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Loudoun County School Board, Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC) Meeting, Wednesday, January 18, 2023

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[00:00:00] to my right here, as well as Sheryl Gussman, who's our secretary. We've got our vice chair, Andrea Weiskopf in the back, and our membership chair, who is tucked away. All right, Erin Conkel. I also have our liaisons.

[00:00:16] We have our school board liaison, our newest liaison, Harris Mejedevi from the Ashburn District, and Lottie Spurlock, who is our LCPS liaison, and also the equity director, well as Ryan Tyler. I thought I saw Dr. Tyler somewhere. Oh, he's in the back. All right, great.

[00:00:37] We also have our panelists. Welcome to you all. Can't wait to hear from you. And welcome to all of our delegates. If you're a delegate, can you raise your hand? Can I see delegates in the room? Okay. Decent number of delegates. I'm coming in there. All right. Welcome and guests. Welcome as well. So good to see you all here. Oh, I didn't even mention those online. Those of you guys are tuning in thank you so much we appreciate your attention to MSAC and this important mission so I'll go ahead and go over our agenda and have a few

[00:01:16] announcements and then we'll get into our evening so our agenda today we'll be talking about the change you can be and we really want to pivot to action this year so you guys will be hearing about that

today we kind of set aside our our conversation on the Comprehensive Equity Framework, which we'll be picking up back in February in favor of a more timely conversation that will be hosted by Pastor Michelle Thomas, who's the NAACP president, and she'll be talking about the Virginia SOLs, and then we also have

[00:01:52] our level directors for middle and high, no, I'm sorry, elementary and high school, who will be enlightening us as well and introducing them will be again Ms. Lottie Spurlock who is the equity director and we'll make time for Q&A for you guys to really make the most of their presence here. There's a lot of information that they have to share so I'm so glad that we're going to get a chance to hear from them.

[00:02:21] Quick housekeeping notes. You guys should know but if you don't the bathrooms are out of the doors and to your left and And as you all know, this is a relaxed setting. We want to talk about something that can be difficult, but we want to do so with respect.

[00:02:39] And so we ask that if anybody has any questions for our panelists, that they address them with respect. We ask them to not even bother with questions that are hostile. We want to respect everyone who takes the time to come out here and speak to us tonight.

[00:02:57] All right. Before we get to our meeting minutes, I'm gonna go ahead and get a few announcements in. As I mentioned, we're gonna be pushing our Comprehensive Equity Plan, the report that goes into more depth in terms of what the findings were about the climate for February.

[00:03:16] So stay tuned for that. But one thing I did wanna bring up are a few things. The Diversity Recruitment Experience will provide interested educators an opportunity to learn more about LCPS and its commitment to serve as the educator of choice, excuse me, employer of choice.

[00:03:32] This event will provide virtual space to network, potentially interview with school administrators. That networking event will take place on January 30th at five to six Eastern Standard Time. And there'll be virtual interviews on January 31st, February 2nd.

[00:03:51] The gifted education department is rolling into its spring cycle. So those of you who are interested and getting your child enrolled, please go to the website, learn more about that. And finally, the Seneca Bridge Middle School, tomorrow is having a multicultural symposium entitled Culture, Prominence, and Perspective.

[00:04:14] That's tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. And so if you got some bandwidth after tonight, we ask that you go and check it out. It really looks like it's gonna be a great conversation. All right, and I wanna head to our meeting minutes.

[00:04:33] Do I have a motion on the floor to approve the meeting minutes? All right, is there a second? Do I hear a second? All right, all in favor say aye.

[00:04:49] All right, any nays? All right, the meeting minutes for November are approved. All right, so before we get into our panelists and guest speaker, I do wanna give our newest school board liaison, Harris Mehedavi, an opportunity to say hi, to introduce himself, and to suggest the group.

[00:05:13] - Thank you, Ms. Bush. So my name is Harris Mehedavi. I represent the Ashburn District. That's sort of the clusters are Riverside, Stormbridge, and Broadrun. So any middle school and elementary schools within that. I'm really pleased to be here and part of the liaison to the MSAC.

[00:05:31] I'm looking forward to working with you and see how we can collectively work on whether the policy or budget or any items that can help further the initiatives and sort of the things that you're

championing from the Advisory Council.

[00:05:47] Just a few things I want to kind of bring it back, highlight, which I'm working on and I think hopefully can happen through this budget perhaps. So one of the things we did this year is to focus on counselor ratios from a mental health perspective. One of the things that we saw, especially in elementary, middle and high school, we addressed in the past couple of years, but we hadn't really addressed the elementary counselor issues.

[00:06:12] Right now, the ratio is about 375 to 1. So for every 375 students, there's one counselor. And if you have an elementary school that has 500 or 550 students, you approximately have just 1.5 resource.

[00:06:28] So hopefully as a budget passes, the initiative is to make the counselors whole. So regardless of whether you have 1.2 or 1.3 or 1.5, you'll get two full counselors to work within. So they'll be at the school staff instead of going back and forth along that.

[00:06:46] Even though these are not my schools one of the other initiative was to make sure that schools that have Less than 200 students or 100 students. So we have all the Banneker Waterford Again, they were getting only half or point four council ratios. So regardless of our staffing standards Those schools will get one full counselors going forward with this budget. So really excited about that One of the other things that we see we have we've been focusing on early literacy at elementary schools I mean that's been obviously quite a bit talked about and a lot of discussions that happen.

[00:07:21] We're still waiting for the program from VDOE based on further discussions. But one of the things that we haven't focused on is on the math, early math intervention. And so again that comes back to how do we provide some more additional support for the classroom teachers to elementary from a math perspective.

[00:07:40] So this year I hope, again this is something I'm sort of pushing for but I believe there will be enough support to make this thing happen in the next budget cycle is that we want to pilots few elementary schools where there'll be some more math intervention program so math intervention program exists for special ed students but I think we want to bring it back to the regular students as well so I look forward for having that besides being a school board member I'm chairing the student services committee this year and so there's a lot of initiative a lot of things to work on when it comes to

[00:08:19] mental health and other aspects of it you know one of the key things I'm looking for is we did a mental health task force last year so we're working through what the recommendations were and what we have done so far and what opportunities we have to further improve on that and then the other things that we all see, we hear a lot of TikTok videos, Instagram, et cetera.

[00:08:43] We haven't talked much about the impact of these social media tools within our students. And so I hope to at least get some better understanding on how these social media tools are impacting our students and then what can we do about that. I know we don't really have much, these are devices on students, their own devices, but what can we help educate our parents and staff and so on and so forth, so we'll be taking that on.

[00:09:10] So there's quite a bit of things to accomplish this year, so, but again, I'm excited to be here and look forward to working with you all, thank you.

[00:09:29] - Thank you, thank you. All right, so before we get started, I just wanted to make sure that everyone is aware that our annual report is currently under development, and this is something that I'm very excited about because it's gonna give us an opportunity to really paint a picture of how we see the school board performing, and not just the school board, but the district as a whole.

[00:09:51] So for all of you delegates here, you can expect next week to get a survey to your email. We ask that you promptly return it and give a lot of time and thought to your answers because we're gonna go through those answers with fine tooth comb and analyze them and present them to the school board.

[00:10:10] February 14th is the date that we'll really be digging in and drilling down on our findings, but that's the portion that we're asking you to play. We want to have a unified voice. So please be aware of that. We also want to hear from the MSAC body, and that's everyone who is in this room today.

[00:10:29] So I'm asking if you are interested in taking part of that survey, we put a piece of paper in the back that it says MSAC survey. If you add your email address to that, we will also give you a survey to fill out. And that's just for the people who are in this room right now, just for today.

[00:10:47] All right. So at this time, we are going to welcome Pastor Michelle Thomas, who is going to talk about the proposed changes to the Virginia SOLs for history and social studies.

[00:11:01] Good evening. In 2019, August the 24th, I, along with 39 educators and professionals in their field, history museum executives, all were appointed by Governor Northam to the African American History Education Commission.

[00:11:47] This commission convened quickly and began to do our work that was assigned by the governor to really reinvestigate and revamp our SOLs, to make sure that it was culturally competent, to make sure that teachers had the tools that they needed to be able to teach history in a way that all children are supported and all children see themselves reflected in the curriculum. And I think that was fantastic. It also addressed certain things that people are

[00:12:23] just not really, I guess they weren't as familiar with, such as licensure. What is important to teach history in terms of the credentials for teachers? One of the greatest outcomes I think that I brought to the commission was to add to the licensure an opportunity for teachers to have African-American history.

[00:12:48] Most teachers in Loudoun County, history teachers, have not taken an African-American history course. Thus, we do have many problems, not just in Loudoun. We do not have the monopoly on that. All over this nation, we are void with people having African-American history and their backgrounds and such that creates an impasse with students and competence.

[00:13:12] And so as a part of that commission, we worked very hard for -- to come up with, I feel, and not only just me, but some of the professionals, Virginia Studies Leader Consortium, ASCD, the American Historical Association, probably seven other mainstream commissions and have said that these were probably the most culturally competent SOLs that they've ever had presented. And those SOLs were presented

[00:13:48] on a regular cycle in August 2022. I emphasize regular cycle because I think many people are not aware that the SOLs are and other disciplines are actually up for SOLs every seven years, right? So they

make sure that we're teaching culturally competent, that content is correct, that it's aligned, and all the things that you guys know about. It happens on a seven-year cycle.

[00:14:22] There's a disruption this time, it's normally not political, it goes under the radar, it's normally not big news or anything that is sort of combative, but this year it seems to be very different.

[00:14:40] There's an administration change and a national effort to push this narrative of CRT, which we've debunked successfully is not happening in Loudoun County, and because of that, I think there's a disruption. When the August curriculum SOLs and the curriculum framework was presented, the new administration came in and halted that process. Again, this process is not really disrupted. It just goes like clockwork, given that the previous administration is trusted to

[00:15:18] have done a good job. This one was a little special because it wasn't just educators or VDOE that came up with these SOLs. It was community input and so many different experts all over Virginia that came up with these SOLs. The SOLs that have been presented now in November and also just on January the 6th, these SOLs are pared down.

[00:15:49] A lot of you guys have probably followed the contention. Initially, when the SOLs presented in January the 6th was presented in November, these SOLs were very flawed. They took out things like MLK Day after a lot of backlash that was put back in.

[00:16:10] They referred to indigenous people as America's first immigrants, and it was on and on and on in inappropriateness and inaccuracies. What happened was after, in January 6, there is, I'm sorry, in November the 17th, the VDOE gave instruction to the administration to take the presented SOLs that was extremely

[00:16:43] flawed and do a crosswalk with the good SOLs that was presented in August. That has not happened as far as I have seen, however, some of the groups that I mentioned earlier, they have gotten together and done a crosswalk, and that's what I'll share with you tonight.

[00:17:07] I think before we get started, most of you guys are familiar with SOLs, but I just want to just put it in this term, SOLs tell you basically at the state level, it tells you what you're going to teach, what you're going to teach.

[00:17:23] The curriculum framework that's put together also at the state level tells you more specific information about what you're going to teach, and it gives some guidelines about how you should teach it.

[00:17:39] But the curriculum, which is really important, actually has the autonomy of the district. The district has its own autonomy to develop curriculums here. And the curriculum actually not only explains what you're going to teach but it tells, it gives guidance, very specific guidance about how to teach it.

[00:18:00] It is our aid for teachers and sometimes when our textbooks don't do a good job all we have is the curriculum which I believe that our curriculum development department does a very good job at.

[00:18:16] Again, this adoption of the SOLs, the standards, and the curriculum framework happens in a seven-year cycle. If something happens that there must be a review and you need to go back and look at the standards for some strange reason, that can happen as well.

[00:18:36] But it should be like a real issue. It shouldn't just happen because there's a political indifference. So as you began to look at the new or the January SOLs, there are a couple of things that kind of really come to mind.

[00:18:55] I've kind of highlighted them for you. Number one, when you look at it, it appears inclusive. You're going to see buzzwords. It looks like history, all the history is there. But what you don't see or what you'll see in a deeper dive is that there's been skills, critical thinking skills that has been de-emphasized.

[00:19:21] The cost of delivery of these new SOLs is going to cost us a fortune because of the way it's misaligned, because of the scope and sequencing that is out of order. because now you're teaching fifth graders a sixth-grade curriculum, and then you're skipping civics, and you're teaching eighth-grade geography, and that's a high school course.

[00:19:47] And so that means you're going to have to buy all new books. That means that teachers have to be trained in elementary school where elementary school fifth-grade teachers are not specific. They're not specified in history. And so now you are teaching at the level of specificity, and that's going to require teachers to really be trained.

[00:20:11] Or they're just not going to teach black history well, which means more complaints and more harm to children. Interesting. If you want to just go K through 12, I can just run you through, and then I'll open up for questions.

[00:20:28] I could run you through what an example of K-12 is going to look like in this January section or this January proposal. Kindergartens now have to learn Election Day. They need to know what Election Day is.

[00:20:47] For some, that may not be a problem, but for those kids that are just coming to this country, can you imagine? for kids that cannot read many of our kids start kindergarten they can't read right um they have to learn about the yorktown victory the york do you know about the yorktown victory they have to i mean it's going to be um they have to identify columbus day which is appalling right so federally we know that we no longer celebrate columbus day we celebrate indigenous people's day and so why

[00:21:24] would you bring that back into the curriculum and then start it at our earliest learners? You're just going to teach them incorrectly from the beginning. Imagine that. In first grade, they're learning Booker T. Washington. They're learning other black prominent figures, Langston, and there's no context. It's all rote memory. So imagine learning all the black leaders who've done significant things, but you know nothing about them. There's no context. You don't know how

[00:22:02] they contributed. You don't know their struggles, their resilience. You don't know the story. So what is the point? What is the point? Burdening down a first grader who's still trying to master reading. Huh? Interesting. In the second grade, they learn about the War of 1812.

[00:22:24] Do you remember the War of 1812? They learn about law, respecting and following laws. Wait a minute, what happened to citizenship? Remember that on your report card?

[00:22:41] You used to have a grade for citizenship. They're learning about respecting laws. They learn about the father of the Constitution. Do you know who he is? The father of the country. No, you know that, but the father of the Constitution.

[00:22:59] Do they know that they own slaves, enslaved people? Do they know that? It's interesting, no context. They learn about JFK, just inappropriate. They learn about 85 in the second grade, about 85 people.

[00:23:18] Not much context, certainly around the African Americans. What is the point? In the third grade, they put Molly back into the curriculum. They took it out, they put it back. Molly showed up, world history.

[00:23:37] That's gonna require new books because of this emphasis on world history now. It's gonna require new books. In fourth grade, they added more context, just piling on, further go into propaganda about the father of the country and Constitution and just more of that just piling on.

[00:23:59] Again, no point. Fifth grade, U.S. history is being taught. That's where it really gets complicated. That's where it really gets complicated. Now, you know, for most African-American students, fourth grade is our trouble point anyway, right?

[00:24:21] And then we get to fifth grade where you know you're going to have a problem in fourth grade just because we're talking about the period of enslavement. And then you get to fifth grade and you're mentioning that again, and these teachers still do not have a requirement to have taught or to have taken an African-American history course.

[00:24:41] they're going to try their shot again. They're going to try their best to teach this, along with everything else that they're teaching. It's just not going to be enough time in a day. Because of the way that they are teaching U.S. history now in fifth grade instead of sixth grade, now you're going to have to have new books.

[00:25:04] That's going to cost a fortune. Seventh grade, still the same, piling on. Sixth and seventh grade, more piling on. Not a lot of context.

[00:25:20] Eighth grade, they introduce world geography. This is a huge problem. Normally, eighth grade is civics. Guys, remember that? Or you remember that from your kids? Eighth grade is civics. And so now they're going to be teaching world geography.

[00:25:37] The problem with that is world geography is a high school course, which means you get high school credit, which means you can get a verified credit for your diploma. But if that's not available to you and you're a student that still has challenges with language, right, that's going to be a problem.

[00:25:59] That's a huge problem. Not to mention all new books again. Ninth and 10th and 11th grade, the content is just not viable.

[00:26:15] Piling on, piling on, more content, not a lot of background. In 9th, 10th and 11th grade, you will see an uptick in Eurocentric history. uptick in Eurocentric history. And that's where we are. That's where we are. There's nothing good that is coming out of the January 6th version of the SOL. We must ask to adopt the August version.

[00:26:49] We simply must. Because I know that you guys have MSAC reps, if you would like to see me after the meeting or if you would like to contact me, I'm actually going down to the next VDOE meeting. That is going to be on February the 2nd, where I will address the VDOE board and share some of what I've shared with you and our reasons for asking respectfully that they adopt the August SOLs.

[00:27:20] Yes, ma'am. Hi, Pastor Michelle. I noticed when I looked at the standards, specifically with the Civil War, students are supposed to learn about the Battle of Manassas instead of Bull Run.

[00:27:39] and noticed a lot of the southern names instead of northern names for the battle. Has that been addressed at all, or do we have to wait and see if they go back to the earlier standards? But I noticed

all the southern names.

[00:27:55] That has not been addressed. I think that is a unique take, and it's actually very important because of the history of emancipations of enslaved people in Bull Run, where Mr. Carter, Robert Carter III, which was one of the grandfather to George Carter, who owned Oatlands, who emancipated over 500 enslaved people, they settled at Bull Run.

[00:28:28] Did you know that? Yeah. They settled at Bull Run. So it is so important for them to use the Bull Run example or have the Bull Run example along with the Manassas, because the bull run example has the African American history tied to it.

[00:28:47] Good question. Any other questions? Yes, ma'am. Could you say it a little louder?

[00:29:10] No, we don't choose to adopt it. The adoption is done at the state level, but there is the adoption of the SOLs, the standard of learning, and then along with the adoption of the curriculum framework that normally would happen at the same time.

[00:29:28] but these are two things that give guidance. One tells you what to teach, one tells you how to teach it, but on the local level, the district level, Loudoun County, we have the autonomy to construct our curriculum, right, and we take that how we're going to teach it in Loudoun based on SOLs and also the curriculum framework. Has anybody brought up that if you change what you're teaching especially as you get into the junior high and high school level you're going

[00:30:05] to impact what our students can do in terms of ap and dual enrollment classes and possibly cut back on their opportunities to excel in those courses and make them available for students of all you know in all the high schools and at all levels i think that's an interesting point to bring up especially as we bump world geography down i'm even more concerned about that so that is absolutely an issue. Also, because our district does have some autonomy with the curriculum, we were able to introduce African American history, Latin American history, and African

[00:30:45] history to the curriculum in Loudoun County, which is fantastic. And even at the district level, we were able to designate to those classes an honors designation to help our students get excited about taking those classes and to almost compete because all the students want that extra bump, right? And so we don't want students that are interested in African-American history, African history or Latin history to be precluded from the competitiveness. So we've added at the district level that honors designation, which gives students a 0.5 bump if they take either of those classes.

[00:31:27] Also, along with the financial burden of adding new books to some of these classes, there's also the burden of SOLs, and so we have to be very cognizant that as they bring these classes online and change curriculums and change SOLs, they may ask that you know this information.

[00:31:53] I think one of the statements was it was about 180-something people added that you have to know. Imagine having an SOL. Imagine in the second grade where you have to know 85 new people, still master reading, and have an SOL.

[00:32:15] You don't know. I don't know where they're going to put them, but this is something to think about. And we know who typically the SOLs do not show the best representation of our student learning and achievement Because we learn in a very skill-based way Versus rote memory any other questions. Yes,

sir Can you tell us a little bit about what the decision process looks like for approval is this within the executive branch?

[00:32:49] is it something the the chief executive can can weigh in on or is there anything more specifically that either other educators can weigh in on in the districts or parents or anything like that okay parents are really going to have to get involved this is a strategic game now and when I say game it seems like people popping up with new curriculums at the last minute and new SLS at the last minute it must be a game because students are not at the center of what we're doing here and as that goes I think it's

[00:33:26] important to understand what this process looks like which is what you're talking about all right so the board now um is going to be changing administration of change term limits of change and so with the newest administration there will be the appointment of two new members of this board which will then carry that over to an imbalance if you will we need to win this fight on february this second. Because if we do not, we will not have the power going forward the very next month.

[00:34:08] So specifically, what does that mean? What is the call to action for parents? The call to action is to go down to Richmond or to write and address the Virginia Board of Education and state your concerns. All the questions that you've had here today, those are excellent questions. Please ask the question about sequencing in our students that are on that trajectory for AP classes. Please ask the question about Manassas and Bull Run. Sure, it's local history, but our students really thrive in the spaces where they understand history in their

[00:34:47] backyards. So we go down to Richmond. Those who can go in person, if you're interested, just tip out and meet me. I'll write your names down, put you on the delegation list. Those who cannot come, send your letter. If you are going to come, send your remarks in advance. Yes, ma'am.

[00:35:11] Are there any delegates that we should contact besides just the VDOE? Sure. You're allowed in delegation. So that is your senators, Senator Boisco, Jennifer Boisco, Senator John Bell, Senator Barbara Favola.

[00:35:30] Your delegates, it's going to be Suha Subramariam, Delegate Suha Subramariam, Delegate Wendy Goditas, Delegate David Reed, and Jorana Blank with the others.

[00:35:48] Just Google. Any questions? Yes, ma'am. So the question that I have is, we're hearing this message today, so we're privileged enough to hear it firsthand, But then how do you create mass communication so that parents who are not here acknowledge and understand the concerns?

[00:36:11] Because that's more of a harmonized message that I think might resonate at the level in terms of the call to action. So obviously with the time that I was allowed it, I can't go through every single detail. So what I've done was left information with your chair, and she will post it on your website.

[00:36:31] And it has all of the crosswalk. It has the January 6th version, and it also has the version that is supported by all of the education establishments and organizations. And so you'll be able to clearly see.

[00:36:48] It also has call to actions, things that you can do. Questions? Yes, ma'am. When is the time frame for this? I mean, if they're trying to pass this, when are they trying to implement it all?

[00:37:05] Because we're going to have to train the teachers and give them time. Great question. So, like I said, it's a seven-year cycle, but that is just when you get ready to vote on the SOLs. After the SOLs are voted on, it's a two-year cycle for implementation.

[00:37:22] So, we're talking about 2025. Pastor Thomas, I can actually provide a little more context to this timeline, too. Hi, everyone. Danielle Graham. I'm the social science supervisor for Loudoun County Public Schools. So the February 2nd meeting is basically the board will make a decision on whether they want to adopt this first review and move forward with public comment on that.

[00:37:45] The anticipated final adoption is, I think they're estimating August, which would go into effect the next school year, so 24-25. And so these would be known as, I believe, the 2023 standards. So they were due in 2022, now we got pushed back a little bit, but it's off by about a year.

[00:38:03] So, yes, so the February 2nd date is whether or not they're deciding to move forward with the January 6th draft, and then they're hoping for a final adoption by August. And I did want to just say, and I know Pastor Thomas has emphasized it, our office designs a curriculum that is inquiry-based and skill-based and culturally responsive, even if our standards still remain fact-based as they are right now.

[00:38:31] They're not built for that, and that was part of the plan with implementation. So we still intend on having a curriculum that is aligned to our strategic plan and is inquiry-based and culturally responsive and helps our students develop as communicators, critical thinkers, contributors, and our five Cs.

[00:38:47] So I did just want to state that as well in case there were concerns around that. Your voices matter. It mattered so much so that it was able to halt the process. And so I believe that if we wrote in or those of us who can take that day off and ride with me to Richmond, I think that our voices very much matter and it makes a difference, especially when we show up.

[00:39:14] Any questions? All right. Well, thank you so much. Have a great night. Thank you so much, Pastor Thomas, for your time.

[00:39:30] I hope that was informative and she's already sent me that information. And as she mentioned, I will be posting it on the Web site. I also post as much as I can online. So Pastor Thomas, when these standards first came out in November, she did a press conference.

[00:39:46] We had a video of it. It was actually on our social media page. Didn't get a whole lot of looks or likes. Please try to stay tuned because I want to do as best I can to keep you all informed, understand that we're all busy, but these are the types of issues that I want to bring to everyone's attention because it impacts our students in real time.

[00:40:05] So as she mentioned, she'll be, are you gonna be here or do they need to come back? Okay, so she'll be in the corner now or later? Okay, all right, so, and if you guys miss her, feel free to email me. I'll make sure everything gets back to her.

[00:40:23] All right, so next on our agenda, we have Ms. Lottie Spurlock who is gonna talk more specifically about our organizational structure and she is going to also introduce our level directors. Now, before I have Ms. Spurlock speak, I do wanna acknowledge, no, so, Danielle Graham, thank you for coming.

[00:40:50] Give me her title again. Okay, so she is our Supervisor for Social Science and Global Studies, right. And so I want you guys to see her, know who she is, because as she mentioned, she is responsible for providing guidance for the curriculum within LCPS.

[00:41:08] You guys should know her name. If you have questions about the African American, Latin American history that's ongoing, she's your point of contact. And so we ask that she sit in to kind of bring

context to this conversation. So, you know, if you guys have any additional questions, you can send them to me, I'll definitely funnel them, or you guys can go directly to her with your questions.

[00:41:27] But again, these are the faces, these are the names that I want you guys to be aware of, okay? Thank you for being here. All right, so with that, Ms. Spurlock. - All right, good evening, everyone. I appreciate the questions, and I could tell by way of your interest and your questions that you realize that this is a collective responsibility.

[00:41:53] And so I appreciate the perspective of community advocacy, parental voice in this, so please be sure to follow up. And, of course, as staff leadership, we have our part to do every day. So whether you see it, just trust and know that there are a lot of things behind the scenes, a lot of moving parts to make sure that we're showing up for our students.

[00:42:17] And so I am going to get it all set. All right.

[00:42:36] So I want to try to pull up this visual here, and I know it's going to be really hard for you to see. Try to shrink it a little bit. I don't think it's going to show because it's such a huge chart.

[00:42:56] What I try to do is provide a visual to you, and I want to cue it up a little bit. I'm just kind of take a quick walk to the conversations that we've had so far about our strategic plan.

[00:43:11] And many of you who are in the room this evening have been in previous meetings when we've had leaders from the superintendent's cabinet and our senior leadership talk about the goals and provide an overview. And so I would like to think of our second part for tonight's meeting as a focus on goal two, which was recently reported to the board to focus on exemplary staff.

[00:43:37] And so we know while we show up each and every day for every child, it is really the work of adults to do this work for and with our students. And so the Department of Instruction is huge. We have several directors and lots of supervisors and specialists and support staff.

[00:43:57] And so in conversation with Ms. Bush as chair, she really wanted MSAC to know and to be able to see a little bit by way of this visual just what this reporting structure looks like. And more importantly, what does the work look like?

[00:44:14] And so this time is really less about this visual, but I did want to just name, you all know, Dr. Ashley Ellis, who is our deputy superintendent. She's been here and has even this year presented part of our strategic plan.

[00:44:30] And reporting to her is our chief of schools and executive director, and she's here tonight. She's not at the front table, but Ray Mitchell. I'll ask that you wave. And so Ms. Mitchell is the executive director who oversees our school's offices.

[00:44:47] So the office of schools is made up of three directors. We have an elementary, a middle, and a high school director. And so I want to shift here to quickly allow you to see just who makes up the leadership for those offices.

[00:45:08] I do not have, I'm not able to say that all of the leaders are in the room tonight, but slated for tonight's conversation with you all as parents and delegates are the three directors. And so I'm excited to be able to introduce Elaine Lehman, who is the director of elementary education and also charter schools.

[00:45:27] She's going to talk a little bit more about her role. Three of the additional leaders in the elementary office are Terry Finn, Chantel Simon, and Dr. Ashley Cramp, who is also doing double duty right now. She's in her temporary role as acting executive director of teaching and learning in Neal Slevin's place while he is acting as chief of staff.

[00:45:52] There's a lot of moving parts. And so, again, not all of the executive principals are here tonight, but I did want to name them. So it's a sort of a fancy title for supervisor. I also want to make note of the fact that although we do have middle school leadership, neither of the leaders were able to be here tonight.

[00:46:11] Unfortunately, Gus Martinez, who is our director, had an urgent situation, which just happened late this afternoon. So this was a change in schedule for him. He was planning to be here. And that middle school office is also made up of an executive principal, who is Beth Robinson.

[00:46:30] And then our high school, Nareta Gonzales-Sales, our director of high school education, is here tonight. And so she's serving on the panel and will be speaking about her role as director of high schools. And then you'll also note that the executive principal in that office is Kirk Dolson.

[00:46:48] So at this time, hopefully, just seeing the names, I think a couple people may have captured a quick picture so that you can have a name for future reference. Each of the directors, or at least two of the directors tonight, will be sharing a little bit of what it looks like for supervisory experience.

[00:47:06] And I think about, again, going back to the strategic plan for that goal for exemplary staff. If you read it in the fine print, it ends with the phrase about accountability. A lot of times we hear accountability, we think of the hard and compliance. And it's about that. But ultimately, I'd like to think as a former principal that accountability measures are necessary because they speak to what you can count on us to do to show up for and with your children in our work day to day.

[00:47:36] So at this time, I'm going to yield the mic to our directors and we will hear from them and a little bit more about what the schools look like. Well, thank you very much, Lottie, and we know that you all are very familiar with your school principals and your teachers of your students, but we're kind of behind the scenes, so we wanted to give you a little overview of what our offices look like and how we interact with the school principals and the teachers at the schools.

[00:48:03] So in the elementary office, we have 59 elementary schools currently in Loudoun County and two charter schools, so I am the director of those, and as you saw, I have three executive principals who work with me. So we divide the schools among the team for direct support to the schools, but I'm ultimately in charge of the whole office and all the schools.

[00:48:24] By dividing amongst the schools, we are able to provide individualized support to each school. So every school principal, we partner with them over the summer months as they're analyzing school data and preparing for the year, and we ensure that they're writing an effective school improvement plan, which is going to drive the work for the year.

[00:48:40] And then in the elementary office, we visit each school six times, at least six times a year. If you're a new principal, you get a monthly visit. So we spend 15 to 20 hours in each school during the year and 30 hours if you're a new principal to ensure that the plan that was laid out in the summer is being followed and that evidence is being collected and that the plan is being effective.

[00:49:00] So that's something that we really enjoy, but we really focus on communication with our principals. We're available 24 hours a day to them, and they definitely take advantage of that support. We also ultimately are responsible for their evaluation, and we evaluate them against the standards, which include everything from instructional leadership, the building of that plan, and the delivery of the plan by the teachers in their buildings to the professional development of their teachers, hiring human resource management, hiring of their staffs and supporting their staffs, communication and community relations climate within the building and outside

[00:49:36] the building professionalism culturally responsive instruction and academic achievement for their students so all three levels have that in common that's our ultimate job is to evaluate each of the principles at each year stop there there's plenty I could say yeah so Nettie Gonzales sales high school office I supervise the 17 high school principals two programs the North Star school in the academies of loudon i also supervise the academies of loudon admissions team and that's the last two years i've done that i have the executive principal and an administrative

[00:50:12] assistant in our office we do all the exact same things elementary middle and high the only difference at high school is the high stakes of making sure our kids graduate with what they need in the four years that we have them we get them from elementary they do all they can do they come to middle school and in high school we try to ensure that they have access and opportunities to honors courses dual enrollment ap any extra supports of intervention and so on and so forth and so again our role is to be in the building boots on the ground with the executive

[00:50:49] principals uh observing monitoring having conversations providing professional development having those hard conversations sometimes putting the mirror up and doing all those things that we that we know are good and just for students to make sure that they have every opportunity and every access when they leave us as best as we can do that.

[00:51:10] Additionally, our roles as level directors, we are often also here in the central office because we're the connectors to all of the other departments that support a school, every single other department. So we connect with them and help give them the perspective of what's appropriate at an elementary, middle or high school level when it comes to whatever it might be discipline safety food nutrition transportation before and after school programs so as the level directors we do a lot of those meetings here to make sure that the moving parts continue to work well together while we're

[00:51:49] also boots on the ground in the buildings and supporting and she is not kidding we are 24 7 high school doesn't end if you have a high school student you know it's open until 10 o'clock in night so whenever there's a game a club activity anything can happen so we are on 24-7 so and and we do that out of the love for our students and the love for our staff and to make sure that we can support them in any way that we can so that it does not disrupt what needs to happen when they're back in the building on a daily kind of a nice segue too because I dove right in and we

[00:52:26] were both going to share with you a little bit about our history our professional history and what gets you to this sort of position. So what you have done in your past to get here, I often ask, were you ever a principal? So, you know, we both started as teachers. I took a very traditional route, assistant principal after I was a teacher, principal here in Loudoun County for 12 years, and then came to the Office of Elementary Ed, where I was an executive principal for six years and then became the director.

[00:52:52] And if you would like to share, Nettie. Sure. This is my 34th year of education. Me too. So I began as a mathematics teacher, middle and high school, and I became an assistant principal very early on in my career.

[00:53:10] I'm originally from Syracuse, New York, that has state exams and has had for a long time. So when I came to Virginia in 1999, SOLs were brand new. So I brought some of those experiences with me. I worked at Washington Lee High School as an assistant principal.

[00:53:28] I've worked at T.C. Williams High School as the Associate Principal for Curriculum Instruction. Then I had a child and went to middle school because the hours are long and hard at high school and became the principal of Sterling Middle School.

[00:53:43] And then I became the high school director here in Loudoun County. And I've been in Loudoun County for, this is year 15. Year 26 for me, and I wish I could say it was my first county that I've only had a 26-year career, but I'm older than that, so this is the third county that I've worked in.

[00:54:00] The next thing we wanted to share with you is a little instructional guidance by age group and level. And what should parents be asking of their principals and their schools at each level? So at the elementary level, Nettie was mentioning, you know, with the added stakes at the high school level of making sure students graduate.

[00:54:17] The elementary level, we're creating the foundation. So you know if you've had elementary students that it's a kind of more global program, right? We're covering all the subjects. Everyone is getting, covering the same material, the same curriculum. with some differentiation to prepare them for middle school.

[00:54:34] When they get to middle school, they start having some choices in their course selection, which is going to kind of direct them toward the path of their own choosing. So at the elementary level, we have, in addition to the general curriculum, we have Search in Futura.

[00:54:50] The search program is for kindergarten through third grade students, offering all students opportunities to extend their thinking, and it's searching for the gifted learner, so that when there are opportunities in middle and later in elementary and middle school for gifted programs, we know which students would benefit from those programs.

[00:55:09] Additionally, we assess students so that when they get to middle school, they're ready for the appropriate foundational courses in mathematics to prepare them for the track that they decide to go on. In terms of what you should be asking, you should be asking to be included.

[00:55:25] You should ask to be included in classroom activities. You should ask to be included in school-level focus groups. We encourage all of our school leaders to have parents involved in things like hiring, equity teams, school improvement planning, all of that. So if you're interested in that sort of thing, reach out to your school's principal and let them know you're interested in being a voice in the room and being involved in that.

[00:55:46] And you should be asking your children, what did you learn today? And ask them specific questions about various subjects and what kind of activities did you do? Not how was your day, because we all know what they say. Fine. Right? and I'll pass it on to Nettie for high school. Okay, so I will share a little bit about middle school since I was a middle school principal for a little bit.

[00:56:05] So, and I have some of the notes that we were able to quickly get. So it's a transition time, right? So there's transition from elementary to middle school, and parents get very nervous about that. The middle schools offer a lot of transition evening and daytime events and activities to help support what's going on.

[00:56:27] If you don't feel like there's enough, As any parent, you advocate and ask for more things. The one thing that I found as a middle school principal was the biggest fear from kids were getting stuffed into a locker. And we're like, that does not happen. However, we're there to help.

[00:56:43] And we ask that folks, the biggest thing is also opening a locker. So I would always tell my elementary folks to buy them, you know, the locker thing, have them practice. We do a locker night. They come in, make sure that they're comfortable, walk the building.

[00:56:58] So all the same stuff that happens at elementary school, opportunities for advanced courses begin at that level. Upper level, you know, world languages, some of the math courses, which the curriculum shifts every now and then.

[00:57:17] So those are things that we need to know. So the program of studies is your friend. Make sure you look that up and look to see what the progression of potential math courses are. And this is for middle school through high school. Because what you want to make sure to do is that you're setting your student up even at the elementary level for what the alternative pathways are and options and choices they have, right?

[00:57:40] So looking at the Academies of Loudoun and middle school is kind of almost too late. You need to know what's going on ahead of time to get there, which is why we have the admissions team doing a lot of outreach at our elementary schools and at our middle schools and providing opportunities and going to visit.

[00:57:55] And so for the Academies of Loudoun, if that's one of the pathways, then you need to start having those conversations with the admissions team. They can really guide you and support you with what it is you need to know and be able to do. And maybe we can do a presentation here at one point to share all of that with you.

[00:58:14] You know, at the middle school, we're doing all of those things. And then clubs are a big thing at middle school, right? So we start our affinity groups in the middle school, students begin advocating for themselves, and we try to provide the guidance and support that they need to be able to do that in a manner that will be heard.

[00:58:34] And also, we also support the teachers to ensure that they are heard, right? So we work on both ends of that in middle school and working on that social emotional lens at that level. At high school, the student advocacy continues. The big thing are the courses and transitions from middle school to high school And making sure that you advocate that the transition is a smooth one.

[00:58:58] What you want to do in middle school and also do in high school is ask for what is my six-year graduation plan from middle school to the end of high school, right? What is that graduation plan? Have a counselor sit with you and go through the program of studies and map out the courses.

[00:59:18] Sixth grade, seventh grade, eighth grade, ninth grade through senior year. So that you see what all of the options and alternatives are and so that you see what the flexibility is if the choices that were

made in sixth and seventh grade with that plan don't, you know, the interest is not there and you want to hit the computer science stuff more than you want to do the science, right, that you see that.

[00:59:41] So I would advocate that you do that at middle school and you also do that again at high school and you do that yearly and update it and work it regularly and have those conversations. Instructional guidance, let's see what else do I have here. I wrote a whole bunch of notes. When you get to high school, if you're interested in Monroe Advanced Technical Academy for the Academies of Loudoun, that recruitment begins in grade nine.

[01:00:04] There are a couple of pathways that students can enter in 10th grade, and then 11th and 12th is pretty much open to enroll, and then the process for that is super, you know, everybody wants to go there for certain things, but we're working on implementing things at the high school level that are also of interest students in particular in the area of cyber security and computer technology type of things and any other things that you all can support and would like to see that we don't offer like we can work with our CTE departments and as you heard you know with our social sciences to create courses that will be

[01:00:43] supportive of our students and their needs we have a learning recovery process at the high school it's an intervention process that occurs during during each marking period. So, especially after COVID, what we tried to do is make sure that students don't fall behind in a marking period.

[01:01:02] And if they do, then we're, you know, trying to, between bell to bell, provide interventions for students to go back and recover what those grades are, right? So knowing the grading policy and knowing where the interventions are in your building, if that is needed.

[01:01:17] There's also a look at those students who would like access to and successful completion upper level courses, honors AP and dual enrollment. And we have a process for that as well. And it's not just a self-selection process. We work very closely with the research office, Dr. Tyler in the back, to make sure that we gather data and look at the data of who really could benefit from that. Like just because you don't have a good grade doesn't mean you don't have the smarts to be in that course. And so we look at that purposefully and look at pieces of data to then

[01:01:52] advocate and ask students to go in there and work with families and work with counselors to call and then provide the supports for any kid in any class, whatever they're in, K-12, right, with supports that they need if they're struggling. So we try to do that bell to bell. So resource time is an important time at high school because that's when we can provide some of those extra supports outside of what occurs in the classroom. Athletics, clubs, affinity groups, graduation requirements i could go on and on uh which i think we we probably need to have a broader session by level willing to do that um but if you have any questions about that i'm going to give you

[01:02:31] my phone number right now before i forget because i wrote it down um if you would like to call me for any reason um 571-252-1160 i'm on the website you can just call the main line and ask for the the high school office. 571-252-1160. Because that's critical. It's critical. Instruction is key. It's critical. And you can't, you know, we, not just you, we, me, we all just can't allow students not to do their best and allow teachers to not pull the best out

[01:03:08] of their students, right? So our role really is to focus on the teachers and the professional development for them to make sure that your students get what they need. And so if ever you have a question and you don't feel like you can get that from the school call us I'd like to add we have phenomenal

programs at the high school level in Loudoun County we are very very fortunate and I would say as a parent of three children who have gone through Loudoun County Public Schools another thing I would add is don't assume it looks like it looked when you were in school it looks nothing like it looked when you were in school so it's really important that you be involved not take your child's word for it get involved and learn about it yourself because there

[01:03:47] is so much available to our kids. It's fantastic. So the next thing we wanted to give you is some advice to promote a successful school experience for your child. At the elementary level, we want you to stay connected. We expect our school leaders and our teachers to provide you with regular information. So we expect if you're not seeing that regular information from us in the form of a school newsletter, a regular ConnectED message, something like that, you should be asking for it. And additionally, teachers should be sending you regular information about what's coming up in the curriculum all schools are required to post their nine week plans their plans for the year and that's just what we were talking about earlier with the standards in the

[01:04:25] curriculum so you should be expecting to see that and if you're not seeing that you need to bring it to someone's attention first the principal and then if that's not working of course me and then I mentioned the nine week plans and then communicate your first line of communication obviously is that teacher at the elementary level your child has a very close relationship with their teacher because they are for the most part spending the entire day with that teacher my kids used to accident my students used to accidentally call me mom all the time right because they're just so familiar with you and then they laugh haha it's so funny you're not my mom but that teacher is your first your first line of communication and then that school principal is

[01:05:00] your next and of course our office is always available to you as well but our first call is back to the principal to learn what's going on so that we can help you out so and I can give you our phone number as well in our office it is 571-252-1290 but you can also call the main number and ask for the elementary office and you will get us all right Nettie so just to add to that same same type of things um at middle and high school the the protocols and the processes shift a little differently middle school has houses and teams in that manner um so there are smaller

[01:05:36] schools within the school whereas in high school they take you know seven courses uh high school teachers teach two to four different subjects or you know like it could be algebra then pre-calc and then ap whatever you know and they have 150 students at middle and high a piece so the communication is different we look at phoenix to to communicate some things there and also any information sometimes some teachers use remind or different things with some of their families to communicate in different ways.

[01:06:11] So what I would do is ask the school for what are the processes or opportunities for parents and students to share ideas, both grows and glows. How does the principal and how do teachers share information? You can ask that because each school does things a little differently, right?

[01:06:27] And what's the cadence? What's the timely announcement of communication? And so I think those are all things that you can ask for. And in particular to individual teachers, what's the syllabus?

[01:06:46] have you mapped out your marking period what are your grading practices what are your recovery learning recovery practices so those are things that you can ask and always start with your teacher go to the counselor don't stop there if it doesn't work right go to the AP and the principal and again

you can call us and I forgot to say on that last one also use parent view because you can get in and get messages from your teacher and see how your child is doing

[01:07:23] and completing work, and that often is the source where the questions might come from, if there's something in there that is confusing. So we wanted to last talk about ways schools are expected to ensure a safe and supportive climate that supports each and every child.

[01:07:40] So at all levels, but I'll start. We expect the teacher, it's a little different because, again, we're in one classroom, to build that classroom community, and we expect each school to build the school community we have a number of things you know we have morning meeting across all of our elementary schools when kids are really there's a whole curriculum that we follow to get kids to really share with each other and connect with each other and respect each other also schools always engage in the analysis of perceptual data every year that student survey the parent survey as well as the teacher survey and look for areas that need improvement and make a plan to improve

[01:08:19] in those areas and during our visits we review the plans as I mentioned earlier and we collect evidence toward the plan and then we also provide ongoing professional development for the principals and we're just a phone call away to make sure they're utilizing the many many resources that we have available to us you know an example is all schools have equity teams now and there are many resources that come with the equity team and are available to the whole staff at the school so we are kind of the connectors so we see what you know some exemplars are doing and we are able to share that with other principals in hopes of

[01:08:52] getting consistency and offerings across the school division and so again it's very similar at middle and high middle also has advisory high school has advisory as well we're working on creating a curriculum for it because there really isn't a viable curriculum for high school right now but we're working through so we do have students who will help us to create that as well teachers we have a student advisory team that works through that and a central team with our UM United mental health teams to help support various areas that

[01:09:31] the students and the staff feel are needed to share with students so high school process for sharing a concern or complaint if you feel like something's not happening and they're being culturally not responsive you know speak up it's okay we need to work through that because we're working on all of those things and it's a process and it's a process more for some than others and we recognize that but we're here to support that work and um we're in the buildings looking and checking on that work as um elaine

[01:10:06] stated um we're also looking at you know embedded supports hiring practices who are we hiring uh what do they come with what's their value added to our staff right and we all do that um professional development us being there observations what's the rigor in the classroom well what wait a minute i just went from that algebra class to that algebra class what's happening here let's get back what our collaborative learning team's doing how are we doing that so we monitor those as well when we're out in the buildings like we're in everybody's business trying to see what we can

[01:10:43] find looking for the things that work well to share and looking for the things that aren't so we can help and support so all of the same things we write our evaluations we look for scaffolded supports we don't make assumptions and assume that people know all of the pieces that are expected I mean our principals know so we make sure we go in and make sure that our staff know our staff talk to us and talk to

the principals and so we try to have very collaborative sharing time and to make it a safe space to bring along those

[01:11:22] who need some more support with what it is we're asking. So it's a constant there and a constant reference to the school improvement plan, a constant reference to our strategic plan and our goals, and how do all the pieces connect and align.

[01:11:43] - Does anybody have any questions for us? More information than you could take in in the evening. We're happy to come back either as individual levels or have breakouts or do whatever. Yes, ma'am.

[01:12:00] So I do have one. It's actually a comment. You made a point about, and I'm referencing more middle and high school, which is a graduation plan for students. I don't think that's actually highlighted enough, and maybe I missed that, but I think that's such a critical element as a parent to kind of follow that journey through.

[01:12:21] It's a shame that's not a standard in schools. We're working on that. So we have a new supervisor for counseling, and that was one of the first things that she and I latched arms on to support that work, to align it so that it's a common process, timeline, and structure.

[01:12:43] But even though it's not common right now, we hope that it will be as we work through it the rest of this year, you still have a right to ask, help me map out from now until they graduate. wait, I want to see, I want to look at the program of studies, do you have an opportunity to sit with me? Talk to your principal, maybe they can have a session, right? Advocate. Say, you know, we'd like a session on this, who can come and present and share with us and sit with us to map this out. So, you know, sometimes we have to push from both ends. And so there are so many things

[01:13:21] that are expected of every adult that works in a school and of parents, right? So sometimes we have to remind each other of what we prioritize and what is needed as a parent. And so we are working on that right now. We've already started. We started collecting, like, what do you currently use and how do we standardize that? So ask for it. And again, I'm willing to push harder to try to get it done sooner as we work through standard operating procedures in Loudoun because we've

[01:13:54] grown so fast, so quickly that we really need some guidance on alignment in terms of standard operating procedures for things. And that's a big one. I just wanted to say a few things. First, is this helpful to anyone in the room? Raise your hand if this is helpful, because we really strive to make sure that our panelists are really helping you out. I really want to thank you all for the information that you brought so many things that I've highlighted here like

[01:14:30] you said your six to twelve year graduation crank plan the processes to share opportunities and information some of these things the cadence of instruction syllabus learning recovery plan some of this is you don't know what questions to ask because the culture and the school and the culture of the the working parent is so different and so you're being here is really helping to bridge the gap for that conversation.

[01:14:55] And we know that you guys work hard. I mean, you said that your job is a 24-hour job, and Ms. Lehman said that they were here yesterday, you know, doing this work. So they're doing a lot of work, but we don't really know what they're doing. And so I just, I'm so thankful that you guys took the time to come here, and thank you all, and we're going to try to make sure that we can squeeze as much juice out of them

as we can so that we can get, you know, our kids prepared, because as parents that's what we want to do is walk beside our kids but thank you for all of the work that you're doing and I just encourage all of you all to take to make the most of their

[01:15:30] presence here today. I have another I see another question. Nettie was about to her turn her mic on but I think we can definitely sit down after this with all of the things that we just said and kind

[01:16:09] of condense it down for you all and even put it as a connection here and on our individual level websites as well so that you have it. I just have a wondering thank you so much for all the information that you shared even for me as a teacher it was helpful to hear all of that together to think about the journey that my kids are going to be on. It sounds like the advisory lessons at the middle school and high school level are still in that build phase of trying to figure out kind of what they're going to look like and I'm wondering if that kind of six-year plan can be a part of those advisory lessons for everyone to think about maybe that personalized learning

[01:16:49] aspect of critiquing and revising their plan each year as they go that's an awesome idea and I'm writing that down so that we can make sure we include it thank you another question can you talk about student improvement plans Erin had just a coffee and tea with some of the delegates to go over some things and miss one of the level directors was actually featured and she spoke about about the Student Improvement Plan

[01:17:27] and there were so many aha moments in that conversation. Can you talk about that, please? - School Improvement Plan. School Improvement Plan, or did somebody-- - Did I, the SIP, the School Improvement Plan? - Yes, the school, you said student. - Okay, I'm sorry, thank you. - School Improvement Plan. - Right, thank you. - So the School Improvement Plans are built around student needs and they focus on two major areas, instruction and environment.

[01:17:50] And as I mentioned when I was speaking, we all levels look at the perceptual data that we have available to us And that's where we, everything from attendance to surveys to trying to think of other things that go under environment. Brian, you can yell out if you can think of something.

[01:18:07] And then we set goals under environment, and that's strand two. Strand one is academic achievement. So we analyze student academic achievement at the end of each year, and we look for gaps in either groups of students or in certain subjects where students are not making the gains or the growth that we would expect to see.

[01:18:24] So we start with student need, and then we have the, each school designs a plan where we're looking for the through line. So if students are in need in this area, what must teachers need in terms of professional development to provide students with what they need? And then us, as directly supervising the principals, we figure out what does the principal need to provide the staff what they need to provide the students what they need.

[01:18:45] and the school improvement plan then spells all that out in terms of a major goal, a major process that they're going to follow to make the goal, and then individual strategies that the school is following over time. And then each school is required to collect data on the strategies, for example, a school might be providing teachers with professional development around a reading curriculum, for example, if reading is an area of focus.

[01:19:08] And so the data they would be collecting is who's attended the training, are they then seeing it in their walkthrough data as they walk through classrooms or is it being implemented with fidelity? And then ultimately our students showing gains from as the end result of that training.

[01:19:24] So every school develops a plan. Follow up question. - Yeah, so you mentioned collecting data. Is that data visible to the general public as far as the parents within that school and what the plan that the principal sets forth for his staff and for the students as well?

[01:19:44] Is that something that they share? And if so, at what cadence and at what vehicle to share? School improvement plans are posted on the school websites. So you will see on each school's website an executive summary, which is kind of a compilation of the data that they studied and the areas they identified for improvement for the school year.

[01:20:04] In terms of that internal, those small strategies and small, that's not, you're not going to see that on the plan because it changes pretty rapidly during the school year. but you'll see the yearly plan, the goal, and the progress toward the goal. Man, five stars for Elaine for explaining that.

[01:20:22] She did an awesome job with that. At the high school level, again, a lot of the data is based on the graduation data in many instances, and so that, too, is on the Virginia Department of Education website, and you can see from year to year what needs some work by demographic and percentages.

[01:20:44] And so that information is there, and a lot of that is tied directly to their school improvement plan, along with other things. I just want to add, too, as a former principal, I'm thinking about how the beginning of the year, a lot of information is coming at you as parents, and I recognize that.

[01:21:04] But stay tuned, keep your ear to the ground, because that's oftentimes when principals will have a parent coffee to go over those specific goals for the year. And essentially, they're rolling out what the priorities are for school improvement plans. And again, don't be afraid to ask, when's the next parent coffee?

[01:21:30] Several of us would like to hear about the data. Yeah, where are the updates on your plan? A lot of them do them during PTA, PTOs, or focus groups, but ask. I'm typing that right now to the principal.

[01:21:50] Okay. Stand up. So just, again, want to reiterate how much we appreciate you all coming out today.

[01:22:06] So much information, and I'm going to be following up to make sure that we can kind of get that information, you know, to you guys in a way that you can kind of digest and revisit, because so much of this is not intuitive, and you guys are working so hard, and so we want to make sure that we make the connections.

[01:22:25] And the reason I brought them out today, the reason I wanted them to be here, because MSAC doesn't always get a lot of the complaints, racism and discrimination and things, and some of these things are being brought to the attention of some principals, and the resolution isn't always ideal.

[01:22:41] And so I want to make sure that everyone is aware that there is an organizational chart, and if you're not getting satisfaction at the school level, you don't necessarily have to come to MSAC. There's definitely recourse at another level. So don't necessarily go to your school board.

[01:22:58] That's been the thinking there. If the principal, if you don't get satisfaction with the principal, you write your school board, and you're not going to get many results going that route. So thank you all for

making it plain for us.

[01:23:14] A lot of great information. So that really concludes tonight's meeting. Again, a lot of great information. Pastor Michelle Thomas is still outside. So I want to make sure that we end. It looks like we're going to end five minutes early. Wow, that doesn't happen too often.

[01:23:31] So with that, I don't think I have any other announcements except for MSAC subcommittee members. You all know who you are. Please meet over in the corner. And if you have any questions about anything that's been put out today, please email me, MSAC chair, lcps.org.

[01:23:49] That's not, excuse me. Let me wind that back. msacchair@lcps.org. And then I see Erin has a hand raised as well. - Just a quick reminder about if you had questions, because we didn't get to have a breakout session for us to have table talk to send your questions.

[01:24:11] If you have any or feedback you'd like to offer, if you would email them to me at msacmembership@lcps.org, I'll compile a list of all the questions and stuff and I will pass it on to Mrs. Bush so we can share that information to discuss it as we continue on throughout the rest of the year.

[01:24:27] - Yes, exactly, thank you so much. This is not a call to disperse, we've got five minutes. If you guys wanna sit and talk amongst yourselves, if you wanna share information, or if there's just some digestion that you wanna take advantage of, because we have some great information in the room, please take advantage of that.

[01:24:45] Thank you so much for coming out, thanks for tuning in. You all have a great night.



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