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Loudoun County School Board, 4th Tuesday School Board Meeting and FY24 Operating Budget Work Session and Public Hearing, Tuesday, January 24, 2023

Date Tuesday, January 24, 2023
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 6h 20m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/792350968?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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[00:00:00] fourth Tuesday school board meeting and FY 24 operating budget work session and public hearing the first item on our agenda is 1.02 remote participation however I've been notified that Miss Corbeau will not be requesting remote participation until our evening session so we will begin our 6:30 session with that we will move to item 2.01 disclosures as a member of the Loudoun County School Board I make the following disclosure to the school board and to general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries the budget and or health insurance and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and

[00:00:38] benefits for lcps employees specifically i am enrolled in lcps health insurance and may be affected by any potential changes to health insurance these subjects include thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years mr morse thank you mr chair as a member of louden county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries the budget

[00:01:16] and or health insurance and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for lcps employees specifically my spouse is an lcps employee who may be affected by any potential changes to employee salaries the budget and or health insurance these subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may be affected of which my spouse is included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records with the clerk of the school board for five years thank you miss Chardon thank you as a member of the Loudoun County School Board I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the

[00:01:55] item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a member as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may also be affected of which I am included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the the clerk of the school board for five years.

[00:02:27] - Thank you. With that, we'll move to item three on our agenda, the approval of the consent agenda, and I will move to approve the January 24th consent agenda as posted in board docs. Is there a second? - Second. - Seconded by Ms. Sheridan. Is there any discussion?

[00:02:43] Seeing none, all in favor of approving the consent agenda, please raise your hand and say aye. - Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corbo, Reeser, Mejedevi, and Ogadegbe absent for the vote. We'll now move to item four on our agenda, our public hearing on the FY24 operating budget.

[00:03:07] Thank you for engaging with the school board through this public hearing. The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted.

[00:03:22] Based on the number of speakers and the overall agenda for this evening, all speakers during this public hearing have been allotted two minutes each. Please be advised that speakers who miss their time slot will not be called at a later time. All audience members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times.

[00:03:43] Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium or during a break. Violations of civility, decorum, and respect include shouting, heckling, jeering, applause, or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting, obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair, and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate, disparage, or distract a speaker, staff member, or other meeting attendees.

[00:04:13] Speakers should refrain from vulgarity, obscenities, profanity, or any other like breaches of respect, nor may speakers target, criticize, or attack individual students during public comment. Speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official.

[00:04:29] Additionally, complaints regarding a division employee should be directed to the school principal or an appropriate school division official. Speakers should face the school board and direct their comments to the school board. Per LCPS policy, members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public hearing.

[00:04:50] Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting. Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in on the decision of the chair, the public comment or public hearing being tabled into a later point into the meeting's agenda, limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons or the public comment or public hearing ending for the evening.

[00:05:19] And as it's a public hearing on a specific topic, I will just remind speakers to remain on topic for the FY24 operating budget. We'll begin with our virtual speakers. we have only one virtual speaker signed up and that is Sarah Freeman.

[00:05:38] - Thank you for taking the time to hear me today. I implored the school board to continue the elementary distance learning opportunity. Due to my child's primary immunodeficiency and his education journey coinciding with the start of COVID, we participated in homeschooling during kindergarten, in-person school for first grade and distance learning this year for second grade.

[00:05:58] The variety of these modes provides me with a unique perspective. I acknowledge I did enroll my child into distance learning, concerned about his ability to socialize with his peers and the quality of those interactions due to immediate speculation of online schooling. Happily, I'm able to report my concerns were wrong.

[00:06:16] The distance learning environment is what one makes of it, and Loudoun County Public Schools is an exemplary model of how to do it right. My son is enjoying a quality of peer interactions and frequency of those positive interactions beyond his in-person schooling.

[00:06:32] whereas he experienced physical and verbal bullying while in person, his conversations between his current classmates are warm and engaging. They talk between classes, either in separate Zoom calls with the parents monitoring or in the class with the teacher monitoring.

[00:06:48] The school offers a multitude of after school clubs, which are far more accessible and varied than in-person after school clubs. The school encourages parents to post play groups and a weekly email newsletter, which are held at a variety of playgrounds throughout Loudoun County. As a result, we have arranged play dates from trips to the zoo and to the Air and Space Museum, planting a garden together, creating seed bombs, and frequent playground trips.

[00:07:13] We have even held a school-wide Halloween party, complete with trick-or-treating, pinatas, and pumpkin painting. School is not only for friendships, though. My son has missed a tenth of the days he did in person, which dramatically impacts his ability to access his education.

[00:07:30] The flexibility of distance learning also allows him to access his specialists with minimal interference to his school day or that of his classmates. Frankly, he fondly loves his school day. Thank you. As that was our only virtual speaker, we'll move to our in-person speakers for this public hearing. The first speaker is Sandy Sullivan, to be followed by Karen Tyrell. Good evening. I'm Sandy Sullivan, and I serve

the members of the Loudoun Education Association as their president. Tonight, you'll hear from, in addition to me, three other LEA

[00:08:08] members, four other LEA members, about particular items in LEA's Compensation Climate Committee, FY 24 recommendations. I emailed this document to school board members on Friday. We'll be touching on a handful of our recommendations today and urge that you seriously consider what LEA recommends while you deliberate and adopt the FY 24 budget.

[00:08:28] LEA recommends a step and 5% market scale adjustment for all Loudoun County public school employees. While LEA is pleased that the superintendent's proposed budget includes a total salary increase of a 5% minimum, which is a significant improvement to the wide salary range of salary increases starting well before 5% for this current year.

[00:08:49] Your dedicated employees go above and beyond for our students and colleagues every day and continue to work well beyond the student day to ensure student success. Their work needs to be honored and they need to be fairly compensated. And please keep in mind your employees on the top step of the salary scale.

[00:09:05] The proposed one time top of scale payment and the salary increase which is proposed this year is better than in some years past, but the many years of loyalty and commitment to LCPS needs to be recognized. On another topic and one which will cost no money at all and provide your educators with the level of respect and professionalism they deserve, we urge LCPS to develop a practice that would require a supervisor to indicate the subject to be discussed prior to any meeting with an employee.

[00:09:33] When employees are called into meetings with a supervisor, they often do not know what the meeting is about. This does not allow an employee to bring any documentation such as lesson plans or call records that may be needed or helpful during the meeting. Our students are more successful and better able to take in information when they know what is coming.

[00:09:51] The same is true for your employees. As you finalize your budget and present it to the Board of Supervisors and advocate for full funding, know that LEA will work with you through this budget process and beyond. Thank you. Karen Tyrell, to be followed by Heather Binkley.

[00:10:09] Hello, my name is Karen Tyrell. I'm a middle school digital experience specialist, co-chair of the LEA Education Support Professional Caucus, and a proud member of the LEA. I would like to advocate for a living wage as the floor for classified staff pay.

[00:10:26] What is a living wage? A living wage is defined as purchasing only minimum food, health insurance, not health care, housing, transportation, and taxes, along with basic necessities such as clothing, shampoo, things like that. It does not include savings, investments, eating out, not even fast food, nor any entertainment.

[00:10:48] Loudoun County's living wage for a single adult with no children is \$22.98 per hour, according to the living wage calculator developed at MIT. On the LCPS FY23 universal salary scale, employees at levels one through four and steps one through eight earn an hourly wage less than a living wage in Loudoun County.

[00:11:13] How disgraceful in the fastest growing, richest county in our nation. This must change. Our classified employees deserve to live and thrive in the county they work in. Please pay our classified staff a

living wage.

[00:11:31] Thank you. Heather Binkley to be followed by Tony Simino Johnson. - Good afternoon. My name is Heather Binkley. I am a Loudoun County resident, parent, and teacher. Additionally, I am the Vice President of the Loudoun Education Association.

[00:11:49] I am here today to implore you to consider the impact of your budget decisions on educator time in the classroom, something that directly affects the quality of the education that students experience. Employees are being directed to do more during their planning time than ever before.

[00:12:04] In addition to planning engaging lessons, educators are required to use their planning time 2. Meet weekly with each of their collaborative learning teams, attend interdisciplinary team meetings, participate in webinars, cover classes for absent colleagues, monitor lunch duty, complete mandated professional development, contribute to IEP meetings, 504 meetings, pre-child study meetings, and student-teacher parent conferences, respond to email, review student data, communicate with counselors and attendance officers, provide individualized lessons and plans to students who are learning outside of the classroom, write alternative plans for students whose parents are opting them out of group instruction, and contacting parents.

[00:12:42] When our educators do not have adequate planning time, our students' learning and classroom experience is directly impacted. This is a budget concern because many of the initiatives and trainings that are taking teachers out of the classroom and eating up what should be dedicated planning time are being funded and implemented through the annual budget. Please keep in mind when funding new initiatives and adopting new curricula that time designated to complete required trainings should not exceed the number of contract hours provided to complete them.

[00:13:12] When this is not possible, per diem pay for time spent outside of contract hours must be provided. Teacher time in the classroom must be a top priority. Training that takes place during the instructional day, whether taking a teacher out of the classroom or eating up their planning time, is counterproductive. It adversely contributes to our substitute shortage and results in substitute jobs created by sick teachers going unfilled. When this happens, teachers have to give up even more of their planning time. Thank you. Tony Simeno-Johnson to be followed by Juan Pablo Segura.

[00:13:54] Sir, can you please turn the microphone on? Oh yeah, sorry about that. You think I would know how to do this by now, right? No, I just want to thank the school board, Mr. Slevin, Ms. Boland, for getting the stipends right. You've changed lives this year with our theater teachers and our students and our performing arts stipends. So thank you for listening to us last year.

[00:14:17] I'm here to talk about two quick things and hope the board will consider. The first is having a receptionist at every school dedicated to safety, and when different members of the community come and go, that one receptionist isn't multitasked with other duties assigned by the principal or in their contract.

[00:14:38] The second is something I shared with Ms. Bolin and Ms. Hurd two years ago, which is, and I know that you're reevaluating the pay scales, which is taking a look at the top tier pay scale. Right now the top tier pay scale is a PhD and yet that isn't very equitable in terms of our teachers. A lot of surrounding counties, not here in Nova but in Maryland, use the terminology terminal degree or master's plus 90. This encourages teachers to continue in their field

[00:15:12] of Education. Additionally, it aligns with the superintendent's desire to retain and attract some of the best educators in the country. The terminal degrees would include a master of fine arts, a master's of business administration, master's of architecture. These are all degrees that are the last degree in their given field. And so this is a quick adjustment to the pay scale, and I would hope that Ms. Boland is able to look into that further as she was able to do with stipends and consider that either for this year's budget or next year's. Thank you. Thank you. Juan Pablo

[00:15:49] Segura to be followed by Cristina Ramirez. And Cristina Ramirez is our final speaker. My name is Cristina Ramirez and I have been an educator for Loudoun County Public Schools for over 18 years specializing in grades K to 2. I'm here today to ask the school board to add virtual distance elementary known as vde into the budget for the upcoming school year this year i teach kindergarten

[00:16:28] for vde and today i would like to speak to the topic of enrollment i want to bring to your attention some of the contributing factors for the low enrollment we are experiencing in early spring of last year it was announced to schools and the community that vde would be discontinued then finally in early may it was announced that the program could continue by using covet funding i I would like to make you aware that the deadline for enrollment in VDE was May 20th, and it was announced in May that we'd continue.

[00:17:00] The enrollment window is extremely limited. Secondly, there was a breakdown in communication. Some families registering students as new to the county wanted to enroll their children in distance learning option and were told by the school secretaries as well as school counselors that the program no longer existed because they didn't know, and so they were therefore unable to enroll.

[00:17:24] enrollment will increase if given the right opportunity now we are again discontinuing the virtual option for elementary students tonight you will hear many families speak about why distance learning is beneficial for children discontinuing this program does not send a welcoming inclusive and equitable vibe which i know we all strive for please do the right thing for students by including virtual distance elementary in this year's budget thank you thank Thank you. And that was our final speaker. So thank you all for coming and engaging during this

[00:18:01] public hearing. With that, we'll move on to item five, our agenda, our work session. And our first work session topic is the 1LCPS 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence, Goal 3 Update. Dr. Smith.

[00:18:17] Thank you, Chair Sirotkin, board members. We are pleased tonight to share the Goal 3 update for 1LCPS 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence. We have our goal co-chairs here with us tonight for that presentation, and I'll turn it over to Mr. Robert Carter, principal at Banneker Elementary School, to kick us off. Good afternoon, Chair Sorotkin and board members.

[00:18:39] My name is Robert Carter, and I'm the proud principal at Banneker Elementary School. I'm delighted to be joined by Aaron Smith, chief technology officer, and Kevin Lewis, chief operating officer, this afternoon, and delighted to be presenting the goal number three update to the school board on the strategic plan. Goal number three is centered on an enriched division, which is to maintain an inclusive, safe, caring, and rigorous learning environment as the foundation for student growth. The goal of this presentation is to share with you and with the public the

[00:19:14] five-year targets, updates, successes, upcoming events, opportunities, challenges, as well as implications for the board. Our shared vision, mission, and core beliefs guide our collective work as one

LCPS. Students are at the center of all that we do. One core belief, I'm sorry, one core beliefs of holistic support, equity, and opportunity, trust through listening, rigorous teaching and learning, individualized success, and continuous improvement are the strategic

[00:19:54] foundation and guide the work for our school division. Goal three states that LCPS must be aligned around our core educational mission for students and strengthen trust, listen humbly, value differences, and maintain steadfast in ensuring every student is prepared to make meaningful contributions to the world.

[00:20:17] As you recall, the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee leads the implementation efforts of 1LCPS. We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the Goal 3 Align Action Leads who assisted in preparing this presentation.

[00:20:33] Mr. Ahmad Woods leads Align Action No. 1 and serves in the capacity of the Auditor General. Ms. Erin Robinson is Communication Supervisor and leads Aligned Action 3.2. And Mr. Justin Donovan is the Director of Digital Experience and leads Aligned Action 3.3.

[00:20:54] There are a few documents and board docs that we'll be referencing during our presentation, and I want to take an opportunity to provide an overview for those attachments. The Goal 3 Targets document provides you with our baseline data and five-year targets.

[00:21:10] The data one-pager serves as a visual reference guide for our baseline data. The final document, titled Disaggregated Data, contains all of the goals for the targets. All of the data points, rather, for the targets.

[00:21:27] Next, we will discuss each aligned action under Goal 3 in more detail. I'll start off with the discussion about Aligned Action 3.1. Goal 3.1 focuses on ensuring that we have an aligned culture.

[00:21:42] More specifically, it's centered on ensuring that we define and promote a clear and consistent division culture where all students and families feel like they belong, embody accountability, and striving for continuous improvement. Action 3.1 has four strategic, rather specific strategies, which outline how we will ensure that we have an aligned culture.

[00:22:08] This slide shows a visual of the baseline data for aligned Action 3.1. The data one-pager in board docs contains the baseline data for all of the metrics for goal number three. As you can see, 94% of respondents on the annual family stakeholder survey responded positively to questions about belonging.

[00:22:31] It's important also to note that the percentage of favorable responses to our special education families was also 94%, and our English learner families was at 96%. We are in a baseline year for our Office of Auditor General, and we plan to report on the metrics as soon as those become available.

[00:22:50] This slide shows the five-year targets for Aligned Action 3.1. On the next few slides, I will provide content around what we are currently doing and what we plan to do for this Aligned Action. As you're aware, the Office of Auditor General has been established.

[00:23:06] As Mr. Ahmad Woods is building out that office, he's also gathering input and insights from various stakeholders. A survey has been distributed to principals with the completion date of the end of this month. We are highlighting the Auditor General's Office in 3.1, and many of the strategies in 3.1 overlap with other goals that have already been discussed in previous presentations to the board.

[00:23:31] This slide showcases current efforts from the Auditor General's Office. A My Concern Is hotline is being established to report fraud, waste, and abuse. Additionally, an internal audit plan for the 2024 fiscal school year will be implemented.

[00:23:49] Our goal of the OAG office is to rebuild trust, transparency, and ensure we have the most effective and efficient practices and processes in place. Several short-term opportunities exist as this is a new office to LCPS.

[00:24:06] You will notice that the establishment of the OAG provides a safe mechanism for employees and for the public to voice concerns and report suspected abuse and inappropriate activity. While there are opportunities that exist with creating a new office, challenges also exist.

[00:24:25] I would like to highlight the challenges on this slide. One obstacle is ensuring that all stakeholders know and understand the role of an OAG and know how to report inappropriate auditor-related activities. Implications for the board are highlighted on this slide.

[00:24:42] Creating an audit review committee will aid the overall development and effective implementation for audits. And now I'll turn it over to Mr. Smith to share information about Aligned Action 3.2. Aligned Action 3.2 is grounded in straightforward communications.

[00:25:03] More specifically, we aim to standardize and coordinate division-wide communication practices to improve data sharing and decision-making and to strengthen relationships and trust at all levels of division leadership. While listening structures appear in Goals 1 and 4, it's important to note that under this Aligned Action, we are developing standard reporting expectations coming out of listening sessions.

[00:25:23] We are currently working to define what constitutes listening structures as well as how we can most effectively and efficiently collect that data. Aligned Action 3.2 has three MECs associated with it. As you can see on this slide, the data shows a relatively high response rate on the annual family and stakeholder surveys about communication.

[00:25:44] In addition, the usage metrics from engagement tools are relatively high. We have some work to do around these metrics, and I will share more detail in the next few slides. More detailed baseline data and targets can be seen on this slide. The full presentation is in the board packet or in board docs.

[00:26:01] Please note that both metrics indicate that we are to maintain the high numbers. Our goal is to focus on subgroups and gaps while continuing the effective practices that have led to these achievements. Aligned Action 3.2, updates and successes include, created a proactive culture of planning and communication, offered administrative leadership team training opportunities to streamline communications, improved consistency of messaging by using standardized tools such as ParentVue and StudentVue, provided continuous feedback channels with engagement tools stakeholders, such as Schoology and Blackboard, and implemented universal design standards for accessibility, language translations,

[00:26:39] and functionality to improve the overall user experience, and engagement on the LCPS website. Upcoming, we will continue to promote a proactive culture of planning communications with current engagement tools to improve consistency of messaging, review new engagement tools for the student information system to streamline the way the division interacts with families and students, and enhance and promote public-facing dashboards for reporting progress.

[00:27:04] We'll also audit school web page and develop best practices to improve website average time spent on page. Opportunities and challenges, understand the perception gap for questions communication on the annual family and students staffs stakeholder surveys streamlined division-wide engagement tools to provide improved metrics and audit the use of remind by families and students implications for the board we to continue to support the communication engagement tools and provide information to the school community and families and support the division-wide adoption of let's talk which is the constituent relations management system

[00:27:39] and knowledge base I will now turn it over to mr. Lewis first action 3.3 thank Commissioner Smith members of the board I'm happy to talk to you tonight about action item 3.3 the safe and productive learning environments and our goal is to make sure that each of our schools in each of our classrooms provide that environment for all of these folks that live teach and learn in those spaces our strategies include lifecycle planning for our facilities physical learning spaces that meet the instructional need we've had a number of examples through our capital budget to talk about that modernizing our facilities to improve

[00:28:17] safety and security and improve our energy efficiency across the the division and we partner support services and DDI are partners with that as long along with Department of Instruction and Student Services to provide those facilities to make sure we understand what the needs are and how we're getting there so we'll start with the baseline data that really begins on this side is one of two sides we have about that item 3.3 a was we talked about the increase of the positive responses on our stakeholder surveys and some of those questions refer to things like is my school clean and well-kept is this is

[00:28:56] the works but does the workplace support my teaching does the workplace support my work responsibilities and simple as do I feel safe in school so those are the things we're targeting for that stakeholder survey and then next we move on to the facilities part of the thing in 3.3 B we talk about the critical systems of our buildings and we've we've created a rubric that essentially we will grade our schools by and we talk about making sure that our systems are replaced within their life cycle so when you talk about air handling equipment or chillers or boilers or even computers and computer systems

[00:29:33] those types of things to make sure that we have the industry recommended life cycle analysis done we know where they are and we plan to replace those systems before they actually age out or fail yeah that also includes things like the building infrastructure itself the roof windows flooring those types of things and our athletic facilities exterior facilities for the elementary and middle school but also the athletics for the high schools so one of the things and we have baseline data for all those and you can see those on on that chart one of the things we don't have baseline data for that we were working on is the preventive and corrective maintenance

[00:30:11] work orders we have a huge work order system that we have lots of data on but We haven't identified them. We need to do some work on that to make sure we can partition off the corrective and maintenance work orders because some things come in just asking us to do little projects. We've got to work on those partitions in that system.

[00:30:30] So continuing the baseline data, 3.3C talks about the energy efficiency of our buildings. I know Mr. Srockin, you and I have had many conversations about the energy use intensity, essentially is how many thousands BTU we use per square foot in each of our buildings we've looked at this a lot of different ways and came up with the man the way to manage that is through the average across the board so every

time we improve the EUI for a particular school it incrementally changes the system itself 3.3 D is it is a reminder of the maintenance of our safety of our

[00:31:07] schools and each of the safety features that we have all the way from the secure vestibules to the cameras and intrusion detection, access security, those types of systems within the schools, making sure that we have all those systems done within our life cycle as well. Those are many, many, as you can imagine, many computers in our systems. And they talk about everywhere from the cameras like I mentioned, but also lockdown shades, exterior door, window glazing, school Security Officers, SROs, SSOs, those types of things.

[00:31:41] The last one of our metrics for which we have baseline data on is 3.3E, which is ensure our on-time transportation percentage. So right now we're very pleased. We're at 99% of the AM routes, but we need to work on the PM routes, and some of that has a lot to do with things that happen along the day.

[00:32:01] Some of our performance is greatly enhanced by the changes we made this year in the tiered systems, but we also still need to work on our PM systems, and so you'll see those metrics as well. So the next slide talks about the individual data parts, and so I talked a minute ago about the baseline.

[00:32:23] This now talks about the targets moving from 23 to 27. You see some of those, not all of those are trending up, and one of the things you can talk about in 3.3B is our rubric for the facilities. You may remember as we developed the CIP this year that we fully funded FY24 of the cap but we did not fully fund that across the rest of the thing so you'll see some trending down that you'll see that is directly related to our funding of the cap which was not consistent across the way and and I see some confusion there and when I say fully funded the school board certainly did

[00:32:58] that but as we produced the plan for the based on this the what the supervisors were the county staff was allowing us was their debt availability is we didn't have room for all the projects we had so we shipped to some of those out you Remember, we made some decisions. We moved some of the capital renewal projects out beyond where they were.

[00:33:16] And so that's reflective of that. And then you'll see there that on the last bottom of that is the increase of the energy efficiency. And we talk about how we will incrementally increase that. And that's based on our critical system renewal, but also our solar panel installation projects.

[00:33:37] Continuing on to the targets, we talk about the maintaining the percentage of the safe schools in this situation we are improving and those are trending up in all those areas we're going to focus on each of those areas that I mentioned a minute ago to try to continually improve those and then the transportation as I talked about before we are 99% in the a.m. and starting at 88 in the p.m. so those are things we'll be talking or focusing on in the next several years I will say that we did get a number of feedback comments from the principals we met with the

[00:34:13] principals last week got some good input on some communication we've already made a change based on that of how we communicate in the afternoons when drivers leave the school late and that affect the on-time rate of folks getting home and that's actually taking place starting tomorrow so the next slide is is talking about our updates and successes we have incorporated a lessons learned process to continue to improve the design of our construction process what that involves is meeting with after we move into a school we meet with the school staff we meet with the architects meet the contractors we've restructured our bell times as i mentioned we've implemented an electric bus

[00:34:52] program the pilot program that we hope to be able to continue over time we are developing master database on our facilities which will help us with the life cycle planning of all of our buildings and i won't go through all those but we have also updated our school facility construction guidelines within the cip that we'll be talking with the supervisors about the next slide talks about our things that are upcoming we are working as as mentioned to increase our energy efficiency by decreasing our eui and those that are all the schools and that's we plan many projects around

[00:35:27] those targeting our energy use across the district we plan to continue to work on expanding the the electric fleet not only for the buses but also for the the light fleet or the white fleet sometimes referred to we've got a couple places where we're already putting in charges across the county increasing our access to inclusive playgrounds and continuing to capital partnership with the County of Loudoun also with this in the sheriff's department with safety radios and those types of things regarding opportunities and challenges for just about any project and that includes

[00:36:06] construction project but also just buying materials buying computer equipment buying technology types of things we have a supply chain issue that continues today cost escalations they're still affecting our ability to get and perform work we need to standardize our work order process I mentioned earlier to to help partition off those different types of workers that we get and you know our historical growth impacts our lifecycle planning and as an example of that probably in in the first few years of the 2000s 2000 through 2007 or 8 we

[00:36:44] built a whole bunch of schools and so those that was a bubble of schools and that that bill is going to come due with the management of the lifecycle of all those systems in that so we all not only did we have a huge bubble of cost when we built those buildings that that bubble is going to continue and that's something that's going to continue to be a challenge for us and hopefully as time goes on the the capital funding will be available for that and as noted on that last bullet there 53% of our buildings are 20 years old or older and so those buildings are all going to need system replacement so implication for the board our funding and operations for technology that directly impacts the

[00:37:23] quality of our student staff experience and so we need to make sure that we continue to to work to establish appropriate funding and for all for each of those areas of the not only the capital budget but the operating budget many years sometimes those things get moved to the year-end funding and then they are not in the base and so that's part of that implication for the board and and i think this budget reflects a huge improvement in that so we're very pleased about that um future capital improvement planning as i mentioned earlier with the you know we had some struggles or some challenges with the cash flow for this coming year with the debt cap the county

[00:38:00] staff or the supervisors has raised that so we do anticipate that getting better over the next couple of years and then balancing our school capacity versus attendance zones we've had a couple examples of that and do we take advantage of some of the lower attending areas and move some of those folks in there that's one of the tools in the toolbox for the school board and then you know we will be looking at how do we establish this local funding for electric buses you know electric bus cost three times what a diesel bus for so those are things we'll be looking at moving forward to help the school board consider as we move forward and move out of the pilot program into the regular program and then that is the end of our slides and

[00:38:40] I'm not sure well I'll talk about this unless somebody else is planning on it so here we are on January 24th on the update on goal 3 on February 28 we'll have an update on goal 4 and then March through June we'll have monthly goal updates as we move forward and so there's your timeline for those strategic plans we move forward and I believe that's all we have and we're happy to take any questions board members questions regarding goal 3 of the strategic plan mr. Morris thank you mr. chair I'm impressed with the transportation performance numbers and I know that they've gotten better over the

[00:39:19] years but I guess I'm a little concerned that the PM is 10% lower than the AM can you explain because my understanding is that elementary school buses will do their runs to the middle school or to the high school and the same in the PM so what do you see is the difference why there would be a 10% difference in the two so thank you for that question so the the AM is a little easier to be on time because we're we're arriving there and dropping students off the PM is a little bit different as we leave the school if anything that happens to end the school if someone's forgotten their book bag or something happens in the schools are late so we're actually measuring when the buses pull away from

[00:39:59] the school rather when each kid gets home and so that is a challenge and we're working on to figure out exactly what's causing that and we'll be working with our lead drivers and our principals to look at ways to make sure that we're getting everyone off the campus as quick as possible and I do appreciate the lack of second runs I think that's probably helping those those statistics as well the last question i have is do we have a timeline you mentioned some of the issues in the cap and our ability to close the loop on 3.3d which is the safe schools do you have timelines on when we'll be complete with the security upgrades that we anticipate the vestibules

[00:40:37] the reflective coating etc yes sir so those are all to be finished by the end of fiscal year 24 so we have another summer of doing that and then there will always be ongoing continuing efforts for that with all the equipment, but the actual secure vegetables themselves will be finished at the end of FY24. Thank you. Yes, sir. Additional questions?

[00:41:00] Ms. Polifko. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do see that there is some data on the disaggregated report that shows a breakdown of the percentage of completion for the specific stakeholder surveys. So I see for the first one, this is the annual family stakeholder survey. It looks like 14% completed that. So we don't know what 86% of stakeholders think in this case. And I see similar percentages for 3.2 and then 3.3. And so I guess what I'm wondering is, how do we work to increase

[00:41:39] participation rate on those surveys? Or can we? Is there some way that we can better motivate individuals to complete those surveys? Because with this type of data, I don't know how we can make sense of the percentage that we're looking at when we have such a low completion rate.

[00:41:58] Ms. Polifical, I'll take that question just to start. I know our RASI team, our research team, has done a lot of work on surveys. They've done some stakeholder groups on how can we can increase those percentages. And so I'm going to ask our research team, Dr. Blayclough and Dr. Tyler, to respond so they can give you some specifics around that.

[00:42:18] Good afternoon. Thank you very much for the question. So there are a few things that we're going to be looking to do this year in terms of expanding and increasing our participation rate. thing number one is really distributing across the division leadership along school leadership what the participation is for each school live as the survey is going so that we can really keep an eye and have building leaders keep an eye on what their numbers look like to encourage them to increase it we're going

to have a multi multi several communications go out to parents through blackboard to get them under an understanding of when the survey is what

[00:42:56] the survey is we're gonna try to provide them with an understanding of what's been changed previously on the survey so that they can see what the impact of it is and we're really going to be using the outreach office as well coordinate with them to have them work with their folks to get the the word out there as well as with face to reach out to their communities to really make sure that we're getting a wide variety of responses we've also are going to be setting up some scripts for for calls from principals and messages from principals to their communities as well to help increase participation the other

[00:43:31] advantage of really monitoring that participation in real time is that it allows us to huddle if necessary to come up with additional strategies if needed to really keep that participation rate up and going as high as we possibly can so along with the ongoing efforts the dr. Blakelock outlined over the last several years we've taken steps to try to maximize that response rate we've spoken with other divisions and we found that they've had similar response rates so we will look at the results to ensure that each school and grade level is represented and that there's representation amongst the

[00:44:10] demographic groups but your question is excellent because we want to maximize the results so that we can have a level of confidence that we're getting representation from our key stakeholder groups. Thank you so much. I appreciate that. And then I just have one additional question regarding the, I think it's the lockdown shades. I see that those will be completed in 2023. So do we know exactly when? Will it be at the end of this year or is there a specific month when that will be completed? I don't have that off the top of my head, but we can get that. It's all part of those projects as we move forward and do that. And

[00:44:48] Those started after the secure vestibule started, so we're catching up with the other schools. A lot of those things get done, those types of projects get done during the summer as well. Additional questions? Mr. Marks.

[00:45:05] Quick question. I noticed in the surveys that we surveyed 3 through 5 and 6 through 8. We didn't survey any of the high schoolers. Is there a plan to address that? Because I think you get different responses between middle schools and high school students. So we actually alternate from year to year.

[00:45:21] And the reason for doing that is that the Virginia Department of Education and Virginia Department of Juvenile Services has their survey for those secondary students as well. So this year, middle schoolers are taking that survey, and it's actually live right now. And then our high school students will take the secondary survey this year.

[00:45:40] And we made that decision in part to avoid just over-surveying and having a division and state survey going out to the same group of students. So I see that we're scheduled to have the goal for eligible schools with solar arrays go up by four in 2023 and then up by another six by 2027.

[00:46:07] I assume that those are tied to projects that are already in the CIP. But I was wondering if you have a listing of which schools those are that will be getting solar arrays over the next couple of years. We'll certainly provide that list. I don't have it right with me right now, but it is part of our critical systems and renewal projects that are ongoing and part of the capital budget.

[00:46:31] Okay. And then I was wondering if there's some meaning behind why it says eligible for eligible schools. Are there some schools that aren't eligible for some reason to get a solar? I'm just trying to figure out what that's getting at.

[00:46:46] Yes, sir. So there are certain schools that their physical structure just does not allow it. whether or not we have a building that has a number of rooftop units that just don't allow there be room to put solar panels on them.

[00:47:02] So each building has been looked at and reviewed and whether or not we could, you know, we could put a one or two or 20 on any building, but does that make it cost efficient to do that? So the engineers look at those, making sure that we compare how many panels we can get in the physical location that's available to us and what the output of that.

[00:47:22] some of these have just been deemed not suitable for the the panels and we have not gone to ground mounted installations at this point they take up a lot of space and they're a lot more expensive as well so at this point we're talking about those eligible to point on the roof i would be curious as to which schools those were if you can follow up and provide a list of which schools where because that may be you know we've had a whole debate over the last few months over renovation versus replacement so i would assume that's one factor that we would look at in the long term is You know, if there's just not a way to make some of our older buildings energy efficient, then we might have to look at different solutions.

[00:48:00] So I'd be interested to know which buildings those are. Absolutely. And then I know that, so the metrics are tracking solar, but I know we've done two geothermal projects over the last two years at Aldi, and then it's timely that we have Mr. Carter here because the other one was at Banneker.

[00:48:18] I was curious whether there are any further geothermal projects scheduled over the next five years. So we're starting to look at that with all the systems, and those will be ones that we'll be able to provide input on to the board. At this point, we haven't named any in particular, although I will say that my team has reminded me that Ashburn and Balls Bluff are planned to do that as well.

[00:48:43] So those are critical system renewals that are planned for this coming year. And so we are looking at that for each one of those systems. We'll have more information on the Aldi and Banneker installation after they've been in service for a full year. we can do some assessments and see how well they're doing and performing thank you and then my other question and i you i think you you you talked to this somewhat about why in 3.3 b some of those metrics are going down over time and so i understand it's uh i think i understand that it's the board

[00:49:15] the way that the board of supervisors is funding the the cip is not sufficient enough to keep up with the life cycle for all of our buildings but i feel like we shouldn't be building that into our metrics if that's the case because one of the things you mentioned is that uh where there's the hopes or belief that that will improve as far as the funding of the cip over the next few years so if that's the case then why are we still projecting that we're going to have more buildings go out of life cycle as time goes on so i think if i understand correctly one of the

[00:49:54] things to remember as we put the cip together this fall we had a number of projects affected by the change in the parkview project and the hs14 the escalation of cost construction cost just went very very high inflation was tremendous this year so that affected our the overall debt cap that the county was able to assign to the school so then we take that project and look at that our available funding and then made decisions with that and you know it's during the work sessions we provide a list of projects that were being deferred and some of those were air conditioning heating those types of projects some of those

[00:50:33] were field restoration types of things and so those were decisions that were made based on this past year's actual debt cap that we were able to bring to the board a project that fit the funding for the supervisors and knowing that we made a number of changes from last year so what they were planning on changed in our plan well I am I'm glad that we will be tracking this as a metric going forward because I feel like this would be useful information to have as part of the CIP adoption process so that board members can say okay what is the implication of improving that project and putting the funding towards that is going to be that we have to defer these other projects and now we've only got

[00:51:11] 85% of our I don't know athletic infrastructure within lifecycle instead of 90 percent so if that information can be improved uh included in the proposed cips going forward then i think that will that will aid in making decisions sure absolutely additional questions okay seeing none thank you for the update on goal three and we look forward to getting the goal four update next month with that we'll move over to 5.02 responses to fy24

[00:51:45] budget questions miss Willoughby thank you so you have included in your packet along with it's included in board docs and on our budget web page the second packet of school board budget questions this packet includes responses to 28 additional questions we have four that are still open that we are working on and we expect to have those answered this week and sent out to the school board. That brings our total number of questions to 45 and dare I say only 45 and so if there's

[00:52:21] any questions on the questions. That sounds specifically like you're trying to jinx it but all right. Board members any questions regarding the responses to budget questions that we've received thus far? I'll start with one which is on question 34 about the pre-staffing for custodians so if i'm reading this right it says that the head custodians will not begin work until the staff occupancy is granted tentatively in may 2024 and then it goes on to provide a

[00:52:57] list of duties that the head custodians will perform so am i reading that right that you know we're that and i realize that this is the the practice that we followed that we're funding that at a full fte for the year but they're not starting work until or they don't have duties to perform until two-thirds of the or three-quarters of the way through the fiscal year yes sir that is correct so we don't hire them until that that later in the year and so they're they come on board in time to do those duties as the building comes online okay i think that makes it hard to justify having a full fte in the budget for them if we're not even hiring them if the plan is not

[00:53:36] to hire them until midway through it would still be a full FTE 1.0 however it would be a partial year funding and so I've made a note that is something that we can look at going forward but we do have to have the full 1.0 FTE in the budget but is that just the fun is that the way that it's funded in the budget where there's only partial funding for it or is it a full FTE worth of funding in there I believe it's funded for the full year okay thank you additional questions

[00:54:06] board members okay uh seeing none we'll move to 5.03 for the overall fy24 budget adoption process miss willoughby thank you so i just have a few slides um and if we could advance to the next slide and one more so we've completed um i think about two weeks worth of budget presentations you've heard from each department present information regarding their budget requests And what I've included here is just one of the key takeaway slide from the superintendent's

[00:54:45] estimate of needs budget presentation, just to kind of bring us back to where we began in that, you know, this budget is focused on the one LCPS strategic plan. It does have one of the smallest budget

increases in years, the 6.8% budget increase or \$106.7 million over the current year's adopted budget.

[00:55:06] we worked diligently with the school board and principals and senior staff to obtain feedback and priorities in preparation of this budget and I think that's actually maybe part of the reason why we're seeing a low number of questions the tax rate related to support this would be just one penny more than the recommended guidance and that would fund a seventy three point eight million dollar increase or six point nine percent which again also is one of the lowest requests that LCPS has requested next slide also just another

[00:55:44] recap on where we are in terms of the funding so we had shared the the three options that the County Board of Supervisors gave to their staff so we have the recommended guidance which was in the first box which is a real property rate of 88 cents and that would leave a funding gap base of 7.7 million and then Then we have the two other options, and you can see in the bottom blue where that falls with our funding.

[00:56:12] And then we've got our little yellow starburst, again, just emphasizing that to fully fund this budget is just one penny more than the recommended guidance, which is also the current tax rate. So in terms of next steps, on the next slide, you're going to see our tote board.

[00:56:32] And so when we adopt the budget on February 2nd, the budget team will have this tote board up and available and we'll be working on this live so this is an example of what that tote board is going to look like look like you see the current superintendent's estimate of needs budget at the one point i'm just going to round it seven billion the number of ftes the local transfer and the revenue you see notes of little green boxes that help us make sure that we're maintaining a balanced budget and then as noted on this budget tote board the guidance typically has been that to

[00:57:07] maintain this balanced budget that any changes that the school board may propose would have a corresponding change to decrease the budget and vice versa and so there's an example here on this tote board of an example of a budget increase of a hundred thousand and then a corresponding reduction of a hundred thousand to maintain a balanced budget if that is not the case and there were motions to just increase the budget then what that will do is that it would make our county request even larger so rather than maybe just being a penny more than the guidance we may be doing a penny and a half two pennies you know it all

[00:57:44] depends on where we go so we typically try to stay as close as possible to maintaining the balanced budget unless the school board desires something different we also do not expect any staff recommended changes on the second of February in the last couple years sometimes we'll bring four technical changes or little changes here and there or because we receive feedback during the work sessions from the school board that we wanted to prioritize and make sure we made an adjustment again based on the questions and what we were hearing and the fact that we did the meetings

[00:58:16] in advance i think the budget has a lot of what the school board's priorities are next slide so in terms of the dates in front of us so i want to start off with thursday the 26th we had that listed on our calendar as a meeting if needed and so that still will be at the direction of the school board if we need to have that meeting on Thursday or not after that I have just ASAP in terms of school board motions to be provided to myself for the budget for the budget team to cost and review and specifically

[00:58:53] I would ask for any motions to be submitted by Monday the 30th and this really allows us to better support the school board with your motions we can make sure that the motions have the right technical language in there. Sometimes they can be very nuanced. We can help with the costing. It also helps with a more efficient meeting. As some of you know, we have like a staging table where we copy and paste and we already have all the motions crafted so that the budget team can just copy and paste versus trying to type sometimes lengthy motions on the fly, as well as our worst case scenario

[00:59:27] is costing on the fly. It just sets us up for a higher risk of making an error if we're trying to cost. So again, if we could have all the motions by Monday, the 30th, that would be greatly appreciated. Then we're set to adopt the budget on Thursday, February 2nd. After that, I have on here February 13th and it says tentative, but we actually, I think, are finalizing the date right now and it's looking like that it'll be February 16th when we will have the joint school board and Board of Supervisors budget meeting and I believe that means I think it's our

[01:00:05] turn to host so I believe that meeting will be here and again and this is when the school board presents the adopted budget for FY 24 to the Board of Supervisors then in late April the budget is adopted by the County Board of Supervisors they adopt their budget and in turn they appropriate funding to LCPS and if we are not fully funded then in late April or early May is when we would reconvene to reconcile the budget I'll also say simultaneous to these dates we also have the state budget process that is going on and so right now the the

[01:00:44] General Assembly is working we've got the House and the Senate money committees the appropriation committees they are working on their budget amendments and we expect to have those or they are supposed to have those done by February 7th so we are closely watching those budget amendments and we'll provide updates as we have them the General Assembly is also scheduled to adjourn no later than February 25th and so again it's just something that we're just going to continue to monitor as we go through and any permanent information we'll share we will share with the school board as well as sharing with the Board of Supervisors if it should impact any of their deliberations we do

[01:01:21] expect to include in the adopting motion on February 2nd language that would include that should the state budget include additional funds for LCPS that those be appropriated directly to LCPS and to continue honoring the 60/40 split as recommended out of the the county's local tax funding so I think we had that language in there last year and again it's just wanting to make sure that if if the state budget includes some additional funding for LCPS that doesn't

[01:01:59] require perhaps any additional expenditures that that is again just something that is appropriated to us directly versus being used to perhaps reduce the appropriation from the county and with that that concludes the update and so if there's any questions I'd be happy to take them have we received feedback from the county about the draft revenue sharing agreement that we sent late last year no not yet I'm not sure if they've actually even presented it to officially to their board I think they were scheduled to the county administrator was

[01:02:34] going to present it either January or February but I can follow up to see when that was going to occur but I haven't heard anything thank you board members any questions regarding the overall budget adoption process mr. Morris thank you mr. chair the I had the same question as mr.

[01:02:52] Sorotkin because I'm concerned when I look at option three on their proposal it is we're going to go 60/40 and then we're going to take the rest for ourselves which is completely against what we

proposed in the MOU so if we are not being if they're not interested in the standards that we proposed in the MOU then I would propose that we shouldn't be tied in to that requirement either because it's the agreements not there so I'd like to see how they respond to the MOU and what their inputs are but moving forward with a piece of

[01:03:31] budget that is carved out of a 60-40 agreement is not does not make sense so we'll take a look at what they're proposing but I think we need to have that discussion when we do meet with the Board of Supervisors additional questions regarding the budget process so board members the last work session on the budget process on the budget is always put as if needed and so that's scheduled for Thursday so I wanted to pull board members to see whether we

[01:04:09] there is a desire to have that additional work sessions there are no additional staff presentations so it would solely be if board members have questions for staff or anything they want to discuss related to the budget we also do have a closed session scheduled for Thursday because we were going to be here for a budget work session anyway I'm not sure of the time sensitivity of a of that and whether that can be pushed off or not uh miss okay did you have your hand up or sorry i thought you did thoughts regarding the necessity for budget work session

[01:04:41] on thursday i i'm not seeing strong opinions one way or another so i would propose that we cancel at least that session of the meeting and then i will coordinate with staff to determine whether we uh we still need to convene on thursday for the closed session or not okay with that we that brings us to our recess and we will be back back at time certain 6:30 for our

[01:05:16] evening session we are now in recess thank you good evening the board is

[02:27:39] coming out of recess and we're returning to item 1.02 on our agenda remote participation I have been notified that Denise Corbo would like to remotely participate in tonight's school board meeting miss Corbo please state your location whether this is a medical or personal matter and if anyone is present with you at your location.

[02:28:03] - Thank you, I am home, hang on, let me try again. I am home, I'm alone. Under policy 2420, I'm asking for remote meeting participation due to an ongoing disability in medical condition as recommended by HRTD under the federal ADA disability law.

[02:28:32] - Is there a motion? - So moved. - Is there a second? - Second. - Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none, we'll place the motion to a vote to approve Ms. Corbo's remote participation request for medical or health reasons.

[02:28:51] All those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. Those opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. Nay. Those abstaining. That motion will fail three, three, one, two, with Ms. Ogadegbe abstaining, and Ms. Corbo and Mr. Mejedevi absent for the vote.

[02:29:15] Ms. Corbo, would you like to request remote participation for a personal matter tonight? - With only two items up for a vote on the agenda, and because personal exemptions are limited, I will not be requesting that this evening. Thank you.

[02:29:30] - Okay, thank you. With that, we will move to item seven on the agenda, excuse me, item eight on the agenda, which is the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. For our pledge leader today, we have Jeff Roundsley, the principal of Willard Middle School.

[02:29:49] Welcome back, Mr. Roundsley. Mr. Roundsley leads Willard Middle School, which has over 1,600 students in grades six through eight. The Wildcats utilize personalized learning as one of the LCPS building blocks for deeper learning. There is not a one-size-fits-all model for personalized learning.

[02:30:06] Willard has identified structures and areas of focus based on the needs of the students and teachers. Personalized learning, PBL and PBA, lead to deeper learning by enhancing the student agency, providing students opportunities to reflect on their learning and engaging them in solving authentic, challenging problems.

[02:30:25] Following the Pledge of Allegiance, we will have our national anthem, which is being sung tonight by the Loudoun Valley High School, Vike Sings. It will be sung by a quartet of students from the Vike Sings, Amy Toshiro, Jamie Wall, Josie Schnee, and Logan Buckley, who have all received honor choir delegations at the county, district, and state levels, in addition to upholding high academic achievement and participation in various extracurricular activities which include student council, athletics, and volunteer rescue.

[02:30:59] So at this time I would ask everyone to please rise for the national anthem, excuse me, for the Pledge of Allegiance and remain standing for the national anthem which will be immediately afterwards. - I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible,

[02:31:21] with liberty and justice for all.

[02:31:43] But so proudly we hailed the twilight's last gleaming, Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight, O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?

[02:32:55] that was wonderful thank you so much and with that we will move to item 9 are on our agenda

[02:33:26] which is student school board representative comments and this is our second time having Mr. Bangaroo and Mr. Pearsall with us and tonight we will start with Shrikar Bangaroo from Rockridge High School. Good evening my name is Shrikar Bangaroo and I'd like to start off once again by thanking the board and the chair for giving me this opportunity to speak tonight on behalf of Rockridge High School. I'd also like to thank my SCA advisors Mr. Dobbs, Ms. Mena and our principal

[02:34:02] Mr. Dooman for their continued support as we approach the beginning of a new semester. I'd like to highlight some of the great things happening at the Rock since our previous meeting. First, Rockridge's public forum debate team has seen a great start to their season. After championing at the VHSL States Tournament last year, the PF team continues its achievements.

[02:34:23] This coming week, our team is off to Pennsylvania to compete at the Pennsbury Invitational Tournament where they'll face off against teams from across the country. Led by their coaches, Mr. Briscoe and Ms. Trinivasan, the team is looking forward to succeed at the highest level possible. Furthermore, Rockridge's yearbook program is approaching its third deadline of the year.

[02:34:41] This year will mark our yearbook's third year as a finalist in the Pacemaker Awards from the National Scholastic Press Association. A distinguished honor that signals our yearbook is in the top 10% of yearbooks nationwide. We are very proud of the work their advisor, Ms. Mena, and her yearbook staff has done.

[02:34:59] Moreover, Rockridge Sings continues to flourish, with seven students preparing to head off to Cincinnati, Ohio for a national choir conference. Familiar to success, we're confident that our choir program will represent Rockridge to the best of their ability. Finally, the RRPA continues to remain one of the state's premier theater programs.

[02:35:19] After competing against 15 teams and placing first at the Virginia Thespian Festival in Winchester, the RRPA earned a spot to perform at the International Thespian Festival main stage in Indiana later this year. Even more impressive was Ms. Hess, our theater teacher, winning Theater Teacher of the Year.

[02:35:36] We look forward to our program, Making the School Proud. Encompassing all of these various achievements is the selection of Rockridge High School to receive the 2022 Cognia Schools of Distinction Award. The award is the result of an outstanding 2021-2022 accreditation engagement review with Cognia.

[02:35:55] The award recognizes schools that exemplify excellence in education as demonstrated in meeting the Cognia performance standards. Not only is Rockridge the only school to earn this award in Loudoun County, it is the only school in Virginia to receive this honor. All thanks to our students and outstanding staff.

[02:36:13] I want to end my address today by asking the board and those in attendance to observe a moment of silence. Last week, a student at Rockridge passed away. Our school administrators, teachers, and resources from the county office were available to students to help us grieve in a loss that was too soon and too close.

[02:36:29] We are sadly reminded that mental health services must be fully equipped and funded to help those in need. We encourage the school board in every opportunity to continue providing mental health services to our schools so every child knows their life matters and help is available to them. If the board and audience would join me in a moment of silence for us to reflect and honor the loss of a life of a child gone too soon.

[02:36:54] Thank you. Rockridge's SCA is taking steps to educate students about mental health services available to them. And while LCPS has taken great strides to do so, I encourage the board to ensure that we remain at the forefront of keeping our students safe.

[02:37:11] Once again, I'd like to thank the school board for their continued support and commitment to the students of Loudoun County, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here tonight. Thank you. And second, we will go to Nate Pearsall from Tuscarora High School.

[02:37:35] Good evening. My name is Nate Pearsall, and I'm happy to be here again to represent Tuscarora High School. When I last spoke, I gave a general overview of our motto, RISE, which stands for Respect, Integrity, Service, and Excellence.

[02:37:51] Today, I would like to share a more detailed perspective into service inside and outside the Tuscarora community. Tuscarora has had a mission to create capable and effective members of society. In order to best achieve this, Tuscarora has placed importance on service.

[02:38:08] This emphasis is clear while looking at different initiatives taken by Tuscarora staff and students. Tuscarora has around 100 different clubs and organizations, most of which have some kind of community service element they address. Just to recognize a few ways Tuscar has given back, the THS

Student Council has continued to serve students inside the school community as well as the larger community outside the school walls.

[02:38:35] We collected an estimated 1,400 pounds of food from our Power Buff game. We donate this food to Loud and Hunger Relief. Additionally, we raised over \$1,000 for Colette Bain's family, who was a student at Woodgrove High School who tragically passed away in August.

[02:38:52] SEI has worked hard to highlight the importance of service within our school community. Tuscarora Key Club has placed high importance on serving Tuscarora families with their Head Start toy drive. Through this activity, Key Club members were able to donate toys to Head Start families in need.

[02:39:10] Seniors Camila Ramirez and Esther Mann have organized a Tuscarora blood drive where Tuscarora students have the opportunity to donate blood to those in need. This event was a major success, and they plan to have a second one this March. Various groups and initiatives to help Tuscarora students' mental health have landed within Tuscarora High School, including Sources of Strength and Random Acts of Kindness Club.

[02:39:36] With the stressful nature of high school, their initiatives have had a positive effect on the student body. Tuscarora Varsity Football helped provide a hero's welcome in D.C. for honor flight from Illinois' full-of-war veterans to visit war memorials.

[02:39:51] Tuscarora varsity boys basketball team participated in the Reefs Across America campaign in December and marched in the Leesburg Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. Both varsity basketball teams worked together to support the Special Olympics basketball program.

[02:40:09] Tuscarora's peer program has had many successful initiatives throughout the year. They completed their Thankfulness Food Drive campaign in collaboration with Sources of Strength. Members are proud of their constant work with our feeding middle school smart's mill and make bi-weekly trips to showcase our campaigns there as well.

[02:40:28] We look forward to seeing what they accomplish while promoting service within Tuscarora High School. Finally, Tuscarora teachers and staff have always been willing and ready to serve their students. I've been able to exist in a school where I know that there will always be someone that I can turn to if I need help.

[02:40:47] Not only this, I know that they want to help, which means a lot to us students. I share these achievements not just to brag about our school's accomplishments, but instead to signify a connection between service and producing valuable members of our community.

[02:41:03] By teaching these characteristics at an educational level, the idea of service will become a guiding factor in all important decisions-making. I would like to finish this off with a quote from Woodrow Wilson: "There is no higher religion human service to work for the common good is the greatest creed thank you we'll now move on to item 10 on our agenda public comment thank you for engaging with the school board through the public

[02:41:41] comment process the school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system speakers must limit their comments to the time allotted based on the number of speakers and the agenda this evening all speakers have been allotted two minutes each for public comment please

be advised that speakers who missed their time slot will not be called at a later time all audience members shall maintain the civility decorum and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times please remain seated unless arriving departing speaking at the podium or during a break violations of civility decorum and respect include shouting

[02:42:21] heckling jeering applause or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and vice versa interrupting speakers attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate disparage or distract a speaker staff member or other meeting attendees speakers should refrain from vulgarity obscenities profanity or other like breaches of respect nor may speakers target criticize or attack individual students during public comment speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official.

[02:43:00] Additionally, complaints regarding division employees should be directed to the school principal or an appropriate school division official. Speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board. Per LCPS policy, members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period.

[02:43:19] Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting. Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in on the decision of the chair, public comment being tabled until a later point in the meeting's agenda, limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons, or the public comment period ending for the evening.

[02:43:47] Copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information office in the media box at the back of the boardroom prior to the start of the meeting. provide 12 copies of any materials under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais the public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through lcps tv on comcast channel 18 and verizon fios channel 43. live streaming of the meeting may also be viewed on the lcps website tonight for the fourth tuesday meeting we'll begin with our virtual speakers we have two and we will begin with ruth keifer the comcast channel 18 and verizon fios

[02:44:27] channel 43 live streaming of the meeting may also be viewed on the lcps website tonight for the fourth tuesday meeting we'll begin with our virtual ruse kiefer dps tv on podcast channel 18 and

[02:44:45] verizon first begin with our virtual channel hello yes go ahead i can't tell if it's working

[02:45:19] hello i teach fourth grade in the elementary distance learning program and i am speaking tonight to ask you to reconsider putting our program into the budget for the 2023-24 school year to allow it to remain an option for those who need or prefer it. Our classes are culturally diverse and the students have a wide range of abilities and backgrounds. Our teachers and students have worked hard collaborating, bonding, and connecting across grade levels for the last two years to help us build a tight-knit school community. Many of our students have ongoing

[02:45:59] health concerns, and our program is the perfect way to meet their social, emotional, and educational needs within LCPS. Please don't send away the students that need and prefer what our program offers them. Let's find a way to keep it as an equitable choice for students in grades 8 through 12 and not just grades 6 through 12. We save the county money in so many ways with our virtual platform, it

just seems logical to keep it. Shouldn't we be expanding economical and innovative ways of reaching all learners instead of shutting them down. Thank you for your consideration and

[02:46:36] empathy. Thank you. Sarah Freeman. Thank you for hearing me again. I want to further discuss the benefits of elementary distance learning. While virtual school is a fantastic opportunity and resource for children with health conditions like my child and many others, it is an equally excellent opportunity for families without such limitations. To understand the current enrollment numbers, some background is necessary. As an example, my family was offered the option to enroll in distance learning via an email with a roughly two to three week window to enroll, which included a stipulation to meet our current principal for approval within

[02:47:16] that timeframe last spring. Since starting distance learning this year, my son has the fortune of being significantly less sick, which affords us the chance to participate more actively within our community. During this community involvement, such as cubs, and volunteerism, I learned many families were unaware of the distance learning opportunities within Loudoun County Public Schools, elementary or otherwise. These families demonstrated an interest in it for other children, and I informed them that enrollment was closed for the email.

[02:47:46] The interest was primarily in elementary distance learning, too. If advertised and the window was expanded to the same requirements at switching schools, then enrollment is likely to jump. Elementary distance learning can also provide relief in reducing class sizes while keeping overhead manageable. Thank you for your time. Thank you. That concludes our virtual speakers and we'll move to our in-person speakers. The first in-person speaker is Brenda Bengston to

[02:48:12] be followed by Sandy Sullivan. Thanks for showcasing the remarkable achievements of our students. Thanks also to dedicated teachers who deserve our respect and fair pay. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, 500 of us marched in Leesburg in unity, love, and service. Then a governor tweeted

[02:48:48] an MLK quote and canceled an elective AP course in African American culture, the only one of nine to be erased in Florida. This is a real war on merit and need. My hope is that Virginia does not degrade further into another state of hate. Toni Morrison says, there can't be anyone, I am sure, who doesn't know what it feels like to be disliked, even rejected. Some of us know what it like to be actually hated hated for things we have no control over and cannot change the dislike or

[02:49:27] hatred is unjustified you don't deserve it and if you have the emotional strength and or support from family and friends the damage is reduced or erased hate speech is not free neither are hateful acts we need diversity equity and inclusion to erase hate and embrace kindness when elementary school students in Minnesota noticed their classmates could not enjoy recess because playground equipment wasn't wheelchair accessible. They got busy. Undaunted by the cost, \$300,000.

[02:50:03] They fundraised, met their goal, and now are raising monies for other schools to be more inclusive. Seeing empathy in students is inspiring. Amplifying good is child's play, and I have faith in students. Thank you. Sandy Sullivan to be followed by Karen Tyrell. Good evening. I'm Sandy Sullivan and I've served the members of the Loudoun Education Association as their president. LEA and LCPS educators are thrilled to announce that we have met our 50%

[02:50:40] plus one goal of authorization cards for collective bargaining for licensed staff. We will send our certification letter later this week. This will set into a motion the certification of our authorization

cards and set the timeline for the school board to vote on a collective bargaining resolution. LEA continues to work to meet our goal of authorization cards for classified employees. Several classified employee groups are close. Educators and community members held a rally outside earlier this afternoon. The strong support of educators and to be part of our decision making was powerful out there. There is wide-ranging

[02:51:19] support for collective bargaining. I'll be sharing a list of our community supporters and individual supporters later this week. We know it's the right thing for students, educators, and community. When it comes to our students, we want and we need educators to be at the heart of decision-making. Who knows our students and their needs better than the educators who work for them day in and day out? Who? So let's revisit. Why collective bargaining?

[02:51:47] Collective bargaining brings the experts to the table. Think about all the experts we rely on in our lives every day. We rely on experts because they have the experience, they have the knowledge. It's what we want for our students, it's what we need for our students. It's time. It's time to pass meaningful collective bargaining rights. Educators know collective bargaining is what we need for our students, colleagues, and community. Our community knows collective bargaining is what we need for students, educators, and our community. Elected officials know collective bargaining is we need for our students, educators, and community. LCPS, it's time. LCPS, it's time to pass meaningful

[02:52:26] collective bargaining rights. Thank you. Karen Tyrell to be followed by Sherlita West. Hello, I'm a middle school digital experience specialist and a member of the LEA. I'm also co-chair of the LEA Education Support Professional, ESP, caucus, advocating for our classified staff. I'm in favor of collective bargaining for what it can give LCPS. Collective bargaining gives educators the opportunity to advocate for salaries, benefits, and working conditions. Collective bargaining

[02:53:01] gives employees the chance to state our concerns. Collective bargaining gives our workers a voice to be heard. Collective bargaining gives us all a way to make Loudoun County schools better. Thank you. Sherlita West to be followed by Brendan Kerr. Good afternoon. My name is Sherlita West and I have been a TA at Farmhouse Station Middle School for 28 years.

[02:53:34] I have experienced many changes over time. I support collective bargaining because I want a seat at the table to help make the best decision for our students and educators of Loudoun County. Let us all work together. Let all voices be heard.

[02:53:50] Thank you. Thank you. Brandon Kerr to be followed by Julia Holcomb. Good evening. My name is Brandon Kerr. I'm a teacher in LCPS and a resident of Blancay. Like many others, I am here to urge the school board to adopt a strong collective bargaining resolution.

[02:54:09] In my eight years of teaching in Loudoun, I've seen countless excellent teachers come and go because of the quality of their working conditions. These have been teachers that I've looked to as professional role models, and I've seen them worn down by one bad policy decision after another that could have easily been avoided if an educator had been in the room to help find a better solution at the time.

[02:54:29] Every teacher that I've known that left the profession wanted to continue teaching, but couldn't continue in the current circumstances. Even more outstanding teachers that I know are so burnt out from the past few years that they've already decided that this year will be their last year teaching.

[02:54:45] I believe that Loudoun County Public Schools has the ability to be excellent, but until we allow educators to sit at the table with collective bargaining, we will continue losing great teachers year after year. Thank you. Thank you. Julia Holcomb to be followed by Christine Condi.

[02:55:00] I'm not sure that I can really add very much to what has already been said by the other people who are aware of the advantages of collective bargaining and how they make it possible for the school board to and the school system to compete for the best people.

[02:55:25] The way you compete for the best people is to offer them good wages, good working conditions, and respect. And these are things that collective bargaining can offer. Solidarity forever. This is what we need to compete with the other rich counties around us and to offer the very best advantages to our workforce, which in turn offers the best advantages to our students.

[02:55:54] Go for collective bargaining. Let us work to improve what is already a terrific school system. Thank you. Thank you. Christine Condi to be followed by Todd Fielding. In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans such as right to work.

[02:56:24] It provides no rights and no work. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining. We demand this fraud to be stopped. Martin Luther King Jr. As a former lcps teacher and mom to two lcps students i stand in support of collective bargaining and implore the school board to support such efforts in loudon according to the national education association collective bargaining will do the following one improve student learning and teacher working conditions educators in the school system will collaborate on student-centered issues such as setting limits on class size identifying time for educators to share effective classroom practices

[02:57:02] addressing school health and safety issues and ensuring that teachers get input into their own professional learning, all of which will help students thrive. Two, attract and retain the highest quality employees. Experts like the Learning Policy Institute and Economic Policy Institute note that low pay, poor working conditions, and lack of support for new teachers all play a role in exacerbating the educator shortage. Teachers in the Commonwealth only get paid 67 cents on the dollar compared to other professionals. Virginia has a long way to go to make up this income gap, and with a budget surplus in the Commonwealth, we demand,

[02:57:39] expect, and deserve better for our teachers and our students. 3. Advance social justice and racial equity. Educators, parents, and community allies have come together with the realization that unless we unite to address systemic racism head-on, we can never live up to our belief that every student deserves to succeed no matter where they live or how much money they have. We must develop proposals together to gain critical resources for students and schools. LCPS continues to see racial slurs and hate speech in our schools and we need to stand together and fight back against words and actions

[02:58:14] that divide and demoralize. Hate has no home in LCPS. Stand with teachers, fight for students, support collective bargaining. Todd Fielding to be followed by Heather DeVito. My name is Todd Fielding. I'm a parent of a seventh grader and LCPS graduate teacher in this district for almost 15 years and a member of LEA and SEAC tonight I'm asking the board to please support efforts to begin collective bargaining this is an effort that will benefit all

[02:58:49] parties involved you will this is an you will actually be able to plan more comprehensively than you do now I believe that many of the issues that this district have has faced could have been avoided had

educators had more of a role in the decision-making process teachers need to have an influential role in the overall decision-making in Loudoun County Public Schools a role that needs to be more substantial in areas such as the instructional program

[02:59:23] budgeting staffing and work climate along with morale these areas need more staff input. We strive to give our students voice and choice when it comes to their educational experience.

[02:59:39] The same needs to be done for our district staff. This will help mitigate staff turnover issues in the future. Collective bargaining is a chance for all parties involved to be more active. Thank you for your consideration.

[02:59:55] Thank you. Heather DeVito to be followed by Rosemary Lawler. I'm Heather DeVito, second grade teacher at Belmont Station. I've been in Loudoun County for 20 years.

[03:00:10] If you can solve this math problem mentally, that means you have a very strong math foundation. I'm sure you're aware from the headlines, from if you've talked with principals, and from our math data that there's a real struggle going on in Loudoun County with students and the gaps in their learning in the math department.

[03:00:30] For the last two years, I saw that my students' needs were not being met effectively, so we began at Beaumont Station intervention math groups. we've been running these for two years. We've been using a curriculum called Bridges to Intervention, which is a very specific math intervention program for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. Very simply, we pre-assess them. We target the skills that are missing. We have intensive, explicit, systematic instruction, along with weekly progress monitoring for our data.

[03:01:00] It's very much like a doctor who would run diagnostic tests to find out what's wrong before prescribing a prescription for proper health. Right now, what's happening in Loudoun County is teachers are doing math remediation, but they're helping students understand the current unit of study, but they're not digging deeper and building the future of using math blocks for future math instruction all the way up to high school.

[03:01:25] I've had many LCPS leaders in my classroom, and they've observed these groups going on. Many of them call them the Orton-Gillingham of math, which is our reading intervention program. For years, Loudoun County has had reading specialists in every school providing this intensive instruction, but it's time to have a dedicated math specialist.

[03:01:46] What I'm asking for is for us to do a five-school pilot using bridges to intervention so that we can track some data on this program and try to fill in many of the gaps that students are experiencing in their learning. Last, I want to show you, this is my student, Diego.

[03:02:03] He was in my class in second grade, and by the time he was in fourth grade, thank you. Thank you. You have the exponential power to multiply your efforts and solve this problem. Thank you. The next speaker is Rosemary Lawler, to be followed by Stephen Meyer.

[03:02:23] Some say gender is as simple as male and female. It's not. What about intersex people with ambiguous genitalia? What about women having no internal female organs, but having internal testes?

[03:02:41] What about men who have a uterus and fallopian tubes? Some people with these inborn anatomical differences are cisgender, some are not. And then there is the transgender community, people with ordinary anatomy, but whose inner self conflicts with their physical body, often to traumatic degree.

[03:02:59] A trans person can be straight, gay, lesbian, bi, or ace. Religion sees gender and sexual identity differences as lifestyle choices, but science is seeing a biological basis for transgenderism involving endocrine, neurobiological, and genetic factors.

[03:03:17] CAH in females causes prenatal genital masculinization and later gender dysphoria in 5% and 12% of those individuals respectively. Is a congenital condition a choice? Neuroimaging shows brain regions in transgender women that are more like those of cisgender women than of cisgender men.

[03:03:38] Surely a physical difference in their brain is not a choice. Science has identified variants in sex hormone signaling genes that are believed to cause atypical sexual differentiation of the developing brains of those who later experience gender dysphoria. Is the action of these genes a choice?

[03:03:56] did you know some males are XX, some females are XY, some people are XXY, and some are XO? Did all these people choose the wrong set? Are you still thinking it's as simple as male and female? The writers of the Bible didn't have all of our advances allowing us to see human diversity on a microscopic level, but we do. Your responsibility is to make policies for members of the LGBT community based on the best possible factual evidence, especially when it involves the basic respect and acceptance granted children in your care.

[03:04:31] Thank you. Leave your religion out. Stephen Meyer, to be followed by Corey Burnett. I'm Stephen Meyer, and I'm a proud member of LEA. I recently retired from LCPS as a special education math teacher.

[03:04:47] I taught pre-algebra to students with disabilities, and I loved what I did. I currently substitute teach for LCPS, and we have a dire substitute shortage. According to the last WABE report, we are next to last on the salary scale for subs, and this is real.

[03:05:06] I currently receive the same pay as a substitute with no teaching experience and no college degree. Fairfax's policy is to recruit former teachers. They have a sliding salary scale, and former teachers receive the highest pay.

[03:05:24] Those subs receive 41% more than I do. We need to implement a new salary scale so that former teachers will want to sub. I'm for collective bargaining. As professionals, we need a voice at the table so we can do better what we do.

[03:05:41] I had a few things, and since my time is short, I'll tell you one other personal experience. When I retired after 12 years of service, I was not eligible for health care benefits in my pension.

[03:05:59] This occurred because a previous school board was zealous in cutting as much as they could from the needs-based budget. Their cuts included denying me my health benefits that I would have received.

[03:06:15] This has never been rectified. I'm for collective bargaining. As professionals, we need a voice at the table so we can do better what we do. Thank you. Corey Brunette to be followed by Andrew Pihonek.

[03:06:37] Good evening. My name is Corey Brunette, and I'm an English learner teacher at Broad Run. Collective bargaining will bring transparency and stability. Educators will know what decisions are made because they will be involved in the decision-making.

[03:06:53] Central office staff will be able to plan for multiple years instead of just one, freeing up their time to focus on serving students and our communities. and you school board members will be able to

actively participate instead of constantly having to react. Collective bargaining will attract and retain highly qualified educators to LCPS.

[03:07:15] On November 15th, I told you that there were 63 EOY positions open. Now there are 111. These are educators who have quit mid-year. We are hemorrhaging qualified educators. Educators need more. We need more respect, more unencumbered time, and more money. Right now, we need collective bargaining.

[03:07:38] It is right to love your students and want a living wage. How many of us feel guilty taking a sick day because we know our colleagues will have to pick up the slack and cover for us? This is wrong. If we had collective bargaining, we would be able to negotiate higher wages to attract qualified employees, including subs. We would no longer feel guilty to take a sick day because we would know that someone qualified would be replacing us and continue the learning in the classroom. I am now speaking to all LCPS educators. How many of us have second and even

[03:08:13] third jobs? Just imagine for a moment making enough money at your LCPS job that you do not need to work anywhere else. Imagine what your new home life would be like. Think of the time you could now spend with your family and friends. Think of your new work-life balance. Now think about how this would help you make that how this would help make you a better educator how would this affect your relationship with students and colleagues all of us deserve this thank you

[03:08:42] andrew pihonak to be followed by chris countryman evening i'm a very recent graduate of a tuscar high school hate speech incites violence yet if it occurs the loudon county school board listens to it during public comment says thank you to the commenter and then streams it for all to hear on the loudon website during a school we're meeting in december a speaker said that being gay is immoral and you board members are better off with quote millstones around your necks at the bottom of a river it sounds jarring doesn't it what's even more disgusting is the fact that multiple

[03:09:20] people in the audience cheered platforming hate speech like this empowers people to commit acts of violence against marginalized groups of people and saying that being gay is immoral on a large platform that's on multiple news channels every single week uh meeting causes people like me in the gay community to be bullied, often towards suicidal ideation or suicide, tortured and killed. I demand policy in the school board that requires them to cut off a person speaking during public comment the second hate speech is spoken. This will set an example for anyone who comes in here harboring hatred in their heart. I have made a petition that has over

[03:09:54] 900 people backing my cause. Hate speech incites violence. Thank you. Thank you. Chris Countryman to be followed by Kristen Tapia. Hi, I'm Chris Countryman. I'm a second grade teacher at Creighton's Corner. I'm also an LCPS parent and an LEA member. I'd like to take a moment to thank the school board members that support collective bargaining. You are showing us that you support and value the people that are directly turning the youth of today into productive

[03:10:32] citizens. Talent retention is an absolute must in any organization expecting to function effectively. Collective bargaining gives that talent a voice. Thank you to those of you that understand this. But to the rest of you, I implore you, all of you up there, to embrace this movement and show us that our voices matter instead of paying us lip service. I'm watching the people around me at school leaving or looking at leaving. I admit it, it's only January and we at our meeting

[03:11:10] the other day said, who's planning on leaving next year? I've thought about it, but I haven't yet because i care we all work in the school systems because we care about the students show us that you care not only about the students but about us i have one daughter at brambleton middle school and one at independence high school the people they interact with every day matter as a parent we want the best for our children and so should you it's time to show us that you value your

[03:11:48] employees. It's time to pass meaningful collective bargaining. Thank you. Kristen Tapia to be followed by Hugo Brunet. Ladies and gentlemen of the board, something is terribly, terribly wrong.

[03:12:09] It's now been 50 days without a vote to release the independent investigation report so the public can understand the failures of this administration and move forward to fix them. Lightning rod Scott Ziegler is long gone, enjoying his hefty taxpayer-funded paycheck, and still the public has no clear answers about what happened and what changes need to be made to prevent more sexual assaults. Ms. Reeser, you're running for delegate this year. As a voter, I'd want you to be leading the charge for honesty and transparency regarding this matter to build bridges and to bring healing.

[03:12:41] You've said you'd vote to release the report, and yet when it comes to this topic, you sit back and you don't lead. It's disappointing because the responsibility of a leader, and frankly of all grown-ups, is to have the courage to address the points of failure when you were in charge of a clearly broken system. I came across a story this week about something that in my opinion emphasizes what is happening in society when we choose to ignore red flags and deal with reality. We destroy the most precious beings in this world: our children. If you haven't heard of the Zuloc case, I encourage you to look it up.

[03:13:14] I won't get into the details, but in summary, a married couple adopted two young brothers from a special needs adoption agency after years of sexually abusing them. It came to light that one was an accused pedophile even prior to adoption and it was revealed that they were trafficking these children to pedophiles in their wealthy suburb. Why am I even talking about something so demonic? Because these children were tortured and abused and neglected when a system failed and the adults looked the other way.

[03:13:42] Loudon's failures in regard to the sexual assaults that happened here aren't any different. Stop looking the other way. There were red flags, there are bad and unclear policies, and there are people who are not doing their jobs. And because of this, by not doing the hard work to acknowledge these failures, the children are the ones that suffer. Mr. Sarrakin and Ms. Sheridan, I've watched you guys spend a lot of time talking about spending money, but you really haven't given anything to this. Release the report. Hugo Brunet, to be followed by Tamburly Cummins. Good evening. My

[03:14:17] name is Hugo Brunet, and I'm a special education bus driver for LCPS. I love my job. I love my kids. I want to tell you what collective bargaining will mean to all transportation employees, including lead drivers, trainers, bus drivers, attendants, dispatchers, and more.

[03:14:35] As an employee, I want to be able to be part of the discussion when negotiating for a new contract. I work for Transportation, which is a well-run department. But as a large group of employees, it is hard to funnel our concerns and ideas.

[03:14:51] With transparent communication, the operation will improve, which ultimately will benefit all Loudoun County students. As we've seen in the past, if we start making decisions only from the top down, benefits and working conditions worsen and we lose employees.

[03:15:10] Transportation is still trying to recover from the huge loss of bus drivers after slashing benefits and it costs taxpayers money. Please support collective bargaining for the benefit of all.

[03:15:27] Satisfied employees work hard, are efficient, and help improve LCPS students' lives. Why any organization would refuse to involve employees in the decision-making process that affects their daily life is mind-goggling to me.

[03:15:45] As early as this morning, when transportation had its in-service training, LEA was denied access to the transportation employees. LEA has always been present in the past.

[03:16:02] What are central office leaders afraid of now? Doing what's right? Let's make LCPS the place where everybody wants to have a career. By supporting collective bargaining, you would show us your interest in our well-being. LCPS cannot be a place where some employees earn a salary under the poverty line.

[03:16:21] Tamberley Cummins, to be followed by Jessica Burke. As someone who once gave credence to the false conjectures that the school board members participated in the cover-up in 2021, but now think otherwise, I can state that it is understandable that the school board members should currently wish to withhold the Blankenship and Keith report.

[03:16:51] I come to this conclusion after many months of viewing the unsubstantiated newsletters, editorials, and lawsuits manufactured by the political groups conjuring these falsehoods. This conclusion also comes after witnessing the threats of violence issued against the school board, threats which resulted in one member's resignation, not just to ensure her own safety, but that of her child's.

[03:17:17] Lastly, this conclusion results from the grand jury investigation, which found nothing harsher to admonish the school board members with other than taking the advice of their legal counsel and keeping the Blankenship and Keith report private as the doctrine of attorney-client privilege intends.

[03:17:35] I find it understandable that the school board members should safeguard themselves against those intent on distorting their words for the purpose of political gain. I find it understandable that the school board members should wish to protect themselves and those they love in our current violent environment.

[03:17:53] I understand that it is not culpability or a lack of integrity which underlies the school board's decision to withhold the Blankenship and Keith report. Unfortunately, it is a sad requisite of our times, fostered by the malicious political atmosphere in which we currently reside.

[03:18:12] I can only congratulate each of them on their courage and thank them for their service in these difficult times. Thank you. Jessica Berg to be followed by Jan Merker. Hi, good evening. My name is Jessica Berg. I am a lifelong Loudoun County resident, and I am in my 12th year of teaching high school English and women and gender studies.

[03:18:26] Honestly, I didn't really know what I wanted to say tonight because I've been very outspoken over the years defending books, educators, and education. What I've witnessed over these past few years is only greater polarization, a greater divide, because for all the talking, nobody seems willing to listen.

[03:18:57] And because, as the aforementioned loss of a student this past week at Rockridge, I wanted to start tonight from what I safely assume is a point of mutual agreement. I am a teacher and I love my job,

but my most important job is as a parent. And the health, safety, and well-being of my daughters is the single most important thing to me.

[03:19:16] And I know this is what the parents in our community feel about their own children. So let's start there, with the well-being of our children and our students in mind. The parent-teacher team is so important in fostering this and allowing our students to grow, learn, and achieve success, which is what we aim to do as educators.

[03:19:35] But because of all the vitriolic rhetoric flying around in regard to education and educators, this team has been broken. And things like policy 50-55 and subsequent policies in the same vein only set up to further this us-versus-them dichotomy. It's unreasonable, untenable, it needs to be repealed.

[03:19:53] Parents have always had rights, and if a parent has questions about content, what's going on in a class, or a concern about their student, there is a consistent and encouraged open line of communication. If a parent doesn't want their student to read a specific material, that's fine. They just don't get to make that decision for every other student in my class or the county.

[03:20:14] And because students are not immune to the discourse and hateful speech that is taking place, it is having an impact on them. As one transgender student said to me recently, I just don't understand why they hate who I am.

[03:20:29] They don't even know me. How would you feel if this student was your child? Thank you. Jan Merker to be followed by Julius Reynolds. At your last meeting, we heard from a brave student about her lived experience of rampant anti-Semitism in Loudoun County Public Schools.

[03:20:53] In the last few weeks, there have been multiple incidents of racist and anti-Semitic graffiti at schools across the county. including Woodgrove High School where I have two students. The response from LCPS and the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office seems to be, so what?

[03:21:11] There seems to be zero desire or motivation to identify and hold accountable the people who committed these crimes. When I reached out to the Woodgrove principal for an update on the case, he passed the buck to school resource officer John Merchant. That so-called public servant couldn't be bothered to respond to my email request for information.

[03:21:32] When I reached out to Captain T.J. DeLitta, the head of the Western Loudoun LCSO station, he completely diminished the incident, calling it, and this is a quote, a minor destruction of property case. He also refused to follow up on a group email with school administrators and said if I wanted to discuss it further, I'd need to make an hour-long round trip to the office in Round Hill and discuss it in person, where, of course, there would be no email record of the conversation.

[03:22:05] To my knowledge, not one of these cases in our schools has been solved. It demonstrates an appalling lack of concern from both school administrators and local law enforcement. Protecting our most vulnerable students is part of your job. I expect this board to use your platform to call for accountability in these cases.

[03:22:25] It's time for this board to stand up to the Loudon Sheriff's laziness, corruption, and unwillingness to protect our kids. It's time for you to demand stepped up investigations of these hate crimes from school administrators and consider calling in outside law enforcement since our sheriff refuses to do his job.

[03:22:48] Thank you. Julius Reynolds to be followed by Tori Truesdale. Tori Truesdale to be followed by Kristen Washington. Hello.

[03:23:09] I am an LCPS grad from Freedom in 2013. I'm here tonight to stand up for collective bargaining. I believe our educators deserve so much more than they were given. I can say that I'm super grateful for every single educator that helped me be where I am today.

[03:23:27] and I owe them so much. I believe that we need to stop talking the talk and actually walk the walk. So I support collective bargaining. Our teachers, they're working multiple jobs. They're burning out. How do you expect them to perform for our students if they're not able to take care of their own mental health?

[03:23:47] Their mental health matters, and that's why collective bargaining is so important. Seeing just how much our educators pour to their students time and time again, year in, year after. It's so disgusting to see how little pay they are given.

[03:24:04] I am calling on every single one of you. I don't care what your politics are. I believe across the line, we can say that teachers matter. That should be something that is not political. Don't we want the future of Loudoun County to be strong?

[03:24:20] The quality of our educators directly impacts the quality of our students' education. So this is something collective bargaining should not be a political thing. It should be something that everyone should want because don't we want our educators to be the best they can be?

[03:24:36] Don't we want them not to quit year after year? Don't we want there not to be a shortage? Don't we want them to be valued so that in turn our students are valued? Because I believe if our teachers show up the way that they need to show up, our students are going to be shown love and empathy and compassion in ways that they also deserve.

[03:24:55] So I'm here to support collective bargaining tonight. I'm also here to denounce the hate speech that has continued to happen in Loudoun County. I would like every single school board member to denounce it. It continues to happen and it is unacceptable. Thank you.

[03:25:10] - Thank you. Kristen Washington to be followed by Max Sawicki. - I wanted to share part of the grand jury report. It says we attribute this lack of curiosity and attachment to staying in their silos to a culture of fear permeating LCPS, a culture where anybody speaking up or daring to step out of place faces some type of reprimand.

[03:25:35] We believe this culture of fear is inhibiting LCPS from becoming an even better school system than it is today. I want you to know that this fear permeates all aspects of LCPS. This is the culture that you have created. I've seen this firsthand when I requested an evaluation for my daughter for a suspected learning disability.

[03:25:55] When it came time for her team to say yes or no, the only one that said yes was the school psychologist. And she was talked out of that decision by the assistant principal and the educational diagnostician. She did, when it eventually got approved, she was the one who did the evaluation.

[03:26:13] And after her evaluation, she was no longer a part of that team. They denied the evaluation in order to run an RTI, a practice which, according to a letter from the U. S. Department of Education Office

of Special Education Services dated 1-21-11, evaluations of children suspected of having a learning disability are not delayed or denied because of implementation of an RTI strategy.

[03:26:37] Teachers and administrators no longer stand up for their students due to fear. Silencing the teacher with fear harms students. If you read *Fish in a Tree*, I just wish one teacher had stood up for my daughter the way Mr. Daniels stood up for Allie. Instead, her teacher and assistant principal, who both said they were special educators, campaigned against her, receiving the services that would help her.

[03:27:02] Thank you. Max Sawicki, to be followed by Scott Pio. I'm a retired assistant director at the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

[03:27:20] And GAO's main mission is evaluating performance of government agencies. I've read the grand jury report, and I think the likelihood of a repeat of those circumstances is remote.

[03:27:38] I think there's a much bigger challenge facing the board and Loudoun Public Schools and Fairfax Public Schools, which is the specter of what's happening in Florida settling over our own well-regarded school system.

[03:27:54] You have instances of academic subjects pertaining to racism being removed from university curriculum. You have book bans. In Duval County, Florida, there's a long list of books that have been banned.

[03:28:14] My two favorite, one is called Roberto Clemente, *Pride of Pittsburgh*, *Pride of the Pittsburgh Pirates*. The other one is called *Dim Sum for Everyone*. This is the kind of thinking that I think threatens Loudoun County.

[03:28:31] There was a segment in the last election, last meeting, about gifted and talented students. How will selective universities regard graduates of this system if we start to get the reputation of the kind of antics that are going on, not just in Florida, but two hours away in Madison County, they want to ban books by Toni Morrison, Stephen King, and Anne Rice.

[03:28:58] This, I think, cannot be permitted to go forward. I would encourage you to stand up to this attempt by the governor to intervene in local affairs. And finally, I think you know all this, and repetition never hurts.

[03:29:17] Thank you. Thank you. Scott Pio, to be followed by Susan Cox. I find it really funny you just walked the only kid in the room out of the room. My name is Scott Pio, and I'm the chairman of the Loudoun County Republican Committee.

[03:29:34] Yet I come to you as a parent speaking about mismanagement of schools. This past week I pulled my daughter out of River Bend Middle School as a 6th grader. We had shed a lot of tears these last couple months and I thought it appropriate to share why. My daughter is an avid reader having read almost every night when she was younger.

[03:29:53] My daughter has brought home many highly inappropriate books for an 11 year old girl. Read the book, *TTYL*, *TTFN*, and you'll learn how to masturbate, buy drugs, use, and get blowjobs. Read the book, *Maybe He Just Likes You*, if you want to go through sexual harassment at school.

[03:30:12] Yet when girls tell the school administration, they do squat. Sound familiar? Two girls get raped, the principal gets fired, no principals don't get fired. And this book is about how school staff doesn't listen to the girls. This book should be renamed to *Maybe He Just Likes You* in Loudoun County.

[03:30:30] Read the book The Crossover if you want to know the father touches a mother sexually, loud moans from the bedroom, how boys want to get under the girl's skin and sexualize and drink her. After leaving principals in the schools, finding grotesque books, knowing there is zero consequences for bad actors, I have zero trust in the administration to keep my daughter safe.

[03:30:51] With millions of unallocated dollars, you should be spending money on teachers and spend money on a comprehensive book review instead of what book buyer Michelle Picard. The Loudoun County Republican Committee is recruiting parents and we will fire every single one of you for what you've done to our schools. I am disgusted by your actions. We will install new leadership and trust into this board. My daughter will no longer be part of LCBGS. Thank you. Susan Cox to be followed by Pat

[03:31:22] Heidenthal. Released the report of the independent investigation of the sexual assaults in Loudoun County. I invite everyone to say it with me. Release the report. We should be united about stopping sexual assault. Just mouth it silently then. We should be united about stopping sexual assault and covers ups of any kind. Release the report. We should all realize that trust was broken and we need to restore it. Release the report. We won't tolerate irresponsible and

[03:31:58] secretive behavior. Release the report. Redact names if necessary, but release the report. As stated by members of the Board of Supervisors, including its chair, Phyllis Randall, it is shameful that the report has not been released yet.

[03:32:14] Release the report. Parents have been requesting, pleading, speaking, holding up signs. Release the report. We will not give up. An effort for transparency and accountability is warranted. Release the report. Start to atone. Rebuild respect and trust so healing can begin.

[03:32:33] Release the report. I want to thank Tiffany Polifco for her sincere efforts in having the report released. This is not a Democrat or a Republican issue, or at least it should not be. Release the report.

[03:32:49] What will it take for you to release the report? Integrity, courage, content of character? Release the report. We are tired of being ignored, called names, accused of being domestic a terrorist when our own government should be working for us?

[03:33:05] Release the report. quote, the time is always right to do what is right, end quote. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. released the report. I hope this is the last time it will be necessary to ask.

[03:33:21] Release the report. And for those of you who don't want the report released, maybe you should talk to Phyllis Randall because she says she's been calling for it. It's released. Thank you. Pat Heidenthal to be followed by Mario Vargas.

[03:33:42] Good evening. I'm Pat Heidenthal. I'm a 20-year resident of Broadlands. I'm also a grandfather with three grandchildren in LCPS, also a CPA with an MBA. And I took a quick look at the 500-page budget, 2024 budget, and I wanted to talk about staffing increase versus student enrollment.

[03:34:06] On page 21 of the budget, the total school-based staffing increased by 90 people from 23 to 24, and non-school-based staffing increased by 40 people for a total staff increase of 130.

[03:34:21] This is unrealistic when student enrollment has only been projected to increase by 23. That's staffing increased more than five times the rate of student increase. Another thing I wanted to look at is the projected increase in student enrollment is questionable.

[03:34:38] For page 21 of the budget, the Lyon County School has declined from 85,867 in FY '22. School policies haven't changed and parents will continue to choose private school and homeschool and hybrid schooling as their dissatisfaction with public education continues and their desire to improve the actual time devoted to the basics of education.

[03:35:04] Loudoun County residents are affluent enough to have a choice. The National Center for Education Statistics reported that public schools lost one million students from 2019 to 2020, down to 49.4 million students, and projects an additional loss of 2 million nationally by 2030.

[03:35:23] All this is to say that Loudoun County will be no exception because nothing has changed as angry parents continue to voice and vote by taking their kids out of school. Thanks. - Thank you. Mario Vargas to be followed by Kathy Ellen Davis.

[03:35:42] - Good evening, my name is Mario Vargas. I'm a third-generation union member. I'm a proud LEA member. I'm also a former executive cabinet member of the Seminole Education Association. What does Florida, Maryland, and Richmond City all have in common? Their teachers collectively bargain.

[03:35:59] What is in their contracts? Well, obviously salary, health benefits, duty, and most importantly, some of them have class sizes. Parents, listen up. We can collectively bargain class sizes. Our work conditions are your students' learning conditions. Not an average, an actual number.

[03:36:17] No students crammed into a classroom that was meant to have 24 students. No more averaging. Research suggests that smaller class sizes help all students and create more opportunities for an individualized education. A straight number.

[03:36:33] You know what it doesn't include? Nearly \$3 million earmarked for special positions. Why keep creating redundant positions? VEA states that it can be done for no more than \$600,000. Don't believe me? reach out to your colleagues in Florida.

[03:36:49] Ask them how much they spend in labor management. You'll be shocked. Finally, it is important to allow all voices to be heard regardless of this. If one unit does not get 50% signatures, it does not mean it should torpedo the rest of us.

[03:37:04] All or nothing approaches for collective bargaining is neither progressive nor conservative. I urge you to join your proud LEA members and vote on a resolution today without delay. - Thank you. - Kathy Ellen Davis to be followed by Renee Kemp.

[03:37:28] - I brought a book to read today because I love books and this is one that a lot of people misunderstand. So it's called, "It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity." I don't have time to read all of it but I wanna read a little bit of it to you. This is Ruthie. She's a transgender girl. That means when she was born, everyone thought she was a boy, until she grew a little older.

[03:37:47] Old enough to tell everyone that she's actually a girl. Girl is Ruthie's gender identity. This is Ruthie's brother, Xavier. Xavier is a cisgender boy. That means when Xavier was born, everyone thought he was a boy. And as he grew older, it turned out everyone was right. He is a boy. Boy is Xavier's gender identity.

[03:38:04] There are so many different ways to be a boy or a girl, too many to fit in a book. But not everyone feels like either a boy or a girl. Non-binary is a helpful word that can describe a kid who doesn't

feel exactly like a boy or a girl. And we get to meet Alex, who is both a boy and a girl. We get to meet JJ, who is neither a boy nor a girl.

[03:38:20] And the book goes on to talk about how your gender identity might match what people thought you were when you were born. or it might not. When you were born, you couldn't tell people who you were or how you felt. They looked at you and made a guess. Maybe they got it right. Maybe they got it wrong. What a baby's body looks like when they're born can be a clue to what the baby's gender will be, but not always. When people guess wrong, it's okay to let them know. Ruthie was five when she told her parents, I know you think I'm a boy, but really I feel like a girl. Oops, Ruthie was a girl all along. They just didn't know it at first. When people guess right, it's also okay to let them know. Xavier was three and a half when he told his family. I'm a boy. I like being a boy. The end of the book says your feelings about your gender are

[03:38:58] real. Listen to your heart. No matter what your gender identity is, you are okay exactly the way you are, and you are loved. It feels good to be yourself, doesn't it? So some people in our community think this is a controversial book. What about loving your child exactly how they are is controversial. The only reason you wouldn't want to see a transgender character in a book is because you want to spread your transphobic values to your children.

[03:39:23] And this is a book that kids can understand. It doesn't turn anyone transgender because that's not a thing. Thank you. Thank you. Renee Camp to be followed by Anthony Rochon. So it may be uncomfortable to know the truth.

[03:39:45] It may be hard to actually deal with the truth. Father God, we invite Jesus back into our schools and in this meeting. In 1971, the Establishment Clause of Lemon v. Kurtzman was introduced to schools that prevented funding to anything that looked religious. This clause came against the First Amendment rights of teachers and students challenging freedom of religion, but specifically Christianity and the Bible.

[03:40:09] This clause has now been overturned by the hand of God himself in the Supreme Court, just as people that are going to be removed off the school board by the hand of God. As a result of this and removing God from schools in 1963, our children were taught immorality.

[03:40:24] thus girls get raped in schools, bathrooms, and CRT divides our community. The pride flag is displayed, but the Ten Commandments is not. In 1 Corinthians 6, 9, it says, don't you know the righteous, that the righteous will not inherit, the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom, do not be deceived. No sexually immoral person, idolater, adulterer, or males having sex with males. Now, that is not to say that God does not love us all, because that also includes rapists, it includes murderers, it includes liars, it includes men that beat up on their wives. This

[03:41:03] is all sin. This is all immoral. Immorality means in the dictionary, not moral, inconsistent with rectitude, purity, or good morals. Now, this has caused division in our schools, and the reason for that is because of this lemon lord that has been removed. I implore all teachers, students, parents, pray out loud, read the Ten Commandments, have the nativity as a play instead of Lord of the Flies because this board and any school board has no legal standing to stop you or deny your funding

[03:41:37] to do so. But if you don't, it will not be stopped. Righteousness will be upheld. Anthony Rochon to be followed by Elizabeth Boiko. Good evening. My name is Anthony Roshan. I'd like to thank the

members of the school board for their service to Loudoun County. I've lived in Loudoun County since 1998, and I've been a teacher for Loudoun County Public Schools since 2006. All three of my

[03:42:12] children have graduated from Loudoun County Public Schools, a fact of which I am very proud. I'm here tonight to speak in support of collective bargaining in my years of teaching many decisions have been made that have impacted me as a teacher and a parent some good others not so good but all without not without much input from educators and support personnel through collective bargaining we can ensure the needs of educators staff our community and most importantly students are given a voice educators and staff work tirelessly to ensure that all students

[03:42:50] receive the best possible education. The people who work in the schools can provide valuable insights and suggestions for maintaining and improving working conditions and learning conditions in our school district. I hope that you will vote and encourage you to vote to approve collective bargaining.

[03:43:09] Thank you. - Thank you. Elizabeth Boyko to be followed by Beth Lopez. - Okay, I'm here to ask that the independent investigation report be released to the public.

[03:43:24] The taxpayers have a right to know the results the investigation those of us who send our children every day to lcps schools have a right to know no trust can be restored until you stop hiding behind attorney-client privilege on december 10th 2022 six of you stated you support releasing the report what is the holdup tiffany polifco appears to be the only one with the courage to even bring this up as an informational item it should be a priority it's time to stop playing games with the parents and students that you were elected to serve. I also want to say I think it's absolutely disgusting that adults in this room would laugh at a father who is here trying to protect his daughter. Be

[03:44:03] better than that. Thank you. Beth Lopez to be followed by Brian Davison. Good evening members of the school board. My name is Beth Lopez. I'm currently a general education teacher at Broad Run High School and this is my seventh year of teaching. I'm a 22-year resident of Ashburn and I have three children who all attended Loudoun County Public Schools from kindergarten through 12th grade. While they attended Mill Run, Stewart Weller, Farmall Station, and Broad Run, I was the PTO and PTA president of each of those schools, a classroom volunteer, a front office volunteer, a high school soccer and swim team mom, a redistricting participant for seven years,

[03:44:40] and a substitute teacher. I say this to you so that you understand that I have witnessed the issues and evolution of LCPS over the past 20 years from many perspectives, not just that of my current position as a teacher and employee. This county needs collective bargaining to adequately address the concerns of its students parents and employees in particular it needs collective bargaining to prevent the adoption of policies such as our current grading policy which while doubling the workload of teachers has removed accountability and motivation for most students and does not adequately prepare them for post-secondary employment or education I ask you to approve your employees request for collective bargaining adequately

[03:45:18] educating and properly preparing the students of this county requires collaboration between staff and those on the school board thank you for your time and consideration. Thank you. Brian Davison to be followed by Jeffrey Dunn. So good evening.

[03:45:45] Can y'all start helping these parents with dyslexic kids? You literally have \$40 million you can't spend at the end of each year. Have you no shame watching these parents come up here and try to just get

their kids to read? Seriously, Brenda. I see with all the red in the room, we're certainly not short of Marxist support in the teachers union. And now that we have more than half of the teachers in the Marxist Teacher Union all wearing red. Let it not be said that they are fully in support of shutting down schools and grooming kids against their parents'

[03:46:21] wishes. Nobody accused them of being bright, though, because you see a starting teacher, Daniel, here in Loudoun County, earns \$72,000 a year. That means a household makes \$144,000, which is more than the median income of Loudoun County. They say they can't live here, but yet a household earns more than the median household income. Think about that. And they say they have second and third jobs, but yet you can't get enough teachers to teach summer school. That tells us we basically have none of them with second and third jobs. But I'll let that lie. Tonight I come

[03:46:55] to the Church of Loudoun County Public Schools. Reverend Sorokton. High Priestess Ellis. Pastor Sheridan. Because you see, this is not a rational organization. You don't look at data, right? If you did, you would see that kids in seventh grade algebra score higher than kids in eighth grade who take Algebra I in that same class. Yet you eliminated basically the 35% of kids who are allowed to take Algebra I to dumb down the whole thing. And you prevent national merit commendations from going out. This is a religion. It's a secular progressive religion where you

[03:47:32] groom kids. You had Anne-Marie Barrett get sentenced to five years because she groomed a transgender kid to have lesbian sex in her house with her kids there. Y'all didn't report that because y'all don't want anybody to know y'all condone grooming. Thank you. Jennifer Dunn to be followed by Andrea Weiskopf. Excuse me, Jeffrey Dunn. That's my sister. My name is Jeff Dunn. I am a proud member of the Loudoun Education Association. Momentum is building across the commonwealth for collective bargaining. School boards in Richmond City and Prince William County schools

[03:48:12] are among the first to pass collective bargaining resolutions for their employees. In fact, our colleagues with the Richmond Education Association have already negotiated a tentative agreement with the Richmond School Board for a three-year contract that includes a minimum 12% pay raise over the next three years for its staff.

[03:48:31] Imagine that, a three-year contract. How much easier will it be for Richmond and perhaps our competing district to the south, Prince William, to attract and retain employees with the three-year contract? Perhaps some here have fear of the unknown, like let's see what happens in Richmond or what happens in Prince William before we act.

[03:48:49] But why wait? Why don't we look to our neighbors to the north, Montgomery County, Maryland, who have had collective bargaining for more than a half century? Both LCPS and Montgomery, according to the 2022 wage guide, spend an average of about \$17,000 per pupil.

[03:49:05] Yet the average Montgomery County teacher salary is almost \$10,000 higher than the average salary in Loudoun County. Through collective bargaining, the Montgomery County School Board and the union found a way to maximize salary and benefits without breaking the taxpayers' backs doing it.

[03:49:23] Collective bargaining is not all about the money, however. It's about establishing collaborative relationships between LCPS and its staff. It's about creating a culture of ownership by teachers and staff in the development of strategies of improvement, whether it be in the areas of staff retention, curriculum and instruction, grading policy, equity, you name it.

[03:49:47] Collective bargaining provides the structure that facilitates that sort of collaboration. Thank you. Thank you. And our final speaker for public comment tonight is Andrea Weiskopf. The fact that we must fight for collective bargaining tells me how valuable it is.

[03:50:15] By the way, the crossover by Kwame Alexander is a winner of the Newbery Award and is a Coretta Scott King honor book. It happens to show a loving family with engaged parents who happen to be black.

[03:50:31] Opponents of equity claim that equal outcomes regardless of ability means the curriculum is being dumbed down. They do not understand that regardless of ability has nothing to do with smart kids.

[03:50:51] Ability, rather, has much to do with what we often call disability. A student with hearing difficulties is provided with special hearing aids that connect wirelessly to a microphone worn by a teacher.

[03:51:09] Without that resource, that student would not have an outcome equal to those of their peers. That is what is meant by equal outcomes regardless of ability.

[03:51:24] That student cannot have equality without equity. Equity doesn't dumb down a curriculum. Equity gives children, such as a child with hearing difficulties, access to a full, rigorous curriculum.

[03:51:48] Without equity, that student would be less than equal. If you believe in equality, support equity. and to our lesbian gay bisexual transgender and queer students you belong here black lives matter thank you that concludes public comment for this evening with that we will move to item 11 the acting superintendent's report dr smith good evening chair sorotkin board members while we were able to hear from two of our students about great news happening in our schools earlier this

[03:52:27] evening i'm pleased to begin tonight's report with some great news and achievements from around the division. These past few weeks, I've attended a series of meetings, including the monthly principals meeting, teacher advisory, and student advisory to connect with LCPS educators and students. I've also shared the estimate of needs with LCPS staff members and been available to address questions or concerns. These listening sessions align with our strategic goal work, but beyond that, they're the right thing to do to ensure our staff and student perspectives are heard and that our message about the work we are doing is delivered openly and consistently.

[03:53:04] LCPS recently celebrated the AWS Think Big Space opening at J. Lupton Simpson Middle. This unique educational space encourages students to extend their learning of seen disciplines beyond the classroom. The Think Big Space is a result of collaboration between LCPS staff members, Amazon Web Services, or AWS, and the Loudoun Education Foundation.

[03:53:26] Since its launch, students and staff have been visiting the space to learn about new technology and adapt it to their needs and interests. It's a remarkable space that serves LCPS students and is a training hub for LCPS educators from in LCPS and across Northern Virginia.

[03:53:43] School board members are invited to tour this innovative space and experience how to contribute to real-world STEM topics like engineering, design thinking, and coding, and we'll be reaching out in the near future to schedule visits. Thanks to a collaboration between iRobot and Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton, Sully Elementary received a donation of 10 learning robots.

[03:54:03] This donation increases opportunities for Sully students to experience and contribute to real-world STEM topics like engineering, design thinking, and coding. I and other members of Cabinet were pleased to celebrate this donation with Ms. Stiles' third-grade class this past week. Connections such as these truly benefit LCBS students and help them prepare to the world in which they will engage with.

[03:54:27] Congratulations to Blanca Reyes, a custodian at Dominion High School, who was selected at random as the January Educator of the Year winner. Ms. Reyes won an iPad and won gift cards to several streaming services. This month's prize was donated by the Round Hill PTO as a way to, in their words, pay it forward and celebrate all of the LCPS wonderful staff.

[03:54:50] Year of the Educator is a joint initiative between LCPS and the Loudoun Education Foundation to surprise a randomly selected school staff to thank them for their hard work on behalf of LCPS students. All Year of the Educator recipients receive a prize worth \$500 or more. the prizes are coordinated by the L. Loudoun Education Foundation. Congratulations once again to Ms. Reyes. A big congratulations to Danielle Nadler, Executive Director for the Loudoun Education Foundation, who was named the 2023 Loudoun Chambers Nonprofit Executive of the Year.

[03:55:23] Loudoun Education Foundation partners with LCPS on smaller activities like Year of the Educator Initiative and on large initiatives that engage community support of innovative programs that foster student and teacher success. It's always a pleasure to work with Danielle and her team and congratulations once again to Danielle.

[03:55:39] More than 400 students from five Virginia counties attended CyberSlam on January 9th. The full-day conference was spearheaded by LCPS IT teachers Chris Stark of Briarwoods High and Jennifer Martin of Loudoun County High. In the morning, students heard from industry leaders, including Virginia's Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security and members of the U.S. Secret Service who investigate cybercrime.

[03:56:03] In the afternoon, the students had the opportunity to fly drones and try their hand at cartography among other activities. Congratulations to Kang Hwang, a senior at Broad Run, whose exceptional high score on the Microsoft Office's Word exam led him to be named Virginia State Champion.

[03:56:22] Kang is now eligible to compete in CertiPort's 2023 Microsoft Office Specialist National Championship that will be held in Florida in June. Congratulations to Kavya Lith, a Briarwoods high school senior. Kavya was named as one of Virginia's five nominees for the U.S. Presidential Scholars for Career and Technical Education. She is taking classes in the STEM career and marketing career clusters while being an active participant in the FBLA or Future Business Leaders of America and DECA. Congratulations to CAVIA. Congratulations to senior Tyler Whitfield who was

[03:57:01] selected as one of PBS NewsHour student reporting labs 20 under 20 up-and-coming storytellers for 2022. Tyler was selected for his work in broadcast journalism and recent production of his podcast the final year. PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs is a national youth journalism program that focuses on encouraging teenage journalists. Congratulations to Evelyn Bogush, a senior at Heritage High, who won the school's 2022 Poetry Out Loud competition, which is sponsored by the National English Honor Society. Evelyn will advance to the semi-final Poetry Out Loud

[03:57:39] competition, which will be held on February 4th. The annual Poetry Out Loud competition is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. Participants are judged on

their physical presence, voice, and articulation, dramatic appropriateness, evidence of understanding, and overall performance.

[03:57:56] Good luck on the next phase of the competition. Over the next few weeks, we have several great events being hosted by LCPS departments and schools that draw together our LCPS community and our partners in business and service industries. The Skilled Trades Fair, which is happening tomorrow at the Academies of Loudoun, provides students with the opportunity to speak with industry leaders.

[03:58:17] LCPS students will also be able to apply on-site for the Academies of Loudoun admission. More than 200 students are registered to attend and 35 business partners will be sharing information with interested students. One LCPS, United for Wellness, the Office of Student Services' fifth annual Mental Health and Wellness Conference is happening this Saturday at Light Ridge High School.

[03:58:39] It features 46 speakers sharing strategies that promote well-being and a resource fair showcasing more than 30 community partners whose services support mental health and wellness. 300 participants are expected to attend. Instruction to Industry Career Expo will be held virtually from February 13th to February 16th and provides high school students from Loudoun County and surrounding districts with opportunities to connect with industry professionals from in-demand career fields.

[03:59:06] These are just a few of the great events planned over the next couple weeks. Additional events connecting students with industry leaders and community partners are planned for the spring. Now we'll move on to updating you on some of the other work taking place across the division. As we prepare to enter the second semester tomorrow, and in light of recent events, I want to take a moment to review our LCPS commitment to equity.

[03:59:28] I also want to acknowledge the recent incidents of hate-inspired vandalism in our high schools and other incidents of hate in our schools and surrounding communities, including anti-Semitism and racial slurs. We do not condone or tolerate these actions or this type of behavior in our schools.

[03:59:43] In addition to working closely with law enforcement as part of our response, Central Office supports school-based staff as they address incidents and implement the lcps protocol for addressing racial slurs and hate speech in schools these impact these incidents impact learning and students sense of safety they impact the the affirming and inclusive learning environment lcps seeks to provide to each and every students this is why maintaining transparent communication with the school community continuing to to denounce these hateful acts and providing support to our students and staff are all priorities we'll be working with principals to send out reminders as we

[04:00:19] start this new semester. The Office of Communications is working with my office to create a new newsletter for LCPS families. This newsletter will bundle information from LCPS together in one easy to read resource. We recently completed a review of emails sent over the past 18 months and found that we have many emails that were sent to families plus additional emails featuring electronic flyers. We hope this new platform will be a service to LCPS families and will help to streamline communications. Plans are in place to roll out this new communication platform in early February. Earlier today, the Division of Safety

[04:00:57] and Security coordinated a school security training for more than 200 administrators, school counselors, SROs, and SSOs. Key regional partners, including the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office and the Leesburg Police Department and school divisions, were also invited to attend. The training covered social

media awareness, digital threat assessment, and lessons learned from prior school incidents. On Thursday, January 19th, last week, LCPS facilitated the kickoff meeting with LCSO and Leesburg PD to review the current memorandum of understanding. This team of critical stakeholders will meet weekly in person to discuss and agree upon what should be

[04:01:33] kept, deleted, changed, or added before providing a final draft for review. Thank you, and that concludes my report. Thank you, Dr. Smith. At this time, we will move to our action items for tonight, starting with 12.01, Department of Instruction, Career, and Technical Education month proclamation. I move that the Loudoun County School Board proclaims February as Career and Technical Education Month. Whereas economic and technological changes in society are rapidly reflected in the nature of today's workplace, thereby placing new responsibilities

[04:02:10] on Virginia's education system. And whereas Career and Technical Education provides the Commonwealth students with a career pathway for post-secondary education and workplace readiness in a global economy. And whereas career and technical education gives students experience in practical, meaningful applications of basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics, which promotes deeper learning and improves the quality of their education. And whereas career and technical education is the foundation of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity in industry and contributes to Virginia's leadership in the international

[04:02:47] marketplace and whereas career and technical education offers lifelong learning opportunities that provide individuals with more career choices expanded learning potential and greater job satisfaction and whereas the cooperative cooperative and ever-increasing efforts between career and technical educators administrators and representatives of business and industry stimulate the growth of common the commonwealth's economy by preparing students for careers in high demand high wage and highly technologically skilled areas and whereas the national theme of

[04:03:22] career and technical education month celebrate today own tomorrow demonstrates the crucial road that role that career and technical education plays in readying virginia students for successful careers now therefore be it resolved that the loudon county school board proclaims february 2023 as career and technical education month in loudon county virginia is there a second second in by miss reaser is there any discussion seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand and say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with miss

[04:03:59] corbo and mr mehedvi absent for the vote we'll move to 12.02 department of student services national school counseling week pro proclamation miss sheridan thank you i move that the loudon county school board adopts the proclamation recognizing february 6 through 10 2023 as national school counseling week whereas school counselors are employed in schools to help students reach their full potential and whereas school counselors are act actively committed to helping students explore their abilities strengths interests and talents as these traits relate to career awareness

[04:04:35] and development and whereas school counselors help parents focus on ways to further the educational personal and social growth of their children and whereas school counselors work with teachers and other educators to help students explore their potential and set realistic goals for themselves and whereas school counselors seek to identify and utilize community resources that can enhance and complement comprehensive school counseling programs and help students become productive members of society and whereas comprehensive developmental school counseling programs are considered an

integral part of the educational process that enables all students to achieve success in school and whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has

[04:05:15] further emphasized the essential role school counselors play in advocating and supporting student health and achievement now therefore be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board proclaims February 6th through 10th 2023 as National School Counseling Week in Loudoun County Virginia. Is there a second? Seconded by Ms. Reeser. Is there any discussion? Seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with miss corbo and mr mehed to be absent for the vote board members at this time

[04:05:49] will take a brief recess please be back in your seats at 8 15 and we will start on our information

[04:05:58] items at that time the deus please okay the board is coming out of recess and we will begin our

[04:15:13] information items starting with 1301 from the Department of Support Services abbreviated elementary school attendance zone change process mr. Lewis thank you mr. Sorokin members of the board we are here tonight with a follow-up from our January 10th meeting where we brought to you the calendar and an opportunity for board members to talk to and ask questions about the proposed changes for the abbreviated 10 zone change as as we talked to the night we're going to do two of these are in the to adjust the cluster alignment for two of the schools

[04:15:49] and then one is to address new to residential development in the area that will be going to one of the schools and we've staff proposed three different areas can Cora CL 24 in Leesburg and then Cattail Run which is a new community and so we provided tonight additional information in the board item that has all the enrollment numbers for each of the schools so that's the additional information that we have for you tonight we will be surveying if the board moves forward with this the grade five students in accordance with policy 8160 to see about the folks that may want to stay at their homeschool at this point we'll also do the letters and blackboard messages for the cattail run

[04:16:28] area that is the new development once that is approved and we'll let folks know about that so that's the information essentially we don't have a lot more information that then providing the extra the data on February 14th we would come back with a dedicated public hearing and ask for the action from the school board and we would be recommended that we let the board approve all three of the staff recommendations and I believe that's all the update we have for you tonight we're happy to take any questions board members questions for

[04:17:01] staff regarding this item okay seeing none we will bring this back for action at our next board meeting okay and with that we'll move on to 1302 also from Department of Support Services school name review yes thank you mr. Sorokin so reminding the board back in June of 2020 the board initiated this discussions about the the action plan to combat systemic racism which included a school by school name review to identify any schools that fit a certain criteria that

[04:17:39] was established and those criteria were any school named for Confederate leaders or or Confederate cause any schools named for individuals who lived in the 17th through the 19th centuries when slavery was fundamental fund was a fundamental part of economic cultural and political system Virginia and any school was named for individuals or movements that promoted or implemented racial segregation laws in Virginia during the eras of Jim Crow and the massive resistance so if you recall we had

the schools the looked at we they were reviewed in three phases phase one we included ten schools phase two is

[04:18:17] included nine schools and then phase three was all the rest of the schools and in November of 2021 we asked the Black History Committee and the Thomas Bosch library folks to take a look at these and they subdivided those into groups a through C a through D and then so in the last conversation with the board the board decided to focus on Group A which was Francis Hazel Reed and Mercer Middle School so in accordance with a new policy that the board passed those public hearings or I'm sorry town hall meetings were held by board members for both of those schools and now we're bring forth to you tonight the the

[04:18:53] opportunity to move forward again and establish the naming committees for each of these and begin the process of considering whether or not the school is renamed and so that we have for you here is information we're happy to take any questions and without other wise direction we'll come back on the 14th for action board members questions or discussion regarding the potential renaming of these schools mr. Beatty thank you chair I just want to make a comment that I was able to attend the town hall we had at Francis Hazel Reed

[04:19:29] was there was a number of people there it's no that day so it probably dampened the attendance but all people there were sorry in favor of keeping Francis Hazel Reed is the name we had a colleague of hers who had worked with her a lot of times mere and her parents and associates so I don't it's a plan on supporting the renaming of Francis Hazel Reed and pursuing this for that school additional comments Mr. Morse I believe that that was approximately same time

[04:20:05] that Mercer, we had a community meeting at Mercer Middle School as well, and not overly well attended. I think there were about 25, maybe 30 participants. They spanned all ages, many ethnic groups. There were some African American, some Asian American, and there was great discussion on the value of the discussion about the pros and cons of Mercer and what were the good things that were done what were the bad things that were done but I

[04:20:39] was interested that all the perspectives were that we needed to we needed to continue that dialogue we needed to address those concerns in an ongoing manner and the discussion that was brought up which I thought was a fabulous idea was that we could hold a a student debate type environment this would be something from what promoted and provided by the school and by the the students themselves who would do the research and they could debate the topic themselves. The feeling was that that debate was more important than the

[04:21:15] name change and I was surprised that there there was no support in the room to support to change the name of Mercer but it was unanimous support that this this information in this discussion needs to continue on to the benefit of the students. So I'm still still reviewing a lot of the information but that's that's how the the town hall went and I'm looking forward to having further discussion on this thank you additional questions or comments miss Ogadugbe thank you chair unfortunately the night that we had the town hall for

[04:21:52] Francis Hazel Reed it was a snow rain day and we had actually three individuals outside of those who were there from the school board and staff and the principal from Francis Hazel Reed also showed up. I am also making my way through the comments. And one of the things that I heard in

particular around Francis Hazel Reed and the history behind the woman who the school was named for was that there was an interest in learning more. And I think that there

[04:22:29] was a pending question with someone who is doing more research and to learn more about the writings over the course of her career or any kind of further references to her active participation in the Daughters of the Confederacy. We know that she was part of a group that had started a local chapter in the earlier part of her life but there was a recognition that it would be good to just know more about what was in her writings and so I thought that there was an open question about that. I also

[04:23:05] thought the conversation was very interesting and fruitful and so as I said I'm still working my way through all the comments that you'd shared through board docs thank you additional comments okay seeing none without objection we'll bring this back as action during our next board meeting so that we can provide staff direction on the way that we want to go on on these names that will conclude 3.02 and we'll move to I'm sorry 1302 so we'll move to

[04:23:42] 1303 also from support services fall 2024 opening of new middle school ms14 thank you mr sorokan and obviously i'm joined with dr ellis so this is a joint uh effort by instruction and the support services folks so i'll just take you back just a little bit in time that during the conversations we had in the cip we identified in fact mr morris asked a question about whether or not the opening of the high school 14 was needed at the timeline it was put on and we provided a good bit of

[04:24:20] information about the enrollments in the dullest area and the pressures that were being put on all the schools in that area in fact we went as far as to say that we would we were looking at we were just identifying that issue for the board as far in advance as possible that we at some point come back and be talking about options for opening middle school 14 which may even include the option to do an intermediate school like we've done at willard and at harmony years ago so as we talked through that that process with uh dr ellis's team and my team we we did start down the

[04:24:56] road and talked about the the advantages and disadvantages of the the middle school and the intermediate process and then we also had a call in with the principals of both independence and brambleton middle school in fact mr. O'brien is here tonight mr. Gabriel participated as well and they challenged us to think about this a little bit differently and so it was a good conversation and one of the things that we recognized in the other process and the other two times we've done this that the freshman of freshman grade had an identity issue because they were in a middle school building but they were really high school so in fact mr. O'brien

[04:25:34] in particular said you know we need to find a way for those folks in the ninth grade to be able to have a high school experience because they are high schoolers so what you see tonight is a reflection of that is that what we're proposing to do is a non-traditional opening not just a regular middle school where the new middle school 14 would open up in the fall of 24 with the sixth and seventh grades and then eighth grade would stay at the Brambleton Middle School but the Brambleton Middle School building would also house the annex for freshmen for Independence High School and so that way Independence High School

[04:26:12] the facility itself the building would have grades 10 11 and 12 but also in the proximity right across the street is is perfectly suited for this as well so we would have an annex for the high schoolers who would still remain high schoolers have the whole high school experience be able to participate in after-school activities pep rallies all those types of things as a regular high school would do so as we talk through that we do believe that that is a better experience for the students it's manageable for us it's from a

staff perspective there's no transportation challenges like we had at Willard getting folks across town to do the different things it is supported by the numbers we

[04:26:49] do have some numbers in the in the the item for you where you can see in that table on the on the second page where Brampton and Independence are both overcrowded Brampton immediately and then Independence becomes overcrowded in 2025 and the idea of having the three schools support that same group of students allows each of those buildings to be within their capacity throughout that process and so that is where we have come down with this non what we're going to call a non-traditional setup for that I will say that as we go through and looked at all this and we've talked with mr. Roundsley as well down at

[04:27:28] Willard and you're probably already where we have 44 module classrooms there and we've decided that they need the other four when we got the approval for the four that are there now we got approval to put in eight and so we do believe they're going to need that to get that same relief for Willard Middle School throughout this same period of time so we're trying to do as best we can to address all the enrollment problems in that area until we get both the middle school and the high school open and I'll pause just for a second and ask dr. Ellis if she wants to add anything so then the last thing is conversely we have provided a calendar of meetings if the board were to choose

[04:28:06] to go forward with just the regular boundary process for the middle school and that's there for your consideration but on February 14th we would come back with a recommendation to do the non-traditional layout but obviously the board would have that option for the other so happy to take any questions board members questions regarding the proposal mr. Morse thank you mr. chair the so the process ms14 is going to open up in the fall of 24 correct so the process of boundary changes for MS 14 is coming and this this is addressing that

[04:28:43] in addition to that we're going to look at the the restructuring and I think I heard you say that MS 14 would be used for grade 6 and 7 is that right yes sir and just to make sure that I didn't completely overlook something that we would not do a boundary adjustment this spring as was planned we would do that when the high school open okay okay when so it's the adjustments would be done once MS 14 is open no sir they would be done when HS 14 is about to open because this plan will bridge us between FY or school year fall of 24 when the middle school opens

[04:29:22] until the fall of 28 when the high school opens so we would have this structure of the non-traditional structure in place from fall of 24 to the fall 20 so the footprint of independence and the footprint stays the same you're just dividing it across three three schools instead of two schools if the footprint is in student counts yes sir yes yeah yes okay so the only hiccup I see and we go through this and I think we've been through this before is that someone who's a sixth grader in Brambleton when this happens

[04:29:56] would be in Madison's Trust at fifth grade Brambleton and sixth grade MS 7 at seventh grade independence at eighth grade would that be correct Brambleton at 8th grade and then independence annex in 9th grade and then independence the actual building in 10 11 and 12 okay so and I don't know how big that population is but I think that that that's my only real concern is that that transition is difficult especially bouncing through so many schools however if they're doing

[04:30:36] it with all of their classmates it makes it the mitigation is much better much better so I mean I look forward to hearing the details of the plan it sounds I know we've been through this before we did the

Mercer annex for freedom high school so we've done this successfully and I think in the end it probably benefits the kids more than being pulled into different schools and having segments of the of this class removed so I look forward to hearing through this process thank you additional questions so I want to make sure I I have it

[04:31:12] straight. So 6th and 7th graders will be at MS-14. 8th graders, I'm going to split them up, 8th graders will be middle school students at Brambleton Middle School. 9th graders will be high school students, but at Independence Annex at Brambleton Middle School. And then 10th through 12th graders will just be at Independence. Is that accurate? That is accurate. And I will add that depending on the ninth grade students schedules they may actually alternate days

[04:31:51] and be at Brambleton on an A day for example and take other classes at independence on B days. Those are all details we would need to work out but the proximity of the two schools allows us to do that. Similar to the eighth grade annex we currently have at independence just reversed.

[04:32:07] Okay. So that's what makes it that's to try to alleviate the concern about the previous intermediate school model where they're at least at independence perhaps some of the times maybe on A days or they go over there after school to do their extracurricular activities or what have you?

[04:32:25] Exactly. Okay. Thank you. Has there been any community input on this yet? Have we had community meetings or discussed it or informed about the potential of doing something like this? No, we have, as Mr. Lewis said, talked with the principals and I believe Ms. Tate is preparing um a message that would go out this evening to alert the communities that this conversation is starting so what is your proposed schedule do you want to bring this back and get direction from the board next meeting or do you have other steps in the process before you want to do that

[04:33:01] so our plan is to come back on february 14 one of the other timelines we're up against if we're going to do the the other alternative to do enrollment or a tennis zone changes to for the middle school itself then we would have to start that pretty quickly um but our goal would be to have it ready for you on the 14th and have you know any feedback we get from the messages for you on the 14th okay board members any additional questions comments so we don't I certainly don't want to put this I could send myself so we'll bring this back for action on during our next meeting okay thank you

[04:33:38] that will bring us to our next information item concerning grand jury report recommendation five and transparency I'll start with the school board members who directly requested the item, starting with Ms. Polivko. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[04:33:57] I do want to revisit this topic once again and state that on December 13, 2022, the board engaged in a work session to discuss the recommendations provided in the grand jury report related to the sexual assaults in 2021. One recommendation includes limiting the degree to which public matters and information of public concern are shielded from the public under the cloak of attorney-client privilege. During the work session on December 13th, a majority of board members commented on the possibility of the release of the internal report, which was finalized in January of

[04:34:34] 2022. Currently, the report is under attorney-client privilege, and it is ultimately up to the school board to approve its release by a majority. Constituents are asking for transparency and have been requesting this report for over one year, and their frustration and lack of trust grows daily. Board members

are elected to represent the public body of stakeholders who fund and attend the schools and constituents are communicating their desire for us to take the helm and act as

[04:35:09] leaders. It is our duty to exude leadership as a governing body of Loudoun County Public Schools and the public deserves to hear from the board regarding such a sensitive and critical topic. I'd also like to state that last year I was simply a parent in Loudoun County Public Schools and I attended a school board meeting shortly after the second assault occurred at Broad Run High School and I remember hearing a father state that he and his wife were telling their daughters to hold it when they went to school instead of using the bathrooms and I will never forget hearing

[04:35:46] that. I am a school board member now and I am asking us as a board to display the leadership that this community needs to see. Therefore I recommend providing a date for the public by which we expect to see and be able to take a public vote, making this an action item on either the second or the fourth Tuesday in February. A goal without a date is just a wish, and the public should be able to rely on the board as a group of leaders to provide them with a finality related

[04:36:22] to this tumultuous series of events. I'm going to go to Mr. Beatty next, who also requested this information item. Thank you, Chair. I'll just echo my colleagues' comments. I think that this needs to come out. I think my intention when we decided to do this report way back when was that this would be released. I think it's fortunate that it hasn't been, but at this point, I think there's nothing that should be stopping us from releasing it, and so I look forward to working with my colleagues to get that out as soon as possible. I want to provide some background on this item. I know the board members will already be aware of this, but just for public interest,

[04:37:02] The B&K report was prepared for the school board by a law firm in anticipation of litigation. It is currently a confidential record containing attorney work product that is wholly covered by the attorney-client privilege. Customarily, such reports, when prepared by attorneys under those circumstances, would remain attorney-client privileged.

[04:37:22] Waiving the privilege by releasing the report in some form or another raises complex questions beyond just the contents of the report itself and would have implications for ongoing or future legal matters involving the school division and its employees. These include potential disclosure of other attorney-client privilege information or attorney work product, setting precedent wherein a public body and or elected officials waive privilege for their successors, and an impact on the ability to receive frank and open communications in the future between the school board and its attorneys. Given that many of the details concerning

[04:37:57] the incidents and Loudoun County Public Schools' response to them have already been made public via the special grant jury report and other means, there has been significant public interest in asking the board to waive the attorney-client privilege and release the B&K report to the public.

[04:38:15] Given this renewed interest in the B&K report, in December, the school board asked a law firm, one that had never worked with LCPS in any capacity previously, to provide legal guidance to the school board on the best course of action to ensure that the school board has a complete understanding of the options available to it and the implications of any decision to waive applicable privileges in the circumstance the school board is scheduled to receive that legal advice in early February and could make a decision regarding whether to release the B&K report after that time and given that it's an information item tonight that means if any board member wants to they could bring a motion as an

[04:38:52] action item to do that during our regular our first meeting regularly scheduled board meeting the second tuesday in february board members additional comments or information regarding this item seeing none we will move on to our next item 1305 formation of a oh i'm sorry mr beatty can i make a request we bring it back as an action item absolutely yes uh with that we'll move to 1305

[04:39:27] Formation of a select audit committee. Mr. Woods, thank you. Good evening members of the board It is finally good to finally be in front of you all tonight Here to discuss the audit charter the audit charter is a

[04:40:02] Committee a select committee made up of board members. It is for the purpose of oversight of my office The purpose is to improve accountability assist in fulfilling governance and oversight of the board Also review the suitability of internal controls.

[04:40:24] It also helps with compliance with the regulatory requirements and regulations. It also plays a role in ensuring the quality of the annual audit. So internal audit performs an annual audit plan.

[04:40:40] And the audit committee will be the final say in approving the annual plan. And that plan will be updated as needed, usually on a quarterly basis when we meet. And so my audit plan is really governed by the audit committee.

[04:40:56] And that's why it's important that we have this committee, because they will have the final say on the audits we perform during the year. I'm here to answer any questions you have. We can walk through the charter and go from there.

[04:41:13] Thank you, Mr. Woods, and welcome aboard. Well, thank you. Thank you. So, board members, any questions for Mr. Woods or regarding the draft charter, which is posted in BoardDocs? Mr. Beatty. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Given the nature and the kind of the scope of this committee do you see that most of the meetings will end up having some kind of closed component in order to reserve confidentiality?

[04:41:38] Yes, so because this committee will be overseeing so to speak the whistleblower portion of our division. There clearly should be closed session meetings for that purpose to make sure those who report their concerns remain anonymous and to discuss sensitive topics related to that field.

[04:42:07] It is my goal, though, that audits performed under the annual audit plan are released and put on LCPS website for transparency purposes, but for issues related to the fraud, waste, and abuse hotline, we'll need closed sessions for that.

[04:42:27] Thank you. Additional questions? Seeing none, we will bring this back for, I have a couple of changes I might recommend to the charter. uh the one i'm looking the the status as a select committee generally when we form select committees we put an end date on it so that the school board has to renew it or or change it into a standing committee or just dissolve the committee and i believe the uh the the consensus when we talked about this last meeting was to have this go through the end of 2023 in this format as a

[04:43:04] select committee and then decide what direction the school board wanted to take at that time so I am probably going to propose some language just to change that to put an end date on the status as a select committee so that it is a forcing function to decide to the school board to decide what to do after that okay so for the Charter there is language that it should be reviewed on an annual basis by the committee

members to recommend changes and I think in the long run it is a best practice to be a standing committee well I I agree that we'll extend the committee in some format I'm just saying we may the school

[04:43:41] board may choose to make it a standing committee instead of a select committee or to merge the portfolio with one of our other standing committees generally at the equity committee is kind of an exception to this but generally a select or ad hoc committee in past practice and LCPS has had a defined end date and then it goes on to either dissolve or be something else so I'm just that I'm just talking about making it consistent with that practice board members any additional questions or comments okay so we will bring this item back for action next board meeting on February 14th thank you

[04:44:17] thank you with that we'll move to item 14 our closed meeting is there a motion miss Okedekbe thank you chair I move that the Loudoun County School Board recess this public meeting and enter to a closed meeting pursuant to 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia for the following.

[04:44:39] Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body pertaining to probable litigation where such consultation or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body regarding a matter related to Loudoun Circuit Court Matters CL-22-3129 as authorized by Section 2.2-3711A7 of the Code of Virginia and discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining

[04:45:18] position or negotiating strategy of the public body as authorized by section 2.2 37011 a3 of the code of virginia discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds including discussion of the terms or scope of such contract related to the superintendent search where discussion in open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the school board as authorized by section 2.2371829 of the code of virginia is there a second second seconded by mr morris any discussion seeing none all in

[04:45:58] favor of the motion to go into closed session please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with miss corbeau and mr mehedevi absent for the vote we are now in closed session i am not anticipating any motions coming out of closed

[04:46:13] session tonight. The board is coming out of closed session. Is there a motion Ms.

[06:12:13] Okedekbe? Thank you chair. I move that the closed meeting be adjourned, that the Loudoun County School Board reconvene its public meeting and that the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting. I further move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of this public meeting.

[06:12:36] Resolution 21-22-23. Whereas the Loudoun County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and whereas 2.2-3712 D of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law. Now therefore be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business

[06:13:13] matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies and only such public business matters as were

identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Loudoun County School Board. Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Mr. Morris. Any discussion?

[06:13:37] Seeing none, we'll place the motion to a vote. All those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Ms. Corbo and Mr. Mejedevi absent for the vote. With that, we'll move to item 15, board member comments and committee reports, starting with Ms. Reeser.

[06:13:56] Thank you, Mr. Chair. The legislative and policy committee will be meeting on February 6th for our regularly scheduled agenda. But previous to that, on the 31st, we will travel to Richmond for lobby day with our Loudon delegation. I had the opportunity since our last meeting to attend the Cluster, the Dominion High School Cluster event hosted at Seneca Ridge Middle School for the Multicultural Night, and I had the opportunity to talk with about a dozen principals and teachers about their schools, as well as a number of students and parents about the cultural exhibits that they had,

[06:14:32] and there were some exceptional speakers that presented that night as well. Lastly, I would like to just make a statement that I strongly condemn and denounce the anti-Semitic graffiti and racial slurs in our schools in our communities as well as the hate speech that we've witnessed in our boardroom thank you miss Sheridan thank you I would just like to make the public aware that tomorrow January 25th the Student Services Committee will meet at 5:00 p.m. followed by the specialized programs and centers committee at 6:00 p.m. and then to make everyone aware that the equity committee which normally meets on the first Thursday of

[06:15:08] the month will be meeting on the second Thursday of the month due to our budget adoption on the second so that equity the first equity committee meeting for this year is going to be on February 9th at 5:30 in the boardroom and I would ask that any board members who have not nominated their representatives so please do so soon as possible thank you thank you mr. Morris I'd like to repeat miss research comments concerning hate speech I find it repulsive and there is no place for it in LCPS for the committees I'm pleased to be returned to the

[06:15:44] finance and operations committee as chair and our next meeting will be on Tuesday the 31st thank you thank you mr. baby thank you mr. chair the technology steering committee is in trying to schedule we're scheduled for the 16th but there is a board meeting to go over the budget so we're trying to find a time one of the things I hope to bring up at that meeting is the Attorney General's recommendation about looking into white list and we'll have more discussion on that and see what comes out of that so thank you thank you mr.

[06:16:17] Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I would also like to join my fellow board members in publicly denouncing what has been a series of anti-Semitic and racist language and graffiti in not only our schools but in the community at large.

[06:16:41] and it is, it's disappointing and upsetting for these things to occur, and we can and will do better as a community. I do believe that. On more procedural items, it's hard to kind of shift gears here, but there are, committees are back in swing. This Thursday will be the first HRTD committee that I'll be chairing.

[06:17:12] We have a number of action items coming up on that committee. Next week on Monday evening is the First Discipline Committee of the year, and there are more coming up that are scheduled.

[06:17:28] So I'm distracted. That's it. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Polivka. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to report that the next Special Education Advisory Committee meeting will take place on February 8th from 6 o'clock to 7:15 p.m.

[06:17:48] where we will be discussing SMART goals for IEPs. And I'm looking forward to starting up some school visits this week. Beginning on Friday, I'll be visiting an early childhood special education classroom. And I'm looking forward to visiting many other special education program classrooms throughout the next several months to get to know some of the teachers in the classrooms and the administrators at the school and the students themselves, of course.

[06:18:12] So I am really looking forward to that, and thank you again, Mr. Chair. Thank you. The first 2023 meeting of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee is scheduled for February 9th.

[06:18:30] That'll be an unusual meeting date for 2023. We're going to be moving to Mondays, but we have that one scheduled for Thursday due to a conflict with the Joint Committee on February 6th. Topics that I anticipate being on the agenda for that are policy 5045 an info item on access to literacy for all an information item on the instructional facilitator program an information item on Mentoring and coaching program as well as an information item on Policy 5030 assessment and grading which was referred to CNI from the school board several months ago

[06:19:10] And that will complete my report, other than joining my colleagues in condemning the spate of hate speech and graffiti that's unfortunately been plaguing our county and our schools over the past several months. With that, we'll move to item 16 on the agenda, new business.

[06:19:29] Is there any new business tonight? Seeing none, we are adjourned. Thank you, board members.



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