in schematic design. Idea mining and consensus building is also an important part of the design workshop process. After the Moseley team posed questions to stakeholders about the future of Kuiakasin Middle School, participants were asked to vote on the answers that represented the most important aspects of the school.

[01:58:11] These ideas are the backbone of the Kuiakasin narrative and are represented within the project mission statement. This statement was developed by the workshop team and underlines the importance of community and innovation within the learning environment.

[01:58:30] So our schematic design begins with a site concept. We had already identified the northwest portion of the site as best suited for new construction, so our building takes advantage of that space. Access to that area for construction will be established from Pemberton Road, behind Pemberton Elementary School.

[01:58:48] This access road will allow construction to separate from current school function, which minimizes interaction between the school community and construction activities. When the new school opens, the access road will serve as a bus loop and the student entrance will be established on that east side of the building.

[01:59:07] The existing track and football field will not be touched and while parking will be reconfigured, it will remain in its current location off of Koyakasen Road. Visitors will enter through the main entry in the center of that south façade. To satisfy additional site constraints, including contours, drainage, site access, and use of existing facilities during construction, a three-story concept was determined to be most appropriate.

[01:59:35] Current height limits outlined within the Henrico County Zoning Ordinance will be respected. Upon completion of the new school, the existing Kwiakasen Middle School building will be demolished and athletics will be restored in its place. The floor plan for the Nucleoxin Middle School was developed to promote community and innovation while providing a safe, accessible, and high-quality learning environment.

[02:00:02] The front entry features a secure vestibule with access to the Family and Community Engagement Center, a clinic, and the main administration. This core serves the greater school community. The bus entry on the east side of the building features a courtyard space that enters directly into the dining commons.

[02:00:20] and this dining commons functions as the center of the first floor and serves as the school community gathering space. Its location adjacent to the gym and auditorium allow it to be used for overflow during any event. To respect the scale of adjacent single-family homes to the north, the northern

wings of the floor plan contain larger volume but single-story spaces associated with athletics, food preparation, and performing arts. The southern wings of the building are the three-story portions of the school. The western wing contains core academic

[02:00:55] classrooms, stacking from first to third floors, and the eastern wing contains visual arts, exploratory classrooms, and the innovation center. Each wing is designed with safety in mind, and all corridors have the ability to lock and isolate during an emergency. Two elevators are also provided to aid in creating an inclusive and accessible school. At the core of the second floor is our library. It has a centralized location at the front of the building, and it makes it accessible to all students and draws the corridors together. Directly adjacent to the library is the

[02:01:31] guidance suite. It is also centrally located and intended to be easily approachable while still maintaining a direct connection with the administration space below. The white spaces containing an X identify two-story or larger volume spaces. This gives an indication of how the height diminishes as the building nears the back of the site. Visual connections are established between the floors to highlight core spaces and to promote wayfinding. On the third floor, the Innovation takes center stage. The Innovation Lab is the central hub. It's flanked

[02:02:07] on either side by classrooms and outdoor areas that may provide space for engaging outdoor innovative learning. The central location engages students as they enter on the third floor. As part the schematic design, the Mosley team developed massing models to indicate what the building could look like. These images are intended to show scale, indicate potential material change, and general building siting. In the above image, taken from the existing Kuiakasen Middle School building site, we can see the front entry and a glimpse of the bus loop

[02:02:42] on the right. The lower image portrays the school from the football field and suggests a connection between the building and that site. Materials will be selected to ensure durability, access to natural light, and safety for the building occupants. As a targeted lead silver building, energy efficiency also plays an integral role in influencing the design of the building. The final building massing image gives a glimpse of the building from the bus loop. The entry courtyard welcomes students and provides a place to gather, while the adjacent canopy on the right suggests how students may experience entering the building during inclement weather.

[02:03:21] The Moseley team is excited to share these images and ideas with you and looks forward to continuing the design that will support the overall mission statement. Our mission is to create a safe, inclusive, and vibrant community school that fosters student innovation, collaboration, and academic excellence.

[02:03:40] This time, I'll turn it back to Susan. Thank you, Chris. Just a reminder, this is a 2022 bond referendum project. The total project budget is \$89 million. With our schematic design approval today, we will move into design development where we drill down on all of those spaces and what they contain and then move into construction documents with a projected bidding of July of this coming summer and construction starting late summer in 2025.

[02:04:15] It will take approximately two years to build the building, which would give us a summer opening in 2027. And then we would tear down the existing building and restore the athletic, the baseball, and softball athletic fields for a final completion in the winter of 2027.

[02:04:35] With that, we open up the floor to any questions you may have. This is certainly an exciting project. I know Mrs. Shea is filled with excitement and so I will not ask her to hold on to it and give her the floor first. I appreciate it. Oh, the re-cue, how long you've been waiting for us. This was such a fun collaborative project to be involved with at those planning meetings. It's one of the most fun days I've had on the board moving the pieces around and so

[02:05:12] I thank the Moseley team for really engaging, letting me be part of it, but really engaging the staff of Kwiakasen and people from central office and the community and that sort of thing. Lots of, I remember lots of moments where one of the teachers noted, for example, the life skills class, like that needs to be on the first floor, you know, and some other things which have come out in the final design, which was exciting to see. I appreciate, I really wish that fueling station could have been moved, but I appreciate y'all working around it. And, you know, the one

[02:05:48] dining commons to be the hub of the school and overflow for the gym and the auditorium, just really thinking about how the school functions. It's going to be really exciting. I'm really excited to have a building that reflects the high caliber of instruction that's happening inside that building. It's happening right now, but this building will, the high caliber of instructions is happening right now, but this building will much better reflect that. A question for, not so much for you, Mr. Brown, but maybe for Ms. Moore, do we know the capacity of the new building, the

[02:06:26] estimated capacity of the new building? Right now, and that we'll drill down on that more as we continue in design development, but it is between 1,350 and 1,400 students. Our current, well, let me step back. Last year's functional capacity was 1,356. So we were able to work into our existing functional capacity, our capacity for the innovation center as well. So we may see a little bump up in that number, but more to come as design continues. Perfect. That's helpful.

[02:07:01] to know, and I think enrollment's right around 10:50 or so right now, so that helps. Because I know initially we had kind of hoped that the opening of the building would coincide with the opening of the Innovation Center just from a capacity standpoint, and it looks like our timelines for that are gonna be a year staggered.

[02:07:26] So I, just in my brain, was trying to figure out how all those pieces with capacity works out. But it sounds like we're going to be okay. And then we'll be really glad when the new building opens. I think that was it. I'm just really excited.

[02:07:42] And I wish it could happen, like, tomorrow. But I get we've got, you know, some other projects ahead of us. It's going to be great. It's just really exciting. It's a long time coming. Actually, can we just scroll to the slide of the hallway, like the current hallway?

[02:08:05] So for those of you who have not had the pleasure of being in the building, yes, this one, in the building of Koyakasen, there are three stairwells featured in this picture, all right? There is one that you can kind of see, and then there's another one behind it, and then the staff member coming down at the left is coming from a third one.

[02:08:26] There are roughly 10 of those sets of staircases throughout the quote-unquote one-story building, which makes it very hard to, can make it very hard to navigate. And so this is gonna be a game changer in terms of accessibility throughout the building.

[02:08:44] That's why part of the mission statement is about having inclusive Viren community, not only inclusive from all of the different cultures that feed into the school, but also inclusive physical spaces, because that's not a strong suit of the current Q, being able to be accessible, easily navigable. So it's a really big deal on a lot of levels, no pun intended, for this community. And so I am just so excited. Okay, I'll stop. Thanks.

[02:09:27] Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you so much for this presentation. I've been waiting for Mrs. Shea to be able to celebrate the rebuild of Kwiakasen. And clearly today is a great day.

[02:09:43] You see my yellow? I see. I see. And I also see and I celebrate with you the navigability of the future Riku. I'm really excited about that because over time, of course, I've served with Mrs. Shea for almost five years now, so I've heard a lot about Cuiacusson as it currently stands.

[02:10:06] Really like the attention to safety during the project. Sounds a little bit like what we had at Holiday on the other side, where the bus loop was. Like the bus loop will be, I guess, where construction is, right? Yes. And just separate in and out to protect the kids.

[02:10:25] Yes. Everyone, really. There should be a clean separation between construction activity and educational facilities and daily activities for the school. I appreciate that. Not to mention, and then that lab will be on the third floor, you said?

[02:10:42] The Innovation Center, yes. Now, will other students actually have access to the Innovation Lab, other middle school students not in the Innovation Center? I think those are. Dr. Cashwell, that would probably not be you, Mr. Brown.

[02:10:59] Less a design question and more a programmatic question. I mean, certainly, you know, the spaces created within the building are for use for all students during the day. Your libraries and cafeterias, I mean, certainly spaces can be shared, much like we see even with some of the specialized classroom spaces in middle schools without an innovation center.

[02:11:18] Maybe there's a culinary classroom that's then used later for a club or another. You know, the idea is to get as much use out of the spaces as possible. And I think also with the family and community engagement hub, so I think that's an important piece of this project. We talked about a vision, and I know the board has been excited about expanding our full-service community school model.

[02:11:39] So our first one, of course, we had space to spill into at the Old Highland Springs High School, but this brings a space to life within the school. That's a hub for that entire feeder pattern community. And so imagine after-hours events. So certainly while there'll be some accessing programs adjacent to the separate entrance of that face hub during the school day that will separate them from the access to the school for safety reasons,

[02:12:07] you know, imagine evening events and family events hosted in which anything from the auditorium area to the innovation labs or any other space in the building might be used appropriately, depending on what the event is. Thank you for highlighting that and also for highlighting the community school separation.

[02:12:26] It sounds very similar to what was designed at Academy of Virginia Randolph, right? Yes, very much. That would be our third hub. So we've been aiming towards having, you know, to meet the

geographic vastness of our community, making sure we had hubs available all across the community, East, Central, and West.

[02:12:46] And so this is one of those with the other being at Virginia Randolph. And then how long will the students, I know you said you showed the timeline and that the original queue would be demolished at the end with that being the future home of athletics.

[02:13:06] Where do we think our students will be displaced and for how long do we think our students will be displaced? So during the time that the athletic fields wouldn't be available, much like we did with Tucker and other places during their replacement projects.

[02:13:21] You know, we work to identify alternative practice sites and other fields and so on. But you might be able to speak to the. So are we thinking six months from summer to winter or are we thinking more like Tucker, where it was more like two years?

[02:13:37] More like Tucker. More like two years like Tucker. Because it will take time to get that building built in the back of the site. Okay. And that's going to be displacing the diamond sports. Okay. So, you know, we will work with the school as we did with to provide transportation, to do whatever support services are needed in order to make that transition in that adjustment as I don't want to say simple, but as bearable as possible.

[02:14:09] I know other schools were more than cooperative sharing their fields during that time, but I thought it was relevant to ask because it's not just going to be the summer 2027 to winter 2027. And then lastly, at what point will the board be able to confirm it's still costing us \$89 million?

[02:14:33] Because I know recent projects, right, have had overruns, our recent rebuilds, certainly our two high schools. went over budget. So at what point can we confirm about 89 million? I think as we all cover a little bit, then I'll turn it over to Chris as well. As we continue into design development, drill down into what we've got in the building, our space, how all that's going to work out. As we continue to watch the market, we are seeing some improvements in the market as far as the numbers that are out

[02:15:06] there the amount of bidding bidders that we're seeing in bidding situations. So we are cautiously optimistic that we're seeing some improvements coming through the market. Chris, do you want to add anything? I think that sums it up. We do keep a finger on the pulse of the market and we are seeing a favorable environment. Hopefully it continues in that direction. We have no reason to expect that it wouldn't. But as we move along with the project, we'll certainly keep that in mind and keep updating it as we go. Thank you, because I'd hate to see the scope of the project

[02:15:40] compromised in any way, but I do appreciate the cautious optimism there. Thank you so much. Can I ask a question? Madam Chair, Ms. Shea. Is this the type of project that could benefit from the design build process to keep on budget? Potentially, but that horse is out of the barn.

[02:16:02] Design build and construction manager at risk, you do that as you're bringing on your design consultant. So as we moved into those alternative procurement methods or delivery methods, I should say, for our construction projects, we had already started working on this project, but we will be looking at those alternative delivery methods and looking at what schools those delivery methods could help us with in the future with the remaining projects we have.

[02:16:33] Great, thank you. Thank you. I'll turn the floor over to Mr. Irving. Thank you, everyone, for the presentation. This is obviously wonderful to see. I have no questions or concerns. I think it'll be great. Thank you.

[02:16:48] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Young. I don't think I have a lot of questions, but does Mosley Architect rebuild the dais after Miss Shea banged on it a couple times? I feel like every time y'all come up, it's going to go down a little bit more.

[02:17:05] But you spoke about safety. Does this building provide an extra layer of sort of safety and security when it comes to the building of it? Sure. So in order to establish a baseline for safety, we are required to undergo what we call septet review.

[02:17:22] So that's crime prevention through environmental design. And all of that factors into the way that we approach things like sight lines in classrooms, down corridors, how we can potentially lock down the building if that's a requirement.

[02:17:38] We also, everything we do, we build in a 3D environment, so it's readily visible to security review during design. So we will meet with Henrico County Security just to go over any of those security aspects as well. Okay. And then I know less and less students use them, but I didn't see any lockers on this.

[02:17:59] Does the building have lockers? I'd be glad to cover that. No lockers? No, it does not. We did not put any lockers in our two new high schools. Okay. So I will tell you, in our experience, we have found that the kids just don't typically use a whole lot of lockers.

[02:18:18] And that is something the principals probably think I'm a little off at times because I'm always asking them about lockers. You know, how many lockers are you using? Are the kids using them? Are you using them for storage? And we have found predominantly the kids just don't seem to want or need the lockers.

[02:18:39] And that is pretty much where the trend is going in the industry for school design. And last question, is this design specific to the Q, or will we be using this design for other schools coming on board in the future? I know like Hungry Creek, Wilder, Pocahontas all have the same design and look the same.

[02:18:57] But will this now be, going forward, will this be the design for our middle schools, or is it specific to the Q? Right now it is specific to the Q. As we started this project, we realized it had been quite some time since we had designed a middle school because our last five middle schools were all of the same prototype.

[02:19:16] The site that we're working with, we felt like it was more appropriate to look at what we call a one-off design. So Mosley and the whole design team worked with prepping a building that fit the site that we were working with. Doesn't mean we could not reuse this design as a prototype for another middle school.

[02:19:36] okay well thank you for the presentation thank you thank you again thank you very much all right the next item on the agenda is public forum 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 board members and they are posted in their entirety in board docs located on the HCPS website.

[02:20:15] Dr. Cashwell. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. The next items are consent items and therefore they can be taken in a block. Thank you. Board members, do you have any questions or feedback for any of the consent items? Hearing none, is there a motion?

[02:20:32] I move that the school board accept, adopt, approve, and or award items 8.01 through 8.06 on the consent agenda as presented. Thank you. Is there a second? Second.

[02:20:49] All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. The consent items are approved. Moving forward, the next item pertains to unfinished business. colleagues, I invite you to address any outstanding matters at this time. Hearing none, we will proceed to the next agenda item, which is new business. Colleagues, do you have any new business to present? Hearing none, we'll move on to the last agenda item, which is the announcement of

[02:21:24] meeting dates. The school board's next meeting is on Thursday, October 24th, 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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