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Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting, Monday, March 6, 2023

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[00:00:01] Good afternoon. I call to order this March 6th meeting of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee of the Loudoun County School Board. The first item on our agenda is item two, public comment. We have one speaker signed up, so I'll be allocating three minutes to the one speaker given the number of other items that we have on the agenda tonight.

[00:00:21] So our first speaker is Andrea Weiskopf. Good evening. I was looking at the policies coming up, and I know you know what I feel, and I wanted to explain more in detail about the subtle ways we need to be aware of white supremacy.

[00:00:48] When Youngkin released his version of the social studies standards, which I know, thankfully, aren't there anymore, people focused on the mess instead of even looking at the little details.

[00:01:09] For example, it had students need to learn the battle of First Manassas. It is only called First Manassas here. And by having students learn the battle of first Manassas, when our students go out into the rest of the world and everyone else says the battle of full run and they say first Manassas, it brings us back into this us versus them mentality.

[00:01:40] And it's a very subtle way of enforcing white supremacy that people might not even realize that's what it's doing. The other thing, because I saw F.L. Lee, I really want to bring up the fact that for

young children, F.L. Lee is child abuse prevention.

[00:02:10] Children who do not know the proper names of their body parts can't explain abuse. There's a story of a girl who said her daddy touched her cookie last night, and no one knew it was an outcry.

[00:02:26] Children need to know that, and children need to know not to be ashamed of bodies. Thank you. Black Lives Matter. Thank you. And since that was our only speaker for tonight, that will conclude public comment.

[00:02:45] With that, we'll move to item three on our agenda, approval of the minutes. Is there a motion? I move to approve the February 9, 2023 Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting minutes. I will second.

[00:03:01] Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. That will conclude item three, and we'll move on to item four, our information items. We have five of them tonight, and we'll be beginning with 401 Policy 5045, Selection and Review of Instructional Materials.

[00:03:24] Dr. Ellis. Thank you. So this evening, we have a series of policies for your review, and if it's okay with the committee, our plan was to have a brief presentation on the background of these four policies.

[00:03:40] and the steps that we've taken to revise them and then we'll pause after each policy so we'll treat each policy as a separate information item and give you an opportunity to provide your feedback on each policy before moving to the next. We do have a couple slides on each policy so I'll leave this up and we'll move through the slides as you move through the information items if that works. So I am going to turn this over to Dr. Ashley Cramp she's our interim executive director of teaching and learning and she and her team have been focusing a lot on these

[00:04:14] four policies starting with policy 5045 so she'll start with a brief background and then we'll start with policy 5045 specifically good evening it's nice to see both of you again thanks for having us here to share with you about the work that we've done thus far and the four policies that dr ellis mentioned um so just to remind you a few reminders from our last meeting that i shared with you then was that in november of 2022 policy 5055 parental notification of instructional materials with

[00:04:48] sexually explicit content was approved by the school board and after the approval of 5055 staff began revisiting policy 5045. the request from the school board around that review included clarifying when library materials are considered instructional materials, defining what library materials are considered acceptable, and defining culturally responsive and diverse. And so similar to the VSBA model policies as we were working through this over the past several months, we did make a decision to separate 50/45 into three distinct policies. So 50/45 is the

[00:05:26] criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials, 50/46 is criteria and selection of school and classroom library materials and 5047 is review of challenged instructional and library materials and in the process we did make a determination to add an additional policy 5048 family life education this timeline was presented to you at our last meeting as well just to bring you up to today's date we have been meeting regularly since December around each of these policies, the team up here and myself and we have already at

[00:06:05] this point gotten feedback from legal our Department of Instruction leadership team and librarians and have incorporated all of that feedback into the draft policies that we're bringing to you this evening and once we work with you and get approval for our drafts we will begin the process to get additional feedback from various stakeholder groups. Being culturally responsive means that we have a student-centered approach to instruction that respects and affirms all student cultures and so throughout policy 5045 and 5046 there is reference to supporting a culturally

[00:06:41] responsive environment through the selection of materials this is articulated in 5045 through the selection criteria for supplemental materials which includes that materials will be representative of all backgrounds within the lcps community and beyond as defined by policy 1040 equal opportunity for equitable safe and inclusive environment this is also articulated in 5046 through the selection criteria for school and classroom library materials to include materials that are representative of

[00:07:14] all backgrounds within the lcps community and beyond as defined by 1040. policy 5045 our first policy that we're bringing to you this evening is the criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials and on this slide we just provide a brief overview of some of the changes additions revisions you know that we've provided in this process and so we just want to remind everyone that primary instructional materials are covered under policy 5130 textbook adoption and that we're working with supplemental instructional materials and those materials

[00:07:54] support the primary resource that has been selected and supplemental materials can be you know selected by the division by a school or by an individual teacher we separated the criteria for division level materials and school level materials in policy 5045 and we do state very explicitly that instructional materials with sexually explicit content shall not be used in elementary classrooms as referenced in policy 5055 we did also define when school library materials are considered supplemental instructional materials and we did

[00:08:32] incorporate the feedback that we received from DOI leadership and so policy 5045 is separated into multiple sections I'm just going to highlight what those sections are and then we welcome your feedback and questions so again 5045 is criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials section a is the actual definition of supplemental instructional materials section B works through division level supplemental instructional materials to include criteria for the selection of those materials section C is school level instructional supplemental instructional materials and the criteria for

[00:09:10] selection of those and then section D is school library materials and when they are considered supplemental instructional materials. So we welcome your feedback and questions at this time on 5045. Thank you. Committee members, questions or discussion regarding this policy? I have a number of them. Starting for sections B3, which would be starting on line 30, and then also C3 on line 64, which is essentially the same list

[00:09:47] in two different sections i think that the header the the introductory section for those needs and if applicable for those topics because there's yes it's absolutely appropriate to consider those things but they all may not apply to every topic i mean everything that involves human relationships or values doesn't it may or may not have anything to do with the preservation of national values or things like that. So I think just to be clear that all of those don't have to

[00:10:18] be analyzed if they just don't apply to add that in would be helpful. On or around line 43 in a new section, I think it would be useful to add, unless I missed it somewhere else, to add in that division

level purchase resources should be posted publicly for review prior to purchase or installation in schools i know that's practice that we've moved to over the last few years i remember being involved in the discussion when the middle school diverse classroom library books were

[00:10:55] posted publicly before they were purchased and so i think putting that in uh in policy would be good since that is our standard practice now unless uh they're different direction from the committee so i will i'll just jump in and say that that is not standard practice to have supplemental instructional resources reviewed even if they're division level purchases i'm specifically talking only about division level purchases i understand if you know for everything a teacher or or school might use to might choose to use i'm not suggesting we go that far down but for division level resources i think that's something we should consider although i'd be interested to know

[00:11:34] the committee's feedback on that okay we could certainly talk about it but that is not current practice and it would be we would need to talk about what that would look like so was that just done by exception for the middle school diverse classroom purchases before those before those were bought yes because of the yes exactly just because of the sensitivity of those well i don't think they were actually reviewed prior to purchase the lists were made public i remember the i know the lists were made public before the books were put into the into the classrooms i don't know if that

[00:12:08] was before or after purchase but i remember i remember reviewing it online okay uh on line 78 where it talks about how school library materials would be considered supplemental instructional materials when okay when assigned by a teacher to be used and i'm looking at two section two under there as part of an extracurricular educational program so i'd like to understand how how extracurriculars come into play here because I guess if it's assigned by it when

[00:12:47] it it has to be assigned by a teacher so that wouldn't be like an external organization coming in and doing doing you know pulling books off the shelf in a library for students to read for something that has nothing to do with the decision that a teacher or LCPS made but I'd like to understand more about kind of what the what the bounds are there. So I think at least internally section D as you said is for the completion of an assignment or as part of an academic or extracurricular educational program and if you look in

[00:13:20] section A we do define about halfway down in that section this includes materials selected for extracurriculars and clubs and may include books magazines newspapers articles things like that so when we talk about extracurricular educational program academic or extracurricular those are the things that we're referencing right um is clubs and that we do with students and what materials we may use

[00:13:47] with them um and and internal or external they would be bound to follow our policy i'm this may be a i'm just thinking we have i don't know at our elementary schools there may be you know an after school tennis club i just i'm picking on this example because my i remember my son doing it when he was in elementary school and so that's like it's not an it was an outside organization that came in and ran the tennis club it wasn't an lcps teacher anyone that that's doing it so

[00:14:24] if the the you know the the person from a private company or coach who's coming in and and running the tennis club says picks a book off off the shelf from the library and says you got to read this book is that now a supplement or supplemental extracurricular resource or instructional resource I think what this is referring to is the book clubs that happen in schools the teachers lead those book clubs there's

the Virginia Readers Choice book club there's the Virginia Reads book club there's project lit those books are assigned so librarians have started notifying parents if there is any

[00:15:03] content in them but I think that's what this specifically is referring to when it talks about extracurricular activities that's a free choice participation for the students in the school right we yeah we can we can look at that language and clarify that I think it I think it needs to be I'm just afraid of it being too broad and being like okay anytime anyone's doing a club and they could say oh I'm everyone everything on the shelf is you know is you got to read it or I'm putting that on a reading list for my club and now it's the entire library is in uh uh reading material for that club uh and then just

[00:15:41] one one minor thing there there's some places like on line 46 where policy should be capitalized where it's policy 5048 or other policies is just inconsistent with whether it's capitalized or not and it should be. I think that's all I had. Ms. Reiser. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So just echoing some of the concerns that Mr. Sorotkin was voicing, I think there may be confusion with some of the after-school programs that volunteers run and I would want to avoid parents assuming that the

[00:16:21] after school programs that volunteers or PTAs hold would be held to the same standard and then and then being surprised if they weren't because I don't I don't think this would apply to that program and I don't even think it could if we wanted it to but that's either here nor there I just don't want anybody to be confused so I think just making sure that that's clear the other question I wanted to go back to was regarding the middle school the list of books that was initially posted to the division-wide list for review so we do

[00:16:57] have a way for tracking for parents to be able to track what their children are reading and checking out that's that's different than it was in years past so at this point I guess just for the public's clarification could you just remind us when new books are added where lists would be available sure and the distinction is between the school library and classroom libraries okay so parents and I'll have Alyssa jump in and correct me if I'm wrong or add additional information I may miss so parents have

[00:17:35] access to their child's library account and can see through LCPS go what their student is checking out of the school library regarding the classroom libraries those lists are not listed in Mac in with the school libraries they are separate lists posted on our lcps website so we currently don't track what who checks out a book from a classroom library just the school libraries did i get that right but all the books that are available can be seen absolutely yes all the books are listed

[00:18:07] thank you any additional comments okay so i think we're ready to move on to 5046.

[00:18:26] policy 5046 addresses criteria and selection of school and classroom library materials so in this policy we we did distinguish between school libraries and classroom libraries. Again, we did incorporate feedback from librarians in our Department of Instruction leadership.

[00:18:43] We identified the criteria for the selection of materials in both those entities, school and classroom. And we identified the following materials as prohibited. So sexually explicit instructional materials as defined in Policy 5055 in our elementary schools, materials at all levels that contain visual depictions sexual conduct as defined in policy 5055 and then materials that have been removed removed from circulation pursuant to the procedures outlined in policy 5047 which is challenged to a particular material and subsequent removal so those three would all be prohibited and are listed as such

[00:19:22] in policy 5046. policy 5046 has several sections as well section A deals with our school libraries and the purpose of school libraries as well as selection of materials section B is classroom libraries their purpose and selection of materials section C is retirement or removal of library materials section D outlines the prohibited materials that I just referenced section E addresses gifts and donations and section F addresses inventory of the school library so we welcome your feedback and comments on 5046.

[00:20:04] Is there any feedback or questions regarding 5046? None on this policy.

[00:20:23] Policy 5047 addresses the review of challenged instructional and library materials. So an overview of the things that we've worked with in policy 5047. One, there is no longer a separate school level review.

[00:20:40] All reviews are now just at the division level. we made that decision in order to have consistency and know that certainly school to school as different committees come together there may be different decisions and so a book is allowed at one school but maybe a different school committee had decided it wasn't and so we have removed the school level review process altogether and any challenged review of materials will come right to the division level we did change the review timeline from 30 to 45 days you know we certainly need time to read the book or view the material that's being challenged, to get

[00:21:18] a committee together, to have a dialogue, to find a common date that works for everyone, and when that happens to fall, especially during a holiday season or something like that, the 30 days can actually present some challenge, so we just increase that to a 45-day review period. We added that instructional staff in the building where they work or their student attends can also submit a request for reconsideration and we did add that the complainant share the concern with an administrator before submitting a formal review request the reason we put that in there is we'd like them to speak with their school administration first they can certainly help define some of the context around

[00:21:56] the use of the material might be able to resolve it at the school level with providing an alternate assignment or an alternate material and certainly we want to build those trusting and open relationships where you're able to have that dialogue with your school administrator first and increase the level of transparency that we have there certainly recognize either it may not be able to be resolved at the school level and someone still wishes to proceed with their challenge their review of the resource and that's perfectly okay and we're happy to take a look at that challenge but we also recognize not everybody will

[00:22:33] follow through with that step and so if someone hasn't spoken to their administration prior to filling out a reconsideration form, we're not going to stop the process. We're going to get a committee together and we're going to continue to review the material even if you know they haven't taken that step to speak with their school administration. Requests for reconsideration must be submitted online and the request can include four different actions that the person or people are desiring as a result of that challenge, either removal, restriction, recategorization, or expanded access. And so

[00:23:08] within the online form, we ask them to indicate which of those they would like the committee to consider. The division level committee now has three parents, two division level administrators, and two school-based employees from the level of challenge, either elementary, middle, or high.

[00:23:25] An appeal to the school board can come from any qualified complainant, not just the originator. So if I didn't agree with a particular decision that had been made, but I wasn't the original complainant, I could still file an appeal on behalf of that decision.

[00:23:43] We included a note about posting the decision, including the brief rationale around the decision on the division website, that that will be common practice. And again, we incorporated feedback from the Department of Instruction Leadership. We are already beginning some work on an upcoming regulation that would go with this particular policy that would add more specifics around the committee selection process and we had some dialogue around establishing annual review committees so that we had a committee in place trained well versed on the policy ready to go essentially when we receive a challenge because that is sometimes a difficult thing is

[00:24:20] to assemble a committee in a quick amount of time in order to follow through with the challenge so we have been having dialogue around establishing like I said an annual committee who would be available for any challenge at their particular level so we policy 5047 is divided into section A the procedure for the review of challenged materials section B the division level procedure for review of challenge materials should be section C appeal to the school board section D

[00:24:55] timeline for additional actions, and that is it. So we welcome your feedback and comments on 5047. Thank you. Committee members, questions? Okay. All right, starting from the top, the on line six and seven, it says all materials in the process of being reviewed shall remain in use or circulation until a final decision is reached. I know there's been one or two instances over the last few years where the superintendent pulled books out while they were being reviewed.

[00:25:32] So I wanted to see whether the intent of this is to, is this an intentional change in practice? So this has always been practice to keep the books in circulation until a final decision has been reached. In some situations, when a book is challenged, we only have enough copies of the book to for people on the committee to read and so they're by nature of the process removed from the libraries so that they can be given to committee members to review but I don't recall

[00:26:10] an instance where the book has been removed prior to a decision being made online 13 where it says if the complainant is a staff member they may state an objection relating to the instructional curriculum and not personal opinions that the and not personal opinions just that seems a little i i get the intent but it just seems like weird phrasing or i'm not sure i'm not sure it needs to be there uh online 34 where it says the superintendent's decision shall apply uniformly

[00:26:49] across the division at the school level challenge i think we can get rid of the last clause and just say shall apply uniformly across the division unless there's something I'm missing there and then similarly online oh yeah okay the last sentence on BC lines 37 38 and 39 it says if the decision of the superintendent is not timely appealed within 15 business days of receipt of the decision being appealed the superintendent's decision shall be final

[00:27:25] once the 15 day business it's saying that this 15 day thing twice i think it can just stop after the superintendent's decision shall be final uh let's see okay on lines 52 through 57 where specifically the last the last sentence where it says the school board could affirm modify or reverse the decision of the school board review committee and i can't remember if that i don't know if that's new or that was in the policy previously, but I don't think that's the way

[00:28:03] any of our other three-member appeal committees work, where they can't go up to the full board once that committee makes a decision that's final. So I wanted to understand whether that was an intentional change, because I don't want to create that if that's not something that exists now. So my

understanding is, and I may need Mr. Slevin to help me here, the school board has not changed a decision of the school board committee's review of a book and so what I don't know is was

[00:28:42] that intentionally added and if so why we may have to go back and look at that okay okay no you're fine while she's researching that do you mind if I go back to line 33 and 34 so the what we were trying to say there is and maybe you can help us with rewording if it's not clear so if a book is removed from the elementary school we may still have it at the middle school and it may be

[00:29:20] appropriate at the middle school and so what we meant was it would be removed from all middle all elementary schools so I don't I don't know if that's understood in the decision because we would clarify that it's just at the elementary school maybe that's sufficient I think that would I think that would or should be part of the superintendent's decision where it would say on what levels is the book going to be removed on what levels is it going to be retained on what levels is it's going to be added but whatever that decision is that's what should apply uniformly great okay so we can we can clarify that and then and then back to the school board it was added it

[00:29:59] was not in the original policy so we can take a look at that because that has not been past practice and as you mentioned not practice of other committees of the board right okay and then finally, I remember one of the original reasons why we thought that at the time 5045 needed to be revised after 5055 passed is that there needed to be some way of challenging the status of whether a book contains sexually explicit material or not. And so I want, is that, is that, is that

[00:30:34] what is meant by the parents can challenge the categorization of a book? Exactly. Okay. So for that they wouldn't be challenging to remove the book but well I guess they could be challenging that too but one of one of the they could just be challenging the categorization or the decision could be to okay this should be flagged as sexually explicit content but we're not going to remove the book that's exactly right so the parent could just to paraphrase what you said the parent could either challenge the book book's existence where it is placed and or the whether it has sexually

[00:31:12] explicit content and likewise the committee could keep it or remove it or re-level it and/or identify it as sexually explicit okay I think that needs to be a little more explicit no pun intended in the policy as to what the process for that would be or the fact that that's one of the options that that the materials can be challenged over additional comments miss Rieser thank you so I stand corrected the language about the school board is

[00:31:51] is actually in the policy in the original so we'll go back and look at that I would be I will I'll only speak for myself but I would we've never done that I don't think anyone understood that that's what current practice is and I would be in favor of taking that out given that none of our other appeal committees work that way we're happy to do that and I'll just chime in there and say that I think even if it existed it hasn't been the practice and I think that we don't want to create an inconsistency here in fact I was going to start by saying I'm really glad to see that everything is becoming more consistent and having a process that's very clear and concise

[00:32:28] and everyone can look at it and see did this happen and it's happening the same way for every level and at every school and the consistency that you all have brought forward i think is going to help everyone parents know exactly where they can give input how to give that input and it will help the school board and the school division receive and use that input so thank you for doing that. And I think it is

important to keep the levels of appeals consistent with what other appeal committees do as well. And I also wanted to comment on line number seven, discuss this final

[00:33:04] decision. And I was just wanting to confirm that that term is therefore defined between lines 35 and 40. Is that correct? Yes. Okay. And if you wouldn't mind going back to the slide we were looking at before we looked at the policy I had a couple of questions about

[00:33:29] that so first I was just going to comment on the the additional opportunity for a parent to share their concerns or complaint with a school-based administrator and I heard I heard you speak to how that would give them an opportunity perhaps to get a different assignment I wanted to highlight that additional opportunity is being potentially really helpful in addressing the concern of maybe not wanting a book for my child a parent may

[00:34:09] not want to take that right away from other people and other children to read it but they they may feel it's an appropriate book but maybe just not for their child so I think that additional step hopefully will help bridge that gap a little bit wanted to also thank you for providing that lastly I was going to ask about the bullet point that talks about including a note about posting the decision including a brief rationale on the division website is that meant to be with regard to the division level committee or the appeal to the school board or both it would be uh both and

[00:34:47] the and certainly the final decision being reflected on um the you know the website for the public but yes both in process so it would it would just travel with the appeal wherever it stopped i think that's really wonderful both for transparency and just for anyone following the process also the additional opportunity the the right that you've created for a parent who maybe was not involved in the appeal to begin with to be able to step in at any point that's actually really unique as far as appeal rights go but I think it will make things a lot more efficient because you don't need a parent to start from the beginning in order to be able to step in and have

[00:35:25] standing so even though you I think it's a just another sign of how the division is really amplifying parent voice, I think, in a way that no other division has, so I want to thank you all for that. Okay, I think we're ready for 5048. Policy 5048 addresses family life education, and while we were in the process of looking at 5045 and separating it into three policies, as we shared

[00:36:00] last time, we realized that we did not have an official policy for Loudoun County for family life education, but certainly while we did not have that, we were following the Code of Virginia for family life education and we are still doing that the new policy just formalizes our current practices and we did review other Virginia school division policies including some from region 4 to inform our work around the creation of this policy so policy 5048 has two sections one is the provision of family life education which essentially says that we provide it we follow the SOLs and it will be reviewed at least once every seven years and section B is the

[00:36:39] right of parental review. That's really two pieces that are really important in there. One, our parents have the right to review the curriculum, the materials that we use, the supplemental materials. Parents have a right to review that and we have all of that available for them to do so. And the second part of that is that parents have the right to opt out of any or all parts of family life education as they deem appropriate for their child. So we welcome your feedback on 5048. Ms. Reeser. So our other policies are reviewed every five years?

[00:37:16] The curriculum that's being reviewed. Okay sorry I didn't I didn't follow that and also the family life curricula that's set with the standards of learning so they could you talk a little bit about how the program that we're currently using to teach those SOLs was chosen and when it was chosen and if it's been reviewed or updated i'm going to ask amy wheeler to take this one i will

[00:37:52] do my best to answer um i am assuming the last revision was in 2018 and that was prior to me being in the division and i am assuming that because that's when human trafficking was mandated by the general assembly um so that's the depth of my historical knowledge there um but seven years from that would be 2025 and we do review it when new mandates come through so is that answer yeah

[00:38:24] so i i think that since we're doing a review of the policy it might be informative for the committee if we could have a look at the curricula that we are teaching and maybe get a little more information on who chose it how it was chosen and if there are other options i might be interested in knowing what neighboring school divisions are using in terms of curricula and specifically how much is

[00:38:49] included with regard to education around consent and active consent. Thank you. I had I just had a question on the last four lines that's in quotes because it's somewhat unusual for kind of exact language for things to be specified in policy. So is that state is that language that's mandated by law and that's why it's written out like that or is it just that's the language

[00:39:22] that LCPS is going to use I have 24 to 27 but yeah I think we're talking about the same thing this is some of this I believe it's from the model policy from the Virginia school board and this is it really mimics what's in the code of Virginia so it I can look it up okay yeah I was just curious because if we like if if you ever wanted to change the language that's in the summary because it's explicitly called out in quotes you'd

[00:40:00] have to modify the policy and have the school board vote on it to do that so if if if that language is set by code then I get it but if it's not then we you may not want to have it at quotes because it would just create an additional a lot of additional steps before you could change that

[00:40:18] language if you wanted to. I just looked it up really quickly. It is in the code. So it's a pretty rigorous code that we have to follow. Okay. That explains it. I got it. Any additional questions? Okay. So as far as next steps for these, we'll, I know we had, or do you have next steps in, okay, I will defer.

[00:40:44] We're ready for that. So our next steps, just identifying a tentative timeline. Certainly, if we have your approval to move forward with these next steps tonight after making the revisions that you all have mentioned to us we will begin to do that. So in March and April we will share these draft policies and solicit feedback from various stakeholders to include MSAC, SEAC, our Equity Committee, LEAF, and the general public. In April we will be ready to provide you an update on that feedback. We may have the feedback in time to get it, revise the policies, and

[00:41:22] them back to you for for any feedback that we had received or maybe not because spring break is in there and some other kinds of things so it may be may that we're ready with final policy drafts but we certainly provide you an update in april as to where we're at in that process in june we would hope to bring that to our school board the full school board as an information item and then potentially later in june or august an action item by the school board and the next slide just reflects that same timeline just in visual format if you're more of a

[00:41:55] visual person but again hoping that our process is complete by August at the latest any questions regarding the timeline or consensus to move forward with this plan okay I would just ask because we talked about a number of potential changes today so I would just ask if you could if there are changes made to just disseminate that by email to CNI committee members for review before they go out to advisory committees just so that if there's anything that Ms. Reser, Ms. Ogadagbe, or myself feel are showstoppers, we can bring that to your attention before it

[00:42:31] goes out to advisory committees. We could definitely do that. If you're more comfortable, we could also bring that back as an information item on April 10th and wait for public feedback until April 11th. That's up to you. I don't see, I mean, we talked about a lot of changes today, but we didn't talk about, like, large-scale structural changes to anything.

[00:42:55] I don't. Agreed. Agreed. So, I don't. Ms. Reser? Could I just make this suggestion that maybe you as chair of the committee take a look and decide if you feel like anything was substantive enough that it needs to come back? But I agree that everything was – it was not content, really.

[00:43:11] It was smaller changes. But I would worry about too many of us having – giving staff feedback in individual emails since we can't do it as a group. That's a fair point. I'm certainly happy to do that. Anything else on this topic before we move on?

[00:43:31] Okay. So with that, we'll move to 4.05, the leadership development update. Thank you. We need a little change of the guard over here. Thank you all. So as they are walking to the microphones, I will introduce Tina Howell, Director of Professional Learning, who you've met before, and Lauren Sprouse, our Supervisor of Leadership Development.

[00:44:00] And they are going to give us an overview of leadership development in LCPS. And we are not expecting any action to come out of this. This is purely informational. Good evening. Welcome back. Thank you.

[00:44:16] So thank you for giving us this opportunity to talk about leadership development in LCPS. So the leadership development office is an office of one.

[00:44:45] You brought the whole team. I did. I brought the whole team. so we actually had some changes recently um over the last two years so in august of 2021 before that leadership development was in hrtd in august of 2021 we had some reorganization and leadership development came to the department of instruction at that time we only had one supervisor matt dickerscheid and then in you all very graciously agreed that we could hire another one

[00:45:19] and so lauren started in july of 2022. and i'll let lauren introduce herself good evening um as soon as mentioned i am lauren sprawl i'm excited to be serving in the role of supervisor of leadership development prior to serving in this role i served as the principal of gilford elementary school for seven years here in lcps so we had two supervisors of leadership development and then and what what I did is I kind of divided the work and so

[00:45:59] Lauren was supporting instructional staff and Matt was supporting support staff and in January of this year Lisa Boland came to us and said I would really like to have support because it's HRTD and she really didn't have the talent development piece and so she asked if if mr dickenscheid could go back and become a supervisor of talent development so he is still supporting support staff in lcps and lauren is supporting

[00:46:35] instructional staff so here is some of the stakeholder support that you can see Lauren supports school-based leaders so principals assistant principals deans and teachers and she also support central office leaders so once again on the instructional side though so directors supervisors and specialists as always our work is grounded in our vision and mission specifically with the strategic plan

[00:47:11] goal two exemplary staff and really with action 2.1 with leadership development so you can just see that second strategy there specifically of developing that leadership capacity so everything that Lauren and I do and that we develop really has to do with building that leadership capacity across the division and as always with continuous improvement and you'll hear how we support how Lauren has put some things in place to retain our leaders and

[00:47:46] then also how we are cultivating leaders across the division all right so I'm going to begin with just the intentionality that we put into place in terms of supporting our newest leaders within LCPS. So when I first got into this role in July, I created the principal induction program. That program is specifically for year one and year two principals. The idea there was to give them a space to get additional professional learning, collaborate with

[00:48:22] each other around various problems of practice that might exist within their actual school, and really receive some targeted support from individual offices within LCPF. So our data for that program is a total of 30 participants. We have eight first-year principals. We have seven second-year principals. And then the level office, they assign mentors to each of those principals as well. So that gives us a total of 30 participants. So as you

[00:49:02] can see from the slide we meet about eight times throughout the course of the school year and it's a very comprehensive program where we're constantly collaborating with various offices but it's also very structured our collaboration is tailored to what's going on throughout the course of the school year so you can see in September we collaborated with human resources and talent development as we talked about the evaluation process in October we brought in the school improvement office that looked at okay now that we

[00:49:38] have that beginning of the year assessments have taken place now what are principals supposed to do what are our next steps around that a school improvement team we know that CLT's has been a focus for level offices elementary middle as well as high we provided opportunities for mentors to observe clts in place at their mentee school and then for our mentees to observe practices in place at their mentor school as well so we collaborate with hrtd office of school administration business and finance really gives them opportunities to also ask questions for policies and procedures

[00:50:17] that they might not be sure of we have some feedback from our principals um they really appreciate the collaboration time they feel like that the topics are timely and responsive to their needs and also even our veteran principals say wow this is really great information that's helpful even for them as they lead within their school and provide support to their mentees so not only

[00:50:51] have i created the principal induction program for our year one and year two principals i also created the assistant principal academy so that's specifically for our first year assistant principals within the role as well it's very similar makeup to our principal induction program as far as professional learning collab collaboration and really building a cohort of individuals who can rely on each other throughout the process so one of the big differences between their principal induction program and the assistant principal academy

[00:51:29] is that they meet four times throughout the course of the school year and strictly that's just because of the timing that i assume this role wanted to start off strong with our principals and then also find time to meet with our assistant principals it's also challenging trying to identify a time for their out the building again they're out for assistant principal meetings they're out for their sped designee meetings so there might be some other opportunities to bring them in for professional learning. Feedback for our assistant principals, they appreciate the opportunity,

[00:52:06] they feel like the sessions are meaningful. I also want to specifically point out there that our assistant principals and principals, no matter when they come in to the actual role, they're still a part of the program. So we even have a second year assistant principal who's in the program because that individual started at the middle of last year. I've spoke a little bit about how we're supporting our newest leaders within LCPS I also want to speak to how we are retaining our experienced leaders as well so one of the main

[00:52:45] lenses that we're looking at right now is through all of our and all of our assistant principals elementary middle as well as high and the assistant principal role is very task driven there's several things on their plate however we want to make sure that we target some instructional leadership skills so when they have aspirations or if they have aspirations to ascend to the principalship they have experience they have some understanding behind instructional leadership I do that by meeting with the level offices on a monthly basis to talk about areas of strength as well as opportunities for

[00:53:23] growth I also meet with the elementary and middle school deans I facilitated a a book study with them throughout the course of the school year talking about 10 mind frames for leaders and how they can put their learning into place within the individual tasks that they do at their schools i also have developed workshops on building leadership capacity as well as keys to delegating successfully in addition to our assistant principal support also providing support

[00:53:56] to our principals through our principal meetings workshops for school leadership teams collaboration with the el department not only for the el department admin staff but also for our el leads that support all the el leaders throughout the school consulting with the school counseling team as they work to develop their aspiring school counseling program i also offer a leading and learning professional development series throughout the course of the year this particular is a flyer

[00:54:32] for one that was offered in november that touched on being a together leader putting systems in place so leaders can be successful within the role but also maintain some sanity as well some of the topics covered were things in terms of creating a meeting matrix or organizational chart rules and responsibilities, intentionality with your calendar and the things that you do, and then it's always in here to provide one-on-one leadership coaching for all leaders. So one thing that we're really excited about for this year and next year

[00:55:10] is cultivating leaders. We realized that we didn't have a lot for aspiring leaders. We had workshops or we had cohorts for existing leaders and we wanted to do more for aspiring leaders so we're super excited about next week we have our very first it's called launching your leadership conference it's for anyone in any instructional staff within LCPS who's interested either in a leadership role or taking their leadership to the next level so for example if a teacher wants to be a salt or a chair how might they do that how

[00:55:49] might they go about getting that role if they want to be an instructional coach how might they do that if an assistant principal says I want to become a principal there's a workshop on how do I become a principal what are some skills that you're looking for what can I do to set myself up for success so we'll have an opening session and then they can go to two breakouts we will also have some general sessions on best practices so resume writing how do you interview so you get the job? What are some best practices in working with adults? What are some best practices

[00:56:24] in presentation skills? So that's next Thursday. We are also in the process of, and we used to have an aspiring principals cohort before COVID, and then we didn't have one anymore. So Lauren is in the process of recreating an aspiring principals cohort, and we'll have an application process where we will ask principals to recommend assistant principals who might make good principals and then that will be a year-long cohort that will meet throughout the year to give them the skills that they need to become

[00:56:59] successful principals. We are also in the process of creating what's called an aspiring administrator academy so this is for staff who is interested in becoming an administrator so whether it is a central office administrator or school-based administrator this will also be year-long this will be after school and it will be learning the skills needed to become a successful leader within LCPS and then we're also looking to partner with some university

[00:57:36] partnerships so George Mason Shenandoah and George Washington in particular they have been reaching out to us they would really like to have a cohort of LCPS teachers and there are some teachers who are enrolled in these schools to get their administrative endorsement but we don't have a specific cohort they want a cohort of 20 to 30 LCPS teachers to go through this together what they have told us is if we can get a cohort we can make sure that the curriculum is

[00:58:09] really geared toward what it's like to be an LCPS leader also they will make it local so it would be in one of our local buildings here so it's more it's easily accessible so we've talked about this year we want to look ahead to some things that we hope to accomplish next year as well so in terms of supporting our leaders as i mentioned this year the principal induction program was for our year one and year two principles and the reasoning behind that was

[00:58:46] Make sure that we have a solid playing field for those principals, that they really have a solid foundation that's aligned to the standards for their own evaluation. Next year, we want to differentiate our principal induction program, so continue with year one.

[00:59:02] However, for our year two principals, really build in some soft leadership skills. So in terms of communication, conflict resolution, how do you go about influencing others, building capacity. So for them taking their learning from this year and being able to apply it and some real examples and things that are going on within their actual schools.

[00:59:26] We also want to do the same thing for our assistant principal academy. Looking ahead for retaining our leaders, a lot of focus is for our school-based leaders. We want to make sure we're able to partner with other departments within this building, for example, special education and providing leadership development support.

[00:59:50] This year, we were able to send two of our principals to SCOPE Virginia. SCOPE is a leadership development program with the University of Virginia that looks at sending leaders from all across the state

together to identify a problem of practice, and they get coaching, they get collaboration from one of these exemplar leaders.

[01:00:14] So they should be able to send an elementary and a middle school principal. We want to offer more opportunities like that for all of our leaders. Also this year, we sent our second-year principals to the AACD Leadership Conference.

[01:00:30] We want to be able to do more opportunities, not only have them learn and grow here and now it is, But also learn about some other things that are going on, not only locally, but also on a national level. And then finally, for Cultivating Leaders, we're still in the process of developing the Aspiring Administrator Academy and the Aspiring Principal Cohort.

[01:00:56] And so we will begin to advertise that soon and to ask for applications for both of those. And then we also want to develop those administrator cohorts with the local universities. One challenge that we're working through right now is when we met with George Mason, they told us that we are the only school division in the area who does not offer any financial incentive.

[01:01:19] And so we are looking at how we can offer that financial incentive, not paying for the whole thing, but maybe paying for a course. Generally, they have to take 10 courses to get their administrative endorsement. So how might we pay for one of them in order to give them some financial incentive?

[01:01:36] Because it's been challenged. We've advertised a lot and have not been able to get a cohort of teachers, just 20 teachers, to go through. And so we think it might be because we don't offer any financial support. So we're looking at how we can do that. All right.

[01:01:55] So thank you for the opportunity for letting us share some of the great things going on in leadership development. And we are happy to answer any questions. Questions? Ms. Reiser. Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of offering financial incentives, could you talk a little bit about other areas where we do that for our educators or staff?

[01:02:17] I know a couple of instances, like in hard-to-staff areas we do, also for dual enrollment. We do where it's hard to find dual enrollment teachers in a certain content area. We will pay for teachers to get their certification in that area.

[01:02:38] Those are the two I know of. So would it be fair to say in terms of continuing education support financially, we may not do it for someone to get a master's degree because although that may be it's beneficial, it's not really fulfilling a specific need in the way that what we already offer does and what we're looking to offer would.

[01:03:03] Correct. We don't offer tuition reimbursement in general. And it is in hard-to-staff areas. when we met with George Mason she said that the leadership pool pool is very very light and so and that they're finding that more and more that they can't find people who want to become leaders or get their leadership endorsement and so that's why we're considering offering that incentive sure I imagine it's expensive to take 10 graduate courses and it also takes a lot of time while you're teaching and grading and doing everything else that our teachers have to do in

[01:03:41] terms of tuition reimbursement so when you talked about dual enrollment or the hard to staff content areas are we how much are we offering and do we need to do more there I'll have to get back to you on the answer to that question and I will I will say that I'm we can always do more in that area because

it is really hard as this committee knows to have enough credentialed teachers it is also So it is money, but it is also, like you mentioned, this research, teacher's time.

[01:04:15] Right. And as we have less individuals interested in teaching, period, it's going to be even harder to staff those content areas and to have administrators. And if we are the – in fact, I think that we did use – LCPS did use to offer tuition reimbursement.

[01:04:36] Did that go away about the same time that transportation changed and everything else? I'll just stop right there. Thanks. So last spring, when we were talking about leadership capacity, it was primarily in the context of transferring some APs to different schools in order to, on primarily a voluntary basis, to give them experiences or skill sets or things they couldn't find at their current school to prepare them for possibly being a principal in the future.

[01:05:15] So is that part of what is continuing to be considered under professional development and leadership capacity? And is that program also continuing this year? So that practice is continuing this year with people who volunteer and who raise their hands and say they are interested in other experiences.

[01:05:38] That is, though, separate from leadership development in terms of who manages that. That's really managed by the level offices because they handle the placement of principals. Different department? Yeah. Gotcha. Well, still my department. Okay. I mean, it's the same.

[01:05:54] It seems like the same topic, but I understand. Absolutely, yeah. And just anecdotally, the feedback on that has been very positive from the folks who have new experiences this year. I just wanted to point that Lauren works very, very closely with the level offices.

[01:06:12] So if there are some assistant principals who want that type of experience, she will work with the level offices to determine how might I support if they are going to a new building. Any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you again for the update.

[01:06:30] It's great to hear about the great things going on, especially since a lot of these initiatives and programs are new. So it's great to see them getting off the ground. That will bring us to item five on our agenda, new business. Is there any new business tonight? Seeing none, we are adjourned.

[01:06:47] Thank you, everyone.



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