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Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting, Thursday, February 9, 2023

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[00:00:03] Good afternoon. I call to order this February 9th meeting of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee for our first meeting of 2023. I want to welcome Ms. Reeser back to the committee and issue a warm welcome to Ms. Okedegbe for joining us on the committee this year. So we'll begin with item two on the agenda, public comment. Do we have anyone signed up for public comment today? We do not. Okay. We will skip over public comment as no one has signed up. That will bring us to item three on the agenda approval of the draft minutes from the December 8th meeting. Is

[00:00:39] there a motion? I move the committee approve the draft minutes from the December curriculum and instruction committee meeting. I will second the motion. 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. That will conclude item three and we'll move on. We have no action items today so We will move on to our information items, starting with 4.01 LCPS Mentoring and Coaching Program.

[00:01:13] Dr. Ellis. Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. So this evening, we have several information items for you. The first two are out of our Division of Professional Learning. And in a moment, I'll turn it over to Ms. Tina Howell and her team to give us some information on our mentoring and coaching program.

[00:01:31] We are not anticipating any action coming out of this. This is truly just an overview for information purposes for the committee and the board, and we are happy to answer any questions about

the program. So I'll turn it over to Ms. Howell. Good evening. I'm Tina Howell. I'm the director of professional learning, and I have two of the mentoring and coaching office staff here, and I'll let them introduce themselves.

[00:01:56] Good evening. My name is Julie Bay. I'm the supervisor of mentoring and coaching. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Mary Charlish, and I'm the specialist in the mentoring and coaching office. We're excited to share the great work that's happening with mentoring and coaching here in Loudoun County.

[00:02:19] So we know we have a crisis with retaining teachers, with recruiting teachers, with teachers coming into the profession. Unfortunately, more than one-third of teachers, around 44%, leave the profession within the first five years.

[00:02:36] So we also know that it is crucial to retain teachers. And in order to retain teachers, we have to support them. This says that really it's the retention. However, we think that also offering support really helps with recruitment.

[00:02:55] If we can tell teachers this is what we will do to support you in LCPS and we have a really robust program, then we can recruit more teachers to LCPS. So everything we do is tied to our mission and vision. And it's really tied to Action 2, to Goal 2 and Action 2.1.

[00:03:20] We were very excited to see in this goal that there was coaching and mentoring within that goal because that is really what we do. Within the core values, we are really focused on continuous improvement.

[00:03:37] We are obviously trying to support beginning teachers with improving and in addition to mentors and coaches as well. So this is just talking more about continuous improvement and we know that mentor programs have to be robust and so we focus a lot on our mentor programs and really promoting that climate of collaboration and a lot of professional learning as well.

[00:04:09] So the work that is guiding what we are doing right now is in September 21, and this was a handout that was attached, the VDOE released some updated guidelines for mentor-teacher programs.

[00:04:25] Now, it says the word guidelines, and I would say that it's a little bit more than guidelines because we have to report how we are meeting these 10 guidelines. So since we received these guidelines, we have been, and we just gave you an overview.

[00:04:42] It's a very lengthy packet with a lot of information. So the team has been looking through those to see what are we meeting already and what might we need to do in order to make sure we are meeting all of these. So we'll talk a little bit more about that throughout the presentation.

[00:05:01] These are the 10 guidelines. We know some that we're doing really well. So for example, the mentor professional learning and supporting mentors and the selection and assignment, we're doing that really well. We could be doing some things a little bit better, some we haven't started yet, which we'll tell you about, but resources for the mentor teacher programs, beginning teacher professional learning, we're looking at how we can do that even better in order to support the beginning teachers.

[00:05:37] So our mentor program here in LCPS is based on guidelines from the VDOE and we know, we are following these research-based recommendations. So our mentoring and coaching office is small yet mighty.

[00:05:57] We have one supervisor, Julie, and thanks to you all, we now have a specialist which is new this year and we were very happy to get the specialist because it was very much needed. We have seven instructional coaches.

[00:06:14] Only two of the instructional coaches are paid out of local funds. Five of them are paid out of Title II. So two support elementary beginning teachers, two support secondary beginning teachers, two support special education, and one supports English learners.

[00:06:37] As of January 2023, new hire data indicates that there are 234 teachers with no prior teaching experience. That means there are brand new teachers to the profession and 300 new hires with previous teaching experience, meaning they come from another state or another division, bringing the total number of new hires to 534.

[00:06:59] All new hires in Loudoun receive a mentor. There are 578 mentors who provide support to 682 teachers across our 98 schools. mentors provide support to more than one teacher and of course because hiring is year-round in Loudoun these numbers can fluctuate on a daily basis and the mentoring and coaching office is all about supporting strategic goal too so therefore if a teacher in Loudoun County needs additional support they're

[00:07:36] eligible to receive a mentor another layer of wraparound support that our program offers is we offer an instructional coach to those first-year teachers to the profession and this is an essential and valuable tool to recruiting and retraining highly qualified teachers here in Loudoun the benefit of a job-embedded instructional coach really supports that first-year teacher as they transition into the profession so they they increase teacher

[00:08:10] efficacy, craftsmanship, and ultimately student success. Now our four-year trend data indicates on average a first-year teacher supports approximately, excuse me, an instructional coach supports on average 46 first-year teachers. Now this team of seven also provides differentiated instruction in coaching support to second and third year teachers this team is also called upon to provide support for

[00:08:48] those teachers that needing additional support as indicated by their school administrator our team provides the support now listed here are some of the ways that coaches provide support they facilitate reflective conversations they support by lesson planning and modeling teacher practices observing and providing non evaluative quality feedback among some

[00:09:21] other ways the end of each school year first-year teachers participate in a

[00:11:51] survey specifically the survey measures satisfaction rate with their mentor and how much they valued the mentor well this graphic indicates that a hundred percent of first-year teachers are assigned a mentor and 98% of them are satisfied with the mentor that's assigned and that they value the mentor support that's given and if we may celebrate with you tonight a highlight that we're proud of that 81 of first-year teachers say they receive multiple dates excuse me they they 81 of first-year teachers stated that they met

[00:12:30] multiple times a week with their mentor so that's a clear evidence that they're going above and beyond all about supporting a new hire here in Loudoun. In August we offer professional learning for our teachers that are new to Loudoun to support their growth and development. First-year teachers receive five days of professional learning in August. Two of the five days are about beginning teacher Institute and

those are our two-day teacher induction event for first-year teachers. All new hires have a mentor meet-and-greet where they can

[00:13:06] really build the relationships with their mentor. New hires also get an introduction to technology and curriculum. So as I stated we are really we are really focused on these guidelines and what we need to do to meet the guidelines and so one thing we are doing is implementing an advisory team. We have the leadership team in place and we are in the process of building an advisory

[00:13:43] team. We are also looking at how we can do a better job at evaluating the program effectiveness so we've just partnered with a company called Kickup that is going to support us with that we really want to commit to a well-funded and structured mentor program so we're looking at how we can get additional funding to support our beginning teachers more and that also goes with with guideline three with allocating the resources we really want to kind of build up how we're supporting beginning teachers because of not being able to

[00:14:23] to retain teachers or and I don't think Loudon has a horrible job doing that just nationally teachers are leaving the profession or it's hard to get them to come into the profession and so we're trying to get ahead of that so one thing that we are in the process of doing is we are developing a new program and it's called the beginning teacher cohort program and so the beginning teachers will be put in a cohort with like grade or like subject area. So for example a group of middle school teachers and it may depending on numbers it might

[00:15:02] be secondary teachers. So if we have 15 new secondary English teachers they will be in a cohort or maybe it's 25 fourth and fifth grade teachers are brand new so they will meet together in a cohort. That will be facilitated by two beginning teacher coaches. Each cohort will have two coaches and they will meet monthly and they will meet after school monthly so they'll meet for the the week in the summer and then they will meet every month after school for an hour and a

[00:15:37] half and it will be on topics like classroom management planning differentiation building relationships so just a really robust program to be able to support beginning teachers so that is our presentation. What questions might you have for us? Committee members, do you have questions regarding the presentation? Ms. Reeser. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[00:16:06] Thanks for the presentation. It's very well done and informative. I just have a couple of questions. Are there, you talked at the end about the cohorts being whether it's grade level or subject matter. I'm making the assumption and wanted to make sure it's a correct assumption that when you say new teachers, it doesn't matter what grade what subject or if they only are part-time teaching three periods of a particular subject that's true we will provide support to any first-year teachers great thanks and you spoke a little bit about funding could you tell

[00:16:44] us what your funding sources are right now yes I'll be happy to take that so we are fortunate to have loud and support from from local funds we also have a lot grants that we receive support from we have VDOE provides us funding for each first-year teacher we get money in two veins from them almost if you will to support a career switcher that is a first-year teacher or a first-year careers a first-year teacher who is not a career switcher teaching in Loudoun

[00:17:19] County grant we're fortunate that LEF has been able to give us some funding as As Tina mentioned, five of our instructional coaches are funded from Title II Part A, and this year we've been

gifted the money as a thanks to the ESSER ARP Fund.

[00:17:39] Could you just elaborate a little bit on Title II Part A? I'm familiar with Title I, but not as much with Title II. Thank you. Title II is mainly for professional learning and professional development. So this falls right into that category of we are developing our teachers.

[00:17:58] So I think for a really long time we've been using Title II funds for these instructional coaches. Thank you. That's all I have. So my first question is, so I get the professional learning side of it, that there's formal training that happens before the start of classes and then throughout the year on PD days and then on other times.

[00:18:25] As far as coaching, could you give a little more context as to, you know, What is the day, given that you have each coach, I think you said, supports around 50 teachers or new teachers. So what does that look like for the coaches on a daily basis or weekly basis?

[00:18:41] How are they spending their time? How are they coordinating, trying to provide coaching services to so many teachers at the same time? It is a challenge. I mean, their caseloads, as you said, are heavy. As Tina elaborated that there might be two that we have at the elementary, for an example.

[00:19:02] And if we think of all of the elementary schools and we cross-reference every elementary school that has a first-year teacher, we have to be very strategic and intentional how geographically they are deployed so that they can get the most bang for their buck of how they're providing support.

[00:19:20] They might go in and do a classroom and visit or do a co-planning in person, but they might do a follow-up meeting, for example, virtually to save time and efficiency. That's a benefit that we learned from COVID of how we can work more strategically over our virtual platforms.

[00:19:41] On average, they really have to be intentional of focusing, when I said geographically, focusing on a region and supporting that regional area. For example, while they're out in the park, they're going to hit all the park schools so that they can make sure all those new teachers are supported.

[00:20:01] before they plan for the following subsequent week moving to Dulles South. It takes a lot of strategic thinking. Thank you. And then my other question was, you touched on it a little bit, but about how are you measuring success for the program?

[00:20:19] Is it, are you, you know, what's your primary driver? Are you looking at the attrition rate? Are you looking at the satisfaction rates that you had up on the screen? Is that what you're getting to with the partnership with Kickup, if I heard the name right? You know, what are you, how are you primarily measuring success?

[00:20:38] I think it's been a multitude of mechanisms. We do use our evaluation surveys. Those are deployed by a research organization called Arroyo that helps us create that mentor survey that our first-year teachers take.

[00:20:56] They also have a survey that is quantified, that is given to mentors of first-year teachers. So that gives us a lot of very specific quantitative data beyond just that qualitative data. We do reflect and use our retention data as an indicator of success moving forward using kick-up.

[00:21:20] We feel that would give us some more specific quantitative measures of how effective are our coaches doing and how we look at strategically using them, being that they are stretched so thin. Oh, yeah, certainly.

[00:21:37] So we've been working with KickUp, and we're just in our phases of development right now, to be quite honest, that the instructional coaches will, when they, there's almost like a log that they fill out for a first-year teacher.

[00:21:54] And when they put in their log, there's some qualitative questions, and then there's some quantitative questions. And for the first time ever, it's going to graphically pull out, extract data for us So that we can see having more of a quantitative measure of how all secondary teachers that have a specific math teacher.

[00:22:19] So we can look at it by how math teachers are doing. How the number, the quantity in terms of the number of, excuse me, the frequency of visits that they're providing support. The amount of instructional minutes of support that we're providing as a team.

[00:22:36] We might be able to look at, at a specific school, how much instructional coaching support is provided at a school for year one teachers versus year two teachers? Does that elaborate a little bit more? Yeah, absolutely. And once you, I know you said you were just starting this partnership, but once you have some of that data, it'd be great to come back and present that.

[00:22:57] Absolutely. Committee members, any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you again for the presentation. Really appreciate it. And apologies for having to bump you from December. But, okay, and now we'll move on to the second information item that was bumped from December on the LCPS Instructional Facilitator Program.

[00:23:20] Dr. Ellis. All right, I'm going to pass this one right back to Ms. Howell. And similarly, no action is anticipated for your information. These are the mentoring and coaching program and the Instructional Facilitator Program are both focused on supporting teachers in the classroom.

[00:23:37] But you'll notice immediately that they definitely have a different focus. So I'll turn it over. Thank you. And I'm going to allow Courtney to introduce herself. Good evening. I'm Courtney Williams. I'm the supervisor for the Instructional Facilitator Program.

[00:23:53] So I think it was around seven years ago that I came and reported to CNI about this program. So I'm really excited to be back to talk about how much it has grown and changed. I actually came to Loudon to start this program.

[00:24:11] when i started it we only had 10 instructional facilitators and so it is it has grown quite a bit and courtney do you want to talk about the purpose statement so um the we call them division instructional facilitators as we do have several types of facilitators in our school system so they wrote a purpose statement really just capturing their work around how they um really focus on supporting students like that is our outcome through supporting adults through coaching and working through professional learning and leadership so as i stated when i started this

[00:24:49] program seven years ago we had 10 instructional facilitators we had eight at the elementary level and two at the middle school level the word got out pretty quickly about the impact that this was having and so high school wanted some and middle school wanted more so we now have we still only have one supervisor and we have 15 elementary facilitators six middle school and six high school once again everything we do is tied to the vision and mission and we support through this

[00:25:25] program we support goal one so really supporting instruction and and it says teachers administrators and staff and the instructional facilitators support all three in addition to goal two goal two is a very big focus of the instructional facilitators and building the capacity of the adults in the schools so the division instructional facilitators were super excited around the strategic plan they have embraced our plan and our goals particularly around goals one and two

[00:26:03] and the graphic you see on the screen there is the six ways that they support schools And we created this because sometimes people would say, well, what do instructional facilitators do, and how do you do this? And this was all research-based.

[00:26:21] Courtney and I have both worked with instructional coaching programs in the past, and we have worked with experts in the field in order to develop instructional coaching programs. And so these six areas are research-based, so we're going to go through these six areas.

[00:26:40] - So the first one is really driving instruction. One thing that teachers really like is they will, the instructional facilitators will meet with them to plan lessons, but then they also will model and co-teach. So what's nice is they will plan a lesson and then the teacher says, I'm not really feeling very confident about that.

[00:27:01] The instructional facilitator will say, how about if I come and I model it for you? And then they have a reflecting conversation and then the facilitator continues to support with, okay, so how do you think you could do this on your own? And then they might go observe and then provide feedback. So they are constantly helping teachers with instruction.

[00:27:21] Another area is around curriculum and content. The DIFs work really closely, as well as I do, with our DOI supervisors, especially in the four core, to align our work. At each level, elementary, middle, and high school, there are DIFs who are liaisons for math, science, social studies, and language arts to attend those monthly meetings and bring back information to our community to make sure that we are all in the know and that we're aligning our support to the work of those content offices.

[00:27:54] We use that also to support school-based teams, the CLTs, in the instructional planning they're doing, and again, just aligning our work to support what the content offices provide. So a big focus this year is CLTs in helping teams become very strong functional teams and the diffs have been instrumental in supporting schools with this we have actually been doing this for a very long time we had built something called team leader institute they the instructional facilitators get an enormous amount

[00:28:32] of professional learning to be able to turn around and support teachers and teams and so they receive there's a professional learning called adaptive schools that teaches how to collaborate. How do you collaborate? How do you facilitate meetings?

[00:28:47] How do you deal with conflict? And so they turn around and they go, and really what we're trying to do is build capacity in the schools, but they may turn around and they will facilitate meetings and once again model for teams. This is how you have a really effective team meeting, but then they work with the team leaders so that the team leaders can take that over so that they can facilitate those meetings.

[00:29:14] Another area is around setting goals and this applies to a couple of different ways. They can work with those teams looking at data from a variety of assessments to set goals around student growth. Another way they can support setting goals is our school improvement plans.

[00:29:30] There are targeted goals in those plans and the diff's work closely with their leadership team and the teachers to help support the implementation of the SIPP. They also, through the team that was talking about cognitive coaching in adaptive schools, having coaching conversations through those conversations and teachers reflecting on their practice allows them to set goals in order to continue to enhance their practice.

[00:29:52] Which introduces us to the next one of coaching. We also provide professional learning called cognitive coaching to all of the facilitators. And cognitive coaching is just supporting thinking. So it is building capacity in others. And so they use coaching to build capacity, especially because, and we'll talk about this in just a moment with some challenges, they are stretched thin, so they can't be there every day.

[00:30:17] So we want them to build the capacity, and one way to do that we know is through coaching. So they learn pausing, paraphrasing, posing questions, active listening. Our hope is by them modeling that that then teachers are using that with each other as well.

[00:30:35] And then another area is professional development. While the DIVs engage in their own professional learning, they are instrumental in providing a variety of professional development for our school system as well as their schools. They tailor their learning for the schools based on the guidance of the leadership team and what they see the teachers might need or based on what teacher-identified needs might be.

[00:30:57] They also work really closely, as I said before, with content supervisors and specialists. So our next County YPD Day, I have DIVs that will be providing professional learning around math and elementary and middle and high school. I have a couple of high school diff's that will be supporting CTE with learning on that Division I professional development day. Their skills in providing professional learning are pretty amazing and they're sought after to help support those content areas. So there are many successes of the program.

[00:31:30] Some of them supporting those teams and really helping those teams become high functioning, helping the teachers improve their instruction and I just want to say this is not a fix it model so they're not going in to fix anything it's just that continuous improvement with we're just helping continually improve practice modeling for teachers one and we're going to show you a couple examples but administrators say I could not function without my diff they're my sounding board they're my planning partner they're my collaborator I need them to be a thought

[00:32:06] partner and they're the one that I count on to support staff support for students as well and then as Courtney stated that professional learning they provide a lot of professional learning for teams and for staff principals rely on them during at the beginning of the year countywide PD days staff meetings data dialogues for many many different things and so we have a couple slides with feedback from principals, it's just a highlight of the appreciation for the support

[00:32:42] that DIVs have provided to them, and I'll just give you an opportunity to look at those. Every year I have quite a few principals that will reach out to me and say, "Please don't take my DIV." Not that I'm going to take their DIV, but they really value the support that they provide to them.

[00:33:00] So these are in the presentations, so I know it's a lot, but you can have an opportunity to read those. We didn't want to just give you all the great. are some challenges as well so we wanted to go over the challenges when the program started the diff's were supporting between four and about six schools each

and we realized quickly that was too much so we've added more diffs so there we have two diffs now who are only supporting one school we have one diff at sterling middle and one at parkview high school so they exclusively

[00:33:35] support that school. We have a couple that are only supporting two schools and then we have others who are supporting three to four schools. They're still stretched too thin. The principals are saying I need my dip here every day because what happens is they'll they'll go to a school and provide some PD and they may not be able to come back for two weeks and the principal said that's too long so they're just spread too thin and so they they're not always able to support when needed. They really try to be there on the CLT days. And if two of their schools have CLTs on the same days, they

[00:34:12] have to maybe switch this so they can't always be there. It also means it takes longer to have an impact. If when Courtney and I have supported instructional coaching programs in the past, even when a diff was at just one school, it takes three to five years to really start seeing that impact. So if they're spread amongst multiple schools, it's harder. And principals have been pretty vocal about wanting more support even when we asked them about budget they one of the number one things was we want our own facilitator please give us our own and then i'm very excited about

[00:34:50] this one but when i first started this was the only facilitator position and it became quite popular quite quickly so we have many many positions with the name facilitator these aren't actually called division instructional facilitators we added that because it became too confusing and i have i'm very happy that we are now going to be changing the name to instructional coach which is what they really are the mentoring ones will be instructional mentoring coaches because that's really what they do they mentor and so next year they will be instructional coaches

[00:35:27] and hr has promised me that they will not allow any other titles to be instructional coach so it will not be confusing so our next steps we are looking for ways to provide more targeted support to schools so last year what we did was we worked very closely with the level offices to determine how can we provide more support so that's where we made some changes and some schools had that one just one dedicated diff and some had two and so we're we're working with the level offices again to see what might be some additional changes we can make and then

[00:36:06] yeah I just um and Tina's in my previous work supporting instructional coaching it's really critical that building leaders principals have professional learning to know best how to strategically use an instructional coach in their school it's it sometimes it's just assume people will know and then we really make sure that we provide the learning to help them know best how to to deploy that person in their building and how to partner. And then, as I said, we will be changing the name to Instructional Coach, which will take effect for next year. You're going to need a new

[00:36:42] lanyard if they change the name. Okay. Committee members, questions for the team? Ms. Reeser. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you again for a really interesting and robust presentation. We appreciate the information very much. So I just wanted to follow up on one of the last things you said about the name so a math instructional facilitator would be focused just on math and that might be targeted at a school that might be in jeopardy of losing accreditation okay whereas

[00:37:16] this is more proactive and ongoing and not reactive so something like that um okay that's that's helpful um to understand and just one more thing about sure support all content areas right so they're generalist the diffs the diffs yes and I was going to ask if they support all content areas and and all the

schools who and how do we decide who gets prioritized in terms of number of hours or that kind of thing the diff's work really closely with the principal to determine

[00:37:53] who needs the support and they don't have to be an expert in the content area to provide the support once again it's not a fix-it model they're not going in saying this is how you need to do your job, they're providing coaching. So that's why they work so closely with the content offices, because they're going to go meet with the team and say, what support do you need? And then if they say, I need EL support, they might reach out to the EL office and say, can we partner together to go in and provide a professional learning to the team on this? So they work really closely with the principal and then with other offices to determine how best to support. Okay. And would

[00:38:31] you say that some of those other instructional facilitators are layered in as needed I would say so yes thank you that's all I have additional questions miss okay just a comment to thank you for both of the presentations this has been really interesting and informative I don't want silence to be taken as a lack of interest so that's really all I don't have questions thank you so much I'm just I'm trying to back into what the staffing standard is without having my budget book in

[00:39:08] front of me because I was looking at the numbers and it seems like it's roughly at the middle and high school level it's roughly one per three schools but you were saying that there's one dedicated to Parkview and one dedicated to Sterling Middle so is that differentiated staffing because their title one schools or what's what how what how is the staffing standard for these positions so yeah thank you for asking that question so in the set in the staffing standard in the budget book it is one per five schools one per yes I believe one for five we can get you the exact numbers what we have done though is in in trying to be responsive to principals and school needs we've

[00:39:46] heard loud and clear some principals are in a position where they don't necessarily need a diff at their school every week or or at all right now to be honest other schools have been clamoring for this support and really really show a need and so in order to be responsive we've shifted and for example taken the the one diff at Parkview given that person's other schools to other diff's so that person can focus solely on Parkview. So with the staffing standard that just means overall how many that they give us

[00:40:22] that we we can decide how to deploy them. Okay and is that the same staffing standard at the elementary level or is it separate? I think it's different by level. I'll get I'll get the exact numbers for you. You know ideally in a in a perfect world and and perhaps long term we would have more of a one one per school model but that's expensive that's a lot of people and that's probably a long time all we need is 70 more or so no problem right almost there no big deal thank you additional questions okay seeing none thank you again for the presentation really appreciate

[00:41:00] it yeah okay with that we'll move to 4.03 access to literacy for all update all right thank you so So while Catherine Neal is approaching the microphone, I wanted to take just a minute to introduce you all to Dr. Ashley Cramp, the other Ashley at the other end of the table or bookends.

[00:41:27] So Dr. Cramp is our interim executive director for teaching and learning, while Mr. Slevin is in his role as acting chief of staff. Dr. Cramp is, in her day job, is an executive principal in the elementary office, and in her previous job she was a director of curriculum and instruction in another Virginia school so we're grateful for her stepping in and now I think I'm going to turn it directly over to Catherine for an update on early literacy all right good evening thank you for your time tonight we last met

[00:42:05] with the board in December and I'd like to take a few minutes to provide some updates on the work happening with the elementary reading and writing office so So for tonight, here's our agenda and I'll start by sharing briefly about where we have been with our contingency plan and then share plans that we have for moving forward.

[00:42:31] The VDOE has provided a few updates regarding the best-in-class literacy materials list, so I'll share an overview of where we are with that. And finally, I'll close with some information regarding the literacy assessments in LCPS.

[00:42:49] So the contingency plan for LCPS has been in effect for a few years. As you can see, starting back as early as 2020, we have been evaluating the effectiveness of units of study for all students. In 2021, LCPS calls for an external review of our elementary literacy program from TNTP.

[00:43:11] The report is shared, and shortly thereafter, VDOE creates the Virginia Literacy Act, which significantly impacts our direction moving forward. Around the same time, the leadership in the elementary reading office changes, and since Since that time, all elementary principals and assistant principals have participated in various professional learning opportunities around the science of reading and evidence-based practices from Letters, NSOL, and from our office.

[00:43:42] Additionally, all elementary schools have implemented the Streamline Guidance, Hegerty, and Units of Study in Phonics to align more closely with the science of reading. We have also provided ELA support to all elementary schools through our ELA Instructional Facilitator So, where are we headed as we look towards the second semester and into next school year?

[00:44:08] The first addition to our contingency plan will be implementing additional professional learning for our teachers. During the 2022 year, we spent considerable time and effort building the background for our administrators and reading teachers to ensure a strong foundation moving forward.

[00:44:24] As we progress into the second semester and continuing through next year, we will be providing opportunities for teachers to engage in learning around the best practices with literacy and the science of reading, balanced versus structured literacy, what's the difference and what does it look like, and then unpacking and understanding the SOLs. The point behind providing this learning is to help ground teachers in what is not changing. While we have a lot of uncertainties ahead of us, we know that the SOLs will remain the same, and by taking a deeper dive into the

[00:45:00] SOLs and connecting to instructional practices that will remain the same we are hoping to provide reassurance to our teachers these sessions will be created by the ELA instructional facilitator team and offered during the march 13th PD day and these offerings will also be available to principals who want building level support ELA facilitators are able to provide any of these offerings at a CLT a staff meeting etc and this will extend into next school year as well in In addition to our support for teachers, we will continue providing learning for our reading teachers during our monthly meetings.

[00:45:38] We will have regular touch points in professional learning with principals and assistant principals. The VDOE has also committed to required professional learning for reading teachers and principals. Additional details on those requirements are still being developed. Moving forward into next year, we will continue using the streamlined guidance across all K-5 classrooms.

[00:46:03] Our contingency plan will include refinements to the streamlined guidance based on feedback that we have received from teachers and administrators. Some of the anticipated refinements will be

reworking lessons from units of study to be more explicit and follow the I do, we do, you do format.

[00:46:20] We will also continue with Hagerty instruction for phonemic awareness skills across all our K-2 classrooms. Many schools have reached out sharing their frustrations with the units of study in phonics and its lack of structure for our K-2 students.

[00:46:39] Our office will be pulling back on the units of study in phonics and replacing all K-2 classrooms with UFLY Foundations. UFLY comes from the University of Florida Literacy Institute. The UFLY Foundations program has recently received a lot of attention from its evidence-based approach that aligns with the science of reading research, but most importantly for its success with students.

[00:47:05] UFLY mimics the structure of Hegarty in that it provides clear, concise, and explicit lesson plans that are pre-made for teachers and requires little to no prep work. This program includes a comprehensive scope and sequence that complements our Hegarty resources.

[00:47:24] Whereas Hegarty explicitly teaches phonemic awareness, which is segmenting, blending, and manipulating spoken sounds, UFLY explicitly teaches phonics, which is learning to read printed alphabetic symbols, speech-to-print. Systematic explicit programs such as Hegarty and UFLY follow a lesson routine for building decoding skills incrementally.

[00:47:47] We currently have a few elementary schools across the division that have purchased and implemented UFLY this year and have shared great successes for students and positive responses from teachers. Materials will be purchased this year and we are anticipating a spring delivery.

[00:48:03] Our office will be purchasing manuals for all K-2 classroom teachers along with the additional copies for our English learner and special education teachers. While teachers are welcome to begin getting familiar with the materials and using them this year, they will not be required to use them until the fall of 2023.

[00:48:22] This will be reflected as one of the refinements to our streamlined guidance. An important element of implementing UFLY will be the professional learning component. We will be providing introductory professional learning for teachers in the spring of this year with continued professional learning throughout the 23-24 school year.

[00:48:44] Both Hegarty and UFLY will have long-term outcomes within our division literacy plan. Once we have secured a core resource that includes phonics and phonemic awareness instruction, both Hegarty and UFLY will transition to being interventions that we can use to support students as needed.

[00:49:01] Finally, we will be expanding our offerings of letters to include Volume 2 for teachers who completed Volume 1 this year. We will also offer additional cohorts of Volume 1.

[00:49:18] Additionally, we will be providing Letters facilitator training to our ELA instructional facilitator team. Our hope is to expand the number of local facilitators here in LCPS to increase the sustainability for this learning long term.

[00:49:37] We have received many pieces of positive feedback from the National Letters facilitators who are supporting our 18 cohorts of Volume 1 this year. are just a few testimonials that have been shared with us so we've covered a lot of information about where we've been and where we're heading this year

[00:50:03] and into next year this is just a recap of the highlights from our office in a state superintendent's memo from January 20th divisions were updated on the status of the best-in-class list for

core resources the memo indicated that phase one has been completed this phase provided an initial review for alignment

[00:50:37] features of evidence-based core instructional reading programs as required by the Virginia Literacy Act. Additionally, in the memo, the VDOE shared the status of those publishers that will and will not be moving forward to phase two. The list shares a total of 13 resources that applied to be reviewed by the VDOE committee. Of those 13, six applied during our LCPS's open RFP and were reviewed by our resource adoption team.

[00:51:12] At the conclusion of our adoption process, LCPS determined McGraw-Hill Wonders and HMH Interreading to be the best options for our division, both of which appear on the list that will be moving to Phase 2. LCPS also reviewed Benchmark Advance and McGraw-Hill Open Court, which will also be moving to Phase 2.

[00:51:32] Additionally, during our adoption process, LCPS reviewed Savas, MyView, and Scholastic Literacy, but determined they were not sufficient. Per that list from the VDOE, those titles will not be advancing to Phase 2. We know that continuous momentum is critical right now.

[00:51:56] Our teachers need to feel like their instruction is moving forward. Originally, our literacy and plan included implementing a core resource during the 23-24 school year, followed by implementation of the new PALS assessment in the 24-25 school year.

[00:52:13] With the decision from the full school board to pause our core resource adoption, our office has been starting conversations with the Virginia Literacy Partnership Office, formerly the PALS office, to discuss plans regarding early implementation of the updated literacy screener.

[00:52:30] We know that regardless of when the assessment is implemented, it will pose a shift in learning and practice for our teachers. Since we are delaying the adoption of a core resource, our goal is to alleviate some stress by implementing the new PALS screener next year rather than wait and have teachers implement a new core resource and a new screener at the same time in 24-25.

[00:52:53] In a recent information webinar, the VLP office shared that the new screener will be called VALS, which stands for Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System. For a few years, the DRA assessment has been a recurring topic of conversation.

[00:53:14] We have also received considerable feedback from our teachers and administrators. The Elementary Reading and Writing Office is currently surveying our administrators and teacher leaders to collect feedback on this assessment. Our questions center around the use of the DRA, what data schools find valuable from this assessment, and their overall support or concerns regarding the DRA.

[00:53:39] We will continue to engage with our stakeholders to gather feedback to make the most informed decision regarding continuing or not with the use of the DRA in school year 23-24. A big question we've been receiving is, how do all these pieces fit together?

[00:53:57] How is this all related to the science of reading and evidence-based practices? This visual helps to highlight the individual pieces we have been working through, but also how they all connect to each other. Thank you for listening to the updates from our office.

[00:54:19] Committee members, questions? Ms. Okadekbe. Thank you so much for the update. This is very helpful to understand what's happened. I wanted to just note, I appreciated hearing that four of the

programs that we had reviewed and were on the list, and just wanted to note and make sure that as we wait for BDOE to complete their review that we do have the opportunity to consider resources that may not have been on our list of vendors who submitted to our RFP

[00:54:58] but have an opportunity to look at everything on the final list from BDOE. Thank you. Yes, that is true. Thanks. Additional questions? Okay, so what exactly is the streamlined guidance? Is that essentially how to use the units of study and how not to use the units of study?

[00:55:18] Yes, and so we developed the streamlined guidance last year, and it basically goes quarter by quarter. It's like a pacing guide for each grade level, and it takes the units of study and compares it to the different components in a literacy block.

[00:55:38] So last year we wanted to make sure that, especially in our early grades, we had dedicated time daily for phonics instruction. And so we scaled back on some of the units of study so that there would be more time for that explicit instruction, like in phonemic awareness and phonics.

[00:55:55] The same for the upper grades. There's dedicated time for word study. So it basically just gives the framework for teachers on what resources we have in Loudoun and how they can use it during their literacy block. Okay. That makes sense. That's what I figured. I don't think I had heard that term before today, so I wanted to make sure I understood what that was.

[00:56:17] Now, I thought when we started using Hegarty a few years ago, it was to provide more explicit phonics instruction and phonemic awareness, but it sounds like we're now also going to be using UFLI for that.

[00:56:32] So is that just kind of further phasing out units of study, or is that replacing some of what Hegarty has been using, what we've been using some of that for over the last few years? That's a good question. So Hegarty is just phonemic awareness. And so what that means is that it's just students manipulating the sounds that they hear in words.

[00:56:52] Like they're hearing the sounds, and then they're repeating the sounds with their teacher. And so it doesn't connect to the written print at all. And so phonics, though, is taking the sounds and connecting it to print.

[00:57:09] And that's like, you might have heard the term orthographic mapping. That's where that term comes into play. And so Hegarty is really, you know, powerful for getting students to hear the different sounds and words and how to communicate using those sounds.

[00:57:27] But we also need to have that explicit instruction in phonics as well. And so that's what UFLY helps to support. We've had the units of study in phonics, but that program is not as explicit.

[00:57:43] It doesn't have a scope and sequence that helps the teachers kind of follow along and know what skills need to be taught at what time. Okay, thank you. Do we have an update from VDOE on when they're expecting to finish Phase 2 or publish their final list?

[00:57:59] We don't have any additional information. Phase two is expected to be completed mid-March, but then there is some different review periods that the board has said that they would have to go through at the state level, and so we have been told possibly early summer, late spring.

[00:58:25] Okay. And the reason why that triggered in my mind is because there was, when you had the future timeline, you anticipate UFLY being used for the next two years for FY24 and FY25, I think. So are

we anticipating that we're not going to have a new core resource until FY26, or do we think we'll have it sooner than that?

[00:58:52] I think we're still anticipating FY25 for the new core resource. So fall FY20, excuse me, fall 2024. Yes, that's correct, yes. And then going along with that, I know we had money in the current FY23 budget for purchasing the new core instructional materials.

[00:59:12] So I'm assuming like the rest of our money, we can't roll that over. So are we going to have to put money in a future budget in order to cover the cost of that? Because I know it was significant. We may, although we've been able to adjust our textbook adoption plan, and we are currently in the middle of reviewing CTE materials, and the board will receive an information item on that soon.

[00:59:39] So we are adjusting the plan in order to be able to use most of the FY24 funds for the early literacy adoption. That's not to say we may end up needing to ask for more money, but that's our current plan.

[00:59:55] So the money that is already in the FY24 budget for general textbook adoption would be used for that? Would be, yes. Okay, got it. Committee members, any additional questions? Ms. Oganegbe? Sorry. So just a follow-up.

[01:00:12] So you mentioned that you're phasing out units of study and described what will be in place. Is it accurate to say that units of study will not be part of the instructional plans for the upcoming academic year? So we're phasing out units of study phonics for K-5 or for K-3.

[01:00:35] Units of study reading and units of study of writing will still be in place. They're part of the streamlined guidance. Additional questions? Thank you for the update. Looking forward to getting that phase two list and seeing next steps.

[01:00:52] With that, we'll move to 4.04, Policy 5045, Selection and Review of Instructional Materials. Dr. Ellis. Thank you. All right. Dr. Cramp and I will give you an update on Policy 5045.

[01:01:11] So as you know, in November, this committee was instrumental in drafting and sending a final draft of Policy 5055, parental notification of instructional materials with sexually explicit content to the full board for approval.

[01:01:28] And that policy went into practice on January 1st. In the development of policy 50-55, it became clear that we needed to revisit policy 50-45. A couple of things that struck us right away was the clarification of library materials and when they are and are not considered instructional materials.

[01:01:52] Some other things that have come up, both among staff conversations and even in very recent school board meetings, was the definition of what to really define and clarify what library materials are considered acceptable.

[01:02:09] Do we need to tighten that up in the policy? And defining terms such as culturally responsive and diverse, and just really tightening up the language around that. So we have been working quite a lot on this project, and Dr. Cramp has really taken the lead with her team.

[01:02:32] We are splitting the existing policy 5045 into three separate policies. So that is why we don't have a draft policy for you tonight. We plan to have multiple new draft policies for you on March 6th when we meet. and I'm going to let Dr. Cramp talk about the work that's been done and the policies that you will see when we come to you on March 6th.

[01:02:56] Good evening. It's nice to meet all of you. Thanks for having us here. So as Dr. Ellis said, when the team began meeting late November, obviously I just joined in early January, but they have been meeting once or twice a week since that late November time frame to begin to look at policy 5045, and when they began to take a look at that, can see there are multiple pieces that were part of 5045 or seem to be missing from 5045 and so when the team began the work the first conversations were around splitting it into

[01:03:31] three different policies so we could clearly address each of the um you know of the topics in and of themselves so what we're currently working towards is 5045 would be criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials not core resources but supplemental instructional materials that are part of the materials we use in the classroom 5046 would address selection of both school and classroom library materials we're receiving lots of questions around that because most classrooms English in particular and certainly all elementary have classroom

[01:04:06] library materials in addition to the school library so we're outlining that in 5046 and then 5047 is reconsideration of instructional and library materials so if someone wishes for us to review one of those resources or materials to maybe exclude it or to take it out of being available for student or teacher use that policy will outline that challenge process how that review happens the committees that will look at the the resource or the materials

[01:04:41] and you know that will all be defined in 5047 as part of that work we have discovered a need to address family life education so we are working on also an additional policy that outlines that offering that we have across the division grades k through 12 and so we reference that in one of these policies and then have created a standalone one as well. So as I said we have been working very diligently one or two times a week a core team and so I just wanted to talk you through the progress that we've made thus far. So in

[01:05:18] December you know our staff obviously the board recommended that we revisit 50/45 in late November and we began that and decided to make that split. We did some research and we began to work on developing the policies in January at the school board meeting on January 10th the board discussed the need to revisit 5045 which was already in progress we have been continuing to develop the policies again one or two times a week working together we have gotten feedback from our librarians on the policies and have incorporated that and made appropriate

[01:05:53] revisions in this month of February we have taken the draft policies to our Department of Instruction leadership team for review and feedback our legal team has reviewed them cabinet is also soon to review them and provide some feedback and we are also beginning to work on some supporting regulations that will need to come along with some of the policies that really outline more specifics of procedures and things at the school level so in March when we come back to you on March 6th we plan to present all four of those policies now 50 45 46 47 and

[01:06:31] our family life education policy and following that meeting we will begin our additional stakeholder or public feedback processes so that we can continue to gather feedback and we anticipate an information item for the full school board in either May or June of this year around the So we did want to give an opportunity to hear your feedback.

[01:06:58] It would be really helpful at this phase, even not seeing, having seen any drafts, but considering the four policies that you will see drafts of in March, is there anything top of mind for you that you want to make sure that we are considering, any significant questions that you have?

[01:07:18] One question that has come up is why is 5045 focused only on supplemental instructional materials? And I'll just remind, for the sake of anyone else who's listening, that we already have a policy about textbooks and core instructional materials.

[01:07:34] So that's an existing policy that is not up for review at this time. And in this process, we have realized that there is a lot of content in 5045. It's super confusing if you just sit down and read it start to finish and we anticipate this being much more clear and easy to follow. Committee members questions? Ms. Reaser. Thank you. I think it would be helpful to see what other school divisions in our region may have with regard to

[01:08:14] certainly anything that's a brand new policy and I don't I'm looking at family life education in specific when I say that because I realize a lot of what's happening with 50-45 is the three policies are coming out of something that already exists and we've seen it but if we're looking at an additional brand new policy I think it would be helpful to see what other region four schools have thank you thank you chair Sirotkin I think one thing and I it sounds like you're already planning

[01:08:51] on incorporating this but I think it'll just be really important to include definitions of terminology that are used so that it's just very clear within the policy what it is that it's addressing, what the terms mean, so that there aren't questions. Because I think often a word can be thought of in different ways, so being clear about what we mean by those things. And then I know you mentioned that the policy on textbooks and instructional materials is not up for review,

[01:09:24] But I think if there's anything in through this exercise, again, specifically around definitions and terminology where it would make sense to look at that to make sure that it's up to the same level of clarity, I think that would make sense to take a look at that one, too.

[01:09:46] Thank you. And I was going to ask the same question about the textbook adoption policy to make sure staff had at least just taken a look at it to make sure it doesn't need to be updated as part of this, given that we're either updating or creating everything else that goes along with it.

[01:10:03] We have no policy right now that covers FLE. I was almost positive we did, but now I can't find it either. So regulation and policy? We follow the BDOE's guidance, you know, lockstep, but in terms of local LCPS policy, we do not have one.

[01:10:21] Okay. Thank you. I think that's all I had. Any additional questions? Okay. So it's difficult to give more specific feedback without having seen any of the drafts yet, but definitely looking forward to seeing those in March.

[01:10:40] With that, we'll move to our last agenda item on policy 50-30, assessment and grading. So, committee members, this policy is not up for a regular five-year review, but the policy was referred to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee by the full board in September of 2022 based on a motion from Mr. Hoyler during New Business, which passed on a 5-4 vote.

[01:11:10] This policy has been reviewed numerous times over the past few years in October of 2019, September 2020, November 2020, and September 2021. And staff is not recommending any additional changes to the adopted policy at this time.

[01:11:28] So at this point, I wanted to ask the question to the committee members to see whether there are any specific changes to the policy that you feel should be explored or that we want to direct staff to

come back to us with more information on or that any committee member might want to just directly propose and come back and provide those to our advisory committees for feedback.

[01:12:00] So it does not appear that any committee member has interest in changes to policy 50-30 at this time. And so given that there are no staff recommended changes either, I'll consider this referral complete. With that, we will go to item five, new business.

[01:12:22] Is there any new business tonight? Seeing none, we are adjourned. Thank you, everyone.



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