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Loudoun County School Board, 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting, Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Date Tuesday, March 14, 2023
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 8h 16m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/807999637?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-20. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] March 14th, 2023, second Tuesday meeting of the Loudoun County School Board. The first item on the agenda is 102, remote participation. However, I've been notified that Ms. Corvo is not requesting remote participation for tonight's meeting.

[00:00:16] So with that, we will move to item two on our agenda, disclosures. And we will start with Ms. Sheridan. - As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I'm eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the

[00:00:55] statutory three employees whose interest may also be affected of which I am included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you. Mr. Morse. Thank you. As a member of the Long County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries, the budget, and

or health insurance, and any other discussion which may include salary, affect salary, or benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, my spouse is an LCPS employee, and either my spouse

[00:01:31] or I may be affected by potential changes to employee salaries, the budget, and or health insurance. These subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may be affected, of which my spouse and I are included. I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest.

[00:01:48] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you. Thank you. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public. in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries, the budget, and/or health insurance, and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:02:09] Specifically, I am enrolled in LCPS health insurance and may be affected by any potential changes to health insurance. These subjects include thousands of employees, well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest.

[00:02:28] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. And we may have additional disclosures tonight as more school board members arrive. And if that's the case, we will return to item two at that point. With that, we will move to item three, the consent agenda.

[00:02:47] I will move that we approve the, excuse me, the March 14th consent agenda as posted in board docs. Is there a second? - Second. - Seconded by Ms. Sheridan. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye.

[00:03:02] - Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Beatty, Mehedeivi, Ogadegbi, and Corbo absent for the vote. With that, we will move on to item four, our work session. We have three items for the work session tonight.

[00:03:18] And so we will start with the step full day phased approach proposal. Dr. Ellis. - Thank you, Mr. Sorotkin.

[00:03:33] Good afternoon, board members. This afternoon, I am joined by Alexis Duffin, supervisor of head start and step programs who will share some information that we have already shared with the SPC committee regarding a phased approach to shifting to a full-day step preschool program I will share that the SPC committee had some excellent questions for us and some valid concerns on how to proceed and they helped us process this proposal and while they did not necessarily I don't think I think they would agree they didn't necessarily come to a consensus on next steps that we recommend but they did agree that this

[00:04:12] should be a full board discussion so we're glad to be here this evening at the end of this presentation in addition to the recommendation we originally shared with the SPC committee I will also provide another option for your consideration I don't know that we are necessarily seeking a vote at this time or as an action item but perhaps guidance and potentially consensus on next steps that staff should be taking moving forward staff does strongly believe that a full-day program is important and should be the goal to work toward so I just ask that you all keep that in mind as we as we share some

[00:04:49] information about the step program and our proposal for moving forward so with that I'll turn it over to miss Duffin hello hi I am Alexis and I'm the supervisor for the step in head start programs and I'm excited to be here today to talk to you about our Starting Towards Excellence in Preschool program, which we refer to as STEP, really discussing our full-day phased approach proposal starting next year. So I am going to go over the what, the why, and the how of this proposal. So I think it's really important that we start with the what. So I want to discuss our current program structure for our STEP program.

[00:05:29] We are state-funded through the Virginia Preschool Initiative. This runs very parallel to our Head program. Our Head Start program also serves at-risk preschoolers in the county. That is our federally funded program. Our STEP preschool runs parallel and is funded through the state. There are four different ways that families can qualify for their child to be in the STEP program. We currently have the capacity to serve 320 at-risk four-year-old, and there are four ways they can qualify. So the first one is income up to 200% of the federal poverty level. And just to kind of put that in

[00:06:04] perspective, 100% of the federal poverty level that we are given for this year, a family of four's annual gross income would be \$27,750. So for STEP, income up to 200% of the federal poverty level means that a family of four's income would not exceed \$55,500. Another way a family can qualify is if they are experiencing homelessness. If the parents or guardians have low school achievement, meaning that they dropped out of high school. Or, and this is actually a new guideline for this year,

[00:06:39] children are eligible if they have special education services. We currently have a half-day program that runs three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon with 16 students in each session. Ten classrooms are located in six schools throughout the county. Our morning students are offered breakfast and our PM students are offered lunch. All right, so now we're going to move a little bit into the why. So we're talking about full day and I have a few things that we're going to discuss today. So one, LCPS is one of only four localities in the state of Virginia to

[00:07:13] offer only half-day programs. So this represents 5.2% of VPI students statewide. I'm also going to go into a little bit more detail with our Head Start Gold Standard and along with that, the Virginia Preschool Initiative time requirements. So let's talk about that Head Start Gold Standard.

[00:07:36] So Head Start is often the model that is used when programs are designing their pre-K design. And this is straight from the Head Start program performance standards. So I'm going to pause and just let you read this for a moment. There are a few things I'd like to point out in this.

[00:08:11] And we're going to talk more about school readiness when I go over some of the data that was provided by Dr. Tyler and his team. But I also want to talk about the increase in employment rates of low-income parents and better meeting the parent need. So when we talk to parents, we hear a lot about how a three-hour program does not meet their need.

[00:08:30] I actually had a conversation with a parent last year. We were discussing part-day program, and she actually, we had this conversation, and she said to me, I feel as though I have to choose between an education for my child or finding a job to support my family because I can't do both with this setup.

[00:08:47] And that had a very profound impact on me, hearing that firsthand from a family. So, again, this is the Head Start gold standard. This is from that, from the performance standards, knowing, again, that that's kind of our gold model when designing a pre-K program.

[00:09:06] Another part of our justification is the VPI time requirements. So half-day programs, this is coming straight from the VPI guidelines, shall operate for a minimum of three hours of classroom instruction time per day, excluding breaks for lunch. Our current half-day structure includes lunch within the three-hour timeframe.

[00:09:24] So moving to full day will allow the program to remain in compliance with the time requirements for meals. All right, so now I'm going to go into the how. So what would this look like moving forward?

[00:09:39] And I've broken this up into a phased approach. So phase one is FY24. So I'm proposing that we transition four classrooms to full day. There are two classrooms currently in Meadowland and two at Rolling Ridge. So that would give us a total of four full day in six half-day classrooms, and it would allow the program to serve a total of 288 at-risk students.

[00:10:03] So the first phase of this proposal is cost-neutral because there will be no additional classrooms added at this point in time. And a student who attends full-time receives double the funding of a half-time student. So if we were just to transition the four classrooms, it would be cost-neutral.

[00:10:20] Given that the current VPI application is written to serve 16 students in 20 half-day classrooms, the original number that was presented at the SPC committee was a total of 256 students in this phase. We are now proposing to increase the class size to 18 to reduce the number of students that are affected by this phase.

[00:10:40] So this is an allowable increase with the Virginia Preschool Initiative guidelines. All right, so now I'm gonna talk about why I picked Meadowland and Rolling Ridge. So the STEP program, we have chosen to start that phase implementation in Sterling after looking at multiple data points.

[00:10:59] So one of those is our selection criteria scores. So we operate a single point of entry in our preschool office, so families apply, and we determine whether or not they might be eligible for Head Start or for Step, because the criteria is a little bit different. Once we get to know those families and we have an interview with them, we determine what their selection criteria score is, and this is based on risk factors.

[00:11:22] Because our program is not first come, first serve, we serve the neediest first. So with that information, now we can collect that data and then do an average in different locations in the county. And when we look at the highest average selection criteria scores, it's in Sterling.

[00:11:41] So we also confirm this after looking at data that is collected in the annual Head Start community assessment. So that's why our focus is starting in Sterling for phase one. All right, so phase two.

[00:11:58] This is where we do see a budget request to add two full-day classrooms, which would include two teaching teams. So in every step classroom, we have a teacher and a teaching assistant. So if we were to add two classrooms, we would have a total of 12 classrooms.

[00:12:14] And I would like to consider the Sterling area because that is where I would like to start this phased implementation and it will help offset the decrease of students that are being served in Sterling. In addition, I would like to transition two existing half-day classrooms to full-day. So with eight full-day and four half-day classrooms, the program could serve a total of 288 at-risk four-year-old students.

[00:12:40] And then we go to phase three. So for FY26, again, adding two full-day classrooms with those two teaching teams, and at this point, transitioning all 14 classrooms to full-day, we would have the capacity to serve 256 at-risk students, I'm sorry, 252.

[00:12:59] I do wanna note that in this phase, the entire STEP program will operate full-day. However, please note that additional classrooms would be added as needed to serve additional at-risk students in subsequent areas. All right, so I'm a visual person, so here's our map.

[00:13:16] So you can see that we are in FY23. We have 10 classrooms that we have the capacity for 320 students. I'm proposing in FY24, we would still have 10 classrooms, so it's that cost-neutral approach, with 288 students. FY25, adding two additional classrooms, so now we're up to 12, serving 288 students.

[00:13:38] FY 26, adding another two classrooms with 252 students, everybody being full day, and then moving forward, adding additional classrooms as needed slash available. So, and just like I said, you know, we have that application process that comes to our office, and that's how we collect a lot of our information.

[00:13:59] We can see how many families are applying, where they are applying from, where do these students live, what are their selection criteria scores, what are the needs in the county, and And we can use that information along with our Head Start Community Assessment to help determine the need for additional classrooms moving forward.

[00:14:20] So that is the end of the original presentation that I had in January for the SPC committee. From that meeting, there were a few questions that came up. So I'm going to go over those questions and the answers that we gathered. So is there data to show preschool program impact in Loudoun?

[00:14:37] Is there room to add step classrooms in Sterling? And what is the cost of adding two step classrooms? So first of all, I want to thank Dr. Tyler and his team for putting all of this data together. We're really looking at and trying as best we can to really compare the apples to apples.

[00:14:55] So we're looking at students that are economically disadvantaged. And we were able to pull information from students when they have an other pre-K program, if they attended STEP, Head Start, or if they did not attend pre-K. So this information is from one cohort of students.

[00:15:12] This is the cohort of students that are currently in kindergarten. So they were in our STEP program last year. And if you want to go to the next slide, it shows that in a really pretty graph. There we go. So now we can see kindergarten readiness based on PALS. So these are how students are scoring when they enter kindergarten with their literacy assessment.

[00:15:37] Then the question was brought up, well, how did they do before COVID? So now we're looking at a cohort of students that attended the STEP classrooms before COVID hit. So we're going back to 2018, 2019 kindergarten students, and we're looking at that fall and spring data.

[00:15:57] And I like it when you go to the next one with that beautiful graph. There we go. So here we go. We can see step. We can see those students entering with kindergarten readiness and then retaining that readiness throughout their kindergarten experience. Again, looking at that literacy, looking at literacy scores.

[00:16:17] And then the question came up, well, what did it look like when they were in COVID? So then we pulled a different cohort of students, just kind of wondering what that data might look like, considering

these students didn't have that full pre-K experience. And there's our chart.

[00:16:33] So we can see that the students were impacted by not having that full pre-K experience during that awkward COVID year. So I want to point out that there was a lot of reflection based on this data. We're looking at these three cohorts of students, and we really decided that the data shows that there is value added from the STEP program in regards to kindergarten readiness.

[00:16:58] So high percentages of students that were a part of the STEP program meet the benchmark in kindergarten, and they retain that level throughout the year. When we have more students that are meeting a benchmark at the beginning of the year in kindergarten, that means we have fewer students that are requiring that Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention. And because of that, we are allowing teachers to accelerate students who may not have had pre-K program prior to kindergarten. Here are some research reviews, results of three national studies. Again, kind of quoting Head Start, knowing that it runs very parallel to the program that we

[00:17:33] are talking about today. And when I read this, I really want to, I focused on bullets two and three. So we're talking about significant gains in early literacy, which is the data I just showed you. So just looked at that PALS literacy data but it also mentions social skills and approaches to learning social competence and addressing attention problems so yes we provided data and we're looking at that literacy those literacy scores but we know that the impact of our pre-k programs goes beyond literacy we are you know we are giving students these quality quality instruction

[00:18:09] to truly benefit their social emotional development as well all right so the next question was is there room to add step classrooms in sterling and the simple answer is yes so i was able to reach out to sterling principals to see who might have space and who would be interested in having a step classroom if that were available and the answer was yes i also had a really great conversation with the principal about the opportunity to gain classroom space by creating additional inclusive classrooms in collaboration with early childhood special education so as a part of the step program

[00:18:49] we currently have three inclusive classrooms that is a collaboration between the STEP program and ECSE to serve students that have special identified needs along with typical peers. So it was a great conversation and it kind of opened our eyes to the opportunities that might be available should we grow the inclusion program. The third question the committee asked was what the cost was of adding two-step classrooms so in addition to the cost of the physical space the

[00:19:25] proximate cost of one teacher is a hundred and eight thousand nine hundred and four dollars the approximate cost of one teacher assistant is fifty nine thousand three hundred and seventy five so to add two classrooms the cost per personnel would be three hundred and thirty six thousand five hundred and sixty dollars so that leads us to the option presented to the SPC committee and other options that we're considering so just as a reminder what was originally presented to the SPC committee was to begin phase one in a cost-neutral way in FY 24 for a total of 288 students and while this is fewer

[00:20:04] students than are currently in the step program we do see the value in moving toward a full day approach some additional options that you may want to consider and we would appreciate feedback on is pausing and beginning the phase one in FY25 potentially as cost-neutral or as part of the budget adoption process for FY25 that as you all know begins much earlier than that we would we would plan for and budget in our estimate of needs two additional classrooms to continue to serve the capacity of two of 320 students so those

[00:20:42] are the options that we are thinking about and we would appreciate any questions that you might have or feedback on potential next steps okay thank you for the overview board members questions or discussion starting with Miss Sheridan thank you mr. chair thank you both for updating the presentation of course I sit on the SPC committee so I appreciate not only the additional recommendations but the work you continue to do outside of the committee to bring more information to the board such as the increasing the students to

[00:21:16] from 16 to 18 per class and I guess my question is why would we wait if it's cost-neutral for FY 25 and not start in 24 what would be the rationale for waiting just recognizing that committee members did have some concerns about reducing the number of students again if we were to wait I would recommend in doi's budget to add add classrooms to keep the same number of students so it would just it would not reduce for even one year we'd be able to stay at the 320

[00:21:51] thanks for the clarification miss Rieser thank you for their presentation just following up on what you said about the inclusion programs the ECSE option could you tell me where you ended with that you said you explored it a little bit I'm just wondering where we're at yeah absolutely So that, it would be in conjunction with adding that teaching team.

[00:22:17] So we would still need to add that STEP teaching team, but we would be working together with special education, and we'd be able to provide that special education support along with our typical peers. So right now, we currently have that classroom structure with 16 students. So four of those students come to us from ECSE, and they become STEP students because they qualify for our program based on those regulations, and the other 12 students are our typical STEP peers.

[00:22:41] So are you thinking of a particular year for possibly using that model to open up space? Is that once everyone is full-time, or are you thinking that might be in 25? I think because the principal I was talking to is actually in Sterling.

[00:22:59] So I think once we get the go-ahead to add the funding for the additional STEP team, I would like to explore that to expand that inclusion program. is the staffing ratio now just one teacher and one TA for the 16 correct and was there a reason why funds were not sought this year to just grow it a little bit more quickly it was really due to timing and other budget priorities and the very poor budget outlook several months ago I know it's been difficult

[00:23:34] and it continues to be but it's it's a really it's really a small amount in the grand scope of our budget and I know that there's robust research that shows how much of a difference preschool makes in the outcome even even when you look at how students do at the end of public education it's it's been shown that preschool is more effective in changing trajectories than even college in some instances and I know that there's robust support on this board for the preschool initiative so I would fully support going ahead with the proposed

[00:24:12] plan to to do the cost-neutral option this year and would have supported expansion of the program with funding so I think that answers the questions that you asked board members to weigh in on thank you additional questions or discussion miss political thank you for your presentation this evening and as we all know learning to learn skills happen in the preschool classroom in the preschool setting so i i do have a few questions though about currently where we are with consideration

[00:24:48] to the ecsc classrooms you know we do have situations across the county where we have ecsc classrooms that are overbooked per se if you want to if you want to call it that we have too many children in a classroom and so my concern with adding another program like this is a how are we addressing those those current situations in which we don't have adequate staffing to support those ECSE students? And B, is there going to be a, are we actually going to see a cap to those classroom sizes? Because if we continue to add children after that 16 or 18 mark, and we only have one teacher and one aide, that is going to be potentially a very detrimental situation for

[00:25:28] those children. And it is critical that they are getting those learning to learn skills, but they have to have adequate staffing in order for that to, in order for that to happen. So let me kind of walk through for ECS for our inclusion program that one looks a little bit different so instead of having the one teacher and the one teaching assistant we also have staff from early childhood special education supporting the classroom as well so I have put a lot of thought into what it would look like to go to full day and I have talked to Lori Padgett who's our ECSE supervisor as well to discuss what would this look like moving forward because I think we've seen so

[00:26:05] many benefits coming from this inclusion classroom and we want to make sure that we're doing our next steps correctly. So we have come up with a plan of what it would look like full day, making sure that the ratio is accounted for. So if we went full day, having two classrooms next door to each other. So if we could have one classroom that would still have the four students with identified special needs and the rest of the class would be our typical step, we would actually be able to have special education teachers split their support between the two. So they would still have their full caseload because we understand that we don't want to pull resources from other

[00:26:44] areas we want to make sure that those ECSE teachers have the correct caseload so that they can support all of their students so hopefully like I there's been thought that's gone into that that preparation and ensuring that we are having the correct ratios that's designed for the program specifically for a regular step classroom along with our inclusion program okay thank you so I think I would just finally reiterate that it would be incumbent upon us to ensure that we're not just making it look good on paper, but that we are actually

[00:27:18] providing the services for the kids that need those services who are identified, who do currently receive their education under the umbrella of an IEP, that we are actually, that we're not double dipping, that we're ensuring that they are truly getting their minutes met according to their IEP. Thank you. So how many, we have 320 seats currently. How many students do we have apply for one of those seats on average on a yearly basis? So I guess I can say currently this year

[00:27:58] we actually filled 300 seats. We did not fill to the full 320. The biggest feedback I've received is that the three-hour program did not work for schedules. As far as the applications go, that number is going to be a lot bigger because we have families that apply that don't qualify for the program and also like i stated before where that single point of entry between head start and step okay okay but i'm looking at the chart on slide 13 for example which shows that there's a huge number of economically disadvantaged students who don't attend any preschool at all so

[00:28:33] can i draw a conclusion from there that they just did not apply to the program and if they had there would have been space for them correct okay thank you i i would be hard pressed to support a model that reduces the number of seats available when there's this number of students out there that currently

aren't being served at all uh even if it's because the model doesn't work for for them or for their family situation so i i i think i'm definitely interested in expanding the program I think moving to a full-day program makes a lot of sense

[00:29:13] for the reasons and the science behind it that you went through. But I think, as I think Ms. Reiser pointed out, I think this would be a small investment that could allow us to have our cake and eat it too by increasing both the quality and the quantity of the program.

[00:29:34] And I would certainly support doing so. Additional comments? Mr. Mahedmi. Chair. Yeah, I think I just wanted to say that this, again, echoing Ms. Reiser, I think this is something I do support. Early intervention, I think we've talked about quite a bit, and I think when it comes to pre-K, as Mr. Suratkin mentioned, I think we need to expand the program, not reduce it.

[00:29:58] So had this been something that we could have seen in the budget, I think definitely as a board, I would definitely support it. So looking forward to growing this program, and again, I'll be supportive of this program. Additional comments?

[00:30:15] seeing none we will look forward to future updates thank you and so i think i heard you that this this isn't going to come back as an information item at least i'm sorry an action item at least not right now yeah i think we have the feedback that we needed so thank you very much okay thank you so with that we will briefly return to item two disclosures for mr mehedivi to read his disclosure thank you chair as a member of the laran county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries the budget and or health insurance and any

[00:30:52] of the discussion that may include or affect salary and benefit for LCPS employees specifically I'm enrolled in LCPS health insurance and may be affected by any potential changes to health insurance these subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which I'm included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years

[00:31:17] Thank you. So with that, we will move to the second item in our work session, 4.02, from the Department of Student Services, Student Mental Health Services Update. Dr. Jones.

[00:31:35] Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. We have Ms. Jen Evans, who's the Director for Student Mental Health Services, coming to the podium. And we also have Dr. Megan Green, who is our Coordinator for Psychological Services. We had the opportunity to present to the Student Services Committee last month an update regarding the Superintendent's Task Force, which convened in July of 2021 and through January of 2022.

[00:32:06] So we have updates as to the work for the recommendations from the Superintendent's Task Force. and then also we wanted to provide an additional update overview of the unified mental health teams that are at the secondary and elementary level. So with that, I will pass it on to Ms. Evans.

[00:32:23] Good afternoon. I'm Jen Evans, the Director of Student Mental Health Services for Loudoun County Public Schools, and this is Dr. Megan Green, as Dr. Jones shared. We are here to provide an update. I'm excited to share an update on the progress we've made as an office.

[00:32:39] As Dr. Jones shared, the Superintendent's Task Force for Mental Health convened on July 28th of 2021, and we were asked to provide a report inclusive of an analysis of the current state of student mental health, available programs, and recommendations to the school board.

[00:32:56] The analysis and recommendations were presented to the board on January 25th, '22, and the task force has since concluded their meetings. This presentation, as Dr. Jones said, was presented to the Student Services Committee and was asked to come forward here.

[00:33:14] The LCPS vision and mission is embedded in the center of our collective work. The ongoing work in the Office of Student Mental Health Services supports the goals and aligned actions of our strategic plan. We're centered around a whole child approach to support the academic, behavioral, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all of our students.

[00:33:37] The task force for student mental health recommendations align closely with strategic goals one, two, and four. I'll briefly touch on each goal followed by the recommendations to demonstrate the connection to our work.

[00:33:52] Goal one, empowered students. With students at the center of our work, the Office of Student Mental Health Services is focused on prioritizing mental health and wellness and removing barriers that impede student success.

[00:34:08] One of the first recommendations that we had was to improve the staffing standard at the elementary school level with our unified mental health team staff. We did conduct an analysis to determine appropriate staffing ratios for these positions our goal is to establish a full-time unified mental health team at the elementary level and with your support we are moving towards that with twenty five point two additional positions so I appreciate your support in that effort the ASCA model the American School Counselor Association recommends one to two hundred and fifty

[00:34:47] one staff member to two hundred and fifty students we've asked for that twenty 5.2 for next school year this will allow schools to have not just one and to share one with another school but to have the appropriate designation so they won't be having itinerants going to two different schools and as you know you can't determine when students are going to have a crisis so it's we need to have them there consistently throughout the school week another recommendation which aligns with goal one was to build upon existing data systems and software to

[00:35:22] identify software that will facilitate data collection and identify and respond to our student mental health needs over the last few years we've been kept capturing our tiered data in the Phoenix SIS student conference log and analysis and analysis analyzing this data with Qlik applications this year we're implementing the MTSS module that you're all familiar with and currently it's in half of our schools with this module we can document and progress monitor and the services that we're delivering to students academically behaviorally and

[00:35:57] with mental health intervention plans teachers are also made aware of the plans for consistent support in the classrooms as you can see this snapshot for the data it was from three nine and at this time we have 1046 active mental health plans being implemented across half of our schools goal two focuses on exemplary staff so teachers administrators staff are the most important factor in helping our students after their parents and seeing that staff are esteemed exemplary

[00:36:34] supported and accountable is vital to our student success this leads us to the next recommendation which focuses on providing mental health professional development to students licensed staff and non licensed staff so I just wanted to spotlight some of the work that we have done at this time we have sources of strength in 31 of our secondary schools and with that we have 740 peer leaders who provide campaigns across their their student body in addition we have 120 staff members who are trained as adult advisors and they support those

[00:37:11] students with their campaigns and advisory lessons that they do throughout the school year so far they've done 60 campaigns focused on a variety of topics focusing on positive friends healthy relationships generosity and healthy activities the advisory lessons we've had over 35 to date that have been delivered and we're seeing that the majority of those reported campaigns and advisories have reached at least 75% of the student body peer is another leadership opportunity where we have 309 peer helpers in all of our high

[00:37:48] schools they're trained in helping skills so they help students with academic peer conflict family issues stress management and if they reach a point where they believe that it's outside of their scope as a peer they connect them to a trusted adult or a unified mental health team in the school they also do campaigns in partnership with sources of strength another spotlight that I wanted to share is that we have 109 affinity groups within our district and we have 1733 students participating these are adult led but

[00:38:23] student focused so they determine what the affinity group is and then the staff members support them in campaigns or awareness throughout the school as you are aware social-emotional learning is in all of our elementary schools and at this time I wanted to point out that with our prevention presentations which is focused on goal one we have 94% of our students have received one or more of their prevention presentations so that is signs of suicide bullying prevention and substance use prevention in addition when we hire new licensed

[00:38:59] staff they all have to complete a mental health awareness training which is through Cognito it's a self-paced training module that they must complete and then of course many of you have are familiar with the mental health and wellness conference as well as our parent seminar series throughout the year goal four of our strategic plan focuses on engaging parents families and our community to support students one of the recommendations here was to improve the visibility and knowledge of our unified mental health teams and this was one of the first projects that I took on and I'm very excited to see the benefit

[00:39:36] we now have much more consistent unified mental health team pages every schools looks the same a lot of previously when you would go to one school and go to another school you'd see different resources the staff pictures weren't in the same place the emails weren't necessarily all live and accessible so now each page looks the same so the elementary model is one and there's a middle school model and a high school model and within each of those sites we have the same crisis resources the same links to our district page and then we also have just different programs that are specific to the level so those are

[00:40:12] examples of the websites that have been created for more consistency and then another area was to connect students and families to community-based care increase partnerships between schools and mental health providers and when necessary and appropriate bring such care into the schools we've done a lot of work with our current partners and we've established new relationships with other agencies this

year mental health Loudoun County mental health substance abuse and developmental services is probably the longest-standing partnership that we have they provide a variety of services to our students with their

[00:40:51] life skills groups that are delivered by their prevention specialists those are in targeted areas and they partner with our mental health staff to provide groups and those students who participate in those groups are then identified for the camps over the summer to help connect them and keep that connection and those resiliency skills help them build that and make better decisions the Prevention Alliance of Loudoun which I think most of you are familiar with is a coalition focused on mental health and substance use and it's multiple agencies that we are part of and we do a lot of efforts in the community there's also a leadership opportunity for students the suicide

[00:41:31] prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia they provide funding support to our sources of strength and peer students who are doing campaigns so that's another partnership there and then this year we've developed new partnerships with the love like Adam foundation for hazing prevention the Cook Center for human connection they've provided the parent guidance org which is free mental health resources for parents as well as my life is worth living which is a series that you can watch at home with your child and have conversations or we can implement that in the classroom so those are two free resources the Williams Center for wellness and recovery has been a

[00:42:09] partner with our fentanyl awareness and opioid presentations they're a new practice that opens right in Leesburg and they accept patients who have insurance who don't have insurance and who have Medicaid it's been much needed in Loudoun County to have that substance use treatment specialty in this area.

[00:42:28] And then our ongoing partnerships with the Ryan Bartell Foundation, A Place to Be, and Laws, Domestic Violence and Assault Services. This is just a spotlight of a new enhancement to our website, which now shows those free resources for parents.

[00:42:48] The Ryan Bartell Foundation offers in-person and virtual parent support groups that are free for parents who are navigating mental health challenges with their students. And as I said, the Cook Center for Human Connection offers those resources, articles, and even parent coaching for those that would opt in for that.

[00:43:10] At this point, I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Megan Green. Thank you, Ms. Evans. So at all levels, the Unified Mental Health Teams, or UMHTs, work to support the social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health of our students.

[00:43:30] At the secondary level, sorry, can we advance? Oh, I think we went a little too far. Thank you. That's the right one. All right, so at the secondary level, UMHTs are primarily systems-level teams, and the decision to make them systems-level teams was based on research and data showing that effective systems-level work prevents problems and encourages school staff to be proactive rather than reactive.

[00:43:59] Systems-level conversations in UMHT meetings should occur about all tiers. So, for example, teams may discuss Tier 1 mental health presentations, processes for identifying students who need intervention support, like group or individual counseling, and looking at the outcomes of the services that different staff members are providing.

[00:44:18] In some cases, UMHTs at secondary also include time for student-focused problem-solving conversations. And although it's common to think of UMHTs as made up of mental health staff, at the secondary level, the team actually includes members from multiple professional disciplines who can offer different perspectives based on their specialized skills and training.

[00:44:39] The elementary UMHT has existed for a while in different schools in kind of their own way, but this year is the first year of implementing it in a systemized way across all of our elementary buildings. In this model, the elementary UMHT is a problem-solving team that's really designed to address specific students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs.

[00:45:00] And the decision to structure the elementary UMHT differently resulted from consultations, observations, and other feedback we received from elementary teams doing the work on the ground. They shared the need and value they would find from having designated problem-solving teams staffed with school-based mental health staff and focused on supporting student emotional, social, and mental health needs.

[00:45:21] Though this team is primarily problem-solving focused, there are times where they may be involved in systems-level discussions. For example, they may discuss trends related to bullying concerns in a specific grade level or suicide screeners among a subset of students.

[00:45:41] Across levels, UMHT members include those school-based mental health staff members we think of when we think of UMHTs, like school counselors, social workers, and psychologists. At the secondary level, the administrator, dean, student assistant specialist, and school nurse are also required members. At the elementary level, these are optional team members.

[00:45:59] A variety of other staff members, like attendance officers, family liaisons, school refusal cohort members, SIFBs, and so on, may attend or be included on kind of a as-needed basis or school-by-school, depending on individual school needs. And this list isn't inclusive. Many other people could be involved, too.

[00:46:16] at every level all members are working to support the social emotional behavioral and mental health of all students there's often quite a bit of overlap in the goals and work done by the different members of the UMHT however they each bring their own unique perspectives input knowledge training and skills to the table and this slide provides just a very broad description of kind of the key members but obviously it isn't all-encompassing of their role or skills so the UMHT members support students in a variety of ways this slide again provides a very broad

[00:46:53] view of some of the ways in which our UMHT members are supporting students it's not exhaustive but highlights some of the key work done by UMHT members to support student mental health all members participate in some aspects of counseling and suicide prevention additionally members of the UMHT provide education and counseling for students with substance use concerns lead restorative circles or conferences and participate in crisis teams at the school and central office level umht members also support special education processes for example our school psychologists participate in providing psychological evaluations at the secondary level

[00:47:32] particularly many of these include a mental health focus and may also overlap with students they're supporting in some other way like individual counseling additional functions that members serve include providing behavioral consultation supporting pbis as internal or external coaches providing

leadership to peer and working to connect families with community resources and again this is not exhaustive our staff do other things besides this but these are some of the highlights and then finally um in general lcps services are embedded within an mtss tiered support framework this is

[00:48:11] also true of the supports provided by the umht umhts are involved at all tiers through and support students social emotional mental health through all of those tiers so things like mental health presentations that are happening at the tier one level group counseling at the tier two and individual interventions at tier three teams review data related to service at all tiers and use that data to make decisions about the type of support to provide to students and the effectiveness of the supports they're providing at the secondary level the school mental health implementation inventory allows teams to examine their success in implementing expected aspects of

[00:48:48] the UMHT at each tier at the elementary level teams use a similar implementation rubric and although all UMHTs primarily focus on issues related to social emotional or mental health and well-being these teams also work to integrate with other teams addressing academic and behavioral issues to ensure that student support isn't siloed or redundant and that's our presentation thank you thank you for the overview of all of the great things happening on our mental health teams board Board members, I'll open it up at this point

[00:49:28] for questions or discussion for the team. Mr. Mahedvi. - Thank you, Chair. I'll begin as a chair of the Student Services Committee. Again, thank you, Dr. Green, Ms. Evans, and Dr. Jones for coming and presenting to the full board.

[00:49:43] So the staff came and presented an update to the committee. I thought it would be really imperative for us as a school board to also get an update of where things are since the last time we talked from the mental task force perspective. know i know myself and this board has been well committed in ensuring the mental health of our school division through many priorities in fact i mean your position also was one of the things the board supported in making sure that not only we need counselors uh staff when it comes to mental health uh team at the schools but we also need to provide the administrative

[00:50:20] support to make that happen so overall i think you know it's i i don't believe you know i'm sure the same philosophy that you and the staff also agreed this is a continuous improvement cycle there is no we arrived state because nuances change the dynamics are changing the environment is changing so this is a continuously evolving and continuously finding new ways to get ahead it's a very challenging task to get ahead of all the things that are going on so again you and I'm committed I know this board is committed and continue to provide the support I do

[00:50:57] do have one question so in the presentation what are some of the next steps that what are some of the new things or what are the next steps you're looking at in terms of continuing to improve on that so that would be my question I just want to confirm that things are changing and evolving and student and student needs consistently are changing you know every week there's something new that's going on but one of the big focuses that I have right now is on the opioid and fentanyl crisis that we're facing and what else do we need to do

[00:51:33] to get the message out there to parents and students about what we're seeing and the risks associated with that a lot of the students don't realize that it looks like every other pill that you might take and just that one decision could be fatal so we're really really focusing on that right now I would say the school refusal and anxieties we have trained 15 people who are serving as cohort leads who assist schools

when students have anxiety and school refusal behaviors but we're expanding that to reach more staff with that knowledge and skill set because we are seeing an increase in

[00:52:11] that as well but I think just staying on top of the mental health and where things are going with anxiety school refusal substance use we are seeing behaviors that we typically don't see for students and that was a little bit of that was happening before the pandemic and then following the pandemic we're seeing lots of challenges so just trying to stay on top of that and respond consistently across the district but I do appreciate the support thank you and just one more to comment I think we will be in the committee looking at how

[00:52:44] did we get more support for the students I think we talked about having some sort of descriptive way for staff that's trained in the mental health mental health first aid and you know again it's not the in all but it's just it creates much more mental health literacy for a staff and I think you know for example we talked about Fockier County how they have lanyard or even Brambleton Middle School had a program I believe called heart of the matter so how we institutionalize some of these programs across entire LCPS where a student can recognize a staff that's already trained in mental health and and

[00:53:23] they can reach out and connect with also and doesn't have to be a teacher it could be any staff it could be the coach etc so I think we'll be looking and working in the committee to kind of help draft some of the what the program could look like and and how to be institutionalized that so thank you I would just like to add I appreciate you saying that we've increased our partnership with athletics so we're looking at they have their own trainings that they go through but we're looking at doing training for coaches and not only coaches but athletic trainers parents about some of the similar patterns that we're seeing just to make sure that we're reaching all but I do

[00:54:01] love the idea of the visibility and a lot of our schools have done campaigns and advisory lessons to show who the team members are but the lanyard idea that you bring up. We've brought up a couple times I want to look into that and maybe that's something we could do through Sources of Strength which really focuses on who are your trusted adults in the building.

[00:54:20] So thank you. Additional questions? Ms. Polipko. Thank you. You mentioned that we currently have 109 affinity groups serving, I think it's 1,733 students. Could you please provide a few examples of those affinity groups?

[00:54:39] So we have black student unions. We have girl empowerment groups, a lot of different, And I don't have that available right now, but there are a variety of different topics that students are passionate about and they want to bring awareness to in their schools.

[00:54:58] And really they do group meetings just together to have that same commitment to the topic, but they also do some awareness in their school buildings. But I don't have the list of those right now.

[00:55:13] - Okay, thank you. And who leads these groups and how are they formed? So there's, I don't know the specifics on how they're formed in the school. It was a push that we asked of our schools to at least give this opportunity. Students volunteer and help identify what topics are of interest to them.

[00:55:32] And then we find an adult who can support those students in the school. And that could be a teacher, that could be a mental health staff member, an administrator. Okay, thank you. Just two more questions. Do you know if we have any affinity groups that are focused on sexuality? Not that I'm aware of.

[00:55:49] If we did have any groups that were focused on sexuality or any of the other affinity groups that are currently in place in Loudoun County, are parents required to provide permission for their kids to participate in these groups? Yes, so any club or activity or group that we provide to students, parents have to provide permission.

[00:56:09] Okay, thank you very much. Mr. Morse. I wondered if you could speak briefly about the migration of mental health issues from high school into middle school. I know that several years ago we had that discussion in committee and the concern was that at that time we didn't have the staffing in the middle schools but I think it's all been exacerbated I'd love to know your thoughts on that so we have focused a lot on those transitions because they are crucial times for students when they're coming from elementary to middle so what we do is the counseling team they provide tours to students the counselors from the

[00:56:47] middle school or the high school will go to the to the younger students and introduce themselves and so the students know who they are and they also schedule field trips for the students to go to the school and learn about the school we also have our social workers and school counselors who will help with that transition so if a student was struggling and fifth grade we don't want that just the support to just end in fifth grade we want to make sure that that's continued and monitored so we are aligning not only counseling but social workers and student assistants to help with that handoff and then in addition we have the summer check-in that we've been doing for two years I

[00:57:25] believe where we've had additional funding for student for our staff who don't work 12 months for them to go into the school do tours with students help them navigate the hallways without other students and just have some time to help with that bridging to the next school so are you seen a rise in the need for mental health services within the middle schoolers as well yes additional questions i just i have one and i may be pair i know i'm paraphrasing but in the introduction of the unified mental health teams

[00:58:02] being system level teams at the secondary level i think you mentioned that that's it's that way because that's the best practice so could you explain why at the elementary level it's not following that model and it's a problem solving based team instead sure so part of that is driven by just the differences between elementary and secondary schools and how kind of much larger our secondary buildings tend to be so what we found is that elementary schools have better system teams in place than secondary did back in the 2017-18 year when umhds first came about so they

[00:58:41] already have teams in place that are working in that way. Now in the elementary UMHD model there is a requirement that there's a member on the UMHD who's also on a systems level team whether that be the MTSS team or the admin team depending on the building. So that's how we tried to build in that structure and those benefits that come with the systems level team while maintaining the problem-solving aspects that elementary just didn't have because they don't have they still have a lot of itinerant staff. So they really needed that dedicated time for counselors, social workers and Sykes to be able to talk to each other about students because otherwise things were getting have lost in the shuffle I would just add that when

[00:59:18] we've talked to high school students and asked for their perception of the mental health supports from elementary middle and high school they talk about their elementary school counselor as that person they went to for everything and then as you get older you're not as likely to help seek for whatever reason there's lots of variables that come into play with that but I think that speaks to there's

already a good system in place at the elementary school level but we really wanted to look at you know how do we build upon that so I think the counselor is their go-to and then we layer in those supports with the social worker and school psychologist where appropriate at the elementary thank you

[00:59:56] additional questions miss research thank you thank you for the update I just have a follow-up to what you just said is there regular contact during the middle school years like there is in the elementary school years I think it's weekly or at least it was when I was an elementary school parent that may have changed but could you speak to how often at each level the kids see their counselors I can't speak to it specifically but I do know at the elementary like I said students are more willing to go to their counselor they do at the middle school and the high school have scheduled times with

[01:00:33] the students and do check-ins with them on a regular basis about transitions and they're doing with their academics and how are things going in your personal life so we're really looking at what does that look like without overdoing it because some students don't want to come and talk to their counselor on a regular basis and they have those trusted adults elsewhere and they don't want to be pulled from their class because the academics come in many cases they take the priority which I'd like to see that shift like let's focus on the check-ins the social emotional and then the academic so it is a balancing act but we're trying to make that much more consistent and middle school is expected

[01:01:12] to pull them at least quarterly to meet with them one-on-one and do a check-in that was going to be my follow-up question is it is it about quarterly I think it's weekly in elementary school and I'm definitely not suggesting that that right that it should be the same but I just wonder if that's perhaps the reason for the difference in the relationships is just that there is that there is one versus just something that is thought of as you only go when you need instead of building the relationship before you have the need yeah and I think that's what we're looking at is how do we get the relationship in

[01:01:52] place from the get-go from when they first walk into that building what can we do to enhance that so that they are more likely to go to the counselor so I appreciate you saying that and we do expect it to be consistently but I believe it is quarterly dr. Smith so thank you just wanted to clarify miss Polifco's question um in terms of sexuality do you also mean sexual orientation yes I would be included under that okay thank you so I do believe we do have um GSA's gay straight alliance clubs um you know I think in terms of that um they're not limited to students that I identify um as gay

[01:02:30] but I know we do have those clubs and those organizations um I just don't want to get confused whether we're calling them affinity groups or how we're but I do just want to clarify that we do have those organizations we have LGBTQ groups so those are we do have those organizations student-run organizations in our schools so just want to clarify that point now miss Evans anything else you want to add to that but I think that just want to make sure no I appreciate the clarifying question so yes there are identity groups that and when I say groups clubs I mean clubs but when it comes to groups we don't run any LGBT plus groups which

[01:03:06] are mental health driven so the clubs or you know at the tier one level that students have self-identified and they want that it's not a therapeutic group it's more of a we all have the same identity and we feel comfortable with one another but they're not getting any sort of therapy in the club if that makes sense additional questions miss political thank you last question if it's possible for staff to compile a list of the 109 affinity groups that are currently in place in Loudoun County and get that out via email at some point in the near future I would greatly appreciate that

[01:03:46] absolutely additional questions okay seeing none thank you again for the update appreciate it with that we'll move to our final item in the work session 403 from the department of support services

[01:04:01] safety and privacy in school restrooms i'll turn it over to mr lewis good afternoon board members thank you for the opportunity tonight we bring you an update on as uh mr schrockin just said safety and privacy in restrooms

[01:04:42] this is a summary and update of information that has taken place with discussions through numerous stakeholders over the last 18 plus or so months and this started in our cip if you recall that we have a project in the cip called privacy space conversions where we looked at providing more privacy in each of our schools and so tonight we're going to talk about the timeline some of the governing documents how we got here what our goals are what are what we're trying to achieve in each of the buildings also actions and then feedback so we've taken some initial actions we got some feedback and now we're reacting to that and making a plan for the future so we wanted to talk

[01:05:22] tonight will be a little more directly focused on the safety aspect of that but in the past we've talked mainly about achieving the privacy and tonight we're going to focus more on the safety so if you go to the next slide you'll see there we are going to share a timeline as I mentioned and we talked about some improvements we're going to do physically in the buildings but also some technology that we're looking at and then show you how we're going to roll out a pilot program to get process starting move into our next phase so the next slide you'll see that you know we've always for four years now we've

[01:05:59] been talking about safety of our schools you know not only with our projects but also with our systems and you know our goal is to always be as safe as possible and continue to make our spaces safer there's no guarantee in any space but that our goal is to continue to work on that and to make sure that our students and our staff feel safe in our buildings so those are some of our primary focuses tonight as I mentioned we're gonna be talking about the restrooms we need to to acknowledge and identify what our risks are and you can see some of those there but you know conflict between students and staff students

[01:06:36] themselves inappropriate activities in the schools specifically in the restrooms also behaviors such as smoking and vaping vandalism those types of things and then again you know one of our main goals starting off this was to provide provide privacy of our students in the staff interruptions you know we need to have options for all the students and all the staff and you'll see in some of the initial things we've talked about and that we've put into place compromise one for the other so our goal is to come out of this and have a goal that comes back to provide equal opportunity for both staff and students

[01:07:14] we do have some I mentioned some governing documents the code of Virginia and also policy 8040 and I go a little bit deeper now in the next slide where you'll see the information related to in 2021 you remember the the Virginia code required all school systems to create or the Department of Education to create model codes and then we based our policy 8040 on that more specifically so we are dealing with tonight everything we talked about is going to be related to the model codes of 2021 there has been a 2022 version of the model codes but that is out for common at this point and is not in play at this point so we are

[01:07:53] still referencing what's what's in in service now as the 2021 model so the next slide we talk about as i mentioned a minute ago policy 8040 requires us to have uh to modernize our school restrooms and our locker rooms and we'll talk about both tonight to to be able to improve our student privacy and promote the creation of single user restrooms and so we have done a number of of little projects for the single user restrooms we're talking we'll show you tonight how we plan to expand that and you know we've

had a number of questions over the time is it does the law specifically say how many it does not it talks about a ratio

[01:08:32] appropriate to the enrollment but it does specifically say that all of our projects will be done in five years so we are as i mentioned 18 months into that process we've done a lot of work so far and we have a lot of work to go i'll also point there in that next last bullet that one of the requirements is these single-user restrooms have to be accessible to all students without special keys or codes and so we can't hand out keys we can't have touch those to be able to do that it needs to be students and staff need to have access to these restrooms without asking for permission and be able to do that on their own voluntarily and not have to go through any extra steps so that's one

[01:09:10] of the things as we look at different options that we are considering there is how do we have free access for students during the day in classes during class those types of things be able to access these restrooms without having to go and ask for a key or permission or something to that order and lastly you see there we we did have in the FY 23 and the FY 24 total about ten point nine million dollars to work on this this will be revisited again I'm sure and this coming fall for the CIP we are confident that this is enough money to get started but I think you'll see as those of you remember we started the security

[01:09:45] projects I think in 2019 and those have continued to grow and as we learn more things we get some projects implemented we learn from that we go back and change and so I'm sure that'll be an ongoing conversation throughout this project the next slide talks again about you know a little bit about the the background and we you know in the fall of 2021 we did our first implementation policy 80 20 came online in August of 2021 so we did the first round of renovations we'll call it in our restrooms by converting a number of restrooms in the building many of

[01:10:23] them were multiple fixtures into single-user restrooms we changed the signs then we changed the signs again we had some some guidance for the signs we you know we had feedback from the students that the first time we did was confusing so we changed that again something that we learned from that we created a space spent you know nearly half a million dollars to to renovate and change the the not only the signage but also the door hardware we added some shower curtains and put some dispensers in in rooms six of those at each of the high school is four at the middle and two at the elementary schools and those are not exactly the same model as we have a number of schools that look

[01:11:01] differently once we get inside the building so that was the first phase we did that we put that in place in the fall of 21 so the next step was we needed to allow the schools to use them and get some feedback so I know as we start talking about the time it's easy to say well why is it taking so long but that's one of the things is we had to put something in place get some feedback get the users there meet with students meet with staff to get input on what we should do and what you know have we made a mistake in any of those so moving a little bit to the next slide this may be difficult to read but it just show you the timeline all together in one place and then the following slides will go

[01:11:41] into a little bit more in depth you'll see there the star on the left and in fall 2021 where we believe we have achieved the requirement of the Virginia model codes by changing the signage and providing that restroom we believe we have met met the letter of the law however we have a lot of work to do to get something that in place that is actually suitable and meets our goals of having everyone have access and enough access to the fixtures so along the way you'll see there and what as I mentioned we'll go

into those a little deeper where we've gotten feedback we've done surveys we've met with principal advisory groups student advisory groups I had a group of students reach out to me

[01:12:20] from Heritage High School and I met with them and and mr. Adam over there and they gave me some feedback of how the system was working we will continue to do that as we move forward and the goal is this fall we will have the next the pilot program that I'm going to describe in a minute in place we'll get feedback from that and be able to implement something and have all the projects done within that five-year period listed in my policy 8040 by the fall in August of 2026 so that's that's our goal and as i mentioned the next slides we'll start talking about more in

[01:12:53] deep in detail so we created in the fall of 2021 we created what was called the principal advisory group and that was for the support services we did that from our office and put a group of folks together to provide us information that's not to be confused with dr smith's principal advisory group who i've also been to to sit down with and get feedback from and which is a different group of principals but it's allowing us to get impact input from many different school administrators and we had a series of meetings we talked through different things we were looking at we had some some definite feedback some

[01:13:32] things the principals were concerned about some they were in favor of and so we took all that and you see there are a list of challenges that we as we got that feedback you know can picture you know we've taken now a single or a multi multi fixture restroom turn it into a single user restroom and now we've locked the door so that you have privacy in there so the door locks have created concerns about student safety student behavior and so those are the things we're trying to address now is to make sure now that we have increased the risk so to speak of what things could happen in a restroom those are the things we're

[01:14:10] trying to address now and getting definite feedback from the principals on that we recognize there's a different problem between class and during class a lot of the schools are using a hall pass app that allows students to go certain numbers of students to get out of this class that doesn't help between classes so we have a number of students students from Heritage High School mentioned that they can come out of class walk to all four of the restrooms in that classroom wing at Heritage and all of them would be occupied at the time and so we're recognizing that the access to those facilities is limited by having just that very few of those in the classroom in addition to that we

[01:14:48] generally took staff restrooms to create these so now we have less access for staff so as we move through there these are the things we're identifying as byproducts of our initial actions and so those are the things that we're focused on to try to find ways to improve we know that teachers are hesitant to intervene you know you have lots of folks sometimes in the larger toilet you a number of folks in there you know how do you approach a locked door and and and go in to see if a student needs help or if everything's okay in there so we're trying to find ways to address

[01:15:21] how we get to make sure that everyone is safe within that space we'll talk a little bit later about standardization of policies and procedure procedures for administrators and how we manage and monitor the the restrooms and the corridors during class changes and other times so the next slide will you know after our initial study our initial implementation we hired an architectural firm provided them the feedback that we got from the teachers and the students on our first initial

[01:15:57] work we provided them the task of going out and looking at some of these risks and observations that we found and provide us with some initial concepts how can we address these what are

some of the features that we can do to physically change the facility to allow for better access safe access and those that comply with all the things we're trying to do with having students be able to get to those spaces voluntarily without keys or codes and be safe in that space and have a way also for staff to manage that so they provided a report that provides some information that we also share with

[01:16:33] our advisory groups and you know gave us several different scenarios of things we can do and you see some photographs there these are locker rooms and we've talked a lot about restrooms and not as much about the locker rooms but some of the ideas we had for converting those of you that been in our locker rooms know that there's a vast difference in how the women's locker room and shower rooms are configured versus the the men's and so there's a different challenge there at each of those and so we've tasked them to do that and so then this also helped us provide the the basis for our CIP project cost walks so the next slide

[01:17:11] in addition to hiring the architectural firm our construction division sent out a survey to each of the principals can't read those boxes at the bottom of those are feedback out responses from there but they're summarized up on the on the slide that was done in September of 2022 after we've had the initial folks in had the school years worth of experience then we went out and surveyed the principals again and we heard the same things again concerns about decreased staff access to the restrooms because we've minimized the number of those spaces concerns about safety in the single user restaurants for students

[01:17:51] again with you now we have a locked space other things you know we know that the showers are not utilized heavily but we know that we still have to provide those privacy features and so we're still working on that recognize that many of the schools do not have wellness rooms and so we're working on ways to do that and make sure we know that the principals do a fantastic job of accommodating those spaces but how can we find a way for the facility to respond to that and not have to impose on the administration to do that and then just mostly a lot of these things were exacerbated in schools that were over

[01:18:30] enrolled and had even more challenges with access to that so we moved on and did principals I'm sorry so I've already talked about this that got ahead of myself so this is we also included the wellness rooms in that study and then so we found that we do have the need for nursing mothers prayer rooms mental health rooms those types of things a lot of the schools are using the school counseling or private offices for those things again imposing on the school operations on a daily basis and we're hoping to find a solution for the

[01:19:07] facility to provide that our new construction includes these spaces MS 14 and HS 14 will do that as well and then so we will continue to look for ways to to accommodate the wellness room in these designs so the next slide we had a second study we purposely reached out to a second architectural firm and made making sure that in both of those and I don't think I mentioned earlier that we asked them to look at not only how we do things in Virginia or in Loudoun County but also throughout the country other countries look at other different cultures other different places to do that so we test our architects to make

[01:19:47] sure they looked into any solutions that we could possibly learn from borrow from you know however you want to say that is to make sure we had a good feel for how these things could be done and so we asked the second architectural firm to actually do some some drawings and sketches for us to take a building floor plan and look for solutions we focused in on Loudon Valley and Broad Run because those two buildings are very similar they're built at the same time very similar floor plans and also we have non

high schools that are built in a prototype manner you know starting with Potomac Falls Stonebridge Heritage all

[01:20:22] those schools are built very similarly and we we took it specifically heritage as our basis of a study and said okay how can we take these these schools and find a solution for the pilot program again we showed them the same objectives we had for there to you know the decreased access for staff and students for the safety of students in the single-use restrooms so those were the focuses we had for this exercise and what they did is come up with a couple different scenarios and you'll see these on the next slide the two little sketches in the center they're very simple sketches but they show two

[01:21:01] different scenarios one is an open quarter and you can see you know the the quarter down at the bottom of each of the blocks and then there's an open area where you see sinks at the back and on either side are floor-to-ceiling stalls but this is open it's not a restroom that you go into this is a space that you access off the main corridor you see a photograph of that from Meridian High School in Falls Church that some of us went to visit where that model exactly as that is shown is in place in an operation we got some some good feedback of how the well that was received there are still challenges with with student safety and just like everything else we do that no

[01:21:40] solution is going to be perfect but it is one one idea that we have and one solution that we know is in place and in operation just below that you'll see what we're referring to as the screen model where these sinks actually blocked the view from the main corridor so it's not there so that provides a little bit more privacy for someone that's washing their hands but also makes supervision that may be a little bit more challenging and you do see photographs similar to that at the Tally Ho theater here in Leesburg that they have done a similar mixed gender restroom facility where folks come in and you see the floor-to-ceiling toilet partitions so those are the concepts that we ask our

[01:22:19] architect look at and they have taken those concepts and provided some a pilot study that we'll talk to in a minute but on the next slide we'll go one more and we'll talk a little bit more about what's happening at Watson Mountain middle school 14 that Ford just named that school the other night and so we have taken these things forward in our new designs and because we were designed the building we had the opportunity to look ahead and address some of these things so you see there we have a variety of multi fixture and single

[01:22:55] fixture restrooms in middle school or in Watson Mountain Middle School we have 15 single user restrooms for the staff excuse me at Willard we had 18 but we we've with Watson Mountain we focus more on the students and we've raised the number of students from from 5 to 12 so now we want we have 27 single user restrooms versus the 23 that were at Willard and we believe that this will help provide more access this building does have four floors so there's more access to each on each floor for students and for staff and so you were going to continue to watch this and learn from this to make sure we have

[01:23:32] captured a usable model or functional model we also provided changing spaces into PE showers which hasn't been there it has been in in the women's side but not the men's side and we have a designated staff wellness room as well For ES32, it was a little bit easier because that school is going to be K-2 grades.

[01:23:53] Every single classroom has an individual toilet like we do in K-2 on all of our schools. So we have 44 single-user restrooms at ES32 compared to 29 at Hovater, which has essentially half of the building set that way.

[01:24:09] We have nine single-use staff restrooms as well in the new school. this is a two-story floor two-story building with also has a designated staff wellness room high school 14 is still in the programming phase so we're going to continue to learn every day and every conversation we have and that will inform us as we begin the designs for that school as it starts in July to the next slide I want to touch on a little bit one of the things that we have struggled with is how do we how do we help the school administration and

[01:24:45] managing the restrooms and the tweens classes during class how do we how do we help with that so we we went out on the market and found some available technology at least one manufacturer that is able to provide a number of different features in a piece of technology that we're going to add to our pilot program to see how well this works it's a tool that the administration can use it has the ability to sense odors for vaping smoking those types of things it also has thermal technology no cameras no audio recording no personal identified information but it will sense when a human being is in the

[01:25:23] space and let someone know so if it's a door there a single user restroom the door is locked you can look in and there's actually a light that we can put out in the hallway that shows that this space is occupied it will also have an occupancy indicator on the door hardware that allows staff to lock the door for after hours use but also if if you're in the room and the staff locks the door you can easily get out with a thumb latch so lots of work going on in the background on the hardware and also these sensors so we want to give this a trial as well to see how well that works you can send that information to

[01:26:00] someone's computer or to an app and so we'll be working with school administrations to try to figure out what is the best way to to not only implement this but also then monitor to make sure that we're taking advantage of knowing what's going on in our restrooms so now I want to talk about the pilot programs I mentioned a little bit ago we've asked our architect to do some designs for Loudoun Valley in Broad Run as well as three of those nine high schools that had the same design and we've chosen Heritage Dominion and Woodgrove we're also do locker rooms as part of this as well and then you see

[01:26:38] there again the same objectives is try to make sure that we increase the privacy of the restrooms and also the safety and security of our students while there we do have a you know it may seem like a minor issue but we want to make sure that we maintain the number of plumbing fixtures in the space to allow everyone to have access there is a code requirement for the minimum of that where we don't have any issues with violating that but we do need to keep that in mind as we go so the next slide I think becomes a little more detailed and so if you look this is a floor plan of essentially it's a generic plan of Loudon Valley and Broad Run and up in the center you can see four dot six dots

[01:27:18] that's the canopy so if you were to come from the top of the page down into the front door go through the vestibule and then you take a right you see a yellow highlighted classroom not classroom a space number 157 the top part of that little yellow box is current staff restrooms that have been converted to single-user restrooms for access by students and staff as well the space 157 itself is a storeroom that we're proposing to convert if you go to the next slide you can see that space again highlighted on this slide and so at the

[01:27:54] top of the page are the two single-user staff restrooms that are now being used as single-user for staff and students we would revert those back to staff only the way they have been for years and then take that other space and create three individual toilet rooms accessible to the main corridor so they're easier to manage for the school administration and in this case they have three individual toilet rooms

sinks toilets mirrors and all those things and so that also provides us not only with the single user restroom but also a privacy space prayer room if it need be all those different things can be used in

[01:28:32] that and we provide those extra spaces for that school so those are the the improvements we're planning for those two schools and then we move to the next slide you'll see a this is the main floor plan of our generic non-high school prototype in this particular case the entrance to the school is at the bottom of the page and you see their stage 800 is the auditorium stage just to the right of that is the main entrance to the school if you picture walking up the page all the way to the to the back almost to the cafeteria and turn right

[01:29:08] you'll see a room there and I think that's 314 or 374 can't read from here and you'll see another yellow highlighted box so those that box right there is where we had you see four of those that's that's the main floor to the right of the screen is the lower floor so we in our initial efforts we took one of those restrooms in each place and turned it into a single user restroom that's accessible by students so in each case those are where have been currently previously I mean staff restrooms so we have removed four staff

[01:29:48] restrooms two men's and two women's in each of those schools so now we've limited the restroom access for staff again and so we're proposing now to take that model if you go to the next slide you can see that we plan to convert that to four individual toilet rooms with some so the yellow there is that open corridor model that I've mentioned earlier and then so the sinks will be accessible to the outside of the space and we would create those four restrooms in those spaces provides those separate spaces for staff or students and this is what we're proposing actually we've already begun the design

[01:30:26] we're rolling that out we need to make sure we continue to make progress on their project because we have lots of work to do between now and in the fall of 2026 so those process projects are all we've been in communication with the school staff at each of the schools and the design work is underway so the next slide would talk about next step as I mentioned we're finishing design phase now and in spring of 2023 the summer we would be constructing that and be done as close to being finished as we can by the beginning of school knowing it's a lot of work to do over a summer

[01:31:00] i am going to our team will create a student feedback group at each of those pilot schools to help us understand how that's being used by not only the students but the staff we're going to take this same presentation that you're seeing tonight to the leaf meeting and it's in the next week or so I think it's March 20th or 22nd something like that so we'll be getting feedback from parents in that particular group and then we will once we get the occupancy we're going to tour meet with our student advisory groups but also get feedback in the next 60 days after that's finished and then

[01:31:37] provide that information to our teams to to help inform the next steps the other thing that's on our list of things to do is the assignment of standardized practices and procedures for school administrators and I'll ask dr. Ellis to update you on that thank you mr. Lewis so as part of this process Ray Mitchell chief of schools is in the process of working with school administrators to first get a handle on how they are currently supervising restrooms and once we gather that information she will work with school administrators to ensure

[01:32:13] that restrooms have proper supervision that administrators have strategies for utilizing staff in order to make sure that restrooms do have that supervision so that is a work in progress so then the last slide we've created a matrix to try to illustrate the risk that we've been talking about all evening the different things we're keeping track of things that we are you know the where how we identified things

whether we're identified by the principal survey or the student survey and on the right hand side we're looking at our improvement strategies I think there are some some more dots we could have

[01:32:49] added could have added to this to show that the pilot program will address some of these things but we didn't want to overstate how effective and how efficient or how well this is going to work but we do notice that you know once we get both the construction of the project and this is related to the pilot study that I just described and provide that classroom technology that we will at least have some form of either technology or physical change in place to address each of those issues as best as we very can very well as best we can and then continue to learn from and adjust and make changes to all the rest

[01:33:28] of the schools as we go forward and that is the conclusion of our slides and we're happy to take any questions you may have thank you mr. Lewis and dr. Ellis for that comprehensive presentation it's been a long time coming and I really appreciate the thoroughness I'll open it up to board members for questions or discussion regarding the presentation.

[01:33:52] Ms. Polifko. Thank you very much. So my question is, what are we doing for our females who are being asked to leave their restroom and use single-use restrooms or seek counseling if they're uncomfortable with males being in their designated restroom area?

[01:34:11] So the idea of this is to provide these spaces for anyone to go and access these spaces voluntarily without any, as mentioned, any keys or codes or permission. So these restrooms will be available to all students and all staff in the building and can be accessed at any point in time.

[01:34:31] So the idea is to have this so that access to that space would be readily available without any other permission, if that answers your question. Partly. It partly answers my question.

[01:34:47] So we're looking at Regulation 8040, and we talk about Section G, that restrooms are accessible to all students. My question is, how are we deciding who gets to experience discomfort? And I don't think we're addressing that. So we had this presentation about how we have all these restrooms to be used by anyone at any time, but we're not addressing the fact that we have females in our schools who are experiencing males come into their bathrooms and they're being told when they bring this concern up, they are being told that they can use a single-use restroom, effectively leave their own designated space to go use a different restroom or seek out counseling.

[01:35:27] And I think that's something that we need to address. Additional questions? Mr. Morris. I wanted to ask about the e-hall pass utilization.

[01:35:45] I noticed on the last chart that we're not enforcing that. And I know that that was something the principals had discussed. Can you speak to that, please? Sure. So we do have e-hall pass available at all of our schools, elementary, middle, and high school.

[01:36:02] It is being utilized at all middle schools and almost all high schools. with some regularity, I would not say consistency. It is different across all schools. And so part of the conversation about restroom supervision is also about the utilization of e-hall pass.

[01:36:23] We have anecdotal stories from schools who are using it very well and couldn't function without it, in the words of a couple of people I've talked to in some schools, and then other schools that haven't quite figured out its usefulness I would say so that will also be a part of the conversation but it is

currently available at all those schools I'm not sure that it's as useful at the elementary level and so we're looking into whether or not we even need to have it at the elementary level in the listing it is not part of the

[01:36:57] technology pilot so mr. Lewis correct me if I'm wrong I think that technology pilot is referencing the new technology that you were talking about so at this point we are that so that's a separate tool and we continue to look at the utilization of e-haul pass separate from that pilot mr. Mahedby thank you chair I guess I'll go back to miss Polifco's I think question I think because I think

[01:37:31] after the policy 8040 I think the board directed to from the privacy perspective for the for the bathrooms again I know this is something we talked earlier on but this is from my understanding and mr. Lewis you can correct me our initial hope was to start with a pilot program of looking into it but again from my as a board member I mean again one one board member among nine my hope is that that we look into considering that all bathrooms are single-use and private including the locker rooms as well so it's not that it's again it's a big

[01:38:09] undertaking it would require a huge amount of dollars from the community and the county to go through that but I believe that that's probably the direction we're probably going into to make sure that we create privacy bathroom for all children because I share that I mean I have to you know I understand where you're coming from in terms of there are perhaps it could be I guess a challenge for some some of the students and so I think how do we address knowing that the state passes policy so it's not something via the school board it's

[01:38:47] not something Long County alone is doing it but it is statewide so I think from our perspective this county our our hope is that the direction is that we create private private private bathroom for all children regardless and not just for one small group I think this is the first initial step in creating the pilot program but that hopefully we we address all the bathrooms and locker rooms in the near future additional questions so i want to follow i want to follow on to that with a with a question for

[01:39:18] what we're doing for watson mountain and es32 because it should be i don't want to call this an easy problem because it's certainly not but this should be a lot easier to solve for new construction than it is for retrofitting existing schools but it looks like i'm just basing off of what's on this slide it looks like ms 14 watson mountain and es32 are still being planned to have

[01:39:47] a variety of multi-fixture and single-use bathroom so my question is what why why is that the case why are we why are we anticipating a hybrid model is it cost is it space is it we we just don't know what works yet what's what's the boss philosophy behind how we're approaching the new construction for those schools Thank You mr. rocket so it is one of many different I guess approaches there it is a cost thing it is a space thing I know

[01:40:24] mr. heavy and I talked the other day about that at this point we have not been given direction to design our schools with that and so what we did is increase the number of accesses to that but if we were going to go to a model where there's only single user restrooms in the whole facility that is something we really need to look at because when we have high occupancy events like something in the gym or the auditorium and trying to get access to that so those are things we need to consider in that and i think what we would do is is well go back to our staff and take a good hard look at that and come back and have conversations with the board about what that looks like so we do believe what we have

[01:41:03] designed for Watson Mountain and ES 32 is a good solution and we think it achieves what we need to do by providing some some of those spaces and also allows the the group toilet areas to be able to do you know get folks in and out very fairly quickly and so that's something we're always going to have a challenge with when we have any type of event in the school so that is a new philosophy and I think that's something we can certainly have that conversation about but we do think that what we have in place right now especially yes 32 because each of classrooms has that so we're getting close to that but those

[01:41:39] are contained in the classroom so if you were to have a you know a large event in the cafeteria the multi-purpose room or something like that and then folks would have to go throughout all the classrooms to get the restrooms and we're still going to need to provide restrooms for the plug when we have those those types of events so it's something that this is new we're all learning about this at the same time and so we'll continue to look at that I'd be interested in getting the floor plan or architectural plans for I know we're breaking ground on yes 32 tomorrow I believe yes so I hope we have the floor plan for it at

[01:42:17] this point we do okay so I'd be interested to see exactly what we're proposing what we are going to be building at those schools since I believe we should have that at this point the the 5.3 million in FY 23 CIP funding for this can you provide a description of what we're it does that money have to be spent by the end of the fiscal year and what are we using that five point three million on so the first question is does not have to be used by the end of fiscal year it's a capital funding project so it is flexible and can span over fiscal years and you know for lack of a better term we we guessed at

[01:42:56] what we thought the process projects would be when we started on this road knowing that we didn't have our final solutions defined and knowing we'd have to come back so we believe it will be enough to do that initial you know some of that money was spent on the initial study I think I mentioned like a half a million dollars to do the locks and hardware and those types of things so we'll use that on this pilot program some portion of that money will be spent on that maybe 50% maybe 75% not sure once we get into there and but that will help inform us one whether the solution will work and then to how much projects will cost moving forward and as I mentioned we'll come back this this

[01:43:32] coming year and if when we develop the FY25 CIP and provide school board more more guidance on what we think will cost to do to finish the project okay and then my last question for right now I appreciate there there was you had some information about doing external studies so I know looking at Meridian high school looking at Tally Ho looking at I didn't hear a lot about looking at what other school districts have done that have been further along than we are in doing renovations or taking a look at this problem because we're not we're kind of reinventing the wheel for what for what bathrooms might look like but

[01:44:11] we're we're by far the first ones to consider this problem so I feel like there's got to be a model out there somewhere that's that we can look at and says you know they got it right we should just do that or do something that's very close to that so are there school districts that have are are significantly further along with this that you've looked at beyond the the one or two examples that you gave and if so what could can we just do what they did or at least use that as a starting point so we think that's what we have done um i have been reaching out to my counterparts in other

[01:44:45] counties some are have done similar things that we did and complied with the um the model code and just stopped there and they're working with the schools to to be able to do that the other example is the meridian high school in falls church where they've gone to that and so we knowing that that was

close by and in place we went to see that and have studied that talked to the architect and the builder as well and so those are things we're trying to see we'll continue to be in contact with them to see how well that's working and i know when we visited you know we we saw students coming and going from that space and it seemed like it was perfectly natural for them

[01:45:23] but we also heard from some of the administration there's still some you know safety risk with the lockable doors and then so they're addressing that the same as we are that's one of the reasons when we do this pilot we're going to incorporate this technology to see if that helps us address the the security risk or the safety risk for those students that are in in their spaces so we will continue to do that I reached out again this afternoon to some more folks to see if I can get some feedback on what they may be doing in other other jurisdictions and we'll keep doing our architects are telling us that we are actually ahead of most if not all of those folks so we'll continue to strive

[01:45:59] to find what other folks are doing and how far along are we on the technology solution that you've been referencing is that still in the evaluation phase have we picked a vendor are we doing tests where are we in that process so we are still looking at the different features of that and so we found at least one month sorry one manufacturer that does a number of different things so now we need to go out from a procurement perspective and see what else is available out there we've seen some manufacturers that only do vaping and smoke detection so that doesn't help us with the other things so at some point in time we'll get an RFP out to see if there are other vendors that we're not

[01:46:37] aware of and so we're working with procurement now to get that established do we have a time frame for that it will be for this we plan to put these in for this the pilot this summer so we'll have it figured out and put in as part others projects okay thank you additional questions for discussion mr.

[01:46:54] Beatty thank you as I'm thinking about the technology solution you're talking about you said that it can sense when there's a person in the bathroom can it sense if there's multiple people in a stall the staff stall so we would know if there were two people person perhaps get trapped in there or something yes sir it will it would also be if someone was ill and not moving you can see that there was a heat map so to speak that would show that there's an individual there and it's not moving or if they are moving and if there's more than one in there it shows all that it does not show distinguishing features of a human being it just shows a blob so to speak okay and then who do we expect to be monitoring that I think we said we're trying to figure that out would that

[01:47:34] really fall into this safety and security office or would it just be a stipend for a teacher is I'm like where where are we thinking about that I know we're not 100% certain but right so we're thinking about all the above and have not landed on that that's one of the reasons we're still coming to having conversations with our school administrations we know that it would be an additional burden but you know and you know the high schools obviously we have security personnel in the elementaries we don't so you know it may be a different solution and that's one of the reasons we're going to continue to get feedback from the principals to see what what would be once we get set on a particular model then we can get that you know real use of it and try it

[01:48:12] out and see what and try to develop things to do and I'm sure that will change over time as we learn from that as well thank you additional questions Ms. Reeser and then Mr. Mejedevi. Thank you Mr. Chair thank you for the presentation I noticed that some of in some of the floor plans there were mixed use between students and an adult but in some of the floor plans there were separate spaces I was

wondering what the rationale was for having it two different ways why not maximize by since these are single-use if in some

[01:48:51] instances we can allow students and adults why wouldn't we do that in all instances so that we have more single-use bathrooms available to everyone excellent question thank you so I think that's something that we're going to it's definitely something we're going to be exploring as we go through we do anticipate we don't know for sure but we anticipate there may be some hesitancy on the part of adults to be using those in this in the same space as even though it's open to the corridor there may be hesitancy to do that we also know that the restrooms that we've chosen to do that it's a prototype school are the ones assigned to staff so the staff is losing those

[01:49:31] spaces so initial thought was they could be available to students and staff but we're gonna need to roll this out at one of the schools and see where both the students and staff feel comfortable and talk with the administration and learn from that and so it may be that we end up and you saw in that prototype where had four spaces what we're going to do is we have taken one of each of those areas of the building and turned it into a single-use restroom taking those away from staff we'll revert those back to all staff so now staff will have those three areas where this may only be just for students or continue to do both it is something we're just going to have to learn from our experience and

[01:50:11] see what people feel comfortable with if it works out really well we may ultimately go to all four those areas and create a number of them and then you could have even more single-use spaces to mr. Mahedby's point that would be able to you know head us toward that goal of having more individual spaces yes and to to actually build on his comments I believe that that was the understanding and intent of this board was for there to be private spaces for every student not for there to be private space for some versus others so I believe the board fully

[01:50:48] supported in fact that the five years that we asked for I think we wanted that even faster but that's the feedback we got was even that would be a time crunch so while I'm for pilots I would hate for that to be what holds up the ultimate resolution of this situation I think the model you're talking about at Meridian also exists at other high schools outside of the Commonwealth I've seen some videos online of what it looks like in an actual school day and the a lot of other problems outside of 80/40 bathrooms are difficult to monitor

[01:51:27] because educators are teaching and from what I saw there were a lot of other issues that were addressed by having bathrooms that were integrated in hallways and gave complete privacy even ones that had sinks within the private stall but had complete privacy and also were safe because you literally walk past them there's you know there's constant monitoring by people in the halls as well as some of the other technology that you've talked about I will add I don't think I mentioned before that as we've been having these

[01:52:05] conversations and sharing this with some of our principals we have some real real concerns about whether or not this will be a successful thing so we talk about a pilot what I don't want to do is change this at all of our schools and then have it be unmanageable so we recognize we need to move and we need to get it all accomplished but we don't want to put a solution in that ends up not being a solution and more of a problem and so that's one of the things we're trying to go quickly slowly can I do that at the same time I don't know I certainly understand that and I think that is important but I think we're in

[01:52:38] year two of five so thank you I think year three of five actually if you go back to summer 2021 additional questions or discussion Ms. Polipko thank you mr. chair this is a question for you mr. chair what is our plan for the new model policies once they come out of review I I think I'm gonna have to defer that to Division Council because I think it will depend on in what's when it comes out of review and in what status because it's been in a holding pattern with video we for quite a while but I'll ask mr. Falcone to weigh in if

[01:53:15] he is additional additional information to provide Thank You mr. Shoradkin so miss political I think the answer is it really it depends at the moment the proposed model policies were went through a public comment period and then if there is an a concern expressed in the in the comment period that the proposed model policies violate Virginia law then the model policies need to be the the issuing

[01:53:48] agency would need to then respond to those claims and so that's where we are today is the video we still is still holding on to the model policies and will respond to the concerns expressed by commenters that the proposed model guidelines violate the code of Virginia and so it's possible that they may revise the model policies or issue them exactly as they are we don't really know the answer to that so I think we would just we need to take a wait-and-see approach before we would do anything with the new model policies

[01:54:23] additional questions mr. Madby thank you chair so thank you miss Reeser mr. Sorotkin sort of kind of bringing back that you know support be and be directed that the the staff looked into that so I guess you know going back to I was going to bring in Mountain Watson right Watson Mountain sorry I'm being dyslexic what's in Mountain I think if the if the decision is on the budget or the cost I think that's where the the item should come in front of the board

[01:54:59] to make the decision how we proceed forward with it so I'm I'm in agreement with mr. rockin that we should I mean that was a direction that we asked and if you're going to build a new school I think it needs to be lined with a bit the ask of the board that we set out three years ago and I think going back and just building the the schools in the same way I don't think it would be appropriate and I think it would not be something that we all directed to so I'll be in intent with Mr. Sorotkin that we should bring that back from an architecture perspective that it does take into account the board sort of

[01:55:38] direction in terms of making the bathrooms and the locker rooms private before we actually actually do any implementation of it so that'll be my ask thank you additional questions discussion okay thank you again for the updated presentation I know we have a lot of work to do but looking forward to getting more information and seeing how some of this plays out in our schools

[01:56:09] over the next few years with that we are going to move to item five our recess and we will recess

[01:56:20] until 6 30 p. m time certain the board is now in recess thank you pick up with item seven on

[02:28:15] our agenda which is the pledge of allegiance and excuse me and the national anthem the pledge of allegiance today is going to be led by the louden county high school naval junior reserve officer training core unit established in 2009 the unit will begin its 14th year of operation this fall as the first and only JROTC unit in the history of Loudoun County the Loudoun County High School NJROTC unit is open to all high school students across the county the program includes students from all high schools in the district for the current school year the mission of the NJROTC

[02:28:54] program is to instill in students the ideals of leadership character honor and service as the foundation for success in life the program's focus on order precision self-discipline respect for authority ethical behavior patriotism service and citizenship is designed to prepare students for success in life regardless of their future plans the following cadets will be our pledge leaders for this evening: Battalion Commanding Officer Cadet Commander Jamie Facer, Cadet Gabriel Davis, Cadet Hedayah Ishak, and Cadet Julia Mendez.

[02:29:34] Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the national anthem will be performed by Discovery Elementary School's Discovery Singing Trailblazers, led by their music teacher, Helen Zumbach-Willard. This is a select group of students from the fourth and fifth grade chorus, which normally has over 100 singers. This year, the Singing Trailblazers performed at a Veteran's Day concert and two school concerts and enjoyed singing at a local retirement home in Ashburn during the holiday season. At this time, I will ask everyone to please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance and to remain standing for the National Anthem immediately afterwards.

[02:30:48] I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which

[02:30:50] it stands one nation under god indivisible with liberty and justice for all thank you all for

[02:32:58] being here with us tonight we really appreciate you spending some of your your evening with us we're now going to move to item 8 on our agenda student and staff recognitions starting with 801 from the department of instruction schools to watch for 2023 and i will turn it over to

[02:33:25] Mr. Martinez. We have a few principals with us. Good evening Chair Sorokin, Vice Chair Mejedevi, members of the board, and Dr. Smith. I'm Gus Martinez, Director of Middle School Education, and it is my honor to be here this evening to celebrate eight Loudoun County middle schools that have been designated or re-designated as schools to watch by the National Forum to

[02:34:01] Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. Along with our school leaders here tonight with me are Beth Robinson middle school executive principal and Dr. Sheila Steen regional director for the Virginia Middle School Association next slide please we are very proud that Loudoun County Public Schools remains a national schools to watch district in response to all middle schools receiving the designation of a national school to watch indeed this is quite an honor and that Loudoun County

[02:34:37] Public Schools is the only division in the nation where all of its middle schools are designated as a school to watch next slide please the goal of schools to watch is to identify and recognize outstanding middle schools across the nation based on the following research-based criteria number one high-performing middle schools are academically excellent all students are expected to meet high standards and all teachers use instructional strategies that include a variety of challenging and engaging activities number two

[02:35:17] 2. High-performing middle schools are responsive to the unique needs of the middle-school-age student. The school creates a personalized environment, provides access to comprehensive services, encourages alliances with families, and promotes the development of citizenship skills.

[02:35:35] 3. High-performing middle schools are socially equitable. Every student is provided with high-quality teachers, resources, learning opportunities, and support systems. And number four, high-performing middle schools incorporate organizational structures that support these philosophies, including school improvement planning, interdisciplinary teaming, use of data, culturally responsive

instruction, exploratory curriculum offerings, grade-level houses, and places where time is allotted and scheduled to meet these goals.

[02:36:08] The schools to watch designation must be renewed every three years to show continuous growth in the four areas Just mentioned the eight Loudoun County middle schools that were designated or re-designated this year are Brambleton Middle School led by principal Chad O'Brien Willard Middle School led by principal Jeff Roundsley Eagle Ridge Middle School led by principal Scott Phillips farm well station led by Cheryl Loya and

[02:36:46] Represented this evening by Assistant Principal Tonya Edwards, Harper Park led by Principal Shanae Ivory Brown and JL Simpson led by Principal Lenny Compton, Riverbend Middle School led by Principal Dave Schaefer and lastly Sterling Middle School led by Colleen O'Neill and represented this evening by Assistant Principal Elena Barham.

[02:37:12] These eight schools will hold individual school celebrations throughout the spring. They collectively will be recognized at the Virginia Middle School Association conference later this month and at the National Schools to Watch conference in June let's please acknowledge and congratulate each of these principals and leaders for their impactful leadership on behalf of the

[02:37:48] school board I just want to take a moment to thank all of you for all of the work that you do on a daily basis for our students and our community and the success that you've engendered by achieving the schools to watch award and and what what a great tradition to uphold in all of our school all of our middle schools here in Loudoun County continuing to earn this prestigious designation so at this at this point we're going to do a photo so the vice chair and I will come down along with the superintendent and we'll get

[02:38:19] a photo with all of you we'll now move to item 802 on the agenda from the Department of Instruction

[02:40:42] School Business Partnership Recognition of the 2023 Virginia School Board Association Honor Roll Dr. Ellis. Thank you. I think I'm going to turn it directly over to the School Business Partnership.

[02:40:57] Turn your microphone. Good evening, Chair Sorotkin, Vice Chair Mehedivi, and the Loudoun School Board. My name is Denise Rowell, and I serve as the chair of the Loudoun School Business Partnership Executive Council.

[02:41:15] Each year, we have the opportunity to nominate school and division office partnerships to be included in the Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll. The VSBA business honor roll was approved in the consent agenda February 28th meeting, and on behalf of the Executive Council, I would like to present your nominees and school partners.

[02:41:38] Project Aviation, in partnership with the Academies of Loudoun, Principal Dr. Tenelle Pretty detailed the partnership between Project Aviation and the Academies of Loudoun that began in 2018. In five years, the partnership has evolved to include speakers, subject matter experts, paid hospitality internships, events, and scholarships.

[02:42:02] ProJet's general manager, Julie O'Brien, and her team visit to speak with students and explore the opportunities in aviation industry. ProJet aviation staff act as subject matter experts by speaking to students in several academies of Loudoun classes.

[02:42:18] Each year, Project Aviation takes on two interns as client service representatives to learn about hospitality services in the aviation industry. These paid internship experiences involve hands-on work with Project clientele at Leesburg Executive Airport.

[02:42:38] The opportunity is a wonderful resume builder and offers students real-world experience that extends beyond the classroom. One intern recipient, 12th grade student Francis Gordon, spoke to how he has been impacted not only by his internship, but by the annual Aviation Expo that Project Aviation hosts.

[02:43:02] It is open to all high school students and includes over \$250,000 in scholarships. Francis and several Academy students were recipients. The scholarship allowed Francis to access the Unmanned Safety Institute's Drone Pilot Program, which he is currently enrolled.

[02:43:22] We have Tina Gray, Courtney Damaris, and Shiga Lab. Kelly Rubici, Placement Coordinator of the Academies of Fallen.

[02:43:42] PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs in partnership with Dominion High School and Loudoun Valley High School. LCPS became a partner of the Student Reporting Lab Community, or SRL, in 2017.

[02:44:00] beginning with Dominion High School. Dominion journalism teacher Mitchell Swartz described the partnership as one that has allowed journalism students to work with youth media producers on video and audio projects that are for a real world audience. Students have had their work featured on PBS NewsHour on multiple occasions as well as being part of Our Minds, the SRL-produced youth mental health podcast series. Students have also been invited to attend the SRL Summer Academy

[02:44:35] where a select 25 students from across the country gather to learn from PBS NewsHour producers. SRL has also provided teachers from Dominion and Loudoun Valley the opportunity to take part in their Summer Teacher Academy. Through this partnership, LCPS staff and students have presented together with SRL staff at various national conferences. Loudoun Valley High School journalism teacher Shari Andorz spoke to the universal skills that students receive through

[02:45:10] partnering with PBS, stating, whether pursuing communications engineering, cosmetology, medicine, marketing, or education, they hold themselves to a professional high standard that is above and beyond what I see in their peers. They know what a professional standard truly is and how to achieve it. I credit that to the partnership we have built and the resources provided by PBS to my students. PBS was not able to make it tonight due to a week-long work retreat and unable to

[02:45:49] attend. So this evening representing the partnership is Dominion journalism teacher Mitchell Swartz, Loudoun Valley Journalism teacher Shari Andwers, Dr. John Brewer, and Dr. Susan Ross.

[02:46:16] Lastly, we have, and not leastly, Asha Jyothi in partnership with Waxpool Elementary School. Asha Jyothi is a volunteer-based global non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting the community through education and health care initiatives. Asha Jyothi conducts an annual 5k run walk to promote community involvement and give back to the society. Proceeds from the 5k run walk registrations associated with the schools in LCPS and Fairfax County public schools are donated back to the schools so that the funds can be utilized towards their respected needs.

[02:46:57] Waxpool administrators Michael Pellegrino and Chris Rawls along with Asha Jothi, volunteer Kieran and Vimuri, described the partnership. Asha Jyothi recognized Waxpool Elementary's vision to

make all learners successful and knew that even before construction had finished, Waxpool aimed to be different. Waxpool offers an early childhood special education, or ECSE, program for children with a disability as young as two. A reverse inclusion ECSE program,

[02:47:32] grades 12 K through 12 autism program and a grade 3 through 5 autism program. These were considerations that Waxpool kept in mind when deciding to partner with Asha Jyothi to build and maintain a state-of-the-art sensory room. LCPS special education staff were consulted in the planning process and although special education students were a primary factor in creating the sensory room. It is a space that is a multi-purposed and available to all learners, including occupational

[02:48:06] and physical therapists, counselors when meeting with individual or small group students, and even staff who may want to utilize the space throughout the day. The science behind sensory rooms is well researched and documented. Multisensory environments have been shown to improve the health, social well-being, and quality of life of those who have access to such areas.

[02:48:32] Studies have also found associations between sensory processing and classroom emotional behavior and educational outcomes. Asha Jyothi's commitment to providing educational opportunities to local schools through service and financial contributions embodies the Loudoun County Public Schools Strategic Plan and division goals for partnerships in the community.

[02:48:58] Tonight we have representing Asha Jyothi, Malini Puli, Hamanta Ganta, Yamini Ganta, Kieran Vimuri, Ahana Vimuri. Representing Waxpool Elementary School are Michael Pellegrino and Christopher Rawls.

[02:49:21] Thank you. So I want to thank you all for being here tonight. Thank you. Congratulations on being selected as honor roll recipients.

[02:49:38] I'm reminded that one of the key pillars of our LCPS strategic plan is an engaged community and that in addition to parents and families, our community must be a support, guide, ally, and partner. So I wanna thank you for making that come to life, for being such engaged community partners and for really enriching the lives of our students here in LCPS.

[02:50:02] Thank you again. And I think for the last item, we're gonna do a photo with all the recipients

[02:50:13] who are here tonight.

[02:51:40] We'll now move to 8:03.

[02:52:04] one LCPS spotlight on Mercer Middle School and rigor in the middle. Good evening. Good evening Chairman Sorokton, Vice Chairman Mahidavi, Dulles District Board Member Jeff Morse, additional board members, Interim Superintendent Dr. Smith, LCPS families and staff. I am Nikesha

[02:52:40] Deal, the very proud principal at Mercer Middle School and we are grateful to be here with you this evening. I would like to take this time to personally thank the school board for making rigor and instructional priority and providing our school with this opportunity to present on how we are keeping rigor as the core focus of our instructional implementation at Mercer, which we conclude as the best practice for sustaining student pathways towards deeper learning. For this presentation, we will focus on one aspect of the one LCPS strategic plan for excellence, specifically goal one, empowered students, where we all will outline Mercer's intentionality of embedding

[02:53:18] this goal throughout our instructional practices to further increase student agency, amplify student voices, in addition to our collective efficacy. Next slide. Mercer Middle School is located in Aldi, Virginia. We are the home of the Mountain Lions, a very proud representation of various cultures and a school that is filled daily with the learning sounds of 1,398 Mountain Lions and still counting. In school year 1920, we shifted our core belief to one voice, one purpose, one vision, concluding that our voice, purpose, and vision are collective for the

[02:53:56] building of our school's legacy. Next slide. We are a division-aligned school, especially in the manner that we have ensured that the strategic plan is how we are aligning each of our school structures for continuation of empowering our mountain lions so they are fully equipped to make an imprint on our world. This evening, you will hear from a few members of our team, and when we say, team, we include our students automatically within this collective work. Each member will provide a brief explanation and display of Mercer's connecting alignment to the 2027 Strategic Plan

[02:54:31] for Excellence as we organically empower students through the lens of sustaining our school culture centered upon rigorous instruction at Mercer, which first began with a true understanding of our areas of growth and strengths derived from the data that drives our school improvement plan, which in turn builds upon our legacy of one team.

[02:54:52] Next slide. Good evening.

[02:55:08] I am Katie McGrath. I am the proud division instructional facilitator for Mercer Middle School. One key facet of my position is supporting the schools and implementing the strategies outlined in our strategic plan for excellence.

[02:55:23] Mercer is committed to all of these goals every day, especially goal one, empowering our students. We work tirelessly as a team to enable core academic excellence by engaging teachers in collaboration around our eight rigor leverage points and using those leverage points to deliver high-quality instruction to each and every student as it aligns with our profile of a graduate. This work is a small part of our collective commitment to deeper learning, which lives in our golden circle.

[02:56:03] Good evening. I'm Val Cashman, one of the proud assistant principals at Mercer Middle School. We created the golden circle that you see here in the summer of 2021. We knew we wanted instruction to be our focus because we know that putting rigor at the core will increase student engagement.

[02:56:25] The what encompasses a lot of what LCPS provides to teachers in the form of curriculum and standards. The how are the important strategies and tools we use to differentiate and support students and the why is simply deeper learning which is the heart of the process and engages our students in authentic challenging problems and prioritizes rigor. Simply put in student terms, students should know what they are learning, how they are learning it, and why they are learning it.

[02:56:59] Next slide. We knew that there was a lot of work that needed to be centered and aligned with our golden circle and that we needed to create a team to support our instructional focus. So we created the deeper learning team. The DL team as we like to call it then created a DL committee which is comprised of teachers from all different subject areas that support this important work. The DL committee wanted to empower staff through professional development sessions and which allowed them to join

[02:57:34] a cohort design based around their need and continue to build on rigor at the heart of instruction. We restructured our faculty meetings to prioritize instruction. Our DL team offers optional

deeper dives in the morning before school throughout the school year to allow staff to learn more about a certain strategy or tool. At the beginning of each year we create a deeper learning plan which is a fluid document that allows our team to backwards design where we want to take staff by the end of the year and then build in plans and how to get

[02:58:11] there. Next slide. I'm Kelsey Brown Malone, the school-based instructional facilitator at Mercer. One way we commit to supporting academic excellence and our golden circle is through our continual focus on student learning in our CLTs and ITs to provide students with rigorous instruction that meets their individual needs. We accomplish this through a shared facilitation model that honors all of the voices and experiences in the room who are working collectively to support each and every student at Mercer.

[02:58:48] Teams use common agendas to support student learning and rotate leadership so that each team member takes a turn facilitating the meeting. This intentionality supports staff collaboration as they incorporate various leverage points in their instruction to develop rigorous learning experiences for their students.

[02:59:08] Next slide. Good evening, I'm Derek Kaufman. I'm the proud instructional facilitator of technology at Mercer Middle School. And to continue our discussion here, we continually make data-driven instructional decisions based on various data points, which include our learning walk data, professional development feedback from our deeper learning dives, and more recently, our staff-led data chats within our CLTs.

[02:59:36] - Hi, I'm Melanie Manning. I'm one of the music teachers at Mercer. As a staff, we meet in groups monthly in our cohorts to discuss practices that support positive classroom environments at Mercer in which students are provided with opportunities to facilitate their own learning. Learning walks allow staff to see these instructional practices in place and how it directly benefits our students.

[02:59:57] One of our students, Ms. Allison Morgan, is going to speak on that tonight. Can you change to the next slide, please? One way my teachers empower me as a learner is by letting me do things on my own in the classroom. If I need the help, they'll help me, but they won't do it all for me.

[03:00:12] If someone does it all for you, you'll never learn how to do it by yourself. One thing I'm passionate about is helping other students learn about Mercer. As a seventh grader, I have learned a lot about how to open my locker and how to get to my classes. I know the school really well. This summer, I'm going to help out with Pounds, a summer program for rising sixth graders at Mercer.

[03:00:32] I want to help others learn what I've learned. Starting middle school can be really scary and a big change. I'm looking forward to giving them a head start and making them feel like I belong. One of my favorite things about Mercer is that all the teachers are really nice, the freedom we are given, and I made a lot of great friends, too.

[03:00:52] So a very special thank you to each of you for setting aside this time for our school team to provide you with an aspect of our daily work at Mercer. As a token of our appreciation, we have provided each board member with our golden circle, which is showcased throughout our school to display our commitment to keeping rigor as a core focus of our deeper learning continuum, which ultimately keeps students as our cornerstone.

[03:01:15] Thank you very much. - Thank you, Ms. Diehl and the entire Mercer Mountain Lion team for being with us today. board members, and I had a feeling. Mr. Morris. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ms. Deal, I have to ask the question, you know, the chicken or the egg. You've been doing this for years, and yet this is remarkably similar to the strategic plan that we just got done with. So I wondered if we stole something from you, because, please. Well, no. Well, definitely, it has always been my passion

[03:01:52] to live out instruction, build a culture of instruction. Ultimately, we have been one voice, one purpose, one vision for the last four years. And then when the strategic plan rolled out with one LCPS, we were like, great, we're aligned, we got it.

[03:02:09] So we definitely do believe in the power of one at our school. If you come into our building, you will hear Mercer speak, the way that we talk about instruction, the way our students talk about content. We just, we try to make sure that we have a united practice within our building as far as our students and our staff are concerned.

[03:02:27] Well, we certainly appreciate you coming out with your staff and Morgan, Ms. Morgan, including you as well. And so the one question I have for you is what part of the engagement is most important to you? What is the best way that you learn?

[03:02:46] There's a lot of ways, but one of the best ways is if we do like group projects and you can learn from other people's ideas. project-based learning terrific well thank you very much for coming out and we appreciate your words so we'll now move to item 9 on our agenda for our student school board representatives comments we have of our of our two March student

[03:03:21] representatives we have one with us tonight which who is Trish Guevara who is the student school board representative for Stonebridge High School. Trish is in her third year on the Student Council Association and in her fourth year on the varsity volleyball. She's a member of the National Honor Society and is very involved in making Stonebridge a better place for the students and staff. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Trisha Guevara and I am a senior at Stonebridge High School. I would like to start by thanking Dr.

[03:03:53] Flynn for choosing me to help represent Stonebridge tonight. At Stonebridge we work hard to make sure every student is included at our school, but what is one of the biggest things that brings students together. At athletic events, if there's one thing students love, it's school spirit and hanging out with each other. So after a long week of tests, homework, and studying, it's good to go to a stress-free event that everyone enjoys. As a part of our school's student council association, we plan spirit days to get our students involved and excited about games, such as USA Out, Stonebridge Out, Camo Out, and many more. We also post on our SEA account to spread awareness about the upcoming

[03:04:32] events and outs. At sporting events, students gather in our student section to build an exhilarating and thrilling feeling to the games, especially with our band to help bring strong spirit, playing songs that everyone can join in on. Not only does it create a thrilling atmosphere, but it also excites and encourages the athletes in the game. Seeing their peers cheer for them in the stands brings an energy like no other. Whether it's indoors on the court or outdoors on the field, having the students come together to create an amazing feeling brings joy to the players and the parents watching. Loudoun County is one of the best counties in Virginia when it comes to athletics, so why not be the best? We could do this by funding to create turf practice fields

[03:05:12] or building a dome over our tennis courts so no matter the weather, our athletes could continue to strive to be the best. As everyone says, practice makes perfect. We could bring in new equipment to build our weight rooms so that our student athletes continue to strengthen their bodies to perform at their highest potential. As a student athlete, I work hard every day to make sure I do what I do what's best for me and my team. In order for us to remain healthy and in good condition, it's important that our athletic trainers are provided with the right equipment to always make sure that our students are well. For example, by providing taping materials,

[03:05:49] heating pads, massage guns, and rollers. Being a part of a team has taught me to look out for others before myself, so it's always good to speak up about something when it needs to be said. Stonebridge has given me a voice. Coming to Stonebridge, I was a shy 9th grader afraid to express myself.

[03:06:06] And now, I'm happy to be leaving Stonebridge with leadership and confidence. The students and staff encouraged me to use my voice to speak up when it needed to be heard, and I encourage every student to be able to do the same. Every day, our staff works hard to make sure every student is safe, and we will continue to go out of the way to protect each other.

[03:06:24] As happy as I am to be able to go to college and play at the collegiate level, I am very sad to leave the school where I had some of the best four years. making memories, and building close relationships with my fellow students, coaches, and staff members. I will never forget it. I want to thank my parents for helping me become the person I am today, and Dr. Flynn again for choosing me to speak on behalf of Stonebridge High School, the home of the Bulldog.

[03:06:47] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Guevara. With that, we're going to move to item 10 on our agenda, the quarterly update from one of our advisory committees, the Special Education Advisory Committee.

[03:07:08] I will turn it over to Ms. Trofe. Good evening. My name is Sharon Trofe.

[03:07:23] I'm the current SEAC chair. I want to thank Chair Sorokin, Vice Chair Mahadavi, Dr. Smith, and staff for allowing me to come and present our quarterly report. Next slide, please. SEAC is mandated by the Virginia Regulations.

[03:07:44] We are the school board's advisory committee on special education. One of our jobs is to come and present quarterly reports or periodic reports. The quarterly report meets that requirement or one of those requirements.

[03:08:00] But one of our biggest things that SEAC does, or two, is to look at policies before they come to you to make sure the voice of our special education students are heard. And also to participate in the review of the annual plan before it comes to the school board.

[03:08:16] Next slide, please. Our SEAC leadership, as I said, my name is Sharon Trofe. I'm the SEAC chair. We have Shanaz Khan, our vice chair of planning. Liz Crotty is our membership. Craig Metz is communication.

[03:08:33] And our school representative is Katie Rosenbrook. She is our teacher. So every SEAC should have one teacher, and she is our teacher representative. And our staff liaison, Tedra Richardson, is the director of special education, specialized instruction.

[03:08:51] and our two school board liaisons, Tiffany Polifco and Erica Ogadugby. Next slide, please. So the last time I came, I talked to the school board and started out with something positive, and I wanted to

do that again.

[03:09:09] So I wanted to say that SEAC continues to appreciate the efforts of Ms. Tedra Richardson and Dr. Paige Carter and their support of SEAC. We are continuing to receive positive feedback from the community on our presentations and the activities.

[03:09:25] Our monthly meetings have had an increase in parent and PTA, PTO representative participation. And SEAC has increased its membership to 19 members, and we have one membership application currently pending approval. And now for the down and dirty.

[03:09:47] Last time I came, I talked to you about our current budget concerns, and I'm back to speak to those again. And we have two top significant concerns to share with you this evening. The special education staffing cuts are high on our priority list.

[03:10:05] The FY23-24 budget cuts of the special education teachers and the deep cuts to our related service professionals impact all areas and levels of special education across LCPS.

[03:10:22] LCPS is currently understaffed creating concerning outcome disparities low morale and significant concerns for staff retention next slide please in looking at the application of our current special education teacher staffing standards we are under reporting the current services and needs and IEPs using system-wide growth projections versus special education services we are rounding down and our ratios and our computations.

[03:10:53] student teacher and school administrators are not getting their needs met next slide please in thinking about this when we look at what are some things that could be contributing to this and our teachers being stretched so thin as there are many unaccounted for responsibilities reports we're getting reports of no planning periods for our special education teachers they have mandatory iep meetings taking on the roles of the related service providers They have to do evaluations and training and behavior and crisis management support.

[03:11:29] Next slide, please. And looking at the application of related service staffing standards, it looks at speech therapists, occupational therapists, and our physical therapists. For the 2021 budget, listening to the special education community input, our now chairs, Mr. Sorokin, proposed to add needed related service providers beyond the staff proposed based on his research on student growth. This included speech therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists.

[03:12:03] The school board agreed these positions were necessary. In later years, though, we moved these positions to the ARP for funding, and now these positions are being proposed to be cut. Next slide, please. Related service staffing standards. Again, we are currently below our current staffing standard. Our related service professionals have specialized degrees and licenses. Attracting and retaining these professionals is already a challenge for us.

[03:12:35] Caseload and service minutes per week currently exceed the number of hours that they are paid. No positions for substitutes. We must contract these services. And as we get later into the year, many of these professionals are not available.

[03:12:52] And then we must resort to something like teletherapy, which doesn't work as well as that in-person services. LCPS is currently unable to fully provide services that are outlined in students' IEPs due to holidays, assemblies, testing, therapists, sick days, et cetera.

[03:13:12] Next slide, please. Again, what is also contributing to some of these unaccounted-for responsibilities is these service providers have to conduct evaluations. They do the 60-day kindergarten screenings, attend eligibility meetings, IEP meetings, planning, report writing, and many of these therapists are shared between up to three to four schools.

[03:13:37] So they have travel time to go between the different schools. Next slide, please. So SEAC is asking that we revisit the related services staffing standards. This situation and having not enough service providers for the students that we have, it means that we have students who are not receiving services.

[03:13:58] Services are being cut, and we have eligibility for services being denied. And overall, this results in an overall denial of a free, appropriate public education, or FAPE. Next slide, please. So I know that I've stood before you many times before and said, hey, we are receiving a lot of feedback from the community that we are understaffed. And we have a very robust staffing standard that we hear from a school administration, which we do. It's published in our budget book. SEAC respectfully requests that the school board meet the published

[03:14:37] staffing standard and not make special education the exception when we are looking at staffing to our standard. Funding of our teachers and related service providers is critical and imperative to meet the needs of our students. Without these, we cannot meet the needs of their disabilities. Next slide, please. So thank you. I know I've brought this to your attention many times before, and I'm sure you may have questions for me. Thank you for the update in the quarterly

[03:15:10] presentation. Board members, do you have any questions for Ms. Trofe? Ms. Polifko. Ms. Trofe, thank you for this presentation and thank you for your transparency and your honesty and what we are lacking right now in terms of services being provided for students in Loudoun County with regard to their special needs. Could you please provide the audience with a bit more information on what it looks like when services are underreported for our children's needs? Because there may be people in the audience that don't quite have a clear picture of what that could look like. So when you think about how are these minutes reported and what are they used for,

[03:15:50] so in the IEP there's a service grid that outlines the number of minutes a student requires special education and it outlines what environment those services will be provided in. Will they be in the general education setting or will they be in a maybe a more restrictive environment in a special education setting. When you go to record those minutes, and I think if you think about our strategic plan, when we look at how are we reporting and looking at the number of minutes our special education students are in the least restrictive environment or in an inclusive

[03:16:27] setting, you're looking at our indicator five. I think that's mentioned in our strategic plan is one way to measure our inclusion ratio. But when, and those minutes come from our IEP system. So when a student is in a non-general education setting or in a special ed setting, those service hours have to be reported to the VDOE.

[03:16:54] And there is a special section in the IEP that outlines how many minutes does a student not, it's a double negative, not participate with their non-disabled peers. If the grid under-reports the minutes that the student is in a special ed setting, that it impacts our overall numbers when we're looking at how many teachers do we need, and it also impacts the numbers that we are reporting to the VDOE in our Indicator 5.

[03:17:26] So if a student, for example, is in a self-contained math class, and the class at the high school level is typically you think 90 minutes but we have some variance there so say 80 minutes but we're only reporting that the student is in that classroom for 30 minutes we are under reporting the amount of time that that student is in a special education setting so not only are we impacting our overall teacher reporting of our needs of the number of teachers we need we're also misrepresenting to vdoe the number of minutes our students are in a special ed setting and not

[03:18:05] in the general education setting additional questions mr. Mahedby thank thank you chair and thank you mr. for coming and presenting that I think the last slide I think where where I think one of there's two bullet points and I think the SEAC respectfully requires a school board meet the published staffing standard and not make special education the exception I think you were speaking somewhat somewhere else on that I find that very disturbing I don't know if staff wants to share some feedback on this thing because I think we have been as a board have been working towards to make sure that the staffing centers are in place

[03:18:44] and so on and so forth. I don't know if you would like to speak to this perhaps. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Mejedevi. Yes, we do have the established LCPS staffing standards, which overall are more robust or staffed with lower ratios of students to special educator ratio when compared to the Virginia regulations for providing services for students with disabilities as mrs. Trofe mentioned staffing has indeed become a very big challenge for not just our

[03:19:23] school division but for school divisions in our region we are working very diligently with our schools to support the schools that might have vacancies with trained substitutes as with regard to reporting and under reporting least restrictive environment is very important and something that as special education leadership that we review and provide systemic training for our teachers administrators and designees for student IEPs when we are made aware of a situation of someone as mrs. Trof mentioned service a related service

[03:20:02] provider that might not be reporting the actual service hours of delivery or if If there's a situation where there's a vacancy and there's not a licensed professional providing that service, we are to work closely with the families to identify if there's a need for compensatory services and what else might need to be done to address the need.

[03:20:25] The services that students are provided through their related service providers as well as classroom teachers are based on the feedback from the IEP team, which includes the educators, the designees, as well as the parents. Sometimes their advocates are included as well.

[03:20:42] So we do appreciate SEAC when there are times that situations are brought to the director or my attention that we might not be aware of, but certainly we work diligently to address those concerns as they're brought to our attention. Additional questions?

[03:21:01] Mr. Morks. Thank you for the presentation. I've probably been through half a dozen of these, and I appreciate every one. And this one had a slightly different tone. It definitely felt like there were more actionable items than we've seen in the past.

[03:21:17] And that concerns me because sitting on the HRTD committee, we go through the statistics of how many vacancies we have. And one of the specific questions is how many specific vacancies do we have in our special education positions.

[03:21:33] And I've never sensed, never felt that sense that we were not achieving a very high level of delivery for those services based on staffing. And so I understand, you know, we have absences, sometimes that will happen, but that has got to be the exception, not the rule.

[03:21:54] Are you seeing a change in the overall staffing, absenteeism, or any other personnel-related issues? Well, when I spoke to the school board last year, and we have felt this, I want to say, for many years, there's been a disconnect between what SEAC is hearing from the community and what is being reported by administration.

[03:22:25] So we've had that for a while, for several years, and we couldn't quite figure out where the disconnect was. But over the years, I would say it has gotten worse, and I would say this year significantly, and I understand we have a national teacher shortage, we have a national shortage of our related service providers, but losing positions that are currently filled when our population is growing is very concerning.

[03:22:58] And the number of open positions and teacher positions that are not filled and looking at the cuts that are being proposed would put even more constraints on an already strained system.

[03:23:15] our system, and we are very concerned, which is why we felt the need to bring this forward in a different manner than we normally do, and even more urgency than what we brought forth when I spoke to you in December. In December, we were, our biggest concern, or one of our top concerns was that teacher retention. We still have that concern and many other concerns, but the cutting of the staffing

[03:23:46] and having it to be more strained than what it is this year is very, very concerning to the community. And I hope that when we come to reconciliation that you will carefully consider adding back those positions.

[03:24:05] My understanding, correct me if I'm wrong, but the only positions that were being de-staffed positions that were associated either with COVID funding, which we significantly bumped up our services to try to make up for the gap in services over the COVID time. And I mean, that's primarily it. And then the second is our estimation of enrollment and our projected enrollment, which is based on special needs children, not on the general population, but the reduction in that

[03:24:41] number as well and that's the only numbers are there positions that that we're cutting out that are not associated with those two so one of the things that we thought would be a way to the ones that are trition out we ask that they just be moved over into the budget so they are not risk they're not at risk of being cut so right now the teacher positions and the service the are at risk of being if someone retires and we lose the position and we ask that they stay and not lose

[03:25:13] any of those positions. Currently we have almost 9,500 special education students. You also have to account for an increase every year of new students being found eligible. I know we have students attrition out but we also have new students coming in. So we are always in flux and And then Loudoun County always has usually a pretty good growth over the summer of families moving into the area that have special needs children.

[03:25:43] That challenge of the fact that the general population is growing at a much lower rate than the special needs population is something we have to keep our eye on. And so I know staff has tried in the presentation this year, they spelled that out, the distinct differences between the two. So I do think that's important for us to track.

[03:26:02] Additional question? Seeing none. Thank you again for the review and update. Thank you. - We're now gonna move to item 11 on the agenda, public comment.

[03:26:20] We thank the public for engaging with the school board through the public comment process. The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted.

[03:26:36] Based on the number of speakers tonight, which is 64 total, and the agenda this evening, all speakers have been allotted one minute each for public comment. Please be advised that speakers who missed their time slot will not be called at a later time. All audience members shall maintain the civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times.

[03:26:56] Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium, or during a break. Violations of civility, decorum, and respect include shouting, heckling, jeering, applause, or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting, obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair, and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate, disparage, or distract a speaker, staff member, or other meeting attendees.

[03:27:27] Speakers should refrain from vulgarity, obscenities, profanity, or other like breaches of respect, nor may speakers target, criticize, or attack individual students during public comment. Speakers should communicate these concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official.

[03:27:44] Additionally, complaints regarding division employees should be directed to the school principal or an appropriate school division official. Speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board. Per LCPS policy, members of the school board cannot answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period.

[03:28:03] Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting. Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in on the decision of the chair public comment being later being tabled into a later point in the meetings agenda limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons or the public comment period ending for the evening copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information officer in the media box at the back of the boardroom prior to the start of

[03:28:39] the meeting please provide 12 copies of materials under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais the public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through lcps tv on comcast channel 18 and verizon fios channel 43 the live streaming of the meeting may be viewed on the lcps website tonight we're going to begin with our in-person speakers the first speaker is cheryl underchain to be followed by brenda bengston wow good evening i came here with a

[03:29:19] carefully worded speech prepared against collective bargaining. But after what we just heard from the SEAC representative, I am appalled. I am appalled that you're not making special education students a priority. You know what this reminds me of? When I came here week after week when schools were closed and pleaded with you to not waste time and money on things like changing a mascot or equity

training but to focus on opening schools. You guys need to do some soul searching. You need to get your priorities straight. How are you making cuts to SEAC

[03:29:56] and considering spending \$3.5 million on collective bargaining? Not only that but creating 14 fluffy new jobs here at the Taj to support this money grab that does absolutely nothing to benefit students. Kids don't have unions. Also, release the report. Thank you. Brenda Bengston to be followed by Sandy Sullivan. I'm proud to co-teach with teachers and parents who value all of American

[03:30:32] history and the freedom to read. Joni Pico's The Storyteller, a novel about anti-Semitism and fascism in Nazi Germany, was banned because of a single complaint. Irony? Pico knows that if you want to control the thoughts of a nation, you start by controlling what they read. The majority of parents support the freedom to read and learn history. They deserve to be heard as much as the noisy few. Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop says, books are windows through which kids find the world

[03:31:08] and mirrors in which they find themselves. Yet, some parents choose to close doors because they don't want anyone to have access to books or history that they don't like. That's not liberty. Thank you. Sandy Sullivan to be followed by Beth Hess. Good evening. LEA looks forward to working with the school board to adopt a resolution to engage in collective bargaining with your employees.

[03:31:46] In regard to your discussion this evening and your vote March 28th on the process to develop the language in the collective bargaining resolution, LEA believes we should be a collaborative partner in determining that language whether it occurs in a current standing committee like suggested in the legislative policy committee in the draft process an ad hoc committee or another mutually agreed upon process we've already shared the language with you that we believe should be in the resolution i will remind the school board that the superintendent's proposed cost for staffing and budget of collective bargaining which is not in your adopted budget is not what

[03:32:22] LEA believes is needed to engage in collective bargaining. Collective bargaining can and does occur in localities across the U.S. with much less than 14 additional staff members, even none in some places. Your employees look forward to bargaining with you in the near future.

[03:32:41] Thank you. Beth Hess to be followed by Daniel Brubaker. Two weeks ago, Atusa Reaser requested that certain three-letter words be censored from public comment. I suggest this board censure her immediately as a violation of Policy 1030, wherein I quote, to welcome, encourage active cooperation by Loudoun County residents and to work in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education. SEL needs to be removed from LCPS curriculum. It is a responsibility of LCPS to educate our children and enforce the rules we have for safety and respect between students and

[03:33:19] teachers. Parents will handle the morality side of the equation. Studies show that parent involvement is the key factor in student success, and your attempt to move in on parents' rights will fail, so stop. We will continue to challenge you on SEL, CRT, collective bargaining, and any other leftist initiative.

[03:33:39] We will flip this board to serious adults who will bring a change towards fiscal responsibility and educating our kids rather than indoctrinating them. Say no to collective bargaining and the administrative blow that it will cause, and finally release the report. Daniel Brubaker to be followed by Charani Sankrothari.

[03:34:04] I noticed a number of attendees appropriately attired in communist red this evening. I am disappointed but not surprised at what is about to happen in two weeks. After all, a majority of you are

Democrats from the party that has never stopped advocating for involuntary servitude.

[03:34:22] And you are now poised to sell the taxpayers of Loudoun County from a circumstance of healthy, free, and just at-will employment in the LCPS organization to one in which we will all be forced to pay parasitic unions for the service of implementing a toxic and hostile work environment, higher-than-necessary costs, adding up surely to millions of extra dollars per year to be paid by us and the risk of strikes and shutdowns that will harm our children into the foreseeable future while constantly shaking us down for more money.

[03:34:52] Involuntary servitude is un-American, and it has been illegal since the passage of the 13th Amendment, but somehow you Democrats always find ways to impose it anyway. You can do that, but when you do, you will know that we will call it what it is and call you what you are. Thank you. Thank you.

[03:35:10] Charani Sankarathri, to be followed by Megan Jenkins. Good evening. My name is Charani Sankarathri, and I'm an eighth grade student at J. Michael Lunsford Middle School, working on my step-up laddering project within my Spectrum class.

[03:35:28] My project focuses on redistributing funds in the LCPS budget. My number one concern is to increase classified staff salaries. Prior to the pandemic, it was a high-line item to change in the budget, but the that never happened due to Chromebooks being purchased for every student in the county, providing breakfast and lunch to any student in the county, along with hot spots for more remote houses in the county. We are past the pandemic, and I feel this needs to take a top priority again. If you as a board can think of redistributing the budget by either lessening or eliminating some line items, I think there would be money to give a raise to classified staff in the county. One way to do this is by sending out a survey to all teachers asking them what they actually use on a daily and weekly basis. If there are items on the budget that

[03:36:07] are using funds that are going unused that could be the first way to find more money to redistribute we need to think differently to obtain and keep our classified staff in the county by doing the same thing year after year we are limiting our possibilities thank you thank you megan jenkins to be followed by elizabeth scheib as a dog returns to his vomit so a fool repeats his folly proverbs 26 11 thank you john tiffany and denise for voting to release independent report concerning

[03:36:45] the handling of the two rapes in lcps erica you promised you would vote for releasing the report but you lied we are disappointed but not surprised if you plan on running again for school board this year this decision will haunt you and the good parents of our county will not forget the independent report was paid for by our tax dollars and you all do not have the right to hold on to it as such you have now been subpoenaed to appear in court to produce the independent report your hand has been forced no more hiding when you do the wrong thing it will always come to light you will be held accountable. I see more indictments in your future. Switching gears, we would like you to

[03:37:21] wait on choosing a new superintendent until a new school board is in place. You have a track record of poor decision-making, and this is the least you can do for us considering all the crap you have put us through for these past three years. You say you want to earn back our trust. Actions speak louder than words. Thank you. Elizabeth Scheib to be followed by Catherine Cody. Hi, I'm Elizabeth Scheib. I'm a high school librarian here in LCPS, a member of the Loudon Association of School Librarians, and a parent of an LCPS student. Thank you all. Thank you for creating policy that allows

[03:37:56] libraries in our schools to continue to be free choice to students. LCPS librarians work diligently to create library collections that appropriately mirror our student populations and create window opportunities as they learn about others who are different from themselves. These books are evaluated by librarians trained in age and developmentally appropriate literature. We consider our populations and the books they are asking for as they explore their identity and choices as children and teenagers. We also consider the value of the overall book and whether challenging passages are integral

[03:38:34] to a meaningful story. An open library that allows students to explore is one of the hallmarks of a free and public education. Thank you for supporting this cornerstone of our democracy. Thank you. Katherine Cody to be followed by Lara Larson. Bayard Rustin once said to be afraid is to behave as if the truth were not true. Over the past few years I've seen a lot of this brand of fear in our community. I've heard that librarians and teachers are indoctrinating children and stacking our shelves high with explicit books. I've heard that our

[03:39:12] library books are so powerful that the mere existence of one of them on a shelf has the ability to completely change someone's identity. That the only way to protect our children is to resort to censorship. Today, I hope that I can assuage some of these fears. Number one, I am not here to indoctrinate your children about anything except possibly to love reading. Each year, in addition to reading hundreds of books, I spend hours reading professional reviews, following media awards, auditing our collection for gaps, and of course, listening to my students in order to select the best books. Number two, our students are already inundated by a world of free information and don't always have the ability to tell what is true and what's not. The truth is that the

[03:39:51] library is actually one of the safest places for a young person to go to find answers to questions that may be difficult for them to talk about. And while a book can't change, thank you. Thank you. Lara Larson to be followed by Renee Champaglia. I want to thank you all for the theater stipends that were put in place this school year. My daughter attends Freedom High School and there were times in the past when her amazing teacher, Ms. Rachel Wickham, was supervising more than 100 kids working on a show with only parent volunteers to help. Now she has multiple paid staff members there during rehearsals to assist and work with different teams throughout the

[03:40:29] building. The stipends are making a difference in our performing arts programs. Thank you. Second, related to policy 8010, I want to be sure that you continue to allow door-to-door solicitation for school-sponsored fundraising activities. Freedom High School's annual Tag Day Fine Arts fundraiser is integral to the program's success. Events like Tag Day are part of our neighborhood and enhance the bonds between the school and the people who live near it. Student safety is paramount and appropriate safeguards are always taken when conducting this type of fundraising. Please continue to allow this incredibly important

[03:41:04] source of funds for our PTAs and booster clubs. Thank you. Thank you. Renee Champaglia to be followed by Corey Burnett. Good evening and thank you Mr. Sorotkin for saying my name correctly.

[03:41:21] I'm a special education teacher. We're supporting students in the virtual out and distance learning program, and I'm here tonight asking for you to consider confunding the K-5 program for next year. Our students are thriving. We meet synchronously every day following a regular schedule, just like a brick-and-mortar school. Our program is meeting the needs of LCPS students that either cannot attend school in person or prefer online learning. Many of my students are able to more fully participate with

instruction and interact with their peers in a less restrictive environment than they would if they attended school in person.

[03:41:59] Our students are healthy, safe, supported, engaged, and academically challenged. Bullying is virtually non-existent. Our mid-year measures of academic progress scores in both reading and math have exceeded LCPS growth expectations for every elementary grade level.

[03:42:14] Our students, including special education and English learners, are demonstrating success in this learning environment. Thank you. - Thank you. Corey Brunet, to be followed by Todd Fielding. - Good evening, my name is Corey Brunet, and I'm an English learner teacher at Broad Run.

[03:42:30] There are 63 EOY positions unfilled as of five o'clock this evening. These are all school-based positions like teachers, reading specialists, librarians, deans, and teacher assistants. Who has been replacing these 63 people daily? Some of them have school-based subs as temporary replacements.

[03:42:48] Others have long-term subs doing the planning, instructing, and grading for not much in return. And still other positions' responsibilities have just been spread among the remaining staff. They do their best, but what the students need and deserve are qualified, dedicated, and caring full-time educators.

[03:43:06] Collective bargaining is the solution. Your vote for collective bargaining shows all of us educators that you respect us, that you want us to thrive, and that you believe that LCPS can and should be the leader in public education. LCPS will never outperform its educators.

[03:43:23] - Thank you. Todd Fielding to be followed by Viviana Herbas. good evening i'm a parent and i'm a teacher and i'm a child of a special ed student now a student with special needs now here's how i feel about it it's not an either or situation whether you support collective bargaining or you support fully funding special ed needs it's not an either or it can be both i think i know i support a fully funded school budget which means fully funding students with special needs such as my daughter and supporting collective bargaining um here's the thing

[03:44:00] Teachers and all educators need to have more deeper involvement in the community and in the school district. And one of the ways to do that is having a true voice at the table, something more than answering surveys or serving on the occasional committee.

[03:44:18] Collective bargaining is a way to get us to that point. Again, I also fully support, fully funding any shortfalls that come within the special education budget. Thank you. Thank you. Viviana Herbas, to be followed by Una Wilson.

[03:44:37] Una Wilson, to be followed by Juan Pablo Segura. Good evening, Loudoun County School Board members.

[03:44:54] My first time speaking here. It's nice to meet all of you. My name is Una Wilson. I'm here to support collective bargaining. I've been teaching German at middle school for the past five years. I love my job with Loudoun County Public School. The application process, my contract signing was very smooth and professional.

[03:45:10] My school has a supportive and professional staff. I have a bright, clean, well-resourced classroom, and I take pride in my teaching and the growth of my students. However, there's always room for improvement. Enter collective bargaining. I was appalled a while ago to learn that when major decisions are being made about education in Loudoun County, there is no teacher present at that table.

[03:45:33] I support collective bargaining so that a teacher is present when decisions are being made about especially our contract wording and when it comes to what our extra duties are. More extra duties mean less unencumbered planning time. Less planning time means more work outside of class during unpaid time.

[03:45:51] More stress for teachers, less effective lessons, and less learning. Support collective bargaining. Thank you. Juan Pablo Segura to be followed by Mike Holmes. As we can see in the room today, teachers unions are an incredibly contentious topic.

[03:46:09] I fully support increasing teacher pay, but are unions the best and fastest way to do just that? Like most things in life, sometimes the answer to our question is staring us right in the face. We should all rally around the school board, cutting the administration's budget.

[03:46:27] Over the last eight years, the admin budget has ballooned from \$19 million to \$35 million a year. We now have deputy superintendents, assistant superintendents, assistants to the assistant superintendents, and so many bureaucratic positions that the total full-time equivalent count has doubled in the last eight years.

[03:46:50] This building was supposed to be a palace for celebrating learning. It's become a mausoleum for bureaucrats. Cut the admin budget, increase teacher pay, and invest in our children's future. Thank you very much. Thank you. Please refrain from applause during public comment.

[03:47:05] Thank you. Mike Holmes to be followed by Susan Cox. I'm here to support collective bargaining and more specifically to support LEA's version of the resolution. We live in an environment where we have the lowest unemployment in decades.

[03:47:21] We have a number of people leaving the teaching profession across the nation. I know we have 63 vacancies here in this district. And the reality is that most people are leaving jobs in general because they feel unappreciated and not listened to.

[03:47:38] A common sense way to keep our teachers, a common sense way to keep them from walking, and to save the money on recruiting others, would be to go with collective bargaining. Gives them a space to talk, gives them a place to be heard, and makes them feel like they have input into the system.

[03:47:55] Thank you for your time. Thank you. Susan Cox, to be followed by Jeffrey Dunn. Ms. Reeser, you say you're happy to shed a light on white supremacy, and yet you vote to keep the report hidden. So I have to ask, who's the supremacist?

[03:48:10] Who thinks they know better than the parents? Who's the elite with more political power? Who's the oppressor suppressing the will of the people as a substantial number of the public have asked for the report's release? Who thinks they know better than another board member who prioritizes students' education and safety while calling out bloated spending and advocating for transparency?

[03:48:29] Your logic is appalling. You say that because the report happened under the fired Dr. Ziegler. It should not be released. I say all the more reason for its release. Keeping the community in the dark about sexual assaults is anti-woman, anti-student, anti-healing, anti-empathy.

[03:48:45] It is also shameful, and that's according to the Board of Supervisors' chairwoman. There will come a time when light is shed on the darkness of this LCPS and its systems. We will hold you to account. Your excuses are not helping us get the answers we need and the transparency we deserve.

[03:49:01] Change your ways and no to collective bargaining. Thank you. Thank you. Jeffrey Dunn to be followed by Jessica Smith.

[03:49:18] Jessica Smith to be followed by Michael Rivera. Recently, we traveled to our nation's capital for the Parents' Bill of Rights Act luncheon.

[03:49:33] And part of my students' introduction was, and I quote, it just sucks because right now I am in school, but I am not in full school because the schools can't protect me from retaliation from peers and such.

[03:49:51] This summer, we had a meeting with the North Star School, and they ensured us that they would keep her safe. What we have seen is quite the opposite. Students who are sent to North Star for behavioral problems are in the same environment as other students utilizing different services.

[03:50:09] My student had a security detail at both schools, and still, you could not provide my student with a safe learning environment. Because of all of your lies, the retaliation continues to this day. April 6th is almost here.

[03:50:26] And no, the truth will prevail. - Thank you. Michael Rivera to be followed by Anne Donahue. - The Loudoun County School Board implemented policy 8040 despite a very vocal opposition from constituents.

[03:50:46] The board thus created problems with gender bathrooms and cross-sex bathroom use. The board spent \$500,000 and took 400 bathrooms from teachers and staff as a result of 8040. So they created a problem that cost us more money and inconvenienced teachers.

[03:51:04] This brilliant move created problems with vaping, drugs, and discipline in lockable bathrooms that are frequented by multiple students at a time. Here comes the school board to the rescue. Now we're going to spend \$10 million over two years to make bathrooms safer. However, they were safe before 8040. How much lunacy do we have to endure here? I got a \$0 cost solution. Let boys and girls use the bathrooms corresponding to their sex just like it was before 80 40 and let's stop the madness

[03:51:37] thank you and donahue to be followed by kathy ellen davis good evening board i'm a loudon county resident and a parent of two kids in loudon county schools teachers and staff are hard-working highly educated professionals and they are vital to our students and our community and should be respected they work demanding jobs with long hours under very challenging conditions, especially over the last few years, and often for little or no appreciation. LCPS

[03:52:14] staff have no input in their contract negotiations and conditions, including their salary levels, which can make it hard for them to live here in Loudoun County. You've already heard about the extraordinary number of vacancies that we have in our current school system and the number of teachers that are leaving in the midpoint of the year, which is detrimental to all of our students. Collective bargaining will give our teachers a voice, allow them to negotiate to improve their conditions, and help reduce their level of burnout, which will only benefit our students. Say yes to collective bargaining. Thank you. Kathy Ellen Davis to be followed by

[03:52:52] Elizabeth Boyko. Here's a picture book that has been challenged in our county. A princess wants to find someone to marry and help her rule the kingdom, but finding a match proves difficult. When a dragon attacks, she rides out to defend her people. A knight is fighting the dragon. The two work

together, save each other from the dragon, and defeat him. They fall in love, get married, and live happily ever after. We all want our kids to learn to work together and help each other.

[03:53:17] Kids love fairy tales and retellings. Plus, this is a rhyming book. This book has been called indoctrination and not appropriate. Some think the content is too mature and confusing for kids, and that the characters are not normal or acceptable. Others say it has a high level of sexual content. There's not even a kiss in the book. And they think only those over 18 should have access to this story. These comments came from our community. Why such a big fuss? Because it's not a prince, a princess, it's a prince. I changed it to princess in my recap to show how there's nothing sexual about this story at all. If once it's about a gay couple you think it's sexual content, that's you sexualizing characters in a kid's book. Why would you do that? Stories about LGBTQ plus characters are not inappropriate. What's inappropriate is banning their stories

[03:53:55] and insisting it's your right to teach your kids to hate LGBTQ plus people. It is, but why would you do that? Thank you. Thank you. Elizabeth Boyko to be followed by Suzanne Satterfield. Suzanne Satterfield to be followed by Bertha Tiffany. The detransitioner's mascot is the lizard. Unlike the lizard, their bodies cannot regenerate their breasts or genitalia. Detransitioned by 22, now 26, Laura, the designer of my shirt, wrote a letter to her 15-year-old self. What's really cool is that I'm not even calling

[03:54:33] myself genderqueer, genderfluid, or transgender. After all of these years of searching for the most optimal gender identity, I realized I didn't need one. I I don't need to confine myself to standards imposed by society or impossible self-imposed desires to become someone or something that I cannot and need not be in order to find love for myself. I wish you could believe in yourself and that you can embrace your funky female self and everything will fall into alignment. Teachers do not need collective bargaining. They will be held by the contract with every move you make. Union attorneys do not have to represent them. If you're a teacher, the Supreme Court ruled you're not required

[03:55:13] pay union dues under collective bargaining. Opt out. Don't pay \$10 million for more dangerous bathrooms. Bertha Tiffany to be followed by Tori Truesdale. Good evening. I'm a lifelong resident of Loudoun and a product of Loudoun Schools. I retired after 32 years as a librarian in Loudoun.

[03:55:36] It's time that the employees in the trenches with the students each day gain a seat at the table. The educators know what is academically best for the students, and their voices should be valued. I urge you to adopt the collective bargaining resolution presented to you by LEA.

[03:55:54] Thank you. Thank you. Tori Truesdale, to be followed by Kelly Ferris. Hello. I'm back again because I'm here to support collective bargaining in our county.

[03:56:10] It's about time that we follow Fairfax County, and we show that we not only love our teachers, but we're actually acting in the ways of loving and supporting our teachers. I said this last time, I'm going to say this again to make sure every single one of you hear me. The level to which our teachers are poured into is the level to which our students are poured into.

[03:56:30] If we want to make not only this county and this state and this country a better place, we also want to make this world a better place. So I believe that we need to support collective bargaining. I also believe that all lives matter. I believe black lives matter. I believe that the LGBTQ community deserves the same exact rights that I had in high school as a straight white woman.

[03:56:53] I believe that every single human in our school system matters, and it's about time that we back up our students and we show that love is love, and they matter. Thank you. Kelly Ferris, to be followed by Jonathan Radau.

[03:57:12] Good evening. My name is Kelly Ferris. I'm a transgender teacher in Loudoun County, and I teach German at two middle schools. I wanted to speak about collective bargaining tonight, which receives my full support. Teachers need a chair at the table to allow our voices to be heard.

[03:57:31] Firefighters, police officers, these are all communities that have unions. Teachers deserve them as well. But I'd also like to add that even though we get a lot of money as teachers and educators in Loudoun County, my entire paycheck for the month does not cover my rent. The average rent in Loudoun County for a two-bedroom apartment is \$2,800.

[03:57:50] The average rent for one is \$2,100. Let's also speak to the value of planning days. We would gladly offer an extra few days at the end of the year to have a few planning days within the year. I'd also like to consider that pride clubs allow students the right to have safety in school.

[03:58:09] We are not trying to converse cisgender students. We are trying to save the lives of transgender students. Every year I receive letters from students telling me I've saved their lives. So, thank you. Thank you. Jonathan Radow, to be followed by Sylvia Glass.

[03:58:27] Good evening, and thank you for taking the time out of your schedules to serve on the school board. My name is Jonathan Radow. I'm a teacher, but I'm also a Loudoun County resident, a voter, and a taxpayer.

[03:58:44] I go back long enough that I can remember the financial crisis in 2008, and I can honestly say that I did not know a single teacher who, when our salaries were frozen, Our cola was frozen, no one complained, all right?

[03:58:59] Teachers make sacrifices, they're selfless, they work hard and they do it for the right reasons. And it is time that teachers get a seat at the table, they have a voice, because of all the work they do and everything that they put into it, with hardly ever asking for anything in return, it's time that they have a voice, especially recently with the COVID issues.

[03:59:22] Teachers have been through a lot and that is why I support the collective bargaining resolution that has been put forth. Thank you very much. - Thank you. Sylvia Glass, to be followed by Renee Crawford.

[03:59:38] - Good evening, members of the board. Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Sylvia Glass, and I am here as a staff to Virtual Loudoun, the elementary school, our virtual distance learning. I wanted to speak a little bit about our classroom in Virtual Loudoun.

[03:59:58] We have morning meeting, where we greet each other, we have calendar time, we sing songs, we dance. We have art, music, and PE. We have, along with our core classes, the students have projects that they work on, like we did a volcano project.

[04:00:18] The educators and staff are passionate and care about their classes. To students, this is their class, and these are their friends. I ask that you consider adding elementary VDL to the budget. I also ask that you consider collective bargaining. Thank you.

[04:00:35] - Thank you. Renee Crawford to be followed by Heather Binkley. - Hi, my name's Renee Crawford. I'm a teacher at Heritage High School. This is my 30th year in Loudoun County.

[04:00:51] I support collective bargaining because it shows that you trust educators to have a say in practice and policy. Right now, the only voice we are offered are one minute slots to address the board and or a committee. Collective bargaining offers educators a chance to dialogue about decisions that affect our classrooms and our students every day.

[04:01:07] I urge you to adopt a collaborative process with LEA to determine resolution language, whether it occurs in an ad hoc committee, a current standing school board committee, or another mutually agreed upon process. Thank you. - Thank you. Heather Binkley to be followed by Richie Holden.

[04:01:26] - Good evening. My daughter asked me today what collective bargaining is and why we want it for our community. It reminded me that for many, collective bargaining is still an unknown. Collective bargaining is defined as the negotiation of wages and other conditions of employment by an organized body of employees.

[04:01:44] Wages and benefits are what most people think of, but what are other conditions of employment? These are things like class size, planning time, teacher initiatives, grading policies, and resource adoption to name just a few. Educators know our students.

[04:01:59] We know their names and we know their families. Collective bargaining adds educator perspectives and expertise to our county's toolbox so that those who interact most with students can help identify and solve the issues that affect student learning.

[04:02:14] The majority of certified employees have indicated that they want the Loudon Education Association to negotiate on their behalf. A strong resolution will let us use our collective voice to advocate for Loudon's most important stakeholders, its children. Thank you. Richie Holden, to be followed by Jeremy Wright.

[04:02:33] Hi, sorry. My name is Josie Vinkley, and I was hoping to speak on behalf of Richie Holden because he got sick and he sent me in his remarks. Is that okay? Okay, wonderful. Okay, my name is Josie Vinkley. I'm a graduate of LCPS, a student of William & Mary, and a substitute teacher in LCPS.

[04:02:53] I'm here to speak on behalf of Richie Holden, as he got sick at the last minute. As a teacher, Mr. Holden cares most about students' academic outcomes and their well-being. Collective bargaining is not just beneficial for teachers, but also a powerful tool that can help students achieve more both in and out of the classroom.

[04:03:09] Through collective bargaining, we can improve the quality of education for all students. Collective bargaining is also likely to improve teaching retention and help recruit the best and brightest to the profession. Collective bargaining will allow teachers to make changes that directly affect students in a variety of ways by reducing class sizes, increasing student access to a wider range of resources, and many more positive changes.

[04:03:30] No one knows the educational needs of students better than their teachers and their parents. Thank you. Thank you. Jeremy Wright to be followed by Brian Davison. I scoured the CASEL and Second Step websites to review the research-based practices that supposedly improve student outcomes for mental health issues.

[04:03:53] Most of their studies are secondary or tertiary studies that have nothing to do with the effectiveness of SEL programs and wouldn't meet empirical evidence standards. In the SEL manual, the best they can provide is a statement that SEL competencies are positively related to good adjustment outcomes and negatively related to a variety of problems.

[04:04:12] That is a very nonspecific statement using weak circumstantial evidence. The magnitude effect of that was 0.22 to 0.57, which is very weak. to justify their competencies. It doesn't even address the effects of the program itself on our students.

[04:04:30] That statement is even more ridiculous once you break it down. It basically states that SEL training using their products improves SEL performance and outcomes. How do they measure that? With tests, of course. So the research-based practices they refer to do not positively affect student behavior in regards to mental health issues.

[04:04:50] We are spending a hefty amount of taxpayer money to train. Brian Davison to be followed by Carrie Michonne. sir the mic's not on one second first i wanted to address the dog and pony show with mercer

[04:05:25] middle school uh let's take from 2017 to 2022 their eighth grade math sol scores dropped at 35 points in geometry 43 points in math 8 including their math 8 pass rate was only 62 their algebra 2 pass rate with 10 students only six of them passed so whatever you're doing please stop let's go back to the superintendent survey from a few years ago where you re you asked Community members, parents, and students, what they felt about the following thing, and here's how many agreed with you.

[04:05:57] The quality of their education is good. Only 55% parents, 62% students. Headed in the right direction, 32%, 47%. High standards, 51%, 51%. College readiness, 45%, 44% agreed. Engaging community, 34%, 32%.

[04:06:13] It continues to go down across the board. So basically what we're asking is all of you to quit so we can hire a competent superintendent, Jeff Morris. Thank you. Carrie Michonne to be followed by Abby Platt. A neighbor told me that his senior year he took Calculus AB and could not take the AP test because the teachers in his county in Pennsylvania were on strike for almost his entire senior year.

[04:06:43] The students had to teach themselves and therefore they weren't prepared. What a travesty and a perfect example of why collective bargaining is a farce. The students lose when a small group of people make decisions for the entire teaching staff and school system. Please, please, please put the teachers at the table and listen to them.

[04:07:00] They are boots on the ground, but not with collective bargaining. Second, vapes laced with THC in the bathrooms are very common in our high schools and are creating, along with other narcotics, the medical emergencies and overdoses in our buildings. With no school board member in attendance at a meeting last week at Woodgrove, a brave high school student repeatedly spoke of her daily experience, which puts to rest that these aren't rumors.

[04:07:24] The students know what's going on. Clearly this isn't just Western Loudon. The principals need help. Thank you 8040 for causing half of the trouble, but the bathrooms aren't safe. Please do something. - Abby Platt to be followed by Andrew Pyhonak.

[04:07:45] - The acting superintendent estimated his January 10th budget presentation that the school district would need to allocate \$3.5 million and 14 full-time staff to implement collective bargaining. He said at the time that if a resolution passed in favor of collective bargaining, that the school board would have to ask the board of supervisors for more money to fund it in the budget.

[04:08:08] If you accept collective bargaining, you lose your vote. You are handing over your right to make decisions to a union, a union that will get millions of dollars for more admin positions, not for our teachers, not for our kids.

[04:08:24] We do not want to become Chicago or L.A. Look at those districts. That is not what we not want or what we need. Speaking of millions, how dare you put \$10 million into more single-use bathrooms that are havens for drugs.

[04:08:43] We attended a meeting for parents dedicated to drugs. What a sham and a shame. Thank you. Andrew Pihonak to be followed by Andrea Weiskopf. Hi. Tonight I'm speaking in honor of my best friend in the whole world, my mom.

[04:08:59] This week marks eight years since she passed away. She was a community leader, a loving soul, a mother, and a kindergarten teacher for over a decade. Ten years ago, she was diagnosed with cancer that spread to multiple places. Even through the agonizing treatments, she wanted nothing more than to get back to her classroom and teach her kids.

[04:09:15] She loved it. I see teachers as passionate and caring as my mom all over the county. Why? It's not the money. I can tell you that. They give their everything to making sure students are prepared to navigate this world when they spread their wings and fly out of their nests and face new challenges every single day. Teachers deserve to have better terms with their employment and what better way than to let them decide among themselves collectively.

[04:09:37] Please, collective bargaining. Also, 80-40 has saved lives. 80-40 has saved lives. Trans kids need to feel like they belong. Thank you. Thank you. And our final in-person speaker tonight is Andrea Weiskopf.

[04:09:56] Today, in order to help students celebrate our ability to calculate the area of the circle, I took a pie to the face. Then I wiped off the filling and taught reading comprehension skills.

[04:10:12] But please keep telling us about lazy, greedy teachers who hate students. I hope it is not lost on you that those who oppose equity, those who oppose collective bargaining, are also those who oppose equity and what our students need for each and every one to succeed.

[04:10:35] I belong to the LEA not only because it advocates for educators, but also because the LEA advocates for each and every student, for each and every student belongs, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students. Black Lives Matter.

[04:10:55] Thank you. We'll now transition to our virtual speakers. We have 25, and the first virtual speaker on the list is Sarah Freeman.

[04:11:09] Learning Elementary Program. I received no survey evaluation or opportunity to discuss the closing of the VLE program in the Virginia Constitution of Article 8, Section 1. It states, the General Assembly shall provide for a system of free public elementary schools for all children of school age throughout the Commonwealth, just to ensure that an educational program of high quality is established

and continually maintained in Section 7 of Article 8 of the Virginia Constitution, invested in supervision of schools and each school division to the school boards, attempting to send medically complex, neurodiverse, or bullied elementary students to private virtual options violates the requirement to provide free public

[04:11:48] elementary education, forcing medically complex elementary students to rely on homebound education, which consists of only five educational hours a week covering reading, math, and if lucky, science while living in isolation from peers in their community violates the requirements for the high-quality education. Virtual learning education meets these requirements. Thank you for your time.

[04:12:12] Ruth Kiefer? I believe the elementary grades should be incorporated into the main virtual distance learning branch to rename it as the K-12 program. Hey, then it wouldn't even need a separate budget line item.

[04:12:28] We could scale back in the fall or combine classes while still allowing it to remain an equitable and advertised option. Perhaps the homebound program could be integrated with distance learning for students who need it instead of the one-hour-a-day option that is currently offered.

[04:12:46] No other elementary virtual programs offered in Virginia are providing the same quality or quantity of classes, clubs, and social activities that our elementary program is currently offering. Let's envision the amazing possibilities that the distance learning program offers in equity for students within Loudoun County Public Schools and keep it an option for families that need it or prefer it. Thank you.

[04:13:11] Scott Pacula. I'm here today to plead for the continuation of virtual distance elementary. This program has provided an indispensable option for many families like my own. As a father of an LCPS student, I've seen firsthand the devastating effects of bullying.

[04:13:29] I'm grateful for a virtual distance elementary, which provides a secure and supportive environment that protects our children. We have selected virtual distance elementary for academic success. I can attest to the tremendous value of having a virtual option as an alternative.

[04:13:45] I personally witnessed the positive impact of distance learning on our children's academic performance, confidence, and overall well-being. It is our duty as parents, educators, and leaders to provide our children with the best possible opportunities to succeed in life. And Virtual Distance Elementary has proven to be a powerful tool in achieving that goal.

[04:14:04] Please continue Virtual Distance Elementary. Thank you. Kee Pan. Good evening. I'm here to request that the Virtual Auden Distance Learning Elementary School remains available.

[04:14:20] I know many parents want this wonderful program. Our children need this program for academic success. By providing a safe and secure learning environment, they have received better grades and test scores.

[04:14:36] It also offers an equitable learning experience. Our kids really enjoy learning in this way. We hope that, most importantly, the school board can continue virtualized distance learning for elementary school for years to come.

[04:14:51] our kids really need it. Thank you. David Polanzi. Good evening. My name is David Polanzi and I come before you tonight as a retired teacher of over 30 years. I'm here to speak in support of adopting a collective bargaining resolution. As a former educator, I have seen firsthand the importance of having a

voice in the decisions that affect our classrooms and our students. When teachers are not able to advocate for themselves and their students, it's our students who suffer the most. This policy ensures that teachers can speak up without fear of retaliation and have a voice in the decisions that affect their classrooms.

[04:15:30] I know from my experience that teachers work tirelessly to create a positive learning environment for our students. However, without the proper support and resources, our ability to teach and meet the needs of our students is limited. Collective bargaining gives us the support we need to be successful educators and provides a sense of security that our profession is valued and respected.

[04:15:49] I strongly encourage the school board to adopt a collective bargaining policy. By doing so, you will send a message to educators in this district that their voices matter and that their work is valued. Thank you for your time. Jani Cho. Bullying behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time.

[04:16:11] Bullying is considered an adverse child experience and can have lasting effects on the child's development, the way they interact with others, and how they perform in school. My bullied son attended in-person learning. It affected his focus on his schoolwork, mental health, and anxiety level.

[04:16:27] I strongly support the help of the board to support free, appropriate education by supporting the virtual learning elementary program. This afternoon, my child's children both voiced that the fully free, safe, and supportive learning environment were one of the benefits of attending the program.

[04:16:44] Our virtual teachers have empowered my children to do their best and has provided them with a positive school culture, allowing them to thrive and be confident individuals. My children deserve quality, equitable education. Please support this program. Dave Bhavna.

[04:17:05] I don't have a caller by that name. Jonathan Bunker Hill. Hi, I've been listening to the parents asking for virtual distance elementary to continue, and I also would like to chime in.

[04:17:22] I agree that the county should find a way to keep this option available to those who need and want it. It is an LRE, least restrictive environment option, that offers a truly equitable public school education, and the program they have going on is meeting and exceeding that need.

[04:17:39] Please find a way to keep their incredible and innovative online school community here in LCPS. Thank you for your time. Tim McClintock. Please continue the virtual Loudon elementary program.

[04:17:57] There are many people who still need this program. It has provided equity for many who did not have such an option prior to his existence. My daughter's a prize in this program, and first and foremost has failed. Please, please, please start in the beginning. Thanks.

[04:18:14] Mary McClintock. The last year I have myself and other parents have invited you to visit our children's school. Meet with us, our kids, observe our amazing teachers, survey us on how to success. We again extend the invitation. Please visit Observe Virtual Lounge in elementary.

[04:18:31] LCPS is a trendsetter. Come see how PLU sets itself apart from BABA, Virtual Virginia, and Home Out. Guarantees faith in a least restrictive environment. Talk to teachers' parents about the pedagogy behind its success. As a parent of a medically fragile child with a 504 and another child who's dyslexic, has a PhD, and on an IEP, we have seen great growth in both.

[04:18:49] The school has served as a model for other districts as test results higher than other schools in the district, with a higher number of students on an IEP, 20% versus 10% average district. wide. An entire

number of ELL students, 20%. We have built a loving community around this school. We know more parents want to speak up, but we have troubled content to them as we do not have parent directors, parent meetings, far away to contact them. Patience, Shark. Good evening. I'd like to begin my time by expressing thanks and gratitude to all our esteemed school board members for their dedication to all the students of Long County and this learning community. One of the

[04:19:25] things I most appreciate about LCPS is the deep commitment to equity within our schools. That being said, I'd like to use the short time I have here to ask you to consider the continuation of the virtual allowed in elementary program. This program is proven to be a successful and rewarding educational opportunity for students who for a variety of reasons are unable to attend the in-person educational setting. It provides all facets of an in-person elementary classroom, even offering after-school clubs. The alternatives left to the students with the discontinuation of this program do not provide the same variety and depth of educational experience in comparison to their on-site peers. It seems as though dropping this virtual option creates inequity for this population

[04:20:02] of students. I ask you not to dismiss the importance of what the service provides and how inclusive it can make the elementary experience for them. Please continue this program. Thank you for your time. Michaela Oliver. Hi, good evening. I'm a virtual distance learning elementary teacher. Please keep the option open for kindergarten through fifth grade. Online learning is the future, and with ongoing uncertainties in education such as viruses and gun violence, How could we choose to eliminate this program now?

[04:20:36] Perhaps we should shrink it instead of reinventing the wheel in the future. The virtual elementary program is an equitable option for students now, but additionally is a current and successful program if we ever need to grow it again for any reason.

[04:20:51] Please keep our program alive by adding to the budget. Thank you for listening. Bethany Stiles. I don't have a caller by that name. Aaron G. As an option to better serve the students who would otherwise not be able to attend public school, the families who support them, and staff who work diligently every day to provide the best learning experience possible.

[04:21:23] Given the fact that money appears to be the main issue, remember that you will be paying for the staff of the program either way. Consider whether it is in anyone's best interest to remove a program that each family and staff member has chosen, many of them needing it.

[04:21:40] Ask yourselves whether the decision to leave behind elementary distance learning is equitable for everyone you serve. Thank you. Michaela Garrison. Good evening. I'm a teacher in the Virtual Loudoun Elementary Program, and I'm speaking tonight asking for the board to revisit the elementary program to allow us to continue this K-12 program virtually next year.

[04:22:06] Our students are a diverse population from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, all thriving in our innovative online learning environment. These students work in groups and partnerships, collaborating to build deeper understanding to learning and connection with their peers.

[04:22:23] Unlike other online programs or homebound instruction, our program meets the full needs of students with 504 plans and IEPs, while providing a full day of rigorous, differentiated instruction with many opportunities for social engagement.

[04:22:40] Tonight, you will hear from families and educators who have seen success in and believe in our program. Make the equitable decision by funding virtual learning as a K-12 program. Thank you. Heather Malam. Hi, I teach secondary science, virtual distance learning, and believe that a K-12 distance learning program within LCPS is a benefit to our entire community.

[04:23:08] For all the things the pandemic took away, it also opened LCPS's course to live instruction without physical limitation. Distance learning is real schooling. It's an option chosen by families who need the flexibility of a virtual education. Like the academies, we support students from across Loudoun.

[04:23:25] We're the least restrictive environment for about a third of our students and have the highest per capita number of special education students of any school or program in the county. We're also a majority minority school. In a youth mental health crisis, our students receive the same live instruction as their peers, whether they're at home or a therapeutic center.

[04:23:45] Students with social anxiety thrive in an environment where they can interact remotely. You can visit our classes from the comfort of home, and we invite you to come and see who we are in distance learning. Once you get connected, you'll want to continue K-12 distance learning in LCBS. Karen Moynafar. I don't have a caller by that name. Heather Hughes. I am here to support virtual Loudoun Elementary. There are so many children that have benefited from this school. The teachers have gone above and beyond helping their students. It's disappointing that

[04:24:22] there was no survey or information gathered from parents on whether they would like the elementary program to continue. We only received an email stating it was closing and to contact our homeschool with any questions. Some of these children haven't entered a school building for three years or more. Sending these medically complex children back into a building could be very dangerous. Homebound is not the answer. It's only temporary, a few hours a week, and isolating.

[04:24:47] Virtual Elementary has given these children a safe and equitable place to learn. Please fund Virtual Elementary. Thank you. Caitlin Smith. Hello. Elementary school is where kids make their first lasting friendships and gained valuable social skills that they will use for the rest of their lives. Students enrolled in the elementary school distance learning program learn social skills on everything a student would receive within in-person schooling while in an environment that keeps them and their families safe and healthy. On the Loudoun County Public School

[04:25:22] Equity page is a quote. For our community, equity means being committed to providing a safe, supportive, inclusive, affirming, and a respectful environment for each student and staff member that fosters success growth and academic rigor quote if you remove the elementary school distance learning program it would be inequitable because the high school and middle school programs would still be in place and it would be unsafe for many families you have worked to keep loudon county public school safe and equitable for all please vote to continue the elementary school distance

[04:25:55] learning program it is your responsibility to do so thank you dipali batat bapoti dipali keep the virtual distance learning uh elementary program as is because some there are some families who need it and they they i think if they need it they deserve it thank you valerie smith

[04:26:31] board member today to think for a moment about a child in your life who you love and to picture their face i am sure that you love your child that child immeasurably beyond words can ever express just like how i love my child my child graduated from the virtual loud and distance learning

elementary school last year and attended that school due to him having serious health issues that prevented him from being in the building. Now I'm asking you to imagine telling the child that you love that you decide to close their school. Will you tell them that you and your

[04:27:07] colleagues decided to not pay the allotted school budget for them like you have for every other child able to go inside the school building? What reason will you give to that child that justifies you to treat them like they are less than their peers and then deserving of an equitably education. Please tell me these reasons so I will know what to tell my son when he asks me why you say he is not enough in the eyes of his school community or yours to be equally valued like every other child that attends an LCPS school. Benjamin Smith. Hi, can you hear me? Yes, go

[04:27:46] ahead. Okay. Hi, my name is Ben, and I graduated from Rickwood Business Learning Elementary School last year. I went to this school because I have health issues. My doctor said I could not attend school in the building. I was doing the same education, had kind and great teachers, and I was able to talk, make friends with my peers in my class the way I was safe for me.

[04:28:08] This virtual school gives kids with serious special needs their only way to learn together with the teacher and make friends like in the building. If this school is closed, you'll show everyone and tell all the kids with special needs they don't matter and you are telling them they're less than and not worth enough to use the school budget money to keep them safe like you do for the kids who can go to school in the building.

[04:28:31] Please change your mind and vote to keep the virtual distance elementary school open. Thank you. Ann Abruzzi. I don't have a caller by that name. Christina Ramirez. My name is Christina Ramirez and I am the kindergarten teacher for virtual distance elementary. Please continue the virtual distance elementary program or merge it with the secondary program to make a K-12 virtual option for families. Online learning and the use of technology increases student opportunities and

[04:29:10] improves student outcomes. Right now, LCPS has a unique opportunity to either become trailblazers in this new academic frontier or to throw in the towel on this LCPS program that has clearly proven to be successful. Please do not dissolve this valuable option for students and families. Please keep this option open for our young learners. I believe in the school board's ability to make this happen. Aren't our students worth it? I believe they are. Secondly, I support collective bargaining because it will improve the working conditions of educators, which ultimately improves

[04:29:49] student outcomes. I believe you should adopt the proposed resolution. Michelle Warner. Vote no for collective bargaining. This is yet another political move to further divide our country.

[04:30:06] county. It comes at a massive cost. It will make it impossible to remove bad teachers and will hold students hostage to demands that will not benefit their education. This board has already spent half a million dollars to make our school bathrooms unsafe, to change the signage, and to install sanitary item dispensers in boys' bathrooms. Now a plan will come before you to spend 10.9 million dollars to reconfigure existing bathrooms, apparently put our students in bathrooms with adults. It is long overdue that this board repeal policy 8040 and adopt the governor's model policy to protect all of our students. Do not fund virtual Loudoun. Virtual schooling is offered

[04:30:45] to the state and is not a needed cost at the county level. Keeping books with explicit language, pictures, and drawings out of our libraries does not censorship. Stay out of our morality of our students.

And that was our final speaker for tonight, so that will conclude public comment.

[04:31:05] Board members, at this time we're going to take a short recess. Please be back on the dais ready

[04:31:12] to go at 845. Thank you. The board is coming out of recess, and we're going to pick up with item 12

[04:44:09] on our agenda, the acting superintendent's report. Dr. Smith. All right. Good evening, board members. I am pleased to bring to you tonight the acting superintendent's report to the school board. We'll start with some good news around the division. John Champ High School received the 2023 Virginia School Breakfast Club Award for their breakfast program from the Virginia Department Education Office of School Nutrition Programs. This award was presented during National School Breakfast Week which reminds the school community that healthy breakfast options give students an energizing start to the day and that all LCPS schools offer delicious and nutritious options

[04:44:46] to start the day. Congratulations to Ovia Amulraj, a sixth grader at Michael Lunsford Middle School who won lcps's 40 41st annual regional spelling bee by correctly spelling elon lcps's top 25 spellers completed in the spelling bee prior to the regional competition school-wide spelling competitions were held in all lcps elementary and middle schools local private schools and home schools winner of these competition 83 spellers total then participate in an online assessment

[04:45:22] and spelling and vocabulary to determine the top 25 congratulations Ovia our regional winner did you know that according to current statistics only 26 of tech jobs are filled by women 75 female students from harmony middle learned that fact plus some fun skills at pathways to engineering a workshop and discussion sponsored by microsoft the panel discussion featured tech experts who shared about their careers and career pathways and the obstacles they overcame in addition to learning from these experts the students enjoyed hands-on labs learning the opportunity to try

[04:45:58] hololens technology a mixed reality smart glasses congratulations to evelyn bogus a senior at heritage high school who over the weekend became virginia's new poetry out loud champion this is evelyn's third year in a row advancing to the virginia state final for poetry out loud colleen dobbs who also taught evelyn's freshman honors english class and who introduced evelyn to poetry Out Loud was in the audience to support Evelyn. By winning the Poetry Out Loud championship, Evelyn won \$500 for her school's library for the purchase of poetry books. Evelyn will be

[04:46:37] performing in the Poetry Out Loud finals May 8th to May 10th in Washington, D.C. Danny Vitello, a sophomore at Woodgrove, also completed in the state finals. These two LCPS students were two of the only 12 finalists from across the Commonwealth to advance to the state finals and were selected from nearly 6,000 Virginia students who participated in Poetry Out Loud this year.

[04:47:00] Poetry Out Loud is a nationwide contest encouraging high school students to learn about poetry and provides the opportunity for students to hone public speaking skills while building self-confidence. Congratulations to Olivia Sun, an Academies of Loudon Senior and member of the Academies of Loudon Robotics competition team, RoboLoco, who was awarded a \$2,000 for Women in STEM scholarship sponsored by the Dominion Energy and First Chesapeake, a non-profit that promotes STEM learning through annual robotics competition. Olivia is a team leader for the RoboLoco team

[04:47:36] and collaborated with both the non-technical and technical sub-teams to create RoboLoco's distinct identity. In February, LCPS peer helpers across 11 high schools created classroom lessons and school-wide and social media campaigns that reached nearly 11,000 students with education about unhealthy relationships.

[04:47:58] PEER, which stands for Positive Experiences in Educational Relationships, is a specialized high school class for student leaders to develop mentoring skills and to teach students how to assist their fellow students emotionally, socially, and academically. PEER helpers wore orange to bring attention to their message during National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

[04:48:21] This past Monday, I had the fortunate opportunity to attend and welcome over 400 students from high schools from across LCPS at the first annual student leadership conference. We'll note this was a student holiday, so this was on their day off. The conference was held at Rockridge High School and was a major initiative of Ms. Lynn Fiscus, our extracurricular specialist, and the Department of Instruction.

[04:48:43] There were many breakout sessions for students, and sessions were also provided to support our advisors. It was great to see these student leaders invest in critical thinking skills that will serve them in school in the years to come. As I told the students on Monday, our community needs good leaders, and these students are off to a great start.

[04:48:59] Now for an operational update. First, an update on the state budget. The General Assembly passed a skinny budget, but did not reconcile or finalize the FY24 budget. The FY23 sales tax revised projections are coming in higher than originally budgeted for. This excess sales tax combined with basic aid funding is offsetting the VDOE calculation tool error for the current fiscal year.

[04:49:25] So instead of receiving the additional \$3 million due to the actual sales tax, these funds are supplanting the gap that was caused by the VDOE calculation error. It's important to note that this is a dangerous precedent, as typically, and per the funding formula, schools would receive any excess or surplus sales tax revenues.

[04:49:44] At the same time, school districts would likely be expected to manage any sales tax shortages. The skinny budget did not address the FY24 shortfall that occurred as a result of the VDOE calculation error, which for LCPS equates to \$7.4 million. The skinny budget did revert back to the original adopted biennium budget from the governor's proposed budget, and if this stands, the impact to LCPS would be a gap of an additional \$5.6 million.

[04:50:12] In summary, for FY23, we're projected to receive \$3.5 million less, and for FY24, \$13 million less. For FY24, we are calling this a baseline reset since the skinny budget revises the current FY24 biennium budget.

[04:50:29] It's important to note, though, the state budget is not complete. As we try to plan ahead and sift through the multiple state budget amendments, it's difficult to predict what the final outcome and the budget impact may be. On this slide below the table, you'll see a sample of items that have been included in one or both of the budget amendment packages.

[04:50:49] Applying each Senate or House amendment package to the FY24 reset baseline shows the projected impacts to the FY24 budget ranging from almost breaking even to a funding shortfall of \$20.4 million. These are just two scenarios and the final budget could be a combination of items from each amendment package.

[04:51:07] On Thursday, the Board of Supervisors will discuss the LCPS budget, and this information will be presented. Loudoun County Public Schools will host a series of community listening sessions starting next week on March 22nd. I'll be joined by each district school board member at the events you see here, which will take place in each of the school division's eight districts.

[04:51:29] They'll provide an opportunity for LCPS community members to share comments, concerns, and feedback directly with division leadership. Discussion will also center on how the division can best support students' academic and mental health needs, along with how the division can best communicate with and engage with the community.

[04:51:46] I look forward to engaging with parents and citizens at the upcoming listening sessions. In response to the growing concerns about the dangers of fentanyl in our community, LCPS hosted six opioid and fentanyl awareness sessions. The Williams Center for Wellness and Recovery, the Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Development Services, and the Prevention Alliance of Loudoun, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, and the Leesburg Police Department, all LCPS partners, supported these very important information sessions. More than 200 parents attended these sessions. If you have not had yet a chance to attend a session, there's one more remaining

[04:52:23] next Thursday, March 23rd, starting at 7 p.m. at Broad Run High School. Last week, LCPS families, staff, and community members received an invitation to complete a superintendent search survey. This week, the consulting firm of GR Recruiting is hosting parents, students, staff, community input sessions. This slide highlights the four sessions that are open to parents and students, including two sessions that are occurring this evening and two more occurring Wednesday and Thursday of this week. This week's stakeholder meetings, along with survey results, are useful in helping to develop the profile of the next superintendent in LCPS. On our website, you can

[04:53:02] find the timeline for the selection of the LCPS's next superintendent, which is the same as shown in this slide. After this week's stakeholder sessions, the superintendent search survey closes. I'd like to remind all stakeholders to take the survey prior to March 21st. By the end of this month, the school board is scheduled to finalize the leadership profile.

[04:53:21] After reviewing application submissions and completing the interview process in April and May, the selection of the new superintendent is anticipated to be finalized by early June. Thank you, and that concludes my report. Thank you, Dr. Smith.

[04:53:38] We'll now move to our action items, starting with 1301 from the Finance and Operations Committee, Revision of Policy 8010, Fundraising. Mr. Morse. Chair I move that the Loudoun County School Board approve the recommended revisions to policy 8010 fundraising. Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Mr.

[04:53:59] Mahedby. Mr. Morse would you like to speak to your motion? Yeah thank you Mr. Chair. The discussion that we heard earlier from public comment was the concern that schools would not be able to do tag sales or collect funds and my understanding is that the language we captured in here the language that we added either at the last finance and finance committee meeting or from the information session I forget which was the language that states SSO school support organizations are not part of this policy that prohibits door-to-door

[04:54:36] sales and it's captured in the language so I hope that puts to rest any fears in the community that they would not be able to go door-to-door for tag sales for the whether that be the the band boosters or any other school support organizations it just simply states that the schools themselves cannot solicit doors door-to-door thank you further discussion on the policy mr. Mahadmi thank you thank you chair so mr. Morris I think this is something

[04:55:12] sort of a feedback we heard from leaf member too and I received some some emails around the concerns from this if we were to look back at policy and I know the feedback came in after we move approved this particular policy out of the committee to the to the full school board and I know we we sort of discuss about the student support organizations can continue to do that but the line here on in line 18 you know I'm not I'm not sure if it makes any distinction

[04:55:45] between school support I mean it or just the school itself so so I don't know I mean I'm hopefully I won't have a discussion on this thing because to understand better instead of just trying to add a line that they may not participate in door-to-door because sometimes we have made decisions where we added some things and then we realized later that perhaps it shouldn't have been added so my hope hope from last week but last time when we had this item in front of us and we were debating whether to put on a consent agenda versus having an action the idea was at least we could discuss it to see the

[04:56:23] the merits of this thing versus just you know completely prohibiting any door-to-door solicitations for school sponsor fundraising activities so I don't know staff would like to take a ship I mean who can but if instead of looking at line 19 look at line 23 which states school support organization fundraising activities off school property are not governed by the provisions of this policy so hopefully that's you know that that will clarify the the

[04:57:00] organizational responsibilities for all of the support organizations staff did did you want to comment and then no mr. Morris you pointed out the line that I was going to point out so thank you miss Ogedek Bay and then mr. Reeser thank you chair Sorotkin I I think that so I appreciate the explanation because I didn't understand the nuance of what the school supported organization meant right and so I I think that some clarification perhaps even the addition

[04:57:38] at the end of line 24 to say that and therefore the door-to-door fundraising is not prohibited for those organizations might be a helpful addition to just be very clear what that means i also received a number of emails from parents advocating that we not prohibit door-to-door fundraising so i think there's some confusion about what the edits meant miss reaser i think my comments are also in line with that i mean if you look at sentence the sentence beginning on line 18 it says students may not participate in door-to-door

[04:58:19] solicitation for school-sponsored fundraising activities i think a lot of parents are confused by what school sponsored means um tag day for the bands is probably one of the most topical of the emails I got on on this policy so what I'm understanding is and you can correct me if I'm wrong Dr. Smith tag day would still be allowed yeah so if you in policy 8020 there are definitions of school support organization and school sponsored activities and so as long as that tag day was

[04:58:56] going through the booster club an outside group and not through the it wasn't a school sponsored activity the school was running and supporting then yes so I'm not sure how many community members would think to look for the definition in 80/20 is the difficulty also is so I would suggest either

including the definition here or making specific reference to 80/20 like within the text or as a footnote at the very least but also I was just curious what

[04:59:33] precipitated the necessity to define this not being allowed if it's a school sponsored activity if it is that happening now are there instances in where there's door-to-door fundraising happening that would be therefore precluded by this policy like are we addressing a problem that actually exists or are we just anticipating that that may happen at some point we want to prevent it so I'll share my thoughts and then see if Miss Willoughby also wants to chime in I think I don't know that I can

[05:00:08] speak to say this is definitely happening with a school supported at a school supported fundraiser I will say you know when I looked at this and we discussed it it was all about student safety in terms of allowing kids to go door to door with something that the school division and school was directly sponsoring and we have concerns about student safety and so that's where that's where this policy came from from from staff but I don't know if Ms. Willoughby wants to chime in and add anything else. I'll just add that there I do believe that there are some examples of because

[05:00:43] the current policy does allow for high school students to you know in pairs do door-to-door solicitations and so I can speak from personal experience I have had some high school students comes to my door what I also saw as as a safety wasn't even necessarily just the the student safety but the fact that what they were doing that they were actually collecting cash and checks and money which is also a whole nother risk factor in terms of you know depending on how successful their campaigns are they're walking around neighborhoods with perhaps a lot of money so it really is to double down on the safety issue of why staff had recommended the

[05:01:20] to change to the policy to not have door-to-door solicitations for school-sponsored activities. And I will also add that we do have cross-reference policy 8020 where those definitions are. And we did go through great lengths with policy 8020.

[05:01:37] I think it went through several iterations to try to clearly distinguish between what LCPS has governance over, which is the school support, I mean, I'm sorry, the school-sponsored activities versus the booster clubs and how there is a relationship there, but there's not direct oversight.

[05:01:56] And I see the cross-reference like we normally have in policies. I just thought it might behoove us to have a footnote specifically for this one because it is generating actual confusion, whether it should or not. Going back to the first point, so I'm still not – I understand your concerns about safety, and they're well-founded.

[05:02:16] as a parent I might make certain choices that are in keeping with what you're saying but have we actually had a problem has anyone reported a problem with people going door-to-door at the high school like so I'm not sure that we're not fixing a problem that doesn't exist and it's creating a lot of confusion and honestly I think if parents are comfortable having their high school aged children or or even at elementary school fundraisers for wrapping paper maybe I would have gone door-to-door with my kids and now the policy says that they can't I don't know how much we need to be legislating

[05:02:54] what's happening outside of school I'll just leave it at that. Mr. Morris and then Mr. Mahedby. Yes back to Ms. Ogaedegbe's comment I would support an amendment that would add that language following the line 24 that therefore this therefore SSOs may perform door-to-door approved by their organization or words to that effect.

[05:03:18] So if you have an amendment, I'm certainly open to that. Thank you, Chair. So I was listening to that argument you were making, Mr. Morris and Ms. Oak, debate about adding the line. But then I think as Mr. Smith and Ms. Willoughby spoke from a safety point of view, then I think it doesn't make any sense because we're saying that from a safety perspective, we're okay with the same student.

[05:03:46] Because of SSOs, they can still go and doorknock with all the cash and everything else. but just cannot do for school. So I kind of find it really, you know, contradicting to add the language that you can door-to-door for, if you're talking about safety, from a safety point of view, to do that.

[05:04:02] I mean, my daughter is a middle school, I mean, from Girl Scouts. She's done door-to-door for the last couple of years. This year, they also had World's Best Chocolate. I think they're raising some fundraising for that also. And so there's been, you know, I think the policy is still not in place. I think she did go door-to-door, so I'm confessing that.

[05:04:21] But with a friend, with one of our friends that didn't do that. It's also a great, I mean, I know safety is a concern, but also I think it's a great exercise. I think one of the parents who sort of commented a skill to learn for the students as well.

[05:04:37] So if you're going to add the language, I think it negates it from a safety point of view. So I'm not sure. And if it's not an issue, I would be, you know, I think one thing I shared with you, all board members, But, you know, I would like to make an amendment to remove the line completely so that it just makes it clear that we are trying to, I mean, there's no good substantive argument other than saying safety.

[05:05:00] But then for SSOs, we're okay for the kids to go knock on the door. So it doesn't make any sense in that regard. So, again, I'd love to hear some more before I make my amendment. Ms. Reeser. I hear what Mr. Mahede be saying and I think you're pointing that out about if it's not safe it's not safe made me wonder if the difference between the two lies in is there a liability to the school division if it's a school activity I'm sorry I was doing a poor job of multitasking could you repeat your question I'm not even sure if you can answer the question or if it might be a

[05:05:39] question for for Mr. Falcone I'm I'm wondering if part of the calculation was liability to the school division if the school divisions requiring it are we requiring it or making it even if we're making it optional yeah thank you miss razor so I wasn't in that committee and wasn't part of that discussion but but absolutely that would certainly be part of the part of the calculus going on there so I mean I think for that reason I do see a difference in having it in paragraph in the paragraph numbered 16 through 20 in the red line versus versus

[05:06:17] not. Further discussion? Ms. Okedekpe. I'd like to make an amendment to the base motion to add language starting on line 24 at the end of that sentence. So the new sentence, well actually the sentence starts on 23. So school support organization fundraising activities off school

[05:06:47] property are not governed by the provisions of this policy comma and therefore does not prohibit door-to-door solicitation for fundraising activities.

[05:07:09] Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Mr. Morris. Ms. Okadugbe, do you want to speak to your amendment? Thank you, Chair Sorotkin. I would just say, just in line with a lot of the comments that have already been shared, there is a long-standing tradition of students doing door-to-door solicitation.

[05:07:37] I was going to ask Mr. Mejeda V. why your daughter didn't come to our house with the chocolate sales last week but in all seriousness in our neighborhood we often have students come whether it's with athletics or often band raising money and I've always enjoyed talking to them listening about what they what their activities are and being able to support them so for that reason I think that we just need to be a little bit more explicit about what that is because the language as it is, is causing confusion with families who are thinking we are prohibiting the fundraising in all circumstances.

[05:08:18] Further discussion? Ms. Reeser. Ms. Ogadegbe, I think the language, you might need to say which therefore instead of and therefore, just friendly if you want to. I would accept that slight language change.

[05:08:37] Thank you. Without objection, the amendment will be so modified. Mr. Ogadegbe. Mr. Mahadmi. Thank you, Chair. I know it's late, but so I guess Ms. Ogdebay, I was just thinking about your amendment, and I was reading a little bit more, so maybe see if you're open for making this suggestion.

[05:09:03] So the line could perhaps read school support organizations fundraising activities of school property could include door-to-door and our school sorry let me read this again school support organization fundraising activities of school property property including door-to-door and could include door-to-door are not governed by the provision of this policy.

[05:09:29] So it just reads it very simply that it includes to say that the fundraising activities of school property, including door-to-door, are not governed by the provisions of this policy. So was that, were you making a motion or was that a request for?

[05:09:50] I was just making a request, friendly request, instead of just going through motions. Okay, without objection, the amendment will be so modified. So it would now, the sentence on lines 23 and 24, can you just read that one more time? - Yes, school support organization fundraising activities of school property could include, hang on, activities of school property including door-to-door are not governed by the provisions of this policy, including door-to-door.

[05:10:23] - Door-to-door. - Let me give it a shot. School support organization fundraising activities off school property, comma, including door-to-door fundraising, comma, are not governed by the provisions of this policy?

[05:10:41] Okay. The amendment was already on the table. Further discussion. Mr. Beatty. Based on the discussion, I don't see how this is necessary because the policy very clearly states that school support organizations aren't governed by this policy.

[05:11:00] So for us to say they can do this, but they're not governed by this policy, that kind of is a contradiction, is it not? I think the amount of confusion about the plain language of the policy would indicate that perhaps it is necessary. Further discussion? Mr. Beatty.

[05:11:21] Thank you. So if that's the case, then it would probably make more sense to actually point to policy that they're governed rather than trying to put a loophole or not a loophole, but just sort of clarify something in here in a policy that doesn't actually refer to it. I think the cross reference to 8020 would make more sense than trying to squeeze something into here so that it was more clear. So I will not be supporting this amendment. Further discussion on the amendment?

[05:11:51] Seeing none all those in favor of the amendment to the policy. Please raise your hand say aye aye those opposed that motion will pass 5 3 1 with Sheridan Beatty and Polifco opposed and Corbo absent for the vote So we are now back to the base motion as amended. Is there any further discussion seeing none all those in favor?

[05:12:24] of the motion that the Latin County School Board approved the recommended revisions to policy 8010 raising as amended please raise your hand and say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Ms. Corbeau absent for the vote we'll now move to 1302 from Ms. Reeser on FY 24 through 29 capital improvement program Ms. Reeser thank you Mr. Chair so this was an information item at the last meeting at my request for a discussion on some of the capital

[05:13:00] improvement program items that that were deferred and some that were deferred indefinitely which came to be explained in part as a as being partly as a result of the decision to rebuild Parkview High School and partly due to inflation and I think there may have been other reasons but I think in large part it was those two things and as I said last time it was not clear to me and I think think along with other board members at the time that we were voting on Parkview that there would

[05:13:37] be an impact on the rest of the CIP and in several board updates and in the discussions last time staff provided some tables with data regarding which projects had already had substantial work done substantial work in my opinion includes either substantial financial investments some of the projects in terms of hundreds of thousands of dollars and some having reached completion phases, including plans being drawn.

[05:14:10] I believe specifically the one project that met all of the different criteria that I talked about last time was the Dominion High School weight room in that it had its construction drawings done.

[05:14:26] It was anticipated to begin actual physical work in the following year, this year. I believe that in a meeting with Supervisor Briskman, she was told that the expected date of completion would have been spring of 2024 with the construction beginning this year completing by next spring.

[05:14:49] And it was under \$2 million. There were a lot of other things that were deferred that were in the hundreds of millions of dollars. So I'm going to make multiple motions tonight to add a couple of things, potentially a few things back to amend our CIP because the Board of Supervisors doesn't vote until April 4th to complete their budget.

[05:15:12] And there is the ability for them to decide to expand or grow the amount that's available in the CIP in small amounts under a couple of million dollars.

[05:15:27] I think there are several projects that have already been invested in in different magisterial districts and different schools that could be put back in the more reasonable timeline instead of being deferred indefinitely.

[05:15:43] So I'm going to start by making a motion that the Loudoun County School Board amended CIP to add \$1.6 million for the Dominion High School weight room. Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Ms. Sheridan. Ms. Reeser, would you like to speak to your motion?

[05:16:01] Sure. So, like I said, I was going to start with the Dominion High School weight room because it was the least expensive, had come the furthest along in terms of being ready to be acted upon, and there was about \$250,000 already invested in this project.

[05:16:21] Further discussion? Mr. Morris and then Mr. Beatty. thank you mr. chair from staff could you please explain what investment was made and whether that is sunk cost or whether that is just an investment that will continue thank you mr. Morris in terms of the Dominion high school great room expansion itself we have expended 284 thousand one hundred dollars for the design that includes site plan design and the construction documents for the building itself architectural mechanical electrical plumbing so those plans are

[05:17:00] are, as Mrs. Reeser said, are 100% complete and ready to be permitted. So those are sunk costs because we're going to use those plans when we eventually get the money, whether we get it in this CIP or future CIPs.

[05:17:17] Yes, sir. Okay. Had we made any effort to issue an RFP for this, or is this still, where in the planning stages is it? So the design money actually came to us in the FY23 budget, so we started the design, So it was scheduled to be in the FY24, so we would have not bid it until July 1 of this year.

[05:17:38] But during the conversations with the development of the CIP, we postponed those, so we just stopped working. Thank you. Last question I have for Ms. Reeser is, what is the sum total of proposals you're going to make this evening? Because that could drive support for one or more.

[05:17:55] Well, sure. I prioritize them based on what had been sunk, how close it was to being done, and it being the least expensive. the other motion I'm making is about the same amount sure mr. baby thank you mr.

[05:18:13] Morris mr. Matt be thank you chair so thank you miss reason for bringing this forward and I think mr. Lewis says as we spoke I mean I think one of the things I think we we've been discussing and we brought it back and I believe in 2020 was also the the fine arts renovation at Stonebridge High School and then I I think it was expanded to other schools that probably have the same capacity or the same architecture that was built in.

[05:18:47] So can you speak, I know you mentioned that we have been conducting a study to, I don't know if it was a feasibility study or just a study to see what needs to be done. And I think from a cost perspective, because that's also a little bit concerning to me that that was something that I think we as a collective as a board agreed upon that we need to make those renovations.

[05:19:10] And even those, I see that they've been pushed out to 27 and beyond. So I'm, you know, again, I'd like to understand it better. And if the board would like to consider that, I would like to bring that as a motion subsequently as well to make sure that we make adjustments. Because I've also received feedback from the board of supervisors' office that they may have some additional money or they may have some proffers from builders that could potentially fund those projects.

[05:19:41] So I'd like to understand that also saying where we are, what the dollar amounts could be so that we can discuss as the board and perhaps make an amendment to that as well. Thank you. Further discussion? Ms. Reeser. The only thing I wanted to add to what you were speaking about, Mr. Morris, is since the schedule for this item is now to be determined, One of the other concerns I had was that any plans that we have now might not be good by the time we did come back to building this because often changes are made within a high school.

[05:20:20] We're changing bathrooms, we add programs, we added Robey to Dominion without really looking at what's in those construction plans. It's beside the point. I just wanted to say that was an

additional concern. My main concern here was that this was about to happen, and I think that it was an oversight.

[05:20:41] When we discussed the CIP back in November, and there were specific schools mentioned, I never imagined that something that had already begun work and had been conveyed to the school would have a start time and a finish date coming up so quickly was even in contemplation.

[05:21:04] I mean, it's a lesson learned for me to ask things that I think are obvious more specifically, but I just wanted to explain that's why I started with this one because I think it's different than every other item, including other ones I may present that the board may not agree with.

[05:21:22] Mr. Mahedvi, I think you were, I didn't realize you were asking a question for staff, but if you're still waiting for an answer. Thank you, thank you, Chair. I think Mr. Lewis, you don't know. Yes, thank you, Mr. Mahedvi. If I recall, I might need a reminder of some of those, but you did ask about the the study of the rooms you are correct we started that project with a initial study for adding outdoor storage for the stonebridge high school as we started looking into the scope of that project we realized that the entire music department was

[05:21:55] lacking in several different areas for practice room storage room music rooms and so that project turned into a bigger study and then it did expand into all high schools and all middle schools that were built prior to willard and independence and so that project is now 17 or 15 different schools both middle and high school so a total of 30 schools so what we did is we took a step back to try to do a study on that and we did spend um so far 268 720 on design work for that but But that's just for concepts, so it's not at the same level of detail.

[05:22:34] So back to Mrs. Reeser's example, the Dominion plans are construction plans. What we're talking about here are concept plans that have been developed for six schools that would work as a model for all those projects. And so that's where we are, the status of that.

[05:22:49] But it is a much larger multi-year program that is going to take up a lot of space and to see how we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Lewis. So what's the year, I mean, if I were to say to the Stormbridge community, I mean, what year are we looking at that renovations to be done for, I mean, again, to start with?

[05:23:09] I mean, I'm sure other schools need to be done, but what's the projection for Stormbridge now? So in the FY24 adopted CIP, it was listed as to be determined, so it's beyond the six year window. And so, well, let me make sure of that. That might have been 2027 that we had that.

[05:23:26] So it is, and specifically we can't say exactly what year any of those projects would take place because they've just been deferred, and we'll have that conversation again this fall when we talk about the CIP, and our hope is to be able to get those rescheduled.

[05:23:44] Music program, I'm sorry, so it was moved to FY27 to 29, so it didn't get pushed beyond it. So those first six schools, which included Stonebridge, and I have the list here. Stonebridge, Freedom, Riverbend, Mercer, Sterling and Simpson were on the list of the ones that we did the concept.

[05:24:09] We worked with DOI to get priorities on which schools were in the most need based on the building and their current program. So those are the ones we've put in the first study. Those would be the

ones that would be programmed first in the CIP. - So Mr. Lewis, can you, for the Stonebridge community and for the board too, can you help just clarify what was the reasons to pushing this thing out further?

[05:24:32] i mean now it's back to 27 and beyond sure absolutely and we've had the same pressures that pushed on the press boxes and the weight rooms were changes in the scope of the cip the school board as always inappropriate chooses projects that are based on providing seats and the delivery of instruction is the number one priority we identified and had conversations that the parkview project was a priority to change that from a renovation to a school replacement we We changed the scope of the work for the Banneker Elementary School to a preservation and in addition to that school.

[05:25:08] And then we had just multiple projects. Every single project we looked at has had unprecedented inflation applied to it. So we reestablished all the construction estimates for this year. And one that I left out too was the addition of the additional space at HS 14, which raised that estimate up too to provide extra space in the athletics you know expand the gym and the in the stadium so I'll take that back that was already programmed in there so that what the change in the high school 14 was mostly all related to inflation for the construction estimates so again I'm

[05:25:45] I'm disappointed to be honest with you something that I've been working on this for last four years to get get it beyond 27 I supported Parkview and other other projects but not the expense of just pushing indefinitely some of the projects that we have been you know the community has been asking the school has been asking as you know this is not only on my watch it's been this issue has been open since my predecessors watched too so again I'll just like to echo that I'm very disappointed in learning this again we are part-time school board members I mean this is I think as Miss Reza has already you know

[05:26:22] sort of pointed out that some of the projects that she's been asking for also got pushed out so it's just where we are some of the things that we were hoping and we championed for and we support the staff and the CIP and the cap to make sure that we address the needs that address the needs of our schools too and just to get pushed out indefinitely out I I mean again I nervous reasons here making a motion to add them back into the appropriate plan and given where based on what you said we don't really have any concrete plans to push it to next next year but I definitely hope that maybe if there's any adjustments we

[05:26:59] can make to not perhaps put an FI 24, but to bring it out from FI 27 to FI 25, I'll be, you know, again, that's something I'll, I want to put some dates on it versus just being completely arbitrary, you know, 27 and beyond, you know, that's, that's just not acceptable.

[05:27:15] So I do want to share my concern and my disappointment in, you know, something that we've been trying for some time now, and then just kind of, you know, pushed out indefinitely on that. Thank you. Mr. Baby. Thank you, Chair. I would like to echo my colleagues disappointment I think like something like this should have been on one of the schedules such as such as it is mr. Lewis is there headroom in the budget for in the CIP for this edition or I mean I remember it being kind of at the we're kind of at the limit of what we could do is there is there money available for a

[05:27:53] project like this so when we developed the superintendent's recommended CIP we we provided the project list and recommendations based on what the county staff advised us was available for that i know other board members have had conversations but at this point we believe that we have maxed out the available funding for that but that's ultimately a decision by the board of supervisors to say so i i don't have any more information other than that okay thank you additional discussion on the amendment miss polifka

[05:28:29] thank you mr chair mr lewis just a quick question about construction plans and in what you may be able to tell us related to the question that ms reaser had earlier about what was the likelihood that those would go bad within the amount of time that we're looking at potentially it could take for those plans to become a reality thank you miss polifco that is a reasonable concern with the particular scope at the stonebridge high school and the dominion high school i'm sorry the dominion high school project that's a fairly simple project so i don't think that's a high risk

[05:29:04] if we had a change in the um the building codes or something that's a small project so i don't think it's something that would be a concern for that but uh it's always something that could happen but not something we can overcome additional discussion on the on the motion seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand say aye aye those opposed that motion will

[05:29:34] pass 621 with Beatty and Polifco opposed and Ms. Corbo absent for the vote. Ms. Reeser. I move to amend the Loudoun County School Board's CIP to add \$1.7 million for press boxes at Heritage High School, Dominion High School, and Potomac Falls High School. Seconded by Ms. Sheridan. Ms. Reeser, would you like to speak to your motion? I'm just briefly going to refer back to some of the reasons I stated for the first motion I made, this is my final motion on this topic.

[05:30:14] I went to the next tier of items that had been invested in. The investment between the three press boxes is about \$370,000.

[05:30:31] Not very much work has been done in terms of there's no construction drawings. there is a site plan in the approval process for all three of these and the cost to complete would be the 1.7 million slightly less than that but I just rounded up and again I would just say that there has been indication made by multiple supervisors that should this come back as a CIP amendment that there would likely be support for it so I would at least like to offer them the

[05:31:05] opportunity to make that a possibility for for these three high schools it was the only other set of it was actually not the only other but the next biggest set of investments relative to cost that fell under two million dollars just looking at the same three criteria that I referenced before so I just thought this was a second line there probably is a third and then after that everything skyrockets so this is where I'm going to draw the line on requests I'm making

[05:31:43] dissent to the supervisors mr. Morris thank you mr. chair at this point I'm I'm not going to vote in favor of the project and the reason is because now we're looking at we just cracked open the CIP and we're up here without any preparation on what other items we may as individuals or as a board would have prioritized over the items that are being brought up tonight I think it's challenging because we set our priorities together, all nine of us, when the CIP was, when it was approved. So I don't feel comfortable going back on that based on one or two projects that are being

[05:32:21] surfaced without being able to remember and review all of the projects that we were looking at at that point. Because even though those others may be higher in price, they may have been more important to different board members. So for that reason, I won't support this. Thank you. Further discussion?

[05:32:39] Ms. Reeser. I just want to respond to some of the points raised while not trying to change your mind, but in case other board members have the same concerns. This was brought to us two weeks ago on an information item, and I talked about the same items.

[05:32:57] So I think there was time. And in fact, the request I made of staff was to point out anything that was similarly situated, and they provided not only things that were similarly situated, but additional information. And I think if you look at other things that could be considered, such as tennis court lighting, you're talking about over \$11 million.

[05:33:18] If you look at most of the other things are in the double or triple digits of millions of dollars. So I'm not sure that there is anything else that quite competes at this level, at this small fraction of increase.

[05:33:36] So that's how I justified it. I mean, like I said, ultimately, it's not just up to our board. It's up to the two boards to decide whether these projects that were promised to the communities will go forward or not. Mr. Mahedby.

[05:33:53] Thank you, Chair. So I have a clarifying question. So the amendments, maybe Mr. Lewis, the amendments we are making to the CIP, again, re-changing the CIP request. And I think to Ms. Reza's point, I've been also given some assurances, again, verbal, nothing in writing, that there would be some additional dollars available, that if we were to propose a recommendation, especially when it comes to fine arts and storm breaks, that there would be dollars available to make that happen, is -- again, it's a tough question

[05:34:27] for me to ask, but is this something -- if, let's say, we made the changes and again proposed these amendments and send to send to the board so the board of supervisors then have the options to accept amendments or reject amendments and go back to the base base recommendation that via school board provided what are the from a technical perspective from a process perspective what how is supposed to play out I'd like to be able to answer that question but I think that's a question

[05:35:06] that only members of the board supervisors could could answer I know know that last night I attended their meeting and they did approve their CIP and then they specifically addressed the projects at Dominion Heritage and Potomac Falls and took a vote to move those to the fund balance discussion in December so that's all the information I can share with where the board stands with that so obviously they're aware of this conversation and that was a request from mrs. brishman so other than that I can't really you know speak for the supervisors and how they would react to our changes certainly whatever the board takes action on tonight we will make sure to pass it over to County

[05:35:45] staff for the board's awareness so before before I guess I'll use this opportunity because this is open for Q&A question answer I think some of the numbers that you and I shared before the Stormbridge Fine Arts were about 4.5 million dollars it was not in ten million dollars so technically I could propose miss Reiser to make an amendment to add that and again if the board of supervisors so choose to accept it, then they can accept it, otherwise they can reject that and we can go back to the base CIP that we recommended back to the board of supervisors.

[05:36:20] So forget about that decision, but again, from how are we sending the CIP to the board of supervisors, would that be the process? Because we sent them a CIP, they voted on it, but we are making an amendment and sending it forward so they can accept it or they can find dollars to fund this additional request that we're making tonight.

[05:36:40] Yeah, I'm afraid I really can't speak to their process because, as I mentioned, they took a vote last night to approve their CIP. So they would have to address that however their process would be. And

from our perspective as staff, we would make sure they're aware of whatever action the school board takes this evening.

[05:36:57] And then we could ask them that question and then provide that information back to the school board as to how they plan to address that. Thank you. Further discussion on the amendment? Mr. Morse.

[05:37:14] I just wanted to speak to the discussion here because I'm really amazed that the board of supervisors is signaling back to the school board to reopen and change its CIP. That's unheard of. That's not the way the business is typically done. And what that tells me is that the board of supervisors is driving our budget, is that they are the ones that are saying, well, if you ask for that project, we'll go ahead and approve it. That's not the way our budget works. The school board is responsible for our budget.

[05:37:42] So, you know, I was willing to make the adjustment for the first go here, but I feel that were starting to get manipulated by the Board of Supervisors into approving projects that they specifically are requesting, and that's really not the way we've done business. Ms. Reeser.

[05:38:00] Last word on the motion. May I have last word on the motion? Unless there's any further discussion. Last word, go ahead. Just to make it really clear, this was not driven by anybody other than myself. I've had conversations with my counterpart as well as other supervisors because the CIP is shared between us and them. It's a little bit, as you know, different than our operating budget so I felt it was prudent to have the conversation before putting our board through all of this work so I just want to make it really clear that nobody drove this although I think it was clear from our joint budget

[05:38:34] meeting that supervisor Briskman was not happy with what was transpiring either I don't think there was any mistake about that we'll place the motion to a vote to amend the CIP to include the three press boxes all those in favor please raise your hand say aye aye those opposed that motion will pass five three one with morris beatty and polifco opposed and miss corvo absent for the vote mr mahenby i i move to amend the cip

[05:39:13] to include the storm bridge fine arts renovation project at the uh for approximately 4.5 million dollars is there a second second seconded by miss uh miss reaser uh to clarify are you requesting to add that into fy 24 or which which year are you adding that into i wouldn't do i want to do in 24, that's what the request was, correct.

[05:39:36] To add it into FY24. Okay. Mr. Mahedby, would you like to speak to your motion? Thank you, Chair. I think I've spoken about it, so I think, unless somebody has it, I think I've explained the rational and the reason for it, and I think we can put to the vote, I guess, if there's no questions.

[05:39:52] Further discussion? Mr. Morris and then Ms. Reeser. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do we have a price? I mean, we don't even know what we're voting on. As far as I know, this was supposed to be a consolidation of six different projects to facilitate the construction and cheapen the cost of the design.

[05:40:11] So Mr. Lewis, can you speak to that? Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Morse. During the concept drawing process, we asked the architect to provide us a concept level estimate, and they did give us an estimate between 4.75 and 6.0.

[05:40:28] and so that was arranged because we haven't developed the actual scope yet so at this point Mr. Mehebi's number is in that range but you know we have not developed that full-blown scope of estimate

yet. I was just going to ask a question about the same thing just the amount and I just wanted to explain the reason I said over ten million dollars was I didn't see anything broken out Mr.

[05:40:58] Hedeby so just just so you know why I said the other things I was looking at on list were over 10 million um this one is just a project estimate for all of them and i just wanted to make sure that the amount that he was indicating would be enough and mr morse asked my question but can i get clarification because mr mehedby during his motion said it was 4.5 million dollars so was that the the amount of that item in the cip or do we not know the cost yet when what i feel like i'm missing something sorry mr for the confusion mr sorokan so the

[05:41:33] numbers aren't in the CIP when mr. Meheve and I had a conversation last week I just sent him an email saying these are the concept estimates from the architect and that's just for the Stonebridge project if you recall earlier I gave a list of six schools and Stonebridge was one of them so we we had that information but it is it is a concept level estimate that's which is why it's in a range at this point but this project has been in the CIP right it just what there has to be a dollar estimate that goes along with that because it's been it's not mr. Mahedovee isn't adding a new project to the CIP it's been in the

[05:42:06] CIP and in other years right so it was deferred to and I'll refer to it earlier I think it's FY27 and so they are concept estimates and generally when it's that far out in the estimate what we'll take is those concept estimates just multiply by the number of projects and put a a number that gets refined when it gets closer no different than any other project we do for you know new schools we have a better feel for those those costs year year in and year out this year everything changed because of inflation so um we did push those out and just and we we have a general estimate for that

[05:42:42] and what we find is it gets closer so as at least as far as right now the concept estimate for this is 4.5 million dollars 4.75 to 6 is what the estimate we have right now 4.75 okay thank you mr madby thank you mr chair so mr lewis this was we deferred it so this would have been in the fy 23 cip with dollar amounts in that i mean i don't have maybe i can open up and look at what the dollar amounts that we had budgeted in this this um in the last year's cip because i'm sure we should have dollar amount then back then yes sir so the um any of the projects that are listed in

[05:43:18] the capital renewal and alterations program are grouped together in in one cost so we don't have individual costs listed out in the cip obviously we check the we we track those with with spreadsheets in our office but when when we ran into all the issues we had this year with the pressures on the total CIP and we deferred them so we did not do a real close refinement of those estimates because they were deferred out in the superintendent's recommended CIP so at this point in time the best estimate we have is the reins I just suggested a 4.75 to 6 because we have not those aren't in this year CIP so we haven't drilled down to that actual cost and we haven't

[05:43:56] you know explored the design enough to get it down to specifics so at this point it's still a concept and by that I mean the architects take a look in this they see we tell them what our programming needs are with uniform storage and instrument storage and they estimate a number of square footage that needs to be added to the building so they are not concrete plans at this point for any of those six so let me ask you like from from again from a budgeting perspective I mean, again, from 4.5, what would be a number that we can put in the budget just to make sure that we cover?

[05:44:34] Now, knowing that the inflation from what we had about three months ago, from 9%, I mean, the inflation has gone down significantly also. And this is, again, looking at next year. I'm hoping that

inflation would also make adjustments to come down, perhaps, that the cost is not going to be that much.

[05:44:49] Again, I don't want to speculate on that also. I want to be careful about not throwing a number out there. what would be a good number to for us to make a decision tonight well i guess for me to give you that then i have to speculate um but and and the best i can tell you right now is our range the high point of our range is six million dollars and and that's a risk to do that because we haven't defined you know refined the the design um you know that is what we ask the architect for a concept estimate to give us for for planning purposes and it's just it is dangerous to do that

[05:45:24] this far out fair enough mr. chair can i make my just amendment from 4.5 to 6 million dollars without objection the amendment will be modified thank you 4.5 to 6. miss okadekbe thank you chair suratkin um a couple of questions i think well a comment first i think this is a different type of ask because we don't have a clear budget for this item and so it is a we're talking millions of dollars and we have a range in millions of dollars that we think this

[05:46:03] project might cost and I would also I'm uncomfortable selecting one of six where there are six schools that had been identified for having a similar type of renovation prioritized so I think my question is why this one school when there are other schools and then again just the discomfort I think the comment is really that you don't have to answer that is the discomfort around not having a clear dollar amount and I do think that it's different from the other

[05:46:38] projects where we were further along in the process and there was an expectation of delivery in a closer time period mr. madby thank you chair and miss ok to make great questions I think that this is goes back to the same discussion as perhaps maybe press press box a little bit more ahead perhaps where the finance program is the reason we talk about Stormbridge because this whole initiative about finance started with Stormbridge me asking the request sorry me asking the request that we add the improvements to the finance program to

[05:47:18] Stormbridge and then then we looked at other schools too as mr. Lewis went out and looked at it saying well Stormbridge has you know for example it's constructed similar to Freedom High School and a bunch of other schools saying well Stormbridge has a problem then these all these other schools also have a problem so we as a board collectively believe that we need to make sure that we take other schools into consideration as well but it all started with my request from a Stormbridge high school perspective so that's why I'm making the motion that since all of the started because of Stormbridge that Stormbridge be taking to be addressed first before we address

[05:47:56] other schools. As far as arbitrary dollars I mean I think I don't have that 523 numbers and again it goes back to my disappointment of again this is perhaps this job perhaps a kind of full-time probably be full-time up here to make sure that we track every line items and make sure that we get more details as we collectively make decisions on many of these aspects but when items are loved together it's it's been difficult to break it down or to ask the breakdown of each items as was done the last FY23 CIP so that's where we are at this place because we don't really have a dollar amount for that particular item and so now we're going

[05:48:33] with the best you know estimate of where we are today to propose it to the Board of Supervisors and there's a will that will support it if not you know we still have our proposed CIP that they already passed it so further discussion seeing none all those in favor of oh sorry miss Rieser that's okay previous to us

[05:49:04] deferring this was there a year assigned to the music rooms so they would have always been grouped in any multi-year program so I don't think we had done that we hadn't defined that I think they were grouped just like they were in a range and the range may have been 24 to 28 instead of 27 to 29 or something that effect but I don't have the FY 23 numbers here with me okay thank you Mr. Mahanmi thank you and this reason I think based on the the one of the slide that was shared with you by mr.

[05:49:40] Lewis it has the music again programming or finance I'm not sure of the same thing mr. Lewis but it was FY 23 to a 528 and beyond so further discussion seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand say aye those opposed nay that motion is going to fail 2-6-1 with Sheridan, Morse, Beatty, Sorotkin, Ogadegbe, and Polifco opposed, and Ms. Corvo absent for the vote.

[05:50:21] Any further motions anyone wants to make on the CIP? Seeing none, we'll close that, and we'll move on to our information items, if I can find them.

[05:50:39] Beginning with 1401 from Division Council on Collective Bargaining. Mr. Popkoni. Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. Good evening, board members. I'll try to keep this brief. So on January 31 of this year, the Loudoun Education Association indicated that a majority of licensed school-based teachers had certified their support for collective bargaining, and that certification was verified by LCPS staff on February 28.

[05:51:07] and consequently under the code of Virginia the school board now has until May 31 of this year to vote to adopt or not adopt a collective bargaining resolution under the code of Virginia and to be clear there's no requirement that the school board vote to adopt collective bargaining simply because the certification was provided the proposed resolution would only authorize collective bargaining if this resolution is adopted then the board would then need to adopt a collective bargaining resolution that would outline for example what the appropriate bargaining units would be the scope of collective bargaining and impact impasse procedures among other things this proposed

[05:51:44] resolution if adopted will be the first step along that path specifically the draft resolution included in board docs authorizes collective bargaining within LCPS and would then direct the legislative and policy committee to draft a collective bargaining resolution to be considered by the full school board within 180 days of the adoption of the proposed resolution although of course the school board can modify those terms if they wish to do so turn it back over to you thank you for that brief introduction mr. Falcone to be clear

[05:52:19] this is once we vote on this resolution on the 28th that will fulfill our obligations under Virginia code to take the up and down up or down vote on collective bargaining so this resolution would do exactly that as well as if the resolution passes to provide a mechanism by which the detailed resolution outlining the exact terms of collective bargaining would be created and then brought to the full board. So at this point I'll

[05:52:53] open it up to discussion or questions from board members. Mr. Beatty. Thank you chair. One question that came up was the amount of class size. Is that something that can be bargained upon?

[05:53:18] Can you clarify what you mean by that? I'm not sure I understand. Why interpret it to mean, I guess, the number of students in a particular class. Oh, oh. The fact that a teacher, yes, sorry. I was thinking of employees and, okay, got it.

[05:53:34] I'm with you. So that would potentially be on the table. There is a limitation regarding the size of a class in the Code of Virginia. That's a ceiling, not a floor, so potentially that would be something that

could be negotiated for.

[05:53:56] Okay, and then another point that was brought up was the ability to bargain on resource adoption, and I would assume that would be textbooks or curricular. Is that something that could be adopted under code, bargained for under code? It could be if the board wished to adopt a collective bargaining resolution that included terms of employment.

[05:54:19] Okay, and then my final question would be, if something was bargained upon and was not fulfilled, what recourse does the union have in those situations? For example, if they bargained that they would get 5% pay raise or 1% pay raise, and it was not in the budget that those terms were not met, what recourse would they have in that situation?

[05:54:47] Well, that would depend, and that would be the next step after providing. So if this resolution were passed and a full collective bargaining resolution were adopted by the board, then that would include impasse procedures in case the parties were unable to agree.

[05:55:11] And then if there was a collective bargaining agreement which included a pay raise, then if one of the parties failed to comply with that, then the collective bargaining agreement would presumably include a remedies provision as well.

[05:55:29] The only other, I mean, and of course, anything with respect to salary would always be conditioned on the basis of funding from the county. - Thank you. I guess what remedies are allowed by Virginia code?

[05:55:46] I know, like you said, that they can't strike. So is there really anything that they can do if what was agreed to was not upheld by the board? - So the one thing that the Title 40.1 of the code is pretty clear on is public employees can't strike.

[05:56:07] Beyond that, it really depends on what the parties come up with. It's kind of hard to speculate on what that would look like. - Thank you. - Thank you, Chair Sorotkin. That was actually the point that I wanted to raise because I know I've heard some feedback that people were concerned about the possibility of teacher strikes and just wanted to make sure that that was stated.

[05:56:34] And it just was that in Virginia, their strikes are not a remedy that's allowed by code. So I don't know, we can say that very clearly, but I just think that that's important for the community to understand as well.

[05:56:54] - Further discussion, Mr. Mahedby. - Thank you, Chair. So I know this is a up and downward, Mr. Falcone, but I think based on the resolution right now, we'll be working in 180 days to come back with the resolutions that eventually the board will vote on it.

[05:57:16] So in order to build a resolution, do we, does LCPS has the expertise? Because I know this is the \$3.5 million and everything else been talked about. What would, I mean, do we need the staff to be in place for us to work on the resolution and try to understand what would that resources that have been asked, at what point does LCPS need?

[05:57:45] Is it more on the execution of it? Is it more on working on building the resolution that eventually the board adapts to it? What are the additional resources we would need once this is, you know, the up and down? I mean, obviously, if the vote is a down, then there's no discussion, but let's go with the presumption that there is an upvote on this thing.

[05:58:07] and then we have 180 days to work on the resolution. Forgive me, but I know we have one particular legal person in the HR department. The whole reason the LCPS, from what I understood, was asking for staff was just so that we can work on the resolution, or is it more on the agreement of once the resolution is accepted, it's on the agreement of what we'll be bargaining on.

[05:58:34] Can you explain that a little bit? - Absolutely, Mr. Mahedipi. so the collective bargaining resolution would not is is different from the collective bargaining agreement the collective bargaining agreement would be an agreement negotiated between the bargaining representative of whatever the bargaining unit unit or units would be along with the school board to determine so just for example if the board wished to include

[05:59:10] salary and and local benefits as uh terms of bargaining or term areas that could be bargained then the collective bargaining agreement would set out what that looks like the collective bargaining resolution would establish who the bargaining units would be uh and what the what uh the uh what can be bargained over and so it's it's it's it's much more of a it's not it's it's not as detailed an agreement as the collective

[05:59:44] bargaining agreement so at the point at which there would be I mean I I couldn't speculate on on when additional expertise would necessarily be needed but it would certainly be there there may be some needed at the collective bargaining resolution phase but it would certainly be more at the after a resolution was past and on to the collective bargaining agreement phase does that make sense no thank you i mean i think makes sense but i think going back to the vsps conference and there was a there was a session on on this particular topic how do you navigate that it does come down to the initial sort of

[06:00:22] resolution before you even jump into the agreement so so i guess more to be to be determined but i do want to make sure that there is you know again anyway i think you answered my question but i think At the same time, I think there is still some nuances for us to understand how and, you know, what that looks like and what, you know, because ultimately that would be the deciding factor on what you bargain on, the agreements or the nuts and bolts in who and what and so on and so forth of it.

[06:00:54] So that was my question. Thank you. Further discussion? Ms. Okadekbe. Thank you, Chair. So just to kind of clarify the intent of the, of the, not this resolution, but the subsequent bargaining, collective bargaining resolution draft.

[06:01:16] Is it accurate to say that that resolution is what would drive the collective understanding of what the spirit of the eventual collective bargaining agreement should encompass?

[06:01:35] or the kind of values and approach, but not all of the details. If you can kind of explain the difference between those two, that might be helpful for folks who are trying to understand the difference right now. Thank you. Not a problem, Ms. Okadekbe.

[06:01:52] Happy to do that. So a collective bargaining resolution. I'd outlined this a little bit in my presentation from, I think, the 14th of last month. But a collective bargaining resolution, and I'm just using this for an example, would explain who the bargaining units are and what could be bargained over.

[06:02:16] And so, for example, if the board were to adopt this resolution, then adopted a collective bargaining resolution and it said the board will adopt, will consider for negotiation salaries of employees.

[06:02:32] Just for example, then whatever collective bargaining agreement would arise would include the terms of whatever was negotiated with respect to salaries. And so the collective bargaining resolution would just outline what's going to be negotiated as a part of that agreement, among other things.

[06:02:55] So just to, I'm trying to really make the simplest example I can. And so this is presumably not something we would ever bargain over, but the collective bargaining resolution might say something like, one of the permissible topics for negotiation is what color classrooms would be painted.

[06:03:16] and here's the process by which that would occur. It would be the lawyers from the school division, the lawyers from the LEA, representatives from both sides. If they couldn't agree on the colors of the classroom, then it would go to some third-party arbiter or some kind of impasse proceedings, and then no agreement on the color of the classrooms could be made for longer than five years.

[06:03:41] And then a collective bargaining agreement after that would be the results of the actual negotiations between the parties that would say something like, for a period of four years, all classrooms will be painted red, except for kindergarten classrooms would be, which would be painted blue.

[06:03:57] So is that a very dumbed down, but accurate description of what the difference between those things are and what the general process would be? - So that's a good way to explain it, but I would just, I can't help myself.

[06:04:12] I just, it's just, that would be very, very granular for a resolution, but I take your point. I mean, I think that that's general, the resolution sets the terms of what would be negotiated and then the agreement would get into the details of that.

[06:04:30] - Okay, thank you. Ms. Reeser, no, not Ms. Reeser, Mr. Morris. - Thank you, first I would just ask that the chairman not be on the resolution writing committee. But the question I have is, it's a serious one, if we were to approve the resolution next week And we were to draft up a draft collective bargaining resolution and we could not come to an agreement on the language of the actual resolution with the LEA.

[06:05:03] Would this resolution require us to close that, to make that collective bargaining resolution regardless? Is this committing to us that no matter what we do, if we sign this, when we go to the table, we have to come out with a collective bargaining agreement?

[06:05:28] Thanks for that question. So there's a couple of things in there. The first piece of that is that the collective bargaining resolution would not necessarily require an agreement with the LEA or whoever the exclusive bargaining representative would be.

[06:05:50] In fact, the collective bargaining resolution would establish how the bargaining representative is chosen. Um, so that would be, I mean, and the Loudon Education Association, uh, uh, submitted the signatures on behalf of the, uh, unit and they had a proposed, uh, bargaining resolution.

[06:06:11] Um, so that's fine, but, but it's ultimately it's that, that is up to the, to the board. However, getting to your question, um, if, if the board had decided in, I think the statute requires that the board hold an up or down vote on whether they want to vote.

[06:06:28] to proceed with collective bargaining if they hold an upper if the board votes in favor of collective bargaining and includes this language that would obligate the board to draft a collective bargaining resolution and presumably they would move the board would move forward on that however i don't think that the board's prohibited from in 120 days holding another vote and saying we we actually

don't support that anymore i don't this would not bind us because what i What I was concerned about is if LEA came forward with a proposed language, and we had

[06:07:02] proposed language, and we could not make the two meet, what you're saying is that this is our resolution, it is not an agreement, and therefore, ultimately, we will make the decision based on feedback from the community, feedback from LEA, and board member inputs.

[06:07:19] That's right. Thank you. Further discussion? Mr. Mahedmine. Thank you, Chair. So I guess, Mr. Falcone, I'll go back to my ask of support. So one thing I've learned from that, I think in order for us to have a good mutual resolution, collective bargaining resolution, so I'm not going to agreements, I think it has to have appropriate resources to make that happen.

[06:07:50] And so, again, I'll just kind of bring it back. You know, I trust you and I love you for what you do for LCPS, but we need to have the right people who have the right skills to work on behalf of the LCPS going into that.

[06:08:05] So I just want to highlight and express that as well. That's all. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you. Further discussion? Seeing none, is there interest in placing this on consent for our next board meeting?

[06:08:22] There is not. we'll place it on action for the march 20th meeting with that we will move to 1402 from the legislative and policy committee revisions of policy 1030 a code of conduct for school board members miss reaser thank you mr chair so this policy first came to the full school board at the december 13 2022 work session and we took it back to committee and worked on making some amendments and putting it out to the community for feedback from December 21st till January

[06:09:00] 15th and that feedback is attached in board docs basically there's new language between lines 35 and 37 memorializing our practice that we meet with with regard to the requirements set out by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and that all of our business is conducted publicly in accordance with that act there was some community feedback regarding there were some questions about what consequences there are if school board members don't follow the code of conduct and that is in a different policy which is in policy

[06:09:39] 1035 there were also some other recommendations which we have discussed as a board before and decided not to take action on the only thing that I would point out is there was one piece of feedback regarding line number 20 suggesting that the word should should be will instead and we did not take that up in committee but if if we do bring this back for action I will make a motion to change that because the other language in the policy does use words like shall and and more prescriptive instead of optional so I think that it

[06:10:17] would make sense to make this a will although if everybody wants to put it on consent I don't think there's really any substantive difference in terms of enforcement this i i'm going to follow my practice of recommendations from the special grand jury are not going to be placed on consent so it'll go to action okay okay uh discussion regarding the changes to policy 1030 okay seeing none we'll place this on action for the next board meeting that will move to 1403 from the student services committee revision of policy 8155 school

[06:10:56] assignment. Mr. Madme. Thank you, Chair. Give me one second. While I begin with, maybe I'll pass Dr. Bowers to you to explain the policy to begin with. Then I can chime in if that's okay with you.

[06:11:26] I'll go ahead and get started on behalf of, and if there are any deeper questions, Dr. Bowers can certainly assist me with this. So this particular policy has been brought to two committees, the Student Services Committee, as well as the Discipline Committee. The Student Services Committee has proposed the changes that align with our current practice so that it is transparent and clear to our community, particularly around the provisions of special permission within the policy,

[06:12:03] and also highlights a few key changes that we've discussed previously, and that is to align for elementary rising fifth graders a similar process as we have for middle and high school students that if they have been attending a school on special permission that they are given preference to continue their fifth grade year should they request special permission to continue the revisions also include the provision which is current practice that students may attend the same school as their siblings if their sibling has been placed

[06:12:43] in a specialized program outside of their attendance zone and certainly with the provisions that are in the policy this is ensuring that it is aligned with sufficient capacity exist it does not exasperate overcrowding and that it does not require additional budgetary items to the division additionally lines 242 through 246 further clarify the existing deadline with special permission which runs through June 30

[06:13:20] and we've highlighted that late requests between July 1st and July 31st will also be considered but after the July 31st date requests would no longer be considered or appealed for the following school year for special permissions and the purpose behind that deadline which is current practice but also for after July 31st under the umbrella of special permission is to ensure that

[06:13:56] any of those late requests can be quickly reviewed by the student services team and or appeal to the school board and then consider to if approved allow the student to start the new school year in their school that is being requested we know that during the summer schedules have already been underway and developed and additional activities that school students may be a part of with sports or other activities those are well underway for the start of the school year in in august and we

[06:14:34] also discussed during the committees that each year approximately 3,500 special permission requests are reviewed and processed through the Department for Student Services to accommodate students in parent request. Also included in to ensure clarification is to inform parents wishing to, that are new to the division and desire to have their child attend a school outside of their attendance zone,

[06:15:09] that we have it in lines 248 to 252 that they must apply to attend a school on special permission but must attend the school in where which is assigned to their particular attendance zone and then finally uh the all of those updates were reviewed under the student services committee and lines 361 through 374 were brought to the discipline committee as recommended by division

[06:15:42] council as it relates to the special grand jury's recommendations to further clarify the student assignment or transfer that is a result of a disciplinary or safety consideration Pursue or pursue into court order that notification occurs to the suit with to the superintendent as listed on line 364 and the following lines 367 through 374 outlines the Requirement for a meeting among the staff of the student's current school and the receiving school to include individuals from both schools

[06:16:21] As well as if the student receives specialized services individuals that are familiar with that student to include the case manager and Any other relevant outside agencies that may provide information regarding the student Not limited but to include law enforcement court services Private

providers and the office of the Commonwealth attorney for the purpose of discussing any relevant safety conditions or considerations

[06:16:50] We're open to any thank you. Thank you questions or discussion regarding the policy changes. Mr. Morris. Thank you, Mr. Chair So looking at lines 243, 242, where it talks about special permissions received after July 31st, will not be accepted and will not be eligible for appeal.

[06:17:15] And yet we talked about some exceptions in section E, correct, related to disciplinary and health. Let's go to section E. So talk about student discrimination, harassment, environment, free from harassment.

[06:17:38] What line number, Mr. Morris? So now I'm looking at lines 357, which is other considerations. So what I'm asking is, if there's a situation in which a student is harassed somewhere during the school year, after the closing period from which they're, according to the first statement in Section B, there is no appeal.

[06:18:00] But what I'm hearing now is that there is an appeal process for extremists, for situations where there are extraordinary circumstances. Is that correct? There is still the opportunity for those types of special appeals to be heard outside of the window?

[06:18:19] Yes. Thank you for that question. Section A and Section B of the, excuse me, Section A of the policy, which is on the very first page with starting on line 10 for instructional suitability.

[06:18:34] There are times that the Office for School Administration, in collaboration with our division-level offices, will review certain situations to include the information that Mr. Falcone has suggested for those special situations with special permission, which is different from those unique circumstances that may arise that would be handled under instructional suitability.

[06:19:00] Special permission is at the request of parents outside of those unique situations where they desire to have their child attend a school outside of their attendance zone. Okay, and I think that's probably sufficient in Section A. When we get into, let's see, I'm sorry, I'm going to have to find this once again.

[06:19:26] My concern is that the language used seems to be very finite, And I'm almost thinking that what it needs is a disclaimer saying, in situations not covered in Section A, there are no appeals.

[06:19:46] Because a statement such as that can be read, and standing on its own, people will believe that this is on lines 242. After July 31st, special permission request will not be accepted and will not be eligible for appeal.

[06:20:02] So that sounds like there are no exceptions. What I would recommend is, and I'll propose language when it comes for vote, but I would recommend that in situations not covered in that previous paragraph, there are no appeals. I think that that would be helpful if someone was looking through this and read that sentence just as a precaution.

[06:20:24] One point of clarification I would provide, many times people refer to policy 8155 as a special permission policy, but it is actually our school assignment policy. And the special permission portion, which is the most popular, is one section of three.

[06:20:44] So it does begin with the preface that the school board has the authority for school assignments. And then it goes under section A for instructional suitability, for section B for relieving

overcrowding.

[06:21:00] But the Section C of this policy refers only to the special permission provision. And then it goes on to other sections with in-county residents and other considerations that are outside of that one avenue of attending a school outside of the zone.

[06:21:23] Okay. Let me review the language one more time and see if there's... Because I'm just worried about the disconnect between someone who's going to look for the special permission portion of this instruction even though it's I agree with you it is the School of Assignment but people are going to go directly to that and they're going to read that sentence and if they don't understand instructional suitability and I'm willing to bet a lot of folks are pretty vague about their or you know uncertain about their understanding of what instructional suitability is and what are the factors that go into that

[06:21:59] otherwise it sounds like it can only be driven by the division and not by the parent so I'll take another look and see if there's some recommended language that might help clarify that but I found that just to be slightly confusing for someone who's not you know well versed in instructional suitability and other terms that we use frequently thank you and I have the I had the same concerns and they were actually the concerns that I brought up the last time that this bubbled up to the board level so I would definitely be interested in taking a look at whatever language you come up with or working together on that okay - Okay, Mr. Madhavi.

[06:22:33] - Thank you, Chair. So I think my comment was on the same point. I think this is also we discussed in the committee as well. And I think from how I understand it, I think that's where the differentiation comes in where it says parents requesting it versus the staff making the decision on the instructional suitability.

[06:22:51] 'Cause the first, the former, the issue is that if we go back and open up for further appeals, it is exaggerating the problem of special permission appeals. that's why they're putting the dates and the communication around so if you were to add any more adjustments to what the language already is then I think we kind of going back versus going forward in in the way the intended the policy is so and then dr. Jones can you can you I don't know if this is we repeating the same thing but the difference is again their parents requesting special permission versus the staff making that it's the instructional determination of placing a child in a different school okay I don't know if you can speak to

[06:23:31] that to clarify this question that Mr. Morris and Mrs. Sirotkin asked. - Yes, and I'll ask Dr. Bowers if he has anything else to add, but I believe you put that exactly how we're trying to communicate that, that the special permission request is parent driven.

[06:23:50] That is the vehicle that they can ask to attend schools outside of their attendance zone or to also notify staff of whether they move in or move out of an area. And we try to do our very best with communicating this policy and how it's interpreted to our school-based leaders who may be on the front line for questions from parents.

[06:24:14] The instructional suitability, as well as the relieving of overcrowding, those are more division-driven. And as we learn of unique situations to address the needs of a student or family, that instructional suitability would come under consideration, driven by individuals supporting the student and the family.

[06:24:40] It may be driven or at the discretion of the school division, but I think there certainly has to be a way for parents and guardians to know that they can raise those concerns about instructional suitability

even if it's outside the special permission window it's you know if there's extreme bullying or discrimination or some other issue going on at the school that where it would be in the best interest of the school division to and the student for the student to be reassigned to the other school it just it has to be clear that there's some outlet for for

[06:25:19] that to occur and parents have to know what to do. So I think that's the concern that we're all having is yes we don't want to create yet another special permission carve out or some way of doing special permission outside the window but there has to be enough there that parents know where to go and how to talk to someone if they're having such a dire concern that something like that has to be considered. Further discussion? Seeing none we will place this on action for the next board meeting we'll move to 1404 also from the student services committee

[06:25:59] revision of policy 8290 threat assessment for the protection of schools mr. Madby thank you chair so this is the policy 80 to 90 threat assessments for the protection of the schools I think this came out of the recommendations of from the special grand jury and recommendation so this part again the policy 80 to 90 was first presented to the full school board back in December 13 2022 as part of the work session and since then it came back to the committee to to work through

[06:26:33] that so again uh this was presented by and i'll pass it on to mr falcony to kind of speak to some of the adjustments uh that made in the policy itself uh the com it was brought as an information item to the committee first and then eventually uh the the board the committee voted to send the the policy out to the full board as an information item for consideration of that.

[06:26:56] I don't know, Mr. Falcon, if you can speak to the changes we're recommending in this policy, that will be helpful. Sure, Mr. Mejelevi. So the special grand jury report recommended that the LCPS director of safety and security should be more involved in situations when the safety and security of students, faculty and staff are threatened.

[06:27:21] And so this proposed amendment requires that the safety and security office is informed of any relevant information about any student that's administrators and staff reasonably believe poses a security threat to the school or other individuals.

[06:27:39] And it also requires that the school security officer is a required member of the threat assessment team. In addition to that, the policy was also revised comply with a recent change to the code of Virginia which requires that any school which has an SRO within the school the the code now requires that the SRO be part of the threat assessment team as well and my understanding is that that was our practice but it hadn't been put into policy yet discussion

[06:28:13] regarding these policy changes seeing none will place this on action for the March 28th meeting that will move to 1405 from the Finance and Operations Committee School Nutrition Funds Supplemental. Mr. Morris. Thank you. I'll turn this over to Mr. Morris. During the second quarter financial projection update to the school board at that time

[06:28:47] I had shared information that we would be bringing forward some supplemental budget requests. This one specifically is for the school nutrition fund and this requested budget increase is to increase the school nutrition fund budget by \$2,800,180. The funding source for this will be the existing fund balance of which there is an excess of three months which is the the maximum amount allowed or supported by the usda and bdoe the reasoning for increasing the budget is to allow

[06:29:24] the spend down of the excess fund balance and to provide budget authority so that we can provide the funding support for the items that we had identified for our spend down so in the Board docs agenda item we had some of the examples which was related to the kitchen replacements we had the purchase of digital menu boards as well as other one-time type of purchases so again this is just to increase the budget by 2.8 million dollars of the school

[06:30:01] nutrition fund with the existing fund balance as the funding source any questions regarding the supplemental funding request seeing none interest in placing this on consent for the next board meeting okay we'll place this on consent and similarly we'll move to 1406 also from the fno committee on the self-insurance funds supplemental mr morris so similarly this is a separate request

[06:30:38] now for our self-insurance funds we have grouped the four self-insurance funds so we have our health self-insurance fund the workers comp their short-term disability and the virginia local disability program so the total request to increase the budget for these funds is a total of twelve million thirty five thousand four hundred and eighty dollars within I'm sorry I'm reading the wrong line the total amount is sixteen million one hundred eighty five thousand eight hundred and eighty three dollars

[06:31:17] and in board docs we have the amount broken out for each fund so the health self-assurance fund is requested to increase by thirteen point four million dollars and the funding source for that will be additional revenues that are projected to come in higher than what was previously budgeted as well as existing fund balance the workers comp fund is to increase by 1.6 million dollars that is to be funded out of the school operating fund as well as the short-term disability fund 62,000 out of the school operating fund and the VLDP

[06:31:50] program 1.1 million out of the school operating fund I think that would be the quick summary of that item. Questions regarding this request? Ms. Okadegbe. Thank you, Chair Sorokin. Can you just specify when you said additional expected revenue, what revenue you're referring to? Thank you. So for the health self-insurance fund, the revenues for that fund

[06:32:22] is premiums paid by the employer, premiums paid by the employee, as well as we also have rebates from our prescription programs, and so specifically, I think we had identified within BoardDocs that our actual rebates is projected to come in higher than what we were originally expecting, what we had budgeted, as well as the premiums.

[06:32:50] So those are the revenue sources specific to the Health Self-Insurance Fund. Additional questions or discussion? Mr. Beatty. Thank you, Chair. could you explain how the rebates work because it sounds like it's just sort of a paper transfer where money comes in that we have to appropriate and then we spend it immediately on the premiums is that correct I could probably pull some additional information and provide as a follow-up but there is I think it is a

[06:33:24] little bit of what you have described it is negotiated in the contract and and I would probably feel better as I said if I could provide some additional information as a follow-up. Okay, that'd be great. Thank you. Additional discussion? Mr. Morse. Yes, I'm sorry, Ms. Willoughby, just one additional question. In the narrative, it talks about the increased budget for the health self-insurance fund will be paid through, and the last item is fund balance in the amount of \$3. 39 million.

[06:33:59] In the next line, it says staff recommends that the increased budget for the remaining three funds be covered by transfer from school operating fund in the amount of \$2,700,000. So the fund balance

and the school operating fund, are we talking about the same funds?

[06:34:15] No, we are not. So thanks for that clarifying question. The fund balance is specific to the health self-insurance fund, the fact that it has an existing fund balance. So we're going to use a drawdown of the existing fund balance. The other three funds of the workers' comp, short-term disability, and BLDP are solely funded by transfers out of the school operating fund.

[06:34:38] So the transfer out of the school operating fund, which is what we're most worried about at the end of the year, is \$2.7 million. Correct. Okay, thank you. Further discussion or questions? Interest in placing this on consent for next board meeting.

[06:34:54] Okay, we'll place this on consent. That will take us to 1407 from Ms. Polifco on the policy 5030, the assessment and grading policy. Ms. Polifco. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[06:35:13] I will be brief, given the hour, but I wanted to bring this up because I do believe that this particular policy was put forth uh by mr hoyler last year and i i believe his request was that it go to the curriculum instruction committee for possible amendments and i do recall some feedback occurring within the community regarding some of the some of the issues that we have with our grading policy number one the fact that students have an opportunity to take an assessment to retake an assessment if they score anything below an 80 percent number two the fact that we do currently have 50 floor grades in place And I bring this up because, number one, if this, in fact, has been moved to the Curriculum

[06:35:51] Instruction Committee, I'd like to see what's happening with it currently, where it is in that process. And number two, I did speak with administration, not administration here in the building, but administration at a middle school in Loudoun County, and got some feedback from that particular administrator and his staff as well, and how they perceive this policy and the difficulty that they have, not only with what they see in terms of students being able to circumvent certain assignments that they need to complete and not completing those assignments and then not necessarily being prepared for those assessments when they do come around and so i bring this up

[06:36:26] because i think what we need to be asking ourselves as a district here is are we putting policies in place regarding grading that are truly in the best interest of our students or are we implementing policies that are in the best interest of our division this can lead to grading grade inflation And it concerns me because we're in a position where we are possibly not necessarily preparing students for the future.

[06:36:50] So I think about the 50% floor grade as someone going to the grocery store and wanting to buy a dozen donuts and not having any money. If you don't have money, should you get six of those donuts? No. So I think this is worthy of a discussion.

[06:37:06] And I also would like to, again, follow up on where we are with this policy at the Curriculum and Instruction Committee level. And maybe, Mr. Chair, if you can share that information, please. certainly so you are correct in that this policy was referred to cni by the board late last year it was discussed as an information item during last month's cni meeting in february staff did not recommend any changes to the policy and there was no interest among committee members in recommending any changes to the policy to bring to the full board mr chair may i may i respond to

[06:37:45] to that the reason again that i'm bringing this up is because there has been feedback from the community not only from parents of students but also from school-based administration and staff and i i

would like to request that we potentially provide another outreach if we need to to get feedback from those stakeholders within our school system because something's not working

[06:38:13] And if we're getting that type of feedback, then we owe it to those people within the system, our parents, our staff, to amend this policy if those changes are needed. Further discussion on this item?

[06:38:32] Mr. Beatty. Thank you. I would also be interested in bringing this back for more discussion. Just the fact that, again, we kind of are making it easy for grades to be inflated. And I think that it merits perhaps more community feedback about what changes might be made.

[06:38:54] Obviously, if staff has no issues with it, that's one thing to consider. But I think the fact that you could fail an assignment and then retake it and get an 80%, I just think it's building bad habits for our students.

[06:39:11] And so that's why I was in favor of sending us back to CNI. And it's unfortunate that there's no changes that came out of that. But if we brought it for back action, I think I'd have some ideas for how to tweak this. Mr. Morse. I completely agree with Mr. Beatty, except for one issue.

[06:39:30] And that issue is that our process is to review these through committee and for committees to forward them to the board with recommendations. If the committee has determined that there are no updates, then at that point, it can come before the board.

[06:39:46] But I don't think it's incumbent upon us to review every policy unless there are changes in circumstances that are coming about, that are directly reflected in that policy. So, for instance, the question about the floor, the 50%, which, you know, there were a lot of issues I had with that policy, but it was passed by the board.

[06:40:09] And that meant that one year ago or two years ago, when it was reviewed, that the board made that decision and the committee has reaffirmed that. So I don't know that it makes sense for us to go through and pull up every policy that we have because someone in the community has a concern with it.

[06:40:30] We listened to the people in the community when we reviewed it the first time. And then when it went through the curriculum and instruction, I believe they did that as well. At this point, because it did go to committee, I'm certainly okay with it coming to the full board, but I don't think that we can continue to pull out policies that were reviewed this year and last year and say, well, we need to review this again, not without some significant change in the conditions that would drive us to a new decision on that policy.

[06:41:05] So, again, I'm willing to listen and, of course, I'll vote the way I voted last time on the specific issues, but I think our procedure might be straying a little bit off course when we start pulling out policies one by one and saying, well, we need to review this again, not without some significant reason, and I just didn't see that.

[06:41:30] i've received the complaints as well i've received them ever since we first considered this but all of that was taken into account when this board made its decision thank you further discussion and i would just uh following along to the last comments i would just point out that this this is the first full school year with this version of the policy in effect because the last time we we revised it was uh during covid so i i am certainly this is this is such an important policy that we should absolutely review it more than the the statutory once every five years but I at least

[06:42:06] want one full school year's worth of data from the current version of the policy before we start opening it up again so that that's at least my personal philosophy at this point in time further discussion Mr. Beatty thank you just as I'm going through board docs this is uh how would I see all the previous versions uh is there a quick way to do that it's at it's at the bottom of the policy itself well it's got the revision dates but it doesn't have like the pdf it's got the revision date oh you're looking for the actual older versions of the policies like the the change

[06:42:44] log if you will i guess i i know it's i know it's in board docs somewhere but it's not publicly accessible i think you'd need uh our clerk to pull that for you no i guess well if she wouldn't mind but i can i guess you just go to the revised meetings is probably best way to do that okay thank you okay further discussion seeing none we'll move to 1408 also for Ms. Polifko on policy 8270 the student dress code policy Ms. Polifko thank you Mr. Chair for policy 8270 the student dress code policy I received some feedback from staff within Loudoun County regarding concerns

[06:43:23] with the lack of operationally defined, if you will, material in this policy, which is leading to girls coming to school with sports bras and unzipped hoodies, and boys, because this is not just a policy that affects our girls. The dress policy affects every student. We're seeing, and I'm hearing from administration, that we have boys and other individuals, girls as well, but probably more likely boys that are going to be wearing hats over hats with a hood on top and sometimes

[06:44:01] a mask. And this presents a safety concern because if they are going into the bathroom or if they're in the hallway and there's an issue and staff needs to go back to the cameras to find out what occurred in a certain situation, they're not always able to tell who those students are. So not only is this a safety concern, but we have put a policy into place that is not specifically identifying what a shirt is, what top, you know, what's a top, what's a bottom. And it's not our kids' responsibility. It's not the kids' responsibility

[06:44:37] to have to toe the line for what I believe should be the adult's job in leading our school system and providing a dress code that really mirrors, in a way, if you think about when adults go to work every day, they don't just wear whatever they feel like wearing, unless I guess you're working at home, and that's a different situation, but our kids are coming to school, and they should be dressed respectfully, and we should be creating a policy, we should have created a policy that clearly outlines what it is that we expect our students to wear. We're not a private school

[06:45:11] system, we're a public school system, and we don't have uniforms, but we can define clearly what it is that we expect kids to be wearing and maintain modesty while doing that at the same time we have done this for the adults that work in our school system and i can't fathom a reason that we would not consider going back to looking at this for our students who are truly the most important stakeholders so i'd like to hear from the board what they think about moving this policy back into committee and reviewing it to propose some amendments that will more clearly

[06:45:49] define what it is that kids should be wearing when they come to school further discussion mr. Beatty I think it was made during a time where we were trying to get out of the pandemic and I think having revisiting it after a couple months would probably be prudent further discussion mr. Morris I agree I think if

[06:46:27] there are loopholes in this I do agree that that we need to address those so if our staff is having problems enforcing this and they don't understand the intent of our policy, then that is a good reason to

bring it back. So I would support returning this to the committee. Further discussion? Ms. Polifko.

[06:46:51] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to finish up by saying this is not coming from me. This is coming from administration within a school in our county that is saying they're having an extremely difficult time. Their staff is having a very difficult time determining what they should be doing in certain situations.

[06:47:08] Not only that, but their hands are tied by this policy because it does not clearly define what kids should be wearing. So again, whether we believe as individuals that it's appropriate or not for someone to come to school with three quarters of their torso showing, is that something that we should be, should we be implementing a policy that opens the door to allow that to happen and think about incrementalism and what can happen once that occurs?

[06:47:34] So if that's okay, then what else is okay? Don't think that people won't push and keep pushing to see how far they can go. These are kids. And, again, it's our job to be the leaders here. That's not their job.

[06:47:49] It's not their job to have to figure it out, to figure out what they should be wearing to school. And it's up to their parents, obviously. Parents can clothe their children however they want. That's their responsibility. However, I will say that as a parent, I've had situations where I might say to my child, I don't want you wearing a hat to school, but guess what?

[06:48:11] As soon as he goes to school, I might not want him to wear the hat, but he's gonna be able to wear that hat because that's what this policy allows right now. So it's actually taking away parental control as well. - Further discussion?

[06:48:30] Okay, seeing none, we'll move to item 1409 from the Department of Student Services, Autism Acceptance Month proclamation. Dr. Jones. - Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. April is celebrated and recognized autism acceptance month around the world the December one count for the Commonwealth of Virginia was just over 25 students across the state who have a primary disability of autism and in Loudoun we have just over 1900 students with a primary disability and autism so we ask that with this proclamation is to

[06:49:08] celebrate April as autism acceptance month and this is an information item that further ask that on April 14th, across our division, we are red in supporting school-based efforts throughout the month of April and recognizing this month.

[06:49:25] Any questions regarding the Autism Acceptance Month proclamation? Seeing none, we'll place it on action for our next board meeting. And 1410, also from the Department of Student Services, the month of the Military Child proclamation.

[06:49:42] Dr. Jones. Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. This proclamation is the month of the military child that we also celebrate in April. We have more than 1,500 school-age military-connected children, and our military-connected children we know oftentimes experience frequent separations through deployments of their parents, guardians, or guardians.

[06:50:09] And so during the month of April, specifically on April 19th, we will celebrate by purpling up for our military kids and also celebrating the efforts of our families during that month. So with that, I ask that the board recognize the month of the military child in April as our proclamation. Thank you.

[06:50:31] Discussion or questions regarding the proclamation? Seeing none, we'll place it on action for our next board meeting. That will bring us to item 15, our closed meeting.

[06:50:45] I move that the Loudoun County School Board recess this public meeting and enter into a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia for the following discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiation strategy of the public body as authorized by section 2.2-3711A3 of the Code of Virginia.

[06:51:11] of Virginia, discussion of the performance of specific public employees as authorized by Section 2.2-3711A1 of the Code of Virginia, and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body pertaining to Loudoun County Circuit Court matters CL 22-2713, CR-37536, CR-37874, CR-37875, and CR-37876, and requiring the provision of legal advice

[06:51:44] by such counsel as authorized by Section 2.2-3711A7 and 2.2-3711A8 of the Code of Virginia. Is there a second? Seconded by Ms. Okadegbe. Any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of the motion to convene the closed meeting, please raise your hand and say aye.

[06:52:02] that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with miss corbeau and mr mehedevy absent for the vote we're now in closed meeting i am not expecting any motions coming out of closed meeting

[06:52:13] good morning the board is coming out of closed session i move that the closed meeting be adjourned

[08:14:23] that the louden county school board reconvene its public meeting and the minutes of this public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting i further move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of this public meeting resolution 27-2223 whereas the louden county school board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the virginia freedom of information act and whereas section 2.2-3712d of the code of virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with virginia law now therefore be it resolved that the louden county school board hereby certifies

[08:15:02] that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification applies and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the Loudoun County School Board is there a second seconded by Miss Ogedegbe any discussion seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously, board members present with Reeser, Mehedive, and Corvo absent for the vote.

[08:15:40] Without objection, we're gonna skip over item 16, board member comments. That'll bring us to item 17, new business. Is there any new business this morning? Seeing none, we are adjourned. Thank you.



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