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Henrico County School Board Work Session, Thursday, August 13, 2026

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[00:00:00] 2026 work session of the Henrico County School Board. We will now start with the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic in which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, and in liberty.

[00:00:27] Please remain standing for a moment of silence. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Grant. At this time, i would like to note mrs kinsella's physical absence from today's work session mrs kinsella notified previously notified board members of a request to participate electronically from a remote location due to a personal reason that prevents her physical attendance our school board

[00:01:06] policy p2 p2-04-006 electronic participation in meetings from remote locations requires a majority vote of the board members present at the primary or central meeting location to allow a school board member to participate in a meeting from a remote location. Per the school board policy, do I hear a motion? I move that the school board approve Mrs. Kinsella's participation from a remote location.

[00:01:33] Thank you, Mrs. Atkins. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Young. I will now proceed with the roll call vote. Mrs. Atkins? Aye. Mrs. Shea? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. And I vote aye. Mrs. Kinsella's request has been approved. This meeting is being live streamed on the HCPS website. We'll begin our

meeting with a roll call when i call your name please verbally indicate your presence mrs atkins present mrs shang present mr young present mrs kinsella present thank you please

[00:02:10] let the record reflect that a quorum of the board is physically present and mrs kinsella is participating electronically i asked mrs kinsella to verbally note if she needs to leave the meeting and subsequently verbally note when she returns we will now move on to the approval of the agenda is there a motion to approve the agenda I move that the school board approve the agenda for today's meeting thank you Mr. Young do I have a second second thank you Mrs. Shea all in favor say oh sorry roll call vote uh Mrs. Atkins aye Mrs. Shea aye Mr. Young aye Mrs. Kinsella aye and I

[00:02:45] vote aye the ayes have it the agenda is approved the next item on the agenda is a closed meeting 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 ITEMS A1 AND A2 OF SECTION 2.2-3711 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA 1950 AS AMENDED PERTAINING TO THE ASSIGNMENT APPOINTMENT PROMOTION DEMOTION SALARIES DISCIPLINING OR RESIGNATION OF SPECIFIC SCHOOL BOARD EMPLOYEES AND THE REQUEST FOR A RELIGIOUS EXCEPTION FROM COMPULSARY ATTENDANCE THAT WOULD INVOLVE THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION CONTAINED

[00:03:23] IN SCHOLASTIC RECORDS CONCERNING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS. THANK YOU MS. SHEA DO I HAVE A SECOND? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Atkins. We will now proceed with the roll call vote. Mrs. Atkins. Mrs. Shea. Aye. Mr. Young. Aye. Mrs. Kinsella. Aye. And I vote aye. We will now go in. The ayes have it. We will now go into closed session. We will reconvene the work session at the conclusion

[00:03:45] of our closed meeting. All right, we have returned from closed session.

[00:31:53] Colleagues, is there a motion to certify closed session? Move that the school board certify by a recorded vote to the best of each school board member's knowledge one only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements by virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting in which this certification resolution applies and two only such public business matters as identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard discussed or considered in the closed meeting by the county school board of henrico county virginia Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Do we have a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Young.

[00:32:31] We will do a roll call vote. Mrs. Atkins. Aye. Mrs. Shea. Aye. Mr. Young. Aye. Mrs. Kinsella. Aye. An aye vote aye. The ayes have it. Closed session has been certified. Dr. Cashwell. Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the board. For the first item, I'm recommending the school board approve the appointment of administrative personnel.

[00:32:56] is there a motion to approve the administrative appointments I move the school board approve the appointment of administrative personnel thank you Mr. Shea do I have a second second Mr. Young thank you roll call vote Mrs. Atkins aye Mrs. Shea aye Mr. Young aye Mrs. Kinsella aye and I vote aye the ayes have it the administrative appointments have been approved thank you the board has just approved Gregory Dunaway chief of operations Lindsay Ingram principal a center at

[00:33:31] Hermitage and Emily Kennedy principal knuckles farm elementary school all right for the next item i am recommending that the school board approve the request for release from compulsory attendance for student case numbers 26-27-re-1 26-27-re-2 26-27-re-3 and 26-27-re-4 AND THESE REQUESTS ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VIRGINIA CODE SECTION THAT AUTHORIZES EXEMPTION

BY REASON OF BONIFIED RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND AS ALWAYS THE NAMES OF THE STUDENTS ARE PROTECTED

[00:34:10] UNDER THE VIRGINIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. THANK YOU, DR. CASHWELL. IS THERE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE? I MOVE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR RELEASE FROM COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENT CASE numbers 26-27-RE-1, 26-27-RE-2, 26-27-RE-3, and 26-27-RE-4 based on bona fide religious

[00:34:46] beliefs. Thank you, Mrs. Atkins. Do I have a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Young. All in... SORRY. WE'LL DO A ROLL CALL VOTE. MISSES ATKINS. MISSES SHEA. MISSES KINSELA.

[00:35:05] AND I VOTE AYE. THE AYES HAVE IT. THE REQUEST FOR THE RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM COMPULSORY ATTENDANTS HAVE BEEN APPROVED. DR. CASHWELL. THANK YOU. NEXT ON THE AGENDA, WE HAVE PREPARED FOR THE BOARD'S AWARENESS AN UPDATE ON OUR ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS OVER THE SUMMER AS WE PREPARE FOR THE 26-27 SCHOOL YEAR TO START AND STAFF FROM THE division of learning dr rucker and dr smith will provide that presentation thank you dr cashwell good afternoon chair irving and members of the board even though school is not in session learning and engagement opportunities don't end today dr katie smith and i will provide

[00:35:43] an update on staff teacher and community engagement that took place over the summer

[00:36:00] thank you you're on the four goal areas of journey to 2030 encompass all that we do as a division

[00:36:42] the updates you received today clearly aligned to one of these four goals academic achievement learning environment physical social emotional and mental health and recruit engage retain and reward staff today we will highlight several summer engagement opportunities that extended our connection with students and families beyond the traditional school year these efforts focused on maintaining relationships supporting student readiness and well-being and ensuring families remain connected to the resources and services needed for a successful start to the school year.

[00:37:19] Our efforts included summer academy, extended school year, community engagement, and summer professional learning. This summer the K2 elementary summer academy programming was redesigned to strengthen early literacy skills.

[00:37:34] Based on reading data, 557 students from 15 schools were invited to attend. The redesign included an extended day, 7:30 to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, for three weeks. The transition to a full day allowed for remediation aligned students' areas of need, and the afternoon session integrated engagement supported by LAMPS teachers.

[00:37:58] At the secondary level, over 2,500 middle and high school students, grades 6-12, enrolled in recovery and/or acceleration course offerings; 385 rising sixth graders enrolled in study skills and math essentials, while 486 middle school students took advantage of remediation courses.

[00:38:20] Over 1,200 high school students enrolled in Virtual Virginia, with 76 students enrolled in credit recovery, and over 1,100 enrolled in acceleration courses. In addition to Virtual Virginia, students took advantage of the online option offered through Longwood University.

[00:38:37] Over 700 students enrolled in economics and personal finance, a required course for graduation. During the summer, over 600 middle and high school students participated in ACE Center career camps where they explored a variety of hands-on career pathways and developed real-world skills aligned to their interests and future goals.

[00:38:58] Many middle school students took part in the popular three-in-one camp experience, allowing them to explore three different career programs over a three-week period. Students also participated in the six-week summer building trades program where they gained authentic industry experience by helping construct a house from the ground up while learning foundational skills in masonry, electrical work, carpentry, plumbing, HVAC, and welding.

[00:39:24] Across all 3A centers, students reported positive experiences as they engaged in career exploration, skill development, and workplace learning opportunities. Celebrating the accomplishments of our students at graduation is a highlight of Summer Academy.

[00:39:40] were a total of 39 graduates. 28 students participated and proudly crossed the stage on July 27th at Highland Springs High School.

[00:39:57] In addition to summer academy, extended school year, also referred to as ESY, was available to students with disabilities. In order for a student to qualify to attend ESY, an IEP team must determine that the absence of this summer service would not provide a free and appropriate public education to the student. Teams use a criteria worksheet developed by the Virginia Department of Education to guide teams in determining eligibility for each student.

[00:40:23] This summer, we served 996 pre-K through 12 students during our summer session of ESY. A wide range of programming was offered to support students with maintaining skills developed over our summer year, over the school year, in the area of early childhood special education, multisensory math, reading, behavior, social skills, modified curriculum, and career skills.

[00:40:47] A new program was created this summer specific to supporting students with autism and the development and maintenance of prosocial behaviors. Lastly, our students at VREC also attended their first extended summer ESY session. Students who attend VREC attend ESY for eight weeks.

[00:41:03] During their time, they attended multiple community field trips, participated in daily reading and math instruction, sensory play, and even cooled off with a water play day. To ensure that students experiencing homelessness are identified, resourced, connected, and ready for day one the mckinney-vento team hosted summer barbecue events in the verina fairfield and brooklyn magisterial districts and conducted home visits in other outreach activities at the barbecue events students and families were connected were able to connect with 96 vendors from both the community and the division the service of volunteers made the events flow smoothly

[00:41:42] and during the events the mckinney-vento team connected with 191 students as a result of the overall summer outreach activities over 500 mckinney-vento eligibility screenings have been submitted for review attendance officers conducted over 1400 home visits providing personalized attendance outreach school readiness support and connections to community resources for students and families 1266 follow-up contacts which included over 700 additional home visits and over 500 follow-up calls were made to strengthen family engagement and support student success.

[00:42:20] Our school's social workers conducted over 2,000 home visits to provide families of rising 7th graders and seniors immunization information, guidance, and resource connections to support student enrollment and attendance. The family and student connection will continue throughout the year with our attendance campaign.

[00:42:40] In accordance with Virginia law, students must have documentation of required immunizations or an approved exemption on file to attend school. In collaboration with the Richmond and Henrico Health Districts and Kroger, Health Services provided three summer vaccination clinics to rising seventh and 12th graders.

[00:42:56] 78 students received immunizations at the Cuyacusin Middle School Block Party held on July 21st. And 124 students received immunizations at Fairfield Middle School on August 6th. The final summer immunization clinic is scheduled for this Saturday, August 15th, From 10:00 to 3:00 at the Mariko Sports & Events Center.

[00:43:15] Free on-site vaccination clinics are scheduled the first week of school on August 24th at Wilder Middle School, August 25th at Tucker High School, and August 26th at Brooklyn Middle School. Family and community engagement maintained efforts to continue to strengthen connections with students, families, and community partners.

[00:43:31] 16 community walk-ups were conducted across the county and community pop-up events were held in each magisterial district, providing opportunities to connect directly with families, share resources, and gather feedback about community needs. The pop-up events also provided an opportunity for a number of departments to connect with families, including school health services, licensed mental health professionals, as well as social workers and tiered intervention school counselors.

[00:43:55] These outreach efforts also strengthened our collaboration with partners and stakeholders, reinforcing the collective support system available to students and families to meet the diverse needs of our community. This momentum will continue at our annual back-to-school kickoff scheduled for Saturday, August 15th from 10:00 to 3:00 the Henrico Sports and Events Center. This event will bring together students, families, and schools and community partners to celebrate the start of the school year and ensure families have the information, resources, and support needed for a successful transition back to school. Summer may be short, but it was filled with opportunities for our adult learners.

[00:44:30] One of our goals each summer is to find the right balance between giving teachers and leaders the well-deserved time to recharge while also providing meaningful professional learning that helps everyone prepare for a successful school year. The professional learning opportunities shared on the screen are just a sampling of the various events that took place over the summer for our teachers and school administrators.

[00:44:49] Summer trainings were offered to 12-month employees working in collaboration with the Human Resources, School Safety, and the Department of Special Ed. Ongoing trainings and consultations will continue throughout the 26-27 school year. In July, we welcomed more than 200 school leaders to Shorepoint Middle School for our first Coherence and Compliance Day of Learning.

[00:45:08] Leaders built awareness, leveled expectations across the division, worked through real-world scenarios and developed a common understanding of the responsibilities resources and expectations that come with leading a school the following week more than 350 school and division leaders came together

for our third annual empowering leaders symposium grounded in our belief that we learned best from one another the symposium gave leaders the opportunity to customize their learning through a wide variety of sessions connected to division priorities over three days leaders explored data strengthened professional connections and returned to their schools and departments with new ideas and actionable strategies that could immediately transfer

[00:45:44] into practice. As August arrived the pace quickly picked up as we welcomed our new staff to Henrico. 55 special education teachers joined our central office team for a three-day professional learning opportunity to help support their transition in their roles as novice educators and case managers.

[00:46:01] This week marked the beginning of our teacher licensure cohort academy. The provisionally licensed teachers began their educational careers with the division specialists who will support them throughout the licensure process also happening this week more than 300 educators who are either new to the profession or new to henrico are gathered together for a week of learning and onboarding as we officially welcome them to the henrico team tomorrow we welcome more than 650 full-time general and special education instructional assistants and alternative education technicians for a day of professional learning focused on understanding the importance of student relationships and proactively supporting pro-social behaviors to increase the skill set

[00:46:38] and knowledge of these essential staff members elementary teachers had the opportunity to attend their choose your own adventure of professional learning sessions throughout the summer a wide variety of departments collaborated together ranging from student support and wellness dare federal programs innovation special education empowerment development and opportunity alternative programs engagement and of course teaching and learning this huge collaboration allowed our teachers to choose from 68 unique courses that totaled 379 training opportunities across the summer secondary teaching learning coordinated and led a three-day professional learning over the summer giving teachers the option to engage in six hours of professional

[00:47:17] learning at times that work best for their demanding schedules 597 secondary teachers participated in the june session with more registered for our subsequent sessions it was a short summer but one filled with preparation collaboration and opportunities to learn together as students return to our classrooms we are ready to begin another school year knowing our teachers LEADERS AND STAFF HAVE INVESTED IN LEARNING THAT WILL STRENGTHEN THEIR PRACTICE AND POSITIVELY IMPACT EVERY SCHOOL ACROSS OUR DIVISION. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TODAY.

[00:47:48] WE'RE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE. THANK YOU BOTH FOR THE PRESENTATION. COLLEAGUES, I'LL OPEN UP THE FLOOR FOR WHOEVER WOULD LIKE TO START US OFF. MS. ZACKINS. I REALLY APPRECIATE THE LOOK AND FEELING AESTHETIC OF YOUR PRESENTATION.

[00:48:08] I JUST WANTED TO START WITH THAT. I TEND TO LIKE WHITE SPACE AND THEN LISTEN FOR DATA TOUCH POINTS AND SO YOU ACCOMPLISHED both of those speaking of the the data and the numbers that you provided based off that did you see or feel there was increased participation particularly in the mckinney vento sponsored events decreased or was it about the same i think there was an increase in speaking with tina alsop and um miss abernathy there definitely was an increase and i think it's because it's been happening ongoing throughout multiple summers so the more we continue to do it and offer it and

[00:48:45] advertise um and actually the collaboration with our face team as well as my social workers and attendance officers they all come together for summer engagement so it's not just mckinney-vento it's everyone everywhere door knocking and talking about all the events so definitely i would be interested in seeing what the trend is around participation in that particular space if we're trending with increased participation because that also means there's more awareness or if there's a decline so if you could provide that maybe over the past three four years that would help me understand the trajectory and and where we are and potentially where we could go

[00:49:25] and then the other question i had was around the specific types of events i know i saw a barbecue but could you give me just an understanding of any other innovative type events that we are looking to do in the future specifically to that to the mckinney-vento population i'm not sure that we're aware of the events from that but we're happy to get an update from the mckinney-vento team to share with you about the future events that will take place this school year for sure i appreciate that one thing that i learned over the summer i partner with the chickahominy ymca and they do a

[00:50:02] ton of great things. But one of the things that was wildly successful are bookcases. And so I'd love to have a chat with someone about some of the ideas that I received as far as what interests are. And it's very specific to the types of books that families are interested in, which happen to be Thriller in some other areas. So I think if we could find a way also to be a bit more intimate in our settings uh that could be a reach as well so looking forward to some further conversation and receiving just some of the data points and what the trend looked like in that space

[00:50:42] thank you very much absolutely thank you mrs atkins um mr shea um yeah thank you for all of the time and effort put to uh prepare our students our families and our staff for the new year we We know that success in education requires all three of those inputs.

[00:51:03] And so I can hear really intentional efforts in all three of those buckets. So thank you. I particularly want to highlight the professional development that the team continues to revamp and look at, and the fact that we had 68 unique courses that staff could choose from.

[00:51:24] I've heard really good feedback from some of our staff about the quality of professional development being given and how they feel like it relates to things that they're doing in their classroom because they have that voice and choice. So kudos to y'all, 'cause if you rewind a decade or two, not always the case.

[00:51:45] And so I think we're making really good progress there. So thank you to that team. - Thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Shea. Mrs. Kinsella, would you like to go next? Yes, and I'll echo Mrs. Shea's comments about thank you for the presentation and also every single person who made summer learning and connections happen, whether it's for our students, families and staff.

[00:52:13] I would like to do a special shout out to the community engagement team, McKinney Vento teams, having attended the event at Hermitage and having watched it over the past seven years, what the teams are out doing during the summer.

[00:52:30] It has grown from perhaps a welcome table, a backpack table and a grill and a few games to literally being held at my school is held on the Hermitage High School football field and track.

[00:52:48] And the resources there were unbelievable. Henrico County Library, Henrico County Services, our counseling teams were there, our social workers were there, community advocates were there.

[00:53:04] It was just extraordinary. So I really just want to do a special shout out to that department specifically, those departments specifically, as to just the connections we're making during the summer and how that's grown over time.

[00:53:20] I'm really impressed and can't wait to see what we do next. Back to you, Chair Irving. Thank you, Ms. Kinsella. Mr. Young. Thank you, Dr. Rucker and Dr. Smith. I'm pleased to see that we didn't stop serving students because the school year ended.

[00:53:35] All of the work you all did and put in is amazing. Also wanted to recognize the work around our students and families who need additional support. My daughter has attended extended summer academy from time to time. What was the idea around extending it? Oh, you mean extended school year?

[00:53:52] - Yeah, extended school year, yeah. - Sure, so extended school year is a three week session that we do with students with disabilities. And so that's a session that we do. And so it's just extending and thinking about what the needs and the services are for our students. So we kind of look at the criteria and we hear back from schools and IEP teams about how students are qualifying and what goals we need to work on.

[00:54:11] And that's how we expand the offerings that we offer to our students to make sure that they're not doing that summer slide that we don't want. - Yeah, I love that. 'Cause I think it used to be maybe three hours. So the extended time is probably beneficial to our students. So I'm especially thankful for the idea that I actually attended a professional learning today with our office and clerical staff.

[00:54:32] I had an amazing time. Liza, I don't even know Liza's last name. I call her Liza. Cook, she's amazing. I want to give her a shout out because I attended that this morning. I had the time of my life, believe it or not. I even stayed for a couple hours. So shout out to Liza and her team.

[00:54:49] Dr. Grant was there with me. Tiffany was there with me as well from equity and diversity or empowerment now. But I had a good time, so I wanted to recognize that we had Mr. Willie Spears come in, national known trainer. He did a phenomenal job. So kudos to that team.

[00:55:08] I also was at the transportation kickoff. Our transportation team is ready to get geared up and ready to go. Greg, our new operations, he was there with me. He attended. Me and him had a good conversation and a good time. So just happy to see everybody back. Now, everybody was energetic and happy, but I'm looking over there at this DLT team, and y'all don't look too happy to be back. So there was a lot more smiles in June when y'all were on the way out for the summer. But thank you all. DLT team as well. I know you guys worked 12 months as well. So thank everybody for making this summer a great one. Back to you, Chair Irvin.

[00:55:42] Thank you, Mr. Young. Yes, thank y'all again. Just to reiterate everything that my colleagues have said I just wanted to point out three things in here that I found particularly great um the early literacy redesign I think that's wonderful I mean uh the kids being able to read is very important as someone who teaches high schoolers who I would say sometimes can barely read it is very important especially at a young age that we're not losing whatever was achieved over the school year so that's wonderful to see especially because it's targeted to specific students and I think that's that that that's that's great um I want to give a shout out to the immunization clinics uh when

[00:56:20] vaccines have seemed to fall out of favor with many people in the United States um I love that we do that and we provide that for our students to make sure that they are safe and healthy and that

everybody in our community is safe and healthy because they are getting the shots that that help keep them safe um so I love that we do that um and then the third just the new the new teacher academy I got to be with the new teachers earlier this week and it was wonderful seeing a bunch of new faces some folks who have been in education for almost 30 years and then some people who were career switchers and some people who just came fresh out of college so and everyone in between

[00:56:56] it was wonderful to get to spend time and welcoming those folks to Henrico county which I I have a colleague who is now coming to work for us and he said oh Henrico is a real school division that actually does these things over the summer so uh great to hear i love that and thank you for all the work that you guys do thank you thank you all right for the next presentation we sort of uh looked backwards at summer efforts and now we're going to focus on uh our excitement and we may not have fresh faces as a dlt excited faces but uh i kid you not there is great

[00:57:33] enthusiasm amongst everyone here as we have worked hard to make sure we are prepared and ready Just now days away from the official start of the new school year. So we've compiled a back-to-school readiness update while there's not a lot of brand new information here are breaking news We did want to compile sort of all the back-to-school things in one place Not just for board member awareness, but for community awareness. And so I will turn it over to Mr. Thorpe and Dr. Champ our presenters. Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Good afternoon Chair Irving, members of the school board, today Dr. Champ and I will provide an update on school

[00:58:13] readiness as we prepare to welcome students back to school on Monday August 24th and Tuesday August 25th. The four goal areas of Journey to 2030 continue to encompass all that we do as a division.

[00:58:28] The updates that we will provide to you this afternoon will align with the following goals in our strategic plan: academic achievement, learning environment, and physical, social, emotional, and mental health. Our presentation this afternoon will encompass the following topics on our preparations for the beginning of the school year: staggered start, back-to-school kickoff and open houses, mental health and wellness advancements, facilities and operations, safety and security, cell phone reminders, school nutrition updates, and back-to-school reminders

[00:59:08] for our families and guardians. New for 2026-2027 will be for Enrico County Public Schools is a staggered start by grade level by staggering the days that students come in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students can feel more comfortable starting school by spending time with their teacher in a smaller group setting our elementary school principals are splitting pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students in a variety of ways focusing on what provides the greatest balance at their individual schools for example some schools are using students last names or birth

[00:59:46] months while others are creating group based on enrollment date in every case schools are taking great care to communicate with their families both at registration and through parent square communications each school has a banner posted on their website and a comprehensive list is on the division's back to school webpage additionally the FACE team has shared flyers and put placards on doors during their summer engagement events and at the middle school and high school level the staggered start introduces sixth and ninth grade students to their new schools and routines

[01:00:20] without the larger group of upper-class students. Our schools are looking forward to welcoming parents and families to our back-to-school open houses during the week of August 17th.

Elementary open house events provide opportunities for students and their parent or guardian to meet the teacher, become familiar with the classroom, and learn more about how to engage with the school community. Our middle and high school open houses give students and parents and guardians the chance to walk the schedule and learn about support opportunities for the students. We are excited

[01:00:57] to connect with families and celebrate the start of the new school year with our back-to-school kickoff this Saturday, August 15th at the Enrico Sports and Events Center. This year will feature carnival games, haircuts, immunizations, the famous KidZone, and live entertainment throughout the day. This event is a fantastic opportunity to connect with families from across Enrico, share resources, and support a strong start to the school year. At last year's kickoff we connected with over 5,000 people and we expect to connect with even more families this year. This summer

[01:01:36] construction crews have been hard at work on the rebuilds at Longin and Jackson Davis Elementary Schools as well as the renovation of Jacob Adams Elementary School. Additionally, contractors have been updating spaces at Enrico High School for the new Center for Cyber Security. Longin Elementary school will welcome students to the new building on the first days of school. Meanwhile the finishing touches at Jackson Davis are happening now with a planned move into the new building the first week of November. Dr. Champ will now share about our preparations for the new school year within RICO

[01:02:11] Cares, facility, safety, and more. Thank you Mr. Thorpe. Facilities custodians and school-based teams have been busy with annual building maintenance, HVAC repairs, deep cleaning, and landscaping to prepare schools to welcome staff and students back the transportation team has been hiring and training bus drivers and finalizing routes bus assignments are now available to all families in power school and families can download the edulog mobile app to track buses in real time also the team is on schedule to begin electric school bus implementation this fall

[01:02:48] with 20 buses entering service technology services has been preparing for this year's expanded use of student smart ids wearing the hcps student id badge daily in a visible place is an essential safety layer and supports operational services such as riding the bus and checking out library books smart student ids are now also using the tracking attend are now used for tracking attendance they must also be used in accordance with procedures for attending sporting events there is an extensive faq on the school division website the most important thing for the school for families to

[01:03:25] know is that students will receive their IDs at no cost to families at the beginning of the year and students are expected to wear their IDs in a visible place each day. Students must also use their smart IDs to purchase meals in the school cafeteria. For school year 26-27 there will not be an increase in student meal prices. There will be slight increases in a la carte prices due to rising costs. We're excited to continue the community eligibility provision CEP program in 49 schools. The full list of CEP schools can be found on our website. Families

[01:04:02] will be reminded about the need to complete free and reduced meal applications at their school. As you know, safety and security of our students, staff, and visitors continue to be a top priority across all HCPS schools and offices. Every school in Henrico County has a multi-layered safety plan in place that includes in part buzz-in entry systems school safety officers sros and the continued use of weapon scanners this year the division is adding alertist desktop alerts this is a rapid notification system that overrides computer screens with an alert in case of an

[01:04:39] emergency the program was tested last year and is now expanding division-wide over the summer representatives from schools and central office teams have worked hand in hand to ensure consistency and expectations, practices and accountability related to two important topics, the balanced and purposeful use of technology, and the prohibition of cell phones use in our schools.

[01:05:06] You will hear more about the deeply collaborative work on the development of technology guidelines in a separate presentation today. As for cell phone practices, language has been added to the Code of Student Conduct to align with changes in the Code of Virginia. The language clarifies and prohibits the use of cell phones on school property from bell to bell including at lunch and during class changes and please note smart devices include any personal electronic device that can connect to the internet and wirelessly connect collect process and transmit data

[01:05:44] including smart watches tablets and smart glasses each year essential staff discusses strategies and share guidance documents to support school leaders in the implementation of revised cell phone policies and practices this year we have provided training to our school leaders on the changes to policy language and enforcement practices we have also updated our guidance documents and shared resources and best practices with administrators and teachers alike as they set clear and consistent expectations with students and staff finally hcps is proud to

[01:06:20] expand the henrico cares initiative for the new school year reinforcing our commitment to ensuring every student has access to high-quality mental health and wellness supports. Hazel Health's virtual mental health services are now available to include all middle school students, increasing access to timely mental health care. In addition, HCPS is expanding its partnership with Henrico Mental Health and Developmental Services through the addition of a new in-person mental health team, a clinician and a case manager at Henrico High School, providing students and families with increased access to coordinated behavioral health services directly within the school setting.

[01:06:59] This marks the third HCPS site to implement an embedded team of Henrico Mental Health professionals, further expanding access to comprehensive school-based behavioral health services across the division. AVR, VREC, and Fairfield are the other sites.

[01:07:16] These expansions continue to reflect HCPS's ongoing investment in creating a comprehensive continuum of care that promotes student well-being, removes barriers to accessing mental and behavioral health services, and strengthens partnerships between schools, families, and community providers.

[01:07:34] Together, these efforts further underscore our unwavering commitment to supporting the social, emotional, and mental well-being of every student. As we close the presentation, let's review a few final reminders for families. First, our back-to-school kickoff will be held at the Henrico Sports and Events Center on Saturday, August 15th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We're asking parents and guardians to download and use the ParentSquare app for all school communication.

[01:08:03] It's the fastest and most reliable way to receive updates, announcements, and messages available in more than 100 languages. Families are also encouraged to download the Edulog bus tracking app to get real-time updates on bus locations, delays, and pickup and drop-off times. Families are a reminder to complete HCPS forms and power school, including emergency contacts, code of student conduct, medical information, and photo release forms.

[01:08:32] Student smart IDs will be issued and must be worn all day. And lastly, cell phones must be stored in a way all day from bell to bell. We cannot wait to welcome our 49,000 students plus students back to class. Our leaders, teachers, bus drivers, food service, and support personnel are ready to make this year our best year in Henrico schools.

[01:08:53] THORP AND I ARE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS AT THIS TIME. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH COLLEAGUES I WILL AGAIN OPEN THE FLOOR TO ANYBODY WHO WOULD LIKE TO GO FIRST. MS. SHEA? YEAH, JUST A COUPLE THINGS. REALLY EXCITED FOR ANOTHER YEAR KICKING THINGS OFF. I THINK ONE THING MR. THORP SAID THAT I THINK IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO HIGHLIGHT FOR OUR COMMUNITY IS THAT FOR THE KINDERGARTEN STAGGERED START, DIFFERENT SCHOOLS USE DIFFERENT CRITERIA TO SPLIT THAT. SO PARENTS NEED TO ENSURE THAT

[01:09:28] they're double checking with their specific school on what day that their child is on so i i assume so but do we feel like we've thoroughly communicated that uh with our kindergarten parents we we highlighted that in our presentation in terms of what uh our communications team has done and they've uh done incredible work through the web pages um our school teams have also been pushing through social media aggressively and constantly and uh and especially with open houses coming up and as now parents the the foot traffic in our schools is increasing they're going to be they're

[01:10:05] going to know excellent um i know i've seen it popped up from a lot of um a lot of my schools in my area um all of them that popped up seem to be using the same criteria so i didn't realize that different schools were using different ones so i appreciate you highlighting that um and i've gotten uh there's a in my community there's a little bit of trepidation on new things right like change can be hard at the staggered start but I've heard lots of positive feedback from sixth grade and ninth grade parents about how they feel like they can just kind of give a deep breath

[01:10:40] on that first day knowing that it's just those students in the building who are getting oriented and so lots of excitement around that one personally as a mom one of mine will be going on the 24th and then the other will join on the 25th and the one that has to go on the 24th made it very clear like you cannot go do anything fun like you cannot go i was like maybe we'll go to bush gardens and he was like that that's not allowed i'm at school so um i'm always excited for how we can work smarter and not harder with our badges now tracking attendance i know some

[01:11:15] schools piloted that last year with great success I think one of the keys to the cell phone like you highlighted on your slide will be consistent enforcement and so a lot of that's at our school but I also think as parents we have a responsibility to ensure that we are reiterating that with our students what our expectations are for them to have at a device and also to not be the ones texting our children during the day um i'm i know as a mom i feel like if i don't send it right then

[01:11:49] i'm gonna forget it but there is a setting in the phone where you can set your text message to be delivered later and so i'll set it to be delivered right at the end of school so they get like a healthy dose of mom right at the bell with all the reminders i know they love that um but again i think it's a joint effort between staff families and students to all uphold this expectation we have for them and then an actual question here when we look at free and reduced lunch a lot of our schools are cep schools now and so those schools don't require free and lunch forums but

[01:12:27] we have students that go from a cep school to a non-cep school as they matriculate through the different levels um do we have support for those families that are going from a cep school and then their

child levels up to the next level and it's not a cep school so they know that they have to fill out a free and reduced form and how to do that do we have support for them we do and the feeder patterns you're speaking to uh those those schools are aware if they're feeding in from schools that are CEP and making sure that there are multiple opportunities for families to get

[01:13:04] hands-on support in multiple languages with with any forms that need to be completed not even just for the lunch eligibility but anything from figuring out power school to logging on to parent square but absolutely that is something our schools have really doubled down on excellent I think it's also important as you're saying that beyond the students who would qualify for free free and reduced lunch. The other parents knowing that you've got to put money in that school account for your student to get lunch if they're going from a CEP school to a non-CEP school. So just making sure our families have clarity there. But thank you for all the work.

[01:13:43] I'm looking forward to another great year. Thank you, Mrs. Shea. Mrs. Atkins? So from celebrating summer graduates as shared in the last presentation on summer engagement school readiness there is a lot in this presentation as far as reminders whether we're talking about health and wellness supports these efforts are intentional and i i really want to make sure that i acknowledge that there's intentionality behind what's in the presentation i also will continue

[01:14:18] to say i love the consistency so far i see in these presentation i i really adore the organization of that. That's just a sidebar for you. Very clean. In addition, I also just want to share a few other achievements as we are recapping some things over the summer. I want to start with giving a special congratulations to Dr. Willis. She is principal of Montrose Elementary School on her appointment by Governor Abigail Spanberger to serve on the Virginia State Board of Social Services.

[01:14:50] her insights will not only help hcps but all virginians and that's a major accomplishment right here and within our hcps family for her i also want to give a shout out to miss tiffany berson over the summer when we're talking about transition and getting prepared in getting us on a brand new digital platform which i am loving so shout out to you for having the vision to provide communication tools that help us help our constituents in being effective during these

[01:15:26] meetings and I also just want to speak very directly to Lorena Sanston and Highland Springs so as we are thinking about back to school I want you to know that I see you I hear you we're going to continue to have many many conversations because my theme particularly is going to be a bit more laser focused on us in the community and so we won't simply maintain what we've always done we're going to push forward with imagining what could be and that is my theme for us this

[01:16:03] particular school year and do it also verina sanston and highland springs if you have not registered your child for school please please start that process that helps our schools determine the need in the classroom early so please if you haven't registered your child yet get that done also please join your local schools pta ptsa pto however you want to offer your gifts and talents of service plan ahead to do that so that you can get it on your schedule and it'll make it easier

[01:16:41] for you to accomplish those things i'm very excited about the progress that has been shared thus far in both presentations i'm eager to get started with the school year i'm excited about the participation that i've seen over the summer even at the graduation i started choking up because even then i sense some of the accomplishments that are going to happen this particular school year there it is going to be some challenges ahead in many different spaces but what's going to make

[01:17:17] the difference is the mentality behind them the way in which it's approached if it's approach solution oriented or not and i firmly believe that we're going to have a solution oriented approach not only to solving some of these but having a wonderful start to them with that said chair Irving. Thank you, Mrs. Atkins. Mrs. Kinsella. Yes, thank you, Chair Irving. Mr. Thorpe and Dr.

[01:17:47] Champ, thank you so much for all the information you shared about back to school. I'd like to start off by speaking to the staggered start. Some of the feedback I shared over the summer with Dr.

[01:18:02] Cashwell, and I think it's important for it to be captured on the record today. It was from our pre-k and kindergarten teachers that um could have shared the rollout looks like three first days of school uh why are we doing it this way um and i think that when staggered start was discussed with the calendar you know over the past years by the calendar committee um and with lots of different you know stakeholder groups um if we could just highlight the rationale for why we are

[01:18:36] doing the staggered start just one more time this way specifically for pre-k and kindergarten learners and then highlight that just because we're doing it this way this year we are going to survey and get feedback and perhaps adjust for next year certainly i can speak briefly to that and appreciate you sharing feedback as you're hearing it from staff and other constituents and certainly we recognize this is a significant change to the way we've done the first day of school and so

[01:19:14] while it's been a number of years in the making to your point with the calendar committee lots of community surveys stakeholder surveys and lots of work to get to the point where survey feedback showed overwhelming support for it there are lots of ways it can look and practice and so THIS ITERATION WAS DEVELOPED VERY THOUGHTFULLY BY OUR CALENDAR COMMITTEE WITH A LOT OF FEEDBACK FROM VARIOUS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS SO FOR EXAMPLE TEACHER ADVISORY GROUPS AND SO ON BUT WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT ONCE WE LIVE INTO IT YOU KNOW WE MAY HAVE FEEDBACK LOOKING AT IT NOW WE MAY HAVE

[01:19:48] ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK SO WHILE THIS REPRESENTS OUR FIRST STAB AT IT IF YOU WILL AND LOTS OF feedback along the way we recognize that we'll want to get feedback from all of those that it impacts whether it be our teachers our families once we've engaged in the start so that if we want to make further adjustments to the way staggered start looks in the future or entertain other ideas for school calendar we'll have good information in which to do that so we really will look forward to that feedback and you know again appreciate our community and staff's understanding

[01:20:24] as we try something new that really is in service of those learners who are in those transition years so you spoke i think uh mrs shay to grade six and nine and really understanding that rationale i've been hearing some positive feedback your first time stepping foot into a large high school or a middle school experience and then for our early learners if they're pre-k or kindergarteners for teachers being able to help acclimate the younger learners with a smaller group on each of those first days um will hopefully make a big difference not just for the students in adjusting but for our teachers and getting to know the students and and helping them develop uh routines

[01:21:01] and adjust to the the new spaces thank you for thank you for the additional information there dr cashwell um i would say next is optimal learning and working conditions um with safety continue to be a priority for my district uh so given our budget conversations over the past few years um how are we staffed this is in regards to staffing um for maintenance technician positions

[01:21:35] hvac repairs um custodial service teams are they appropriately staffed i know the last time we talked budget and school expansion i specifically asked for the team to consider additional custodial services at holiday elementary school and long and elementary school not just based on square footage but based on the needs of the students in that building with so many younger learners um enrolled in that building and the increase in the workload um so can i just get an

[01:22:10] update on hvac and um and it could be high level yeah uh certainly custodial services certainly uh we continue to experience recruitment challenges in many of the areas you mentioned but uh you know those aren't necessarily budget constraints as much as constraints in the field and but that has not dampened our efforts to continue to recruit we've seen some positive moves forward in getting those positions fully staffed but certainly have some work to do certainly in the trades as far as school-based individuals i think you mentioned maintenance

[01:22:49] and custodial crews there think we're looking good um really good in that in that respect but certainly are keeping an eye at the staffing ratios and making sure that the teams we've assigned whether it's instructional staff support staff custodial maintenance staff are keeping pace with the actual needs a building may have so we know that we have a good idea of what enrollment is going to look like in each of our buildings as far as staffing is concerned but the first weeks can bring um changes or surprises whether it be with no shows or lots of surprise uh and welcome additions to the school so we're monitoring staffing very closely um on all fronts and

[01:23:28] and while you didn't mention instructional i know you have a a deep interest in that as well and and we're alluding to that with making sure that the unique needs of each school community are met and that the support staff ratios match actual need actually that was that that was actually next i i wanted to keep HVAC mechanical custodial services teams separate from some of our instructional support.

[01:23:53] How are we doing, again, mentioned in the budget discussions this season, with our English learner support staffing and our exceptional education positions? How are we, I know that we have funding, but are we able to fill the positions that we need?

[01:24:13] Another very successful recruitment season on both the ELL and exceptional education front. Again, you know, the important piece now is monitoring what actual enrollment at each school in those areas looks like.

[01:24:28] So if supports need to be shifted, changed, added that we're prepared to consider that. And then just a status check in. What is the team expecting with the boundary adjustments at the schools that we made a boundary adjustments effective for this fall?

[01:24:50] Have we experienced commitments to the transition schools, especially the high school level, that were expected? I'll just say it. I'm asking about Hermitage High School and Henrico High School specifically because those coming from Tucker High School to Hermitage was a greater number. Yes, so you know certainly we worked really hard and I have to applaud our school teams that each of the schools impacted whether they were sending students or potentially receiving students through the boundary adjustments

[01:25:25] did an exceptional job of communicating, over communicating, repeat communicating to make sure families were aware of whether they did or did not have the option to stay depending on what grade level level they were in and making commitments to that really prior to the school year ending so

that as we were considering staffing complement and master schedules that the schools were in the best position to do that and so while you know there may have been a handful of outlier families and cases where there were some challenges and getting in touch and determining what the decision was they made a lot of efforts so that that was handled going into the summer

[01:26:02] so i think the schools feel very well prepared to know who they're expecting to receive who stayed who's going and so on but certainly we know again that's a big change for families and some who have opted to stay would be providing their own transportation for example and so we're certainly attuned to that change and we'll work with our school leaders to make sure we're monitoring that and supporting both schools and and the families impacted by the transition and then i'll just close by saying how excited i am not only for back to school but um for the uh new cyber security program at henrico high school i know mr young will probably weigh

[01:26:42] in on that as well and the uh opening the rebuilds at longan and jackson davis elementary school very excited about that as well as i know adams was highlighted um as well and then the second floor of ace hermitage programming um part of that will open this fall as well so lots of exciting programmatic and uh and for uh renovation rebuild things uh thank you very much for the presentation what a great summary back to you chair thank you mrs kinsella mr young thank you dr champ mrs uh

[01:27:20] thorpe for the presentation uh i am um excited about the staggered start i have a sixth grader So I will be able to provide direct feedback from my little one this year. As a parent, I'm excited about it as well, not only as a school board member.

[01:27:36] So sometimes sixth grade, ninth grade, kindergarten can be overwhelming for our students. So I'm glad we're able to do that. The pre-K and kindergarten, once again, it's probably easier to have 10 kids crying than 20 on the first day, right? Trying to get away from mom and everything.

[01:27:52] So I think that's going to be extremely good as well. Back to school, I'm excited about Saturday. I've been there the last two or three years now. I know it's a great event, so I'm excited to see our families come on out. All of our schools will be there. They have tables set up. It's really an exciting time. I can't speak highly enough about cybersecurity at Henrico Haskell. I haven't been over there yet. I know they have redone one of the buildings, so I'm excited about seeing that and the opportunities that our students will have this year. I did have a question about alertists.

[01:28:22] Is that just for like weather alerts or is this school is on lockdown or can y'all give me some feedback on the new alertists or alert us I guess rather. If there's a change in... Mrs. Cox is prepared to answer. I see multiple people pushing so anybody can speak to it. So it's a combination of things. If there is a weather emergency such as a tornado warning or something that requires immediate attention where students and staff would have to shelter that is possibility but then also

[01:28:57] there is the ability that if there were an incident involving you know a safety an immediate safety risk in a school that it can be activated as well so it is both and as as Mr. Thorpe and Dr. Champ shared it was piloted last year in several of our schools and was found to be successful hence the uh the division-wide launch what was the process before alert us was it just a pa announcement yes so we used um pa announcements walkie-talkies and such uh as well and uh this is

[01:29:33] just another tool as they mentioned multi-layer safety plans in every school and so it may look a little bit different um but each school will have this additional uh layer to the comprehensive plan.

Awesome. Thank you, Ms. Cox, for that. I was along the same lines. Any added layer of security is always a positive for us. And as far as cell phones is concerned, it feels like this should just sort of be a universal approach at this point because it's basically bail to bail. What are some of the approaches? Is it just put them in your pocket? Is it the book bag? Is it the pouches?

[01:30:07] Different schools using different methods? Backpacks or the storage containers that we had in the classroom. So take them out of your pocket, put it in, get it when you leave. yeah a lot of schools are just stating have it in your backpack as soon as you come into the building so they don't have to worry about taking it out exactly but they also have the option of the storage container in the classroom i feel like it should just be universal um at this point keep it in your backpack um but we'll move on we'll see how it works out this year i know it's something different for everyone but outside of that i didn't have any other questions i'm excited about the school year i will provide direct feedback on the staggered

[01:30:39] start um but um chair urban that's all i have thank y'all yes thank you dr champ and mr thorpe for uh the presentation for everybody else who put in the hard work of getting this ready for us um my colleagues have said a lot i just want to highlight a couple things that stood out to me i'm very excited about the the 20 electric school buses that will be coming online this school year i believe mr young said when he was at the the transportation kickoff that if that if one sees him out in the wild he would like to ride on one and i i would like to echo that sentiment as well

[01:31:14] although apparently they're very hard to hear so that's that's a great thing um the cell phones mr young just commented on it i think that the ironic thing is that we are not actually changing anything and if any school does perceive this as being a change perhaps that is telling because they were supposed to be away the entire year last year um i will say you know just given my experience of having to enforce a cell phone ban myself the backpacks are just tough as a teacher especially in secondary because then a kid can take the phone out of their backpack and go with

[01:31:49] them in the hallway and then that leads to harder enforcement on educators so i i understand the sentiment but for me it's like locked away in a box as a teacher is much easier because then i don't have to spend my time walking around the hallway and then deal with a kid who's going to potentially not even know me potentially give me an attitude then i have to redirect whatever i'm doing in the hallway to deal with the situation it just becomes a lot so i think you know as consistent as we can be across campuses is ideal and again as someone who enforces this myself like

[01:32:24] just doing it is the key every single day enforcement the kids eventually respect it because they know that you're going to be consistent in what you do it's when you aren't consistent that the kids don't respect it because they they're just like oh well I can do this with this teacher and I can't do and I can't can't do with this one so if everybody is the same that's that's how that's how we get the respect on on the the no cell phone front um the edulog app for the bus tracking in real time sounds amazing um i feels like at the start of every single school year i'm sure we all get these emails and phone calls about buses not being on

[01:33:00] time etc i this app should help alleviate some of those concerns because you can actually see where it is and if your kid was like oh you know i was late to class because i didn't get to school on time you can actually be like no you were there you know you actually were at the building i could see that your bus is there but i want to also tell our communities to extend us some grace at the start of the school year i think that people take bus for transportation and for granted because your bus comes and then your kid

gets on and then they go to school and then they arrive back at the end of the day but you don't see all the stuff that happens in between you don't see the logistical

[01:33:35] hurdle of planning out literally thousands of stops around the division like it is a complicated undertaking and then you're also dealing with the fact that people said they were going to go to a bus route and then they didn't go to it and then you go to that bus route there's no kid and then you have to do that for a certain period of time and then you find out oh the kid's actually not going to take the bus then you have to switch up the route and it's not it's not just as easy as your kid getting on the bus and then getting off at the end of the day so i would ask that folks extend grace at the beginning of the school year this is a massive logistical infrastructure it will the kinks will work themselves out over time but if a bus is late the first couple weeks like ideally

[01:34:15] we don't want that but also there is there is a process that has to take place of making sure that everybody actually shows up at their bus stops and if they don't how do we eventually filter them out and if somebody wants to get added how do we add them back on and all those things change route times and it's just grace would be appreciated um but other than that i think everything's great ready to start the school year i hope everybody is ready i'm sure folks will be very similar to me that the new alarm clock time is hard to adjust to but but we'll get there thank you all right thank you alarm clock set and ready across the board

[01:34:52] staff and students and we'll look forward to a successful opening and look forward to reporting out on that opening the next presentation follows up on an initial presentation the board received early in the spring before the prior school year actually came to an end updating the landscape OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND SHARING SOME OF OUR EFFORTS GOING FORWARD TO PREPARE FOR THIS SCHOOL YEAR AND ENSURING BALANCED TECHNOLOGY USE. SO I WILL TURN IT OVER TO OUR PRESENTERS, DR. HUGHES AND MS. BUSTANE. GOOD AFTERNOON, CHAIR IRWIN, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND DR. CASHWELL.

[01:35:31] AS YOU MAY RECALL, ON APRIL 30TH, COURTNEY BUSTANE AND I PRESENTED AN UPDATE ON THE CURRENT STATE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN HCPS. DURING THAT PRESENTATION, WE SHARED OUR COMMITMENT to developing a research informed and community informed whoops hold on got it okay all right during that presentation we shared our commitment to developing a research informed and community informed approach to digital wellness in hcps since then we have worked diligently and i might

[01:36:09] add non-stop to review the latest research worked with educators and school leaders and the community to gather feedback and have developed comprehensive digital wellness guidance that bring these efforts together into one clear consistent framework for technology use. This afternoon we'll share what we learned, introduce the guidance, highlight the immediate actions launching for the 2026-2027 school year, and explain how we will continue monitoring and refining this work over time.

[01:36:43] our focus remains on students who deserve high quality rigorous instruction each and every day this work is directly aligned with our division strategic plan journey to 2030 particularly our commitments to academic achievement and creating safe innovative and supporting supportive learning environments our goal is to ensure technology strengthens teaching and learning while supporting the student's well-being that means helping students develop the knowledge skills and habits they need to become life-ready through technology that is used purposefully balanced with other

[01:37:22] learning experiences developmentally appropriate and actively engaging students in learning since our april update we've taken that commitment and turned it into action but it's also important to recognize this work didn't begin in april or even this school year for more than two decades HCPS has intentionally evolved how technology supports teaching and learning we begin with one-to-one access in 2001 as technology became more integrated into classrooms our focus expanded

[01:37:57] from providing devices to using technology to enhance learning through initiatives like the technology integration and teaching innovation progression charts also known as tipsy our deeper learning model the teaching and learning framework and the henrico learner profile each step reflected our commitment to continuously improving teaching and learning as technology evolved today our understanding has evolved yet again we know more about technology and how it can support learning and we also know more about the importance of balancing healthy habits and student well-being

[01:38:35] digital wellness is not a new initiative it is the next evolution of purposeful technology use in hcps i will now turn the presentation over to courtney bostain to share what we've learned how the guidance was developed and the actions will begin implementing this school year thank you dr hughes since april we've listened learned and strengthened our approach through research and meaningful community engagement the guidance we're sharing today reflects what we heard from educators, school leaders, families, students, and community partners, along with current research

[01:39:14] and best practices. Across all of our feedback groups, the message was consistent. Our community called for clearer expectations, reduced unnecessary screen time, more active and hands-on learning, greater transparency and consistency, and a balanced approach that supports both student learning and student well-being. And we heard this within a larger reality. Technology is already a regular part of our students' lives, and there are important differences between technology used for learning, entertainment, and personal use. Our responsibility is to ensure that their

[01:39:50] experiences with technology at school are purposeful, healthy, and supportive of learning. In response, we developed the HCPS Digital Wellness Guidance for the 2026-27 school year. The guidance establishes one division-wide framework for technology use grounded in school board policy research state guidance and community feedback it provides shared expectations for how technology should support teaching and learning so across every hcps school we're working from the same expectations giving educators a consistent foundation for student-centered decisions and

[01:40:29] strengthening our partnership with families the guidance is organized into 10 sections moving from the foundation of this work through implementation it explains why this work is needed establishes clear expectations for technology use outlines the key updates for the 26-27 school year and concludes with the digital wellness roadmap our implementation plan this afternoon i'll highlight a few of those key sections and the immediate actions we're taking this school year at the heart of the guidance are four technology use expectations that establish

[01:41:08] a shared vision for technology use across hcps whenever technology is used for teaching and learning it is expected to be purposeful balanced developmentally appropriate and active this is important because not all technology use is the same technology can be used to consume content but it can also be used to create collaborate communicate solve problems and provide access to learning in ways that may not otherwise be possible these expectations help us focus not simply on whether technology is being used but how and why it is being used together they provide

[01:41:46] educators and leaders with a consistent research informed framework for making instructional decisions and establishing clear expectations across every school and classroom. The four technology use expectations define what we expect technology use to look like across HCPS.

[01:42:06] The next question is how do we put them into practice? We start with the learning goal because every technology decision is ultimately a learning decision. Educators consider what students need to know and be able to do and then determine whether technology strengthens the learning experience or whether another instructional approach is more appropriate we've also incorporated the four expectations into the hcps instructional model making them a part of how we plan for teaching and learning across henrico and while these expectations remain consistent across hcps

[01:42:42] how they are applied evolves as students grow our youngest learners receive greater structure and guidance as they begin developing healthy technology habits as students mature they build the independence responsibility digital literacy and judgment to make responsible decisions about technology this intentional progression keeps technology use developmentally appropriate while preparing students to become life-ready graduates together the technology use expectations and pk-12 progression established the foundation for this guidance now we move from

[01:43:18] guidance into action with the key changes we're putting into place for the 26-27 school year. We've developed new PK-5 instructional technology planning guidance to provide greater consistency across elementary schools and clearer expectations for educators and families. The guidance reflects current research and state guidance, our curriculum and instructional requirements, student needs, and the feedback we received throughout this process. These are planning guidelines for educators not require technology time for students. The parameters vary by grade level to reflect developmental and instructional

[01:43:56] differences across the elementary years. They support an appropriate balance of digital and non-digital learning while preserving flexibility for instructional goals and individual student needs including assistive technology, accessibility, interventions, and accommodations. The goal is greater consistency across our elementary schools while keeping decisions centered on learning and the needs of each student that balanced approach begins with our youngest learners and pre-kindergarten through grade two technology use will now be limited guided and teacher

[01:44:29] directed at these grade levels technology is not intended to be a primary tool for learning hands-on experiences discussion movement play and relationships remain at the center of instruction students will have brief purposeful opportunities with technology to support learning build basic digital skills and prepare for required digital assessments in pre-kindergarten technology will be limited to two approved instructional applications supporting early literacy and mathematics in kindergarten technology will be limited to division approved resources

[01:45:05] supporting the four core content areas and in grades one and two technology use will remain limited purposeful and teacher directed across these early grades we're intentionally reducing and limiting technology use, while ensuring that when technology is used, it is purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and supports learning.

[01:45:28] Beyond the changes for our youngest learners, we are also strengthening expectations for technology use across all elementary schools. Student devices will remain at school, there will be no

digital homework, and classrooms will have dedicated technology stations where devices are stored when they are not being used for instruction.

[01:45:47] Together, these changes reinforce an important expectation. Technology is one tool for learning, not the default. The majority of the elementary school day will remain centered on hands-on learning, discussion, movement, play, reading, and writing, the active non-digital experiences that are essential for our elementary learners.

[01:46:05] Now I'll turn it over to Dr. Hughes to walk us through a sample kindergarten day. - The best way to see how this comes together is to look at a sample kindergarten day. This shows how the planning guidance translates to a day-to-day learning experience for students and how technology fits within a much broader day of active hands-on learning.

[01:46:27] Let's look at the first half of a typical kindergarten day. The morning begins with classroom routines, morning meeting, movement, and time to build classroom community. Technology is rarely needed during this part of the day. Students then spend the largest portion of their morning building foundational literacy skills through direct instruction, small groups, reading, writing, and discussion, and of course, hands-on learning.

[01:46:53] During small group instruction, some students may have a brief targeted use of technology, such as an adaptive reading program, while the teacher works directly with other students. Students also participate in specials, creating art, making music, moving in physical education, visiting the library, and engaging in innovative experiences.

[01:47:13] And of course, the morning includes recess, completely technology-free, providing dedicated time for movement, play, and social interaction. The second half of the day follows the same balanced approach. Students continue building foundational mathematical skills through whole group, small group, and independent learning.

[01:47:34] During small group instruction, some students may have a brief targeted use of technology, such as an adaptive math resource, while the teacher again provides direct support to other students. Lunch and recess remain technology-free, providing time, again, for students to eat, play, build friendships, move, and recharge.

[01:47:54] The day concludes with social studies or science, where technology may be used briefly to build background knowledge or explore a new concept before students move into discussion, investigation, and hands-on learning. Throughout the day, technology use is limited, purposeful, and teacher-directed.

[01:48:11] The vast majority of the kindergarten day remains centered on active, hands-on, and developmentally appropriate learning. Now Courtney will walk us through what a typical secondary day may look like. As students move into middle and high school, the technology use expectations remain the same, but how they are applied reflects the broader range of courses and learning experiences in our secondary schools.

[01:48:38] We also recognize that students are growing up in a screen-rich world, often spending several hours each day with screens outside of school. That makes it even more important that technology use at school is purposeful and balanced. As part of this next phase of our work, we're strengthening and

clarifying expectations to help educators determine when technology adds value and when a non-digital approach better supports the learning goal.

[01:49:04] We're also establishing clearer boundaries around when devices are used. Devices will be put away during lunch, transitions, and other designated non-instructional times, and used during class when directed by the teacher for an instructional purpose.

[01:49:19] We'll continue strengthening homework practices to ensure assignments are purposeful, high quality, and make thoughtful use of digital resources. And through Securely Home and other digital wellness resources, we'll continue partnering with families to support healthy, balanced technology use beyond the school day.

[01:49:38] Just as we did with kindergarten, let's look at what these expectations might look like across a typical secondary school day. The day may begin with advisory with a focus on organization, goal setting, relationships, school community. During this time, devices remain put away so students can focus on connecting and engaging with one another. In English, students might move between discussion, reading, writing, and both physical and digital resources. Technology can expand access to high-quality instructional materials, but it does not replace reading, writing, discussion, or critical thinking.

[01:50:13] In math, students build understanding through teacher-led instruction, guided practice, and problem solving technology is used purposely and selectively when it strengthens a learning goal provides targeted practice or gives students timely feedback the second half of the day continues that same approach lunch and transitions remain device-free giving students time to socialize move and connect in health and physical education and other hands-on courses technology is used when it supports the learning goal while movement and active learning remains central throughout the

[01:50:49] At the school day, Schoology serves as the central hub for instructional materials, assignments, and communication. And while secondary schedules vary, these shared expectations provide consistency while helping students build the judgment, responsibility, and independence to make thoughtful decisions about technology in school and beyond.

[01:51:12] Now that we've looked at technology use in the classroom, I'd like to highlight additional steps we're taking to strengthen safeguards and reduce digital distractions. middle school students will no longer have direct access to youtube at the high school level youtube will remain available under google's highest instructional restriction setting with approved educational content available to support instruction we'll monitor usage and implementation and make adjustments as needed throughout the year we're also strengthening expectations for digital resources roblox will not be permitted on hcps student devices and minecraft education will

[01:51:51] be limited to approved instructional courses, certified clubs, and division-approved initiatives. And as technology continues to evolve, we'll continue reviewing our digital resources and responding to emerging distractions to ensure technology remains safe, focused, and aligned with instruction. Implementing this guidance requires more than clear expectations. It also requires the tools, support, and accountability to help ensure these expectations are consistently applied as part of this next phase of our work we're strengthening that support through improved

[01:52:28] filtering classroom management tools leadership data and stronger partnerships with families we'll continue refining securely filter to reduce digital distractions while maintaining access to the

instructional resources students and staff need following a successful pilot securely classroom will expand to every school teachers will be able to view student screens guide students directly to instructional resources, close distracting tabs, and redirect attention in real time. The goal is to spend less time managing digital distractions and more time teaching and

[01:53:04] supporting students. Post-class reports will also help identify patterns and support follow-up with students and families when appropriate. We're also introducing Securely Reveal, which gives school and division leaders access to technology usage trends and screen time data to monitor implementation, identify areas for support, and inform continuous improvement.

[01:53:28] And through Securely Home, families will now have greater visibility and control of school-issued devices outside of the school day, including the ability to pause internet access, establish offline schedules, and receive safety alerts. Together, these tools provide the guardrails, instructional support, and visibility needed to help put our digital wellness guidance into practice across hcpd that same focus on continuous improvement applies to the digital resources we provide digital wellness isn't just about how technology is used it's also about which

[01:54:06] technology we choose the henrico digital resource menu will remain our division's approved list of instructional technology resources we'll continue refining and streamlining that menu reducing redundancy and focusing on fewer higher quality resources that best support teaching and learning every resource must be appropriately reviewed for instructional value accessibility student privacy security and alignment with our digital wellness guidance before it is approved for use this work creates a more focused and consistent digital environment with high quality resources

[01:54:42] that meaningfully support teaching and learning the guidance also recognizes that digital wellness isn't just about setting expectations it's about helping students develop the knowledge skills habits and judgment to use technology well we're continuing to strengthen digital wellness education across all grade levels students will learn about healthy technology habits responsible use screen time and digital citizenship aligned with virginia requirements and division guidance we'll also continue expanding opportunities for student voice and leadership students aren't just

[01:55:20] the focus of this work. They're important partners in it, helping us build a culture of healthy, responsible technology use at school and beyond. And we know that digital wellness doesn't end when students leave school. That's why strong partnerships with family are such an important part of this work. And we want to thank the families who have partnered with us throughout this process. They brought tremendous care and passion for our students, shared their experiences, challenged our thinking, and helped us build new connections and a stronger understanding of this work their feedback helped shape the guidance you're seeing today beginning this school year

[01:55:59] we'll continue building on that partnership through our back to school digital wellness zone ongoing communication and resources continue promotion of securely home and support for schools in creating learning opportunities that meet the unique needs of their learning communities we'll also continue our family digital wellness focus groups meeting quarterly to listen identify emerging needs and strengthen our work over time digital wellness is a shared responsibility and we want family voice to continue shaping this work as we implement learn and improve together

[01:56:33] launching this guidance is only the beginning at the division level our responsibility is to lead a division-wide culture of digital wellness and provide the support and oversight needed to sustain this work

division leaders will review implementation technology use data and stakeholder feedback throughout the year to monitor progress, identify trends, and determine where additional support or adjustments may be needed. Our curriculum and instructional teams will ensure the guidance is reflected in the curriculum, resources, and professional learning, while our specialists provide ongoing implementation support to schools. We're also establishing a digital

[01:57:12] wellness task force to provide ongoing oversight of this work. The task force will review data, stakeholder feedback, and emerging research, and develop recommendations for future guidance, practice, and policy, including recommendations for school board consideration when appropriate.

[01:57:30] And while the division provides the framework, support, and oversight, this work ultimately comes to life in our schools and in our classrooms. Digital wellness depends on more than individual decisions. It requires shared norms and the collective action across the entire school community.

[01:57:49] principals lead that culture establishing clear expectations and supporting consistent implementation our support staff provide professional learning coaching and classroom support while teachers bring the guidance to life each day through the decisions they make about teaching and learning students develop the healthy habits responsibility and judgment to use technology well and families reinforce healthy habits at home and continue to partner with our schools when everyone is working from the same expectations those individual actions become a shared culture of digital wellness across the school community with the guidance complete our

[01:58:29] focus now shifts to implementation on July 30th school leaders reviewed the guidance at our empowering leaders symposium they provided feedback that helped us refine the guidance and strengthen the supports schools will need for implementation today we're sharing that work with you before implementation begins across the division during teacher work week next week principals and innovative learning coaches will provide training for every teacher on the digital wellness guidance the technology use expectations and securely classroom then on August 24th and 25th the guidance will be shared with students and families as implementation begins across our

[01:59:07] schools and that is not the end of this work throughout the 26-27 school year we'll support implementation monitor technology use continue gathering stakeholder feedback and use what we learned to continuously improve this guidance and as we close we'd like to return to why this work matters throughout this process we heard different perspectives from calls for stronger boundaries around technology to the important role it can play in learning accessibility and opportunity but across those perspectives we found common ground we all want our students to grow up healthy

[01:59:43] connected, capable, and prepared for a world increasingly shaped by technology. Our shared responsibility is to help them develop the habits, skills, judgment, and balance to make healthy, responsible choices at school, at home, and throughout their lives. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has been a part of this process. Your perspectives, experience, and feedback have shaped this work, and it is stronger because of your partnership. We also know that this work is not finished technology will continue to evolve and we will continue to listen learn and improve but one thing will remain constant our students will remain at the center of every decision we

[02:00:22] make if we continue working together as one henrico community and continue asking what is best for our students we'll continue moving this work in the right direction thank you for your leadership partnership and commitment to the students of henrico county public schools we will be happy to answer

questions at this time thank you both for the presentation i'm quickly going to go to mrs atkins because i do know that she has to well i'm going to jump right on in thank you chair irving uh first i want to acknowledge this was a lengthy presentation and you did that you you stood firm you stood strong and you delivered what you needed to do so thank you thank you to the

[02:01:00] division thank you to the families everyone that contributed to developing the guidance this is a great foundational start and I absolutely support protecting our students from unnecessary distractions and strengthening our safeguards. I will share as I reviewed the guidance I kept coming back to one thought and that thought is our responsibility cannot simply be to teach students when to turn the screen off and put the technology down. We also have a responsibility to teach them how to pick it up and how to use it wisely and how to use it

[02:01:34] So with that in mind, I started to think through questions, and one of the questions is, what do our students need to know about technology that prepares our children for a world that they're going to inherit?

[02:01:52] And how are we intentionally teaching them those skills? I'm not expecting a response. I'm going to roll right on through because I do have to leave. if you wouldn't mind taking notes, I will also email what I'm sharing with you too, to be consistent. And so with that particular question, I am delighted because you gave some answers in your presentation to that question and you didn't know it was coming. So you did have some answers to that question, but I do ask that we think about that deeply, that our children are going to

[02:02:26] inherit a digital workforce that they do not know is coming because we don't know either uh we have some ideas we can work towards the best that we can and so i really think that this guidance is a wonderful start and so in the discussion of digital wellness i'm also going to talk a little bit about screen time and one-to-one devices and i'm going to challenge us as a division as a community to go one step further. I saw your tagline but I'm wondering if you

[02:03:00] would consider the statement of every technology decision is also a future readiness decision. That puts us a little bit in an innovative mindset just for your consideration. Also I'm thinking through what opportunities might we unintentionally be taking away. So for some students with plentiful resources in the home and in their communities with access to consistent internet and technology it's simply

[02:03:34] just another tool it really is because they have or may have access to other tools but for other students the division issue device and access may be their primary or only reliable access point to educational technology digital resources i also want you to think about accessibility in this space that is so important to think about the varying abilities that rely on the screen

[02:04:06] as well so and the and the monitor if you will so think about those things i also ask that we consider who may be impacted most not just within our building i would like for us to think about community partners. I would like to think about the families as well, thinking about ESL and all of those things. And I'm going to scroll on down. And so I started looking through our policies, and I need us to make sure that we are aligned equitably

[02:04:42] with this move, because based off what I have seen based off policy. So we have, again, students that may not have access and if we are not intentional a policy that really is designed to promote balance could unintentionally widen the digital divide and leave our most vulnerable students behind real

quick so please make sure as the task force and as your division is looking through these things that we are good in that space i do know the good news is that we can have

[02:05:17] digital wellness and digital equity together it is possible and so let me hit you with these questions here so the first question is has there been a discussion on future metrics focused on what students are doing with technology versus how much time they're on the technology yes absolutely and that is where our digital learning integration standards and the computer science standards come into play as well as our six c's or durable skills of the hemorrhagic learner profile so we use those progression frameworks and that is the metric that we use and really looking at the competencies that

[02:05:57] we're developing with the technology not necessarily the use of the technology so i'd love for us to dive into the use i know we're focused on how much time you're on it one child could be 45 minutes on a screen another could be 10 they both could be very efficient but how they're using it I think will also be another data point to help with decision-making as well as policy.

[02:06:23] The other thought and question is around one-to-one access. For me, in my understanding, and I'm hoping to continue to learn more, this is going to be a work in process, but one-to-one access doesn't have to mean one-to-one screen exposure. It does not.

[02:06:42] Unless you can share something different, I would love to learn more. But from the division perspective can you please distinguish for me providing equitable access to technology and access to unrestricted screen access to technology you don't have to answer now let me keep on rolling i understand yes i was going to make sure that i understood the question so you know when as dr hughes if you don't mind you just want to keep rolling let me just keep on

[02:07:15] rolling i also want to i also want to pause you so that you have the proper time to respond. No pressure. So that you can do your research and get with the team and make sure that whatever you share you're comfortable with. So I'll go to the next one. Let's see. Also I wonder if we could think about exploring a model where parents have the ability to opt out of taking

[02:07:48] division issue devices. I'm trying to figure out what the happy medium is and giving our families agency to say that I don't want my child to have a one-to-one device if that is something doable with minimal impact to learning and minimal impact to teaching and even if a family want to opt out of the one-to-one device we would still have the device in-house maybe during the day for access so just something to ponder something to explore I honestly don't believe the answer is more

[02:08:24] technology i don't believe the answer is less technology i think the answer is a better use of technology and when we understand and have the data to support how our children are using the technology then we can curate and and figure out ways so that we can teach them how to discern between using technology that's enhancing my learning or using technology that's replacing my learning and so i i really wonder if that is something that would be useful for the division and with that said i will close i appreciate my colleagues for allowing me to kind of take the

[02:09:03] floor first i appreciate both of you as well as the division and we're going to have a wonderful school year thank you chair irving thank you mrs atkins um would you like to go next or mrs Kinsella, whomever. I'll defer to Ms. Kinsella. Oh, okay. Which one? I'm sorry. Would you like to go ahead and go, Ms. Kinsella? I go ahead, Ms. Shea. Sounds good. Oh, me, me. Sorry. Clearly,

[02:09:42] I'm not ready for the start of school. I'm over here, too. I had to chuckle a little bit. I know Ms. Bastain and Mr. Jusalt will chuckle, too, the reference back to the tipsy chart and a lot of hard work i did with the tipsy chart and henrico 21 back in those all right first of all thank you for your endless work that you did on this this summer this was a major lift um while you still had other things to do to get ready for the start

[02:10:19] of the school year and so i want to acknowledge that and just thank y'all for your work um i think it was incredibly important with when you listen to the the overall dialogue and education and with parent families and and specifically in our communities and our parent families this is what is bubbling to the top and this is of primary importance for many of them and so taking the time to really do an audit of where are we with technology and what is best for our students and how do we bring all that together is of paramount importance this is a lot more than three months

[02:10:56] worth of work that y'all produce so thank you and thank you for acknowledging that this is the beginning of the work and this guidance and kind of some of our expectations will continue to be malleable as we get feedback and we constantly try to improve and do what's best by our students so i'll jump into some of my questions here um well let me frame it all with of a paramount importance to me kind of framing this in my brain is making sure that our educators and our teachers

[02:11:32] have what they need the resources they need to be able to do their job every day in the classroom is number one number well they tie these these priorities tie for me but that's a primary importance to me along with making sure that we are being developmentally appropriate for our students right and so that's framing kind of everything i look at and and i really appreciate the the repeated use of the words purposeful balanced developmentally appropriate and active i think those those really are essential right we know that there can be poor instruction on

[02:12:09] a screen we know there can be good instruction on a screen we know there can be poor instruction on a piece of paper and we know there can be good so it's more about the instruction sometimes than the modality but being very intentional with that modality um and framing that up for our educators our students and our families is key and that's what it sounds like this um document is going to do so i know you said the document will be available to families that first week of school where will we be able to find it we will be sending it out through um parent square and all

[02:12:48] district message and then staff will also be sharing principals will be sharing with their school communities and we'll work with communication obviously to have it on our hcps website available for families as well excellent thank you um so i also want to highlight um as you had in the presentation but reiterate because i think it's so important what you shared are time limits not requirements for classrooms and so the the immediate question I had is how are we going to audit that as you went through it sounds like perhaps securely reveal could you speak a little bit to

[02:13:26] that and who has access to understand that usage if parents wanted it about their child could they request that yes we are it's a new product for us so we are working on the implementation and the roles but we will have a securely administrator at every school our principals will have access and our coaches will also have access so we can look collectively across the school at trends and data teachers again they will also have the access through securely classroom not only in real time but the nice thing about securely classroom is it doesn't have to just be

[02:14:00] used in real time they get post-class reports and so that's also going to be a powerful piece of data for our classroom teachers to have to really work with our families and that's something that we heard as we work with our families throughout this process that was really important for them to have that awareness of will securely classroom be just for secondary or also for elementary it will be for grades 1 through 12. pre-k and k on the ipads are limited with securely classroom but we have other resources and supports that we will use for that excellent um so looking at um well one piece

[02:14:38] of feedback i got about um chromebook logins particularly for like our first and second graders um is it takes a significant amount of time for the kids to log in um and you know as we're using it in shorter bursts if it takes them five minutes to log in to use it for five minutes That's tough, right?

[02:15:01] Is it possible, I know on the iPads, they can use their badges with the camera. Is that something that's possible with Chromebooks that we could unlock for our elementary schoolers? - That is something absolutely I can take to our technology team and we can work on providing an update.

[02:15:17] - Excellent. Just some one and two grade level classroom teachers have shared that a lot of times we're thinking up here and when we look at kind of rubber meets the road, what are the hurdles? so that came up as one to share back I'm absolutely excited about reducing the access to YouTube Roblox and Minecraft when we look at distractions I'm also hoping that securely classroom will help minimize distractions not that we want to add on our teacher's plate being like policing things but it's nice to be able to see it in one place as opposed to have to run around the classroom

[02:15:55] in their closing windows and I'm sure Mr. Irving and I have both played that game and get that game before and then also increasing the the securely filters do we have consequences for students who bypass the filter and what are those they are in our code of conduct I can't speak to them right here but we do have it spelled out in the student code of conduct excellent and I think as we progress more on this you know I'll review what they are explicitly in the code of conduct but

[02:16:31] also thinking about being really intentional about what those consequences are perhaps if we have student who is regularly bypassing the filters they lose access to their device now will that make that harder on some instructional pieces perhaps but we got we got to do something right the kids are always smarter than we are when it comes to this and so we need some kind of real consequences of there are expectations with this device right and there's a maturity that's required and we're going to hold you accountable for that. I wanted to talk a little bit about secondary

[02:17:09] arrival and kind of secondary downtime so when I you provided the I guess schedule for the day right just to with the arrival it said minimal usage or can somebody do you mind scrolling back to that slide just so i can um and so i'm thinking about when students are in advisory or homeroom sometimes they have um those uh lessons somebody help me with what they're called you the required lessons that they do together but a lot of times students use that time for work like to get ahead

[02:17:48] head of work and so um i'm just trying to think as a teacher how are they going to filter out who is using it for productive academic work for a different class and who is using it for not that i i think oh i was gonna say and we'll be able to see that as you said earlier why we don't want teachers to become police they'll be able to see what the students are doing um you know while while they're on their computers.

[02:18:18] So certainly if they're engaging in an assignment or they're doing something that they need to do to make up for another class or something, that would totally be acceptable. But if they're just scrolling

through, the teacher will be able to see that right away. And of course, as you said, it needs to be purposeful.

[02:18:34] So if they're doing it during advisory, it either needs to be something with our harmony lessons or something that they're making up for class, or there just has to be a purpose. So there should be no students sitting in advisory, just clicking away, doing whatever they would choose to do as they come in in the morning.

[02:18:53] It should be a discussion between the advisory teacher and the students who are sitting in that section. Excellent. And again, as they were, they were like securely, securely, I think since we have not had it up to this time in my brain, right? Like I forget.

[02:19:10] And then just want to thank you for, oh, sorry, I have two questions. I know you started nodding vigorously when Ms. Atkins talked about opt out. Could you talk about that a little bit? I even noticed when I was filling out my parent forms this year, there is a new question mark, or I didn't notice it before, a new form about the consent for Google services, and you can opt out what your child may or may not have access to.

[02:19:37] But in terms of what Ms. Atkins asked about on opting out from a device at all for your student, So is that a possibility for parents who feel like that's best for their student? What would that look like? Yes. So that is a possibility.

[02:19:52] We have had parents, although a very small number, ask us to date. Courtney and her team have been taking data, although very informally, from principals to say how many parents have reached out to you. So far it's a very small number.

[02:20:07] The process that we're going to operate under right now is that if a parent chooses to opt out we would like them to contact their child's classroom teacher and also work with the school counselor and the administrator in a school the reason why we're not doing a form per se is because we really think that this is a topic that needs to have some solid conversation so that the parents understand what it is the students are using the computer for during the day the technology and and what it when they're not using the technology so for example um while this might be a hokey example driver's ed right some of our driver's ed students they have to be on the

[02:20:42] computer to complete that portion of the driver's ed course and so that would be virtually impossible without that piece um and there are other uh diagnostic tests or something that give teachers data to drive their instruction so we want parents to be very informed about here are all the ways that technology is going to be used for your child this school year and make that decision together about what might be able to be completed on paper pencil what might be a recommendation for continued technology use and i think uh operating under that partnership will be beneficial to not only the administrators the teachers who are going to have to provide

[02:21:21] you know alternative um assignments per se and then the parents so that everybody is operating off the same um premise if you will so uh as you started when you set started mrs shea you said this is an evolving process and this is one that we will continue to monitor very closely if the strategy we're using to begin the year doesn't seem to be working or we need to change or be more flexible we certainly will but i do think those conversations between the teacher and the parent and an administrator in the building are key to make sure that we are really

[02:21:56] understanding what the parents are asking us and how we can help deliver that excellent thank you and it's it's great for when parents reach out to us for us to be able to very specifically say this is an option but you need to please have a conversation with the teacher and and and know where to direct them so thank you and please know that we're not leaving it all up to the schools the the teams have all been working very diligently to provide lists of administrators the ilc we're training everybody so if a principal gets that call we certainly can go out we can help we'll provide resources we'll provide whatever they need so we're not uh putting this on the

[02:22:33] teacher or the administrator but again those conversations are key for us to really understand what it is that a parent is seeking excellent um and just thank you for continuing again i know y'all did a tremendous amount of work this summer but saying we're going to continue to have digital wellness focus groups with families we're going to be very intentional about continuing this conversation because we want what's best for our learners so i look forward to um the document being released and really being able to dig into that but also um the continuation of this progress

[02:23:06] uh of this process thank you thank you mrs sherry um mrs kinsella thank you um well what a what a great presentation um i'm glad the board requested it and um and i'm sure community constituents everywhere they're listening today are appreciative of the work appreciate you highlighting mrs shea this is the beginning um i really like the fact of the creation of a living guidance framework

[02:23:41] right that's and the task force that's gonna you know continually um i don't know make change listen right we're gonna listen and learn and then we're gonna make changes um i really appreciate that i know slide for me slide 13 um it's like i see slide 13 and then i'll look at slide 14 it said limited technology for our youngest learners but then we have kids in first grade up to 60 minutes a day and i'm really glad in the small print you say actual use may be like lower based on learning

[02:24:20] goals and student needs i actually hope as a mom and as a board member um screen time is lower especially in our pre-k too um so i just want to i want to start with that um just such a deep dive of information uh i appreciate uh exactly what mrs shea said the repetition or of the words on slide nine that technology should be purposeful balanced and developmentally appropriate um pre-k

[02:24:55] to 12. you can't say that enough and also with so many things just want to highlight this i really appreciated you saying more focused and consistent right so that as i believe miss atkins said you You know, how are we ensuring that there is not digital or technology inequity right across the division?

[02:25:18] And what guidance and what does it look, I guess, what does the guidance look like? And maybe this is in the task group or I'm not sure how, but for our multilingual learners and exceptional education, because technology in some ways is really, it is such a tool, not just a tool in the toolbox.

[02:25:44] but a tool used more often for them so so I worry about groups of students who really do need technology so dr. Hughes can you speak to that yes thank you for pointing that out mrs. Kinsella and as Courtney stated when we started the presentation we heard from a variety of stakeholders and many of our parents who have children that are served by special education or our L students are English learners they were saying something much different than what we hearing some parents say don't take this away this is my child's communication tool my child needs that so again this has been a multi-department approach we've been working with

[02:26:23] dr smith and her team and exceptional education and mike de salt and his team with esl to really make sure that in the guidelines it's called out specifically when it would be a purposeful for the students um in many cases like in dr smith's shop a student may have their technology all day because that's how they need to communicate same thing for some of our esl learners so we have really tried to make sure that um we have thought of every student group that uses the technology how they may have to access it and certainly uh to your point and mrs atkins point we would not

[02:27:00] want to take technology away from somebody who needs that to communicate so that would be their purposeful use each and every day i i appreciate i appreciate you going into detail on that for me and also for those who may be listening or listen back um to this i really appreciated as mrs shea said slide 22. um i appreciate what we're limiting as much as i do the titles um reducing distractions and strengthening safeguards really appreciated that on slide 22 and then um appreciated just

[02:27:37] the continued the focused on the continued work on slides 27 28 various intentional and specific supporting implementation and continuous improvement um really appreciated that and then i'll i'll close with saying since technology it really isn't going away right but i'd also just like to remind everyone in the room as we all know you know so many folks often talk about hands-on learning just for our youngest learners it's actually important for all of our learners

[02:28:12] right pre-k to 12th grade um we're seeing that with our innovation centers with with our cte but all learners really benefit from hands-on so i just like to encourage us to do as much hands-on learning as possible. Anyway, thank you so much, Chair Irving. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella.

[02:28:33] Mr. Young. Thank you, Ms. Bostain, Dr. Hughes, for the presentation. It was a long presentation, everything that we needed. Ms. Bostain, I don't know how you got through it all without drinking a sip of water, but I got a few questions here. I'm not going to hold us up too long. My colleagues asked a lot already. I wanted to get to the focus groups. How many folks participated in the focus groups over the summer? We had about 25 who actually joined us in person, but we also had our community petition that we use. We use written comment, we use public forum, so we use a lot of

[02:29:12] feedback in addition to the focus groups. Was the concern screen time or the quality of this screen time? Can you kind of break that down a little bit on what you were hearing from the community and stakeholders more so the quality of the screen time honestly i mean you know as you can well imagine in a community our size our stakeholders have sometimes very different approaches but i think the common theme was that when we use technology it does need to be purposeful and there needs to be a reason behind it and that technology should not replace high quality teaching that's what we heard across every group who shared with us yeah and that's i agree with

[02:29:50] that statement um and to Ms. Kinsella's point about our pre-k this second um grade screen time it does bother i mean some of the school board members a little bit um but knowing that it's going to be purposeful does uh sort of help that situation but what where do we come up with the screen time right like what led to 15 minutes in that 30 or what led to an hour in that in that 30 as we moved up can you can you give us a little feedback on on how we got to the actual 15 30 and in 6090 yes so if you remember in april when we were doing our research then it's all over

[02:30:27] the place really right i mean you can find recommendations from one group recommendations from another group that are very contradictory we leaned heavy onto the american pediatric association uh for screen times but uh the teams in teaching and learning as well as i've said before all the

departments in the division of learning really sat down to say what digital resources that do we have that actually give teachers that data that they need to be able to drive their instruction and we calculated uh how much of that use would need to happen with fidelity

[02:31:01] over a week for students to actually show progress and so from there we started working on formulas and uh that's you know basically how we came up with the elementary formulas uh but as courtney said earlier we didn't do that in isolation because we're obviously not the ones on the ground teaching so the focus groups that happened over the summer were great but we actually had focus groups of teachers before we actually left school last year and then have connected with teachers and principals over the summer to say if this is the guideline will you be able to accomplish what you need to do with your data and will students be able to progress

[02:31:40] through their adaptive platforms in that time and so that's where we landed we kind of cast a wide net and then kept narrowing and narrowing um and certainly we would uh you know revisit those if that's not working after we are able to collect some data as we go through the school year but for right now we felt like that was a good start to be able to accomplish what we needed to accomplish and as mrs shea said not put teachers in a situation where all of a sudden they don't have the tools that they've been used to for years to provide that high quality supplemental, you know, resource for their students.

[02:32:14] I think it's important for the community to know how we got here. I'm glad you took the time to explain it in depth. And this wasn't just pulling numbers out of the air. But it's important for them to understand how we landed here. And then if we need to make adjustments, of course, this is still ongoing. I think this should be a presentation at least twice a school year for us, beginning and end. But I'm interested because you said data.

[02:32:36] So I'm interested in, now that we have this framework, on the next presentation, if we could get some charts or some graphs on what technology is being used the most in classrooms. As school board members, we really don't, we're not privy to information on what they're using.

[02:32:55] I looked at the, is it the Henrico resource, digital wellness resource? Yes. Henrico resource menu. Yes. It was exhaustive, right? Like it's a lot of apps on there, so I would really love to know what our students are actually using. And then I would also want some data on student outcomes.

[02:33:11] Now that we have securely, it seems like we can monitor how much technology is being used in our classrooms, in middle school, elementary school. So we'd definitely like to see the data on the back end of this, maybe over the summer, this time next year. But if we can get some graphs, some pie charts, kind of let us know what our students are using. And I got a question here, and this comes from actually a member of my household. I had two high school students last year. So I've been kind of testing them on the technology, and both of them said they use technology a lot. And they both seem to enjoy using technology. But my daughter, she's watching now,

[02:33:47] so I'm going to ask her question. So she said, as kids get older, the use of technology in school increases, even though she still feels like hand-on experiences are just as important in the later years. Would you, can you expand on, because she's saying she's on the laptop maybe five to six hours are we going to eventually get to a point where we start looking at high school and saying maybe we should dial it back just a little bit absolutely and they're included in this guidance and that's precisely why we knew we needed this shared framework and a common vision and those clear expectations so that we can really start classroom by classroom supporting our educators

[02:34:25] and making sure that our students in fact through high school do have those balanced technology experiences. Awesome. Awesome. All right. So in closing, I just want to make sure I'm on record with this. I support the direction we're going. I support the balanced approach. I support reducing unnecessary screen time. But I do not want less technology to become the goal. The goal should always be better technology use. And it seems like you all nailed that. The right technology for the right purpose at the right age for the right amount of time seems to be our goal. So I'm glad that we're focused on that goal. And this is going to be ongoing. And like some of my colleagues said technology should enhance students thinking and learning and not replace it.

[02:35:05] So I'm pleased with this. I can't wait to see where we go with this. And like I said, this probably should be a committee at this point because technology is sort of the way of the future. So maybe Dr. Cashwell, give me some thoughts on that, some feedback. But thank you all for the hard work. I know it wasn't easy. We got people on different sides of the spectrum, but I think this is a good middle ground for the division to start at all right thank you guys thank you Mr. Young yes thank you Dr. Hughes and Ms. Bostein for the presentation I know there was exhaustive work and I'm glad you know when we came and asked back I mean we received

[02:35:43] the presentation in April but we asked for before that I you know I went to my colleagues and I was like I think that this is going to be a big thing that people care about and we should be a proactive board rather than a reactive board like so many are not only in our state but around the country and say look you're coming to us and we've already been thinking about this and we're trying to get out ahead of it rather than just reacting to you know people being upset about what's happening so we can show that we care about this and we do take your concerns seriously and even if we're not exactly where you want us to be at this point we can explain why you know that may not be the best

[02:36:20] approach but again this is just the beginning not the end and i think that the things as mrs shea said will be malleable and will change over time and it's important to take that into consideration because i know you know something that i thought about and had parents convey is that you know no screens at all for zero through um for through for pre-k through second grade and at first i was like yeah that's great but then i put on my teacher hat after talking with some folks and was like oh if we just told teachers over the summer in those grades oh you can't use a computer anymore we would have like a revolt on our hands and so i think part of this is like being cognizant

[02:36:59] about the fact that people have done things for a long period of time and it takes time to change things and that a phase in is appropriate and so these screen time limits for the younger kids especially are not only to help the kids but also help the teachers because they're going to have to adapt their practices some teachers won't adapt at all because they've already been doing this for a long time but some folks I would say especially newer teachers it's going to take time to adapt to this and so this is as much to give them grace as it is to move us in a positive direction so I think it's always important to to not just think about solely about your child which

[02:37:35] as a parent you know I I do but also try to be cognizant that there's tons of people who take part in this journey and they have feelings and thoughts about this as well and we can't just you know impose a one-size-fits-all um so i appreciate that and i wanted to that to kind of ground this uh this when we talk about this i i appreciate the timeline at the beginning from 2001 to present it is kind of crazy to think that henrico has had one-to-one devices since i was in

[02:38:06] fourth grade but you know here we are this uh zing yes the one the the laptop usage is old enough that it can still be on somebody's health insurance but but not quite um so but but it's very cool to see the iterative process over the years and now how we are adapting and changing again i i think that's the important thing you reach a primary apex probably in the 2010s where the usage was at its highest and then covet but that was out of necessity and now how do we find you know a path

[02:38:41] that is that is beneficial for everybody um i think that the main focus of this and something that i tried to convey last time but i want to convey again is we should always be asking and giving our folks the permission structure of when i'm when i'm doing a lesson can i do this without technology and if the answer is this then you should the technology should be filling some sort of gap that cannot be met via analog instruction like if you can't do this any other way like you said with the driver's ed then of course you have to use the technology but if it but if you can do

[02:39:17] you know math problems in class without the computer then you should do them without the computer. And I think it's kind of just developing that sort of mindset of, is this a value add? If it's only just as good as the analog, then should we actually be doing this? And I think that's kind of the way that I'm trying to think about it, especially as I'm going into the school year with my classes and just generally as a county, giving teachers the permission structure to say, if you don't want to use this, you don't need to use this. And I think for so long, some teachers have felt, many teachers have felt like, I would like to use less of this, but I don't know if I'm going to be allowed to

[02:39:51] do that. And we can explicitly tell them up here, you know, oh, you've always been allowed to use it less. But I feel like a lot of people in the buildings don't necessarily feel that way. So giving them a permission structure to say you can explore, use this as little as you as you feasibly can. I think a lot of educators are going to love that and run with it. And will, you know, as you said, easily come under those screen times. I think that's that's something that will definitely happen and also just consciously knowing this is the expectation makes things easier as well rather than just trying to have to guess um i would i think like mr young said like us to eventually

[02:40:31] get to a point where we do think about screen time limits for secondary as well um i you know los angeles county the largest school division in the i believe the largest school division in the country they started with zero for the young kids they are experiencing some teacher issues but they're going to phase in for the older kids over the course of the school year i think the second semester, the screen time limits. And so for us, you know, once we get through this year and we have time to like reasonably plan with staff and whatnot, can we get to those screen time limits as well? Because as Ryan said about his daughter, the five to six hours, that's not surprising at all. Like that checks out with my experience with high schoolers. So I would like to see us get to

[02:41:10] that point. And again, this is the beginning, not the end. So certainly something that we can get TO. IN TERMS OF THE K THROUGH TWO APPROVED RESOURCES, CAN WE JUST TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT SOME OF THOSE MIGHT BE? I DON'T HAVE SOMEBODY WHO'S IN K, KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND GRADE, SO I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'M -- YES, IT WILL BE NEXT YEAR. YES, IT'S CRAZY. BUT WHAT WOULD BE LIKE SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT THOSE WOULD LOOK LIKE? SO OUR MAIN TOOLS THAT WE USE TO SUPPLEMENT THE CURRICULUM IN THOSE GRADES ARE IS IREADY. WE USE THAT FOR MATH AND FOR READING. AND IREADY

[02:41:46] has two components it has a diagnostic tool um that i talked about earlier where the students take a diagnostic several times that gives um teachers one data point not the only data point because obviously they have vowels and other uh you know pieces of evidence that they collect but it gives them one data point to say where might a student have strengths in reading and or math or where might a student have some deficits that they need to work on i ready also has a piece called my pathway which is where students can practice adaptively the skills that they might have shown

[02:42:21] either um you know deficiency on during that um diagnostic or such and i think that um that's really what we're trying to make sure that we reduce as we go into this school year in other words a student shouldn't be on my pathway all day right they should be using that for that small group time during reading and math as i explained earlier and then you know using other resources during instruction in addition however there are some other digital resources that our students use in elementary for example we have nuzella which is a huge resource of non-fiction

[02:42:56] text that students can access and while i know all of us no matter how young you are madison i remember having lots and lots of books in our classroom and certainly You know, the Division of Learning team could not be more pro-book.

[02:43:13] I think that when you are able to buy a library, a digital library, you have such a library of books in your classroom that students can access that touch on all kinds of interest, need, and so students might find a time during the day that they want to read a book, and they may go on New Zealand and do that.

[02:43:32] They might read a book in the classroom as well. And then some of our specialists, some of our LAMPS teachers have some digital resources. Again, not that a student would ever be on that for an entire music class, but they might, you know, access some kind of resource to do a quick music assessment or something in the classroom.

[02:43:50] So again, very limited usage, but those are the main ones that an elementary student would find at that age. Okay. I appreciate you outlining some of those. Have we looked into the research on, in terms of like retention from reading on a screen versus reading on a textbook, 'cause my understanding is that the reading on the screen is slightly less effective than with a real book.

[02:44:11] And I think it's mostly due to how your brain and eyes perceive like the wavelengths of the light that's coming off the screen more so than necessarily the reading itself, yeah. - Yes, we have looked at that research and we've looked at it again through the lens of all students, right?

[02:44:27] Because we know that to your point earlier, one size doesn't fit all. And so we have to make sure that we're meeting the needs of all of our students. So if there's a learner that, you know, may find more success by using a digital resource to read, we certainly, you know, would work with that student for that.

[02:44:44] And if that's not the research that's the teacher seeing, then certainly we could have access to your books as well. Yeah, and you also brought up iReady, and I know that I've received quite a lot of emails about iReady. And again, I've not had a student go through iReady, so I can't speak to it to myself.

[02:44:59] But I did see that there was recently new research on it, and I just, if we haven't had a chance to look at it, could we, it was done by online learning, which is a Q1 educational journal. And they produced the first retrospective observational study of I read a usage at a school district in Georgia that had 131 schools, 67,000 students.

[02:45:21] And just the findings from that, nothing that needs to be, you know, hashed out up here on the dais. But I think that I saw that and I was like, oh, the first of its kind, that seems useful. So I just wanted to make sure that folks were aware if they were not, but perhaps you already, PERHAPS YOU ALREADY ARE. OKAY.

[02:45:39] NOW I MAY BE WRONG, BUT COULDN'T -- AND I THINK MS. SHEA SAID THAT SHE GOT A REPORT OF THIS FROM HER CHILDREN. CAN'T PARENTS ALREADY SEE WHAT THEIR STUDENTS DO ON THEIR COMPUTER ALL DAY, LIKE WHAT THEIR TIME USAGE IS? YES. YES. AND THAT IS THROUGH SECURLY HOME. THAT IS WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON TO MAKE SURE OUR FAMILIES RECEIVE THAT INFORMATION THIS YEAR, THE ENROLLMENT INFORMATION.

[02:45:59] THE WAY THEY ARE SET UP IN POWER SCHOOL, IT'S ALL CONNECTED. SO WE ARE MAKING SURE THROUGH OUR SCHOOLS THAT OUR FAMILIES HAVE THAT INFORMATION, NOT ONLY FOR SECURLY CLASSROOM, MR. YOUNG, AND YOU MENTIONED THE HIMRICO DIGITAL RESOURCE MENU, AND THAT IS OUR MENU OF OFFERINGS OF ALL VETTED RESOURCES, SO IT WILL BE COMPREHENSIVE BECAUSE THAT'S PK THROUGH 12.

[02:46:19] FAMILIES CAN ALSO SEE THROUGH THEIR CLEVER STUDENT PAGE THE SPECIFIC RESOURCES THAT STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO. YEAH, SO I THINK RECOGNIZING, BECAUSE I KNOW, I REMEMBER WE GOT SOME PUBLIC COMMENT about like wondering what their kid does on their computer all day. Well, you could actually know what your student does on the computer all day.

[02:46:35] And I think that while we have an obligation to reduce screen time in school, parents also have an obligation to hold their students accountable because if you can see what your student's doing on the screen and you know that they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing, there is an obligation there as well.

[02:46:51] So I would not like the onus to just totally fall on us when parents do have obligations as well. I think that's important to take into consideration as it would be with the cell phones than anything else, parents do have obligations. Okay, so no, so that's great.

[02:47:07] The new screen time monitoring tool securely classroom. I believe I saw it referred to as spying on students by someone and I just think that's funny because I guess whenever teachers are checking on what students are doing, that's spying. Funny how that is.

[02:47:23] But no, as someone who uses a similar technology now, I can tell I am so happy that our staff are going to get to use this. It is actually going to make your classroom management significantly easier. It took me multiple years to actually do it. And once I did, I was so mad that I didn't use it the years before because now I can actually see what a student's doing in real time and they can't hide it from me.

[02:47:44] And as we said, students are always ahead of the game and they're adaptive. I learned that apparently the way to bypass the YouTube filter on the computers is that you can insert a YouTube link. Oh, of course I want to tell them. You can insert a YouTube link.

[02:48:00] No, so we can block this if we don't already do it. No way, we got it. Say no more. We're going to make sure Mr. Maddox, no, no, we need to make sure we can block this. You can insert a link into Google Slides of like highlights from like the NFL and it will bypass the filters.

[02:48:16] So we need to make sure that we patch these types of things because the kids. We will be talking to Ryan immediately. Well, everybody, we need to make sure that we patch these filters so to make sure that the kids, because I'm looking at it and I'm like, why is this kind of on these Google Slides? We have nothing to do with this. And then I actually see what it is. I'm like, oh, you're watching NFL highlights.

[02:48:33] Chair Irving, as we've shared updates with some of our students, they hate them, so we know we are on the right track with some of the things we are putting into it. That is what I want to hear. But no, it is legitimately great. It makes it easier to make sure that academic integrity is being upheld within the classroom. It makes it easier to be able to let parents know if students are not doing what they're supposed to be doing, because you can take screenshots, you can take time caps, you can get reports.

[02:48:55] It is a very good thing to have, and it makes life as a teacher, you can set it so that if they're working on a particular activity and they only need to access a specific site you can lock it so that they can only do that it is a good thing um and it really does make life easier it's not one more thing put on staff it's actually removing some things again in my opinion um okay um i did want to discuss um one of the comments that that a colleague unfortunately she's not here about if screens are taken away that our most vulnerable would suffer and i think that that point is a false binary because it assumes that

[02:49:32] what's happening right now is beneficial because about 90 percent of students around the united states have one-to-one devices and we still see inequities amongst our students so assuming that if a screen in the one-to-one device as we know it is changes that that's going to be necessarily detrimental for students i think is assuming something that's not actually fact because if the screens were the great equalizer then we wouldn't see the inequities that we currently see and if anything right now we're seeing growing inequities in test scores and there's a lot of

[02:50:09] research that shows that the screens actually harm our most vulnerable students the most because brain development and students that grow up in poverty is structured in such a way that they don't have the skills to be able to redirect their attention get on focused um and a lot of other things that the screens can have negative impacts on so i think that there's this assumption that removing them benefits a certain class of students versus another but I don't think that's actually bore out in the reality that we inhibit it and I and I do think that's worth noting that like screens are very beneficial for our ESL students I as someone who teaches ESL students it's a huge

[02:50:46] lifesaver so I think that it's worth distinguishing who are these beneficial for and who are they not and in what cases and that is the purposeful use and so I think you know when I when I said in the spring that we need to get rid of one-to-one devices I'm not saying that it's just blanket across the board you don't get this like there are exceptions for everything and you don't treat all students the same you treat them the way that they need to be treated and some students need different supports and it's important to recognize that and I think we do and we will continue to um but I just I did want to discuss that point um and then the last thing which I

[02:51:20] think is actually bigger and potentially more important than all of this is AI in our classrooms I think the screen time thing is actually somewhat simple like it is it is just using less screens when you're able to like it's not on a on a scale of complexity super complicated but the AI discussion is much bigger and um I was wondering if we if y'all or Dr. Cashwell could speak to some of the AI guidance that's been

giving to schools and and teachers because I do think it plays into this as well and it's it's something that I think worries me much more than than the screen time

[02:51:56] itself. Absolutely. We have a section in the guidance dedicated to AI in our schools. And so we first start with guiding principles for any use, whether that's adults or students in the classroom, where any use of AI in Henrico has to be purposeful and aligned, safe and secure.

[02:52:14] We have to have human oversight. It needs to be equitable and inclusive and transparent and reliable. And the work that we do with AI is really grounded and framed around AI literacy for students. So we've started with our high schoolers and we're working on that backwards mapping. But at the end of the day, we want to make sure that by graduation, our students know how AI works, that they can evaluate AI-generated information critically and recognize the limitations using strategies that we are teaching them, that they can use it purposefully, ethically, and responsibly, that when they are using AI, they are using approved tools that protect privacy,

[02:52:51] They can demonstrate academic integrity and also recognize bias. We want them creating original work and being able to combine AI with human judgment, creativity, and critical thinking. And we want them to leave us being able to lead as a responsible digital citizen, prepare for college careers and life in an AI-enabled world.

[02:53:10] So in the guidance, what we did along the same continuum that we use for our technology progression, we have included what ai literacy looks like starting with grade 2 and then it goes through grade 5 8 and 12. we also are very clear at the end of the day any use of ai in hamrico county public schools the default is zero that means teacher authorization is required so we have very set expectations around that that is in our code of student conduct and something that we work on with students we have a stoplight protocol that we use and so again it sits on level zero and using

[02:53:47] that we have a very limited suite of resources that we use at this time we are focusing with our middle schoolers more on image generation and kind of the training wheels and getting started last year we were successful and use a research-based ai tool that's contained to the content we give it under our contracted resources and so that's where we currently are and we will continue to update that guidance. No, that's wonderful. I love to hear that. I think it's it's incredible and I think it's it distinguishes because I think again sometimes folks when it comes to AI and schools create a false binary where it's you have to use it because the kids are going to use it in

[02:54:25] life but there is a there's a difference between teaching kids about AI which we absolutely should do the good and the bad and then being able to use it on graded work to produce as Mr. Young said doing the work for them and then not not knowing how right and so I think when we're producing future ready students and life ready students if we were just to allow them to use the chat bots to do all their work well then we're not actually producing life ready students because they don't know how to do anything they wouldn't even know if the information that it was giving them is correct and I do think that I have seen right now as a teacher that for the past few years students have been using it that way and it and I do think that like securely classroom makes that

[02:55:05] easier I'm glad that we are putting these protections in place where the the assumption is for graded work it has used zero and that some of the the tools that we have and i looked through the suite you know it's it's like research based and focused to help them with study skills and whatnot but it is contained to a specific amount and it's not just the the chat bots like claude or chat gpt or grok or whatever it is out

there not allowed in henrico yes yes which is which is good yes i'm i'm very i'm very glad that we have taken that stand as a division because i think it's important it's important to teach the kids about it but also not supplement their learning to it because they will be worse off for that in the long run. And it's, you know, learning should

[02:55:44] be hard. Like learning things should be challenging and it should be tough. And it's not like a job where you're trying to increase efficiency. You're just learning things sometimes take some time and you have to get through with grit. But I'm so glad for this presentation. I'm glad that we as a division are being proactive about this issue rather than reactive. And I'm glad that we are thinking about the future of technology with AI and how we teach our students about it in a balanced and useful way, while also making them do the hard work that is necessary to become well-routed citizens. So thank you all. All right. I also echo thanks to the team and all of the stakeholders

[02:56:21] who were a part of the work to date and will be. And again, want to thank every member of the school board for your interest and attention to this critically important topic. And we look forward to keeping you updated on our efforts throughout the school year and to responding to a number of questions I think we owe you some responses to from this presentation. All right, that concludes presentations, and the following items are consent items from me, which could be taken in a block. Colleagues, we have the consent agenda. Is there any items that you would like to

[02:56:56] break out? Hearing none, we'll move on to taking them as a block. Do I have a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented? I move that the school board accept, adopt, approve, and or award ITEMS 1.01 THROUGH 1.10 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AS -- SORRY, SEVEN. THE LAWYER HAS SAID I NEED TO READ THIS AGAIN. GREAT. I MOVE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD ACCEPT, ADOPT, APPROVE, AND/OR AWARD ITEMS 7.01 THROUGH 7.10 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. THANK YOU, MS. SHEA. DO I HAVE A SECOND?

[02:57:34] SECOND. SECOND. MS. KINCILLA. YOU CAN GIVE HER ONE. Thank you. We now move to a roll call vote. Mrs. Shea? Aye. Mr. Young? Aye. Mrs. Kinsella? Aye. And I am an aye. The ayes have it. Items 7.1 through 7.10 on the consent agenda have been approved.

[02:57:57] We will now move on to the public forum. Citizens had the opportunity to submit written comments through an online form in advance of the meeting. Those comments were shared with the school board and posted in community our new platform for public record okay we will now folks move on to an amendment to the superintendent's contract is there a motion to approve the amendment to the superintendent's contract i move that the school board approve the ninth amendment to the superintendent's employment contract and authorize the board chair to execute the amendment to the

[02:58:32] agreement thank you mrs shea do i have a second second thank you mrs kinsella we'll move to a roll call vote mrs shea aye mr young aye mrs kinsella aye and i am an aye the ayes have it the amendment to the superintendent's contract has been approved chair irving could you give for those of you nobody but us knows what um amendment nine is so can you give some context of course of course amendment in line is a an extension to dr cashwell's contract such that she has four years left on our contract and it's been a practice that we've continued over time we're

[02:59:12] glad to have dr cashwell with us for as long as she's willing to serve thank you to the board for your continued confidence in my leadership and it is an honor and pleasure to continue continue to serve in henrico pleasure is ours um we will now move on to the approval of the school board meeting DATES

FOR THE 2027 CALENDAR YEAR. IS THERE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2027? I MOVE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD APPROVE THE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2027 CALENDAR YEAR AS

[02:59:49] PRESENTED. THANK YOU, MR. YOUNG. DO I HAVE A SECOND? THANK YOU, MS. SHEA. ROLL CALL VOTE, MS. SHEA? MR. YOUNG? AYE. MR. KINSELLA? AYE. I AM AN AYE. THE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES FOR THE 2027 CALENDAR HAVE BEEN APPROVED. ALL RIGHT. WE WILL NOW MOVE ON TO THE SELECTION OF DELEGATES AND ALTERNATE DELEGATE TO THE 2026 VSBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY. CAN I ASK FOR A NOMINATION FOR DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE DELEGATE? I AM VERY EXCITED AFTER MS. CONSELLA AND I

[03:00:29] SERVING IN THIS ROLE FOR MANY YEARS TO NOMINATE SOMEONE ELSE. SO I'M GOING TO NOMINATE OUR CHAIR and our vice chair thank you do i have a second on those i second that nobody else here uh thank you mrs kinsella we'll move to a roll call vote mrs you didn't move it please please move that selection chair would you like to be the delegate and vice chair alternative is that how it's working it is excellent responsibility i will accept excellent okay i move that the school

[03:01:05] board select madison irving and ryan young to serve as the delegate and alternate delegate respectively at the vsba delegate assembly and regional meeting during the vsba annual convention do i have a second and a second i second it thank you mrs kinsella do we have a roll call vote um we do we do we do in fact have a roll call vote uh mr shea aye mr young aye mrs kinsella aye

[03:01:40] and i vote aye the eyes have it the delegates of myself will serve as the delegate and mr young will serve as the alternate delegate thanks for representing our board yes all right colleagues we'll now move on to unfinished business does anybody have any unfinished business hearing none we'll move on to new business colleagues is there any new business what was new business not

[03:02:14] on mine not on last year do we have any new business i'm good all right we're going to move on then. All right. We will now move up to the upcoming meeting dates, and the school board's next meeting will be a work session on Thursday, August 27th, 2026 at 3 p.m., followed by a monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. Meeting times may be adjusted as needed. This meeting is adjourned.



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