



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Loudoun County School Board, 4th Tuesday School Board Meeting, Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Date Tuesday, March 28, 2023
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 7h 35m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/812954102?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

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.

[00:00:10] - Good afternoon. I'm calling to order this March 28th, 2023, fourth Tuesday meeting of the Loudoun County School Board. We'll begin with item two on our agenda, remote participation. Ms. Sheridan has let me know that she is unable to join most or all of tonight's meeting due to being on business travel, but she may be able to request remote participation later in the evening.

[00:00:37] I have also been notified that Ms. Corbo is requesting remote participation tonight. Ms. Corbo, could you please state your location, whether you are alone or with anyone else and whether you are seeking remote participation for health and medical or personal reasons?

[00:00:57] - Thank you, I am home, I'm alone. Under school board policy 2420, I'm requesting remote meeting participation due to a medical disability and ongoing medical condition as also recommended by LCPSHRTD, Human Resources Department, under ADA disability law.

[00:01:19] I will entertain a motion that Ms. Corbo's remote participation be granted for health and medical reasons tonight. So moved. Moved by Ms. Polifko. Is there a second? That motion will fail for lack of a second.

[00:01:36] Ms. Corbo, would you like to request remote participation for a personal matter tonight? Yes. I will entertain a motion that Ms. Corbo's remote participation be granted for a personal matter. So moved.

Moved by Mr. Morse. Is there a second?

[00:01:54] Second. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. Those opposed? Nay. That motion will fail 2, 3, 4, with Mehedavi, Sorotkin, and Ogadegbe opposed, and Corbo, Sheridan, Beatty, and Reeser absent from the vote.

[00:02:23] With that, we'll move to item 2 on the agenda, approval of the consent agenda. Is there a motion, Mr. Mahedemi? - Thank you, Chair. I move that the school board approve the consent agenda as posted on the board docs.

[00:02:38] - Is there a second? Seconded by Mr. Morris, any discussion? All those in favor of approving the consent agenda, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corbo, Sheridan, Beatty, and Reeser absent for the vote.

[00:02:56] That will bring us to our work session on the superintendent's search for the finalization, Well, the presentation of the superintendent profile and survey results, and I will turn it over to Mr. Gary Ray from GR Consulting and his team.

[00:03:14] Right. Well, thank you so much. It's great to be here this evening remotely. And with me, I have Gloria Davis and I have Dr. Harl. Both of them have been on the ground with attending many meetings on a number of days, along with myself and some other associates working with various stakeholders.

[00:03:44] And so tonight our purpose is to present the stakeholders and give you the feedback regarding what we heard and as well as our survey results on K-12 Insight, and then we'll finish up talking a little bit about the process.

[00:04:07] So I'm going to turn it over to Gloria, who has lots of data that we've put together, the three of us, along with our partner, C12. Okay. Thank you, Gary. And good evening, board. We appreciate having the opportunity to come and meet with you. As Gary said, Robert and I especially had a fantastic time meeting with staff and students and various community members throughout the course of the week. So we learned

[00:04:43] a lot about Loudoun County and we really appreciate that opportunity. And I'm going to share information from the K-12 survey. K-12 is a partner with GR Recruiting and the survey was conducted throughout March 7th through the 21st of this year. So I'm going to share my screen and

[00:05:11] talk from the various PowerPoints. Cancel that. And thank you to Aaron, who has been fantastic.

[00:05:28] So thank you, Aaron. He's the tech guy and he's doing a great job. All right. So we'll start it. Can everyone see the screen in front of them? Yes, we can. Okay. Thank you. So we're going to begin then. Basically, as I said, DR Recruiting has a great partnership with K-12 Insight, and the survey that I'm going to share the results with you are a part of our stakeholders' input and

[00:06:07] being able to hear from as many residents, parents, students, and staff as we possibly can. The survey was available in Spanish, Urdu, Vietnamese, and the results represent responses to questions as well as you should have received some open-ended questions.

[00:06:32] I believe the board chair sent those to you. So let's begin by just giving you an idea of who participated in the survey. Overall, you had about 4,126 responses for a district year size.

[00:06:50] It's about average, maybe just a tad bit less, but your overwhelming majority were parents of current students as well as some parents of future students, and that's always good to have. Staff members, you see, represent about 36%.

[00:07:09] You did have some students, 3%. Community members, 12%, and then others, and sometimes that's other residents who don't fit into any of the categories above.

[00:07:25] Okay. So of that 4,000-plus respondents, we'd like to have them to just give us a word that in their mind describe what they feel about the division. And you see the top 10 words listed there. And then you see what I call the word cloud or the collage represents about 25 words.

[00:07:49] So we go from the words of positive, good, hopeful, to divided, disappointed, frustrated. The point being, you ran the gamut from people feeling that they wanted to see basically change.

[00:08:09] And we'll talk more about that as we get into the comments from the stakeholder meetings where we met in person or virtually. But this kind of gives you an idea of the sense of how the participants are feeling about the division as they begin to answer the questions.

[00:08:29] One of the first questions we ask, and we ask this because we get questions as we recruit, and GR recruiting is known for really recruiting to be the best and the brightest in the field. And so one of the questions we always get was, tell us about the strengths of the division and the community.

[00:08:50] What is it about Loudoun County that would make me want to apply for the job? And so the top strengths that were indicated by the participants of the survey were caring and dedicated teachers and staff. And we did hear this over and over, not only via the survey, but also in the stakeholder meetings.

[00:09:14] Diverse, inclusive, involved community, really having supportive, involved, not only community members, but parents, and celebrating that diversity. That came from a majority of the participants as well as the stakeholders.

[00:09:32] Strong academics and availability of resources. Feeling that Loudon has a lot of resources still in some ways as the areas of the term, as you will also hear, depending on the group of students that we are discussing.

[00:09:49] But strong academics overall are very proud of the strengths in terms of the instructional background and the areas that we are receiving in terms of instruction. The aspects of the district in terms of rating the quality of some of the problem point aspects that you see indicated, relationship with families, communities, surrounding communities, relationship with organizations, communication, transparency, and fiscal management.

[00:10:23] management. And the green represents excellent in terms of how people would rate those various categories. Blue, good, gold, fair, and red, poor. And basically what you see is majority of the respondents would be designated in the good and fair category in terms of the relationship with with families, relationship with community, and so on.

[00:10:51] The highest percentage in the good to excellent category would be relationship with local organizations, as well as relationship with families. Again, as you indicated in the bar chart there.

[00:11:08] The other big question that we will continue to get, excuse me, from candidates is, tell us some of the, excuse me, critical issues got something in my throat. That just means I've been talking a lot today.

Tell us some of the critical issues that you feel the district is addressing now as well as addressed in the future.

[00:11:44] And they center around food safety, recruitment and retention, teacher quality, academic rigor, and communication. Those are the top five. You also see career readiness, some of the others, mental health, social emotional learning, and facilities and maintenance on the bottom end of that. But this gives you a good idea of how people are thinking about some of the issues

[00:12:20] that will have to be addressed by the new superintendents that are happening now and will go into the future. Leadership style is a big component that we know and we ask people, what do you want in the next leader? What do you consider as the type of style that that leader should have? And as you see indicated in this chart, the respondents are centered around mainly 28%, so a little bit of both collaborative as well as somewhat authoritative, but leaning

[00:12:58] more toward the collaborative end of the scale in terms of the one through four areas. That tells you a lot about how people feel they want someone going to work with people, be able to be a person that they can talk to, work and work with in terms of various project, feel comfortable having that individual as their leader.

[00:13:24] And then we ask, what are the top traits that you feel great leaders should have? What are those qualities or components that the next superintendent should possess as a person, as a leader, as someone in charge of the division?

[00:13:42] And you see here on this chart, the highest areas were accountable and responsible for actions, not only their own actions, but also being able to be the person that's responsible for the actions across the district.

[00:13:58] And while you can't have someone that is able to say what every single person will do, but they wanted a leader that will take charge and have some responsibility for what happens in the district on a daily basis.

[00:14:15] A really effective communicator. We heard this a lot. In terms of wanting someone that's going to listen and be someone that is forthright, honest, and trustworthy and transparent when they hear the person talk.

[00:14:31] The trusted leader there has a next highest percentage, as well as lead by example through honest practices. This was something that I would also share a lot. Wanting someone to be a role model. Be someone that can motivate and inspire others.

[00:14:49] parents have the stakeholders' interests at heart through listening and learning, and just being able to empower others and make the kind of decisions that focus on the big picture. And then the big thing we heard is once they make those decisions, be able to stick to it.

[00:15:08] The other areas in the same category, from a problem solver, someone that, again, makes great decisions with input and collaboration of others. Balance is hard, too, while they challenge. In other words, doesn't shy away from what is in front of them, in front of what exists, but faces it head on. And remains confident in making those firm decisions, all the way to promoting staff growth, and just developing other leaders in the division to become those

[00:15:48] seller individuals and sharing these same traits and characteristics. The next chart just continues in that vein, showing you how participants felt about other value traits, resolving conflict with desired results, maintaining a vision.

[00:16:08] We heard that quite a bit from the stakeholder groups as well, as well as being able to make connections via networking with others, meaning not only networking with those within the division, but throughout the community at large, as well as legislators.

[00:16:26] And then from the value trace, we went to asking the participants about areas of expertise that they felt were important and should the county board, the school board, place in each of the areas.

[00:16:43] So these are areas that, from the individual's perspective, how much importance do you think you as a school board should place in these areas? And you see, first and foremost, the areas that receive some of the highest percentage in terms of, again, green being very important, blue important, yellow, gold somewhat important, and then red not at all or even the very tiny, tiny academy, I don't know.

[00:17:14] And I would say experience working as a teacher. They wanted someone that basically has a great understanding of education and as well as another large area, knowledge of public education, finance, operations and facilities, wanting someone that can help with the bond referendum as well as being able to understand the structure of finance in the area.

[00:17:44] Another large area, understanding the dynamic and culture of our division, understanding and appreciating the diversity that exists and being able to help nurture that. So you see a lot of the areas there, but again, I'm highlighting some of the areas that have the largest percentage.

[00:18:04] And then we went on to ask in the survey strategies for the search. In other words, in choosing the next superintendent, which path would you like the school board to? And as you see indicated here, the largest number, 56 percent, find a different candidate, one who is ready to take the division in a significantly different direction, 56 percent.

[00:18:33] And then following that, find a candidate with the same basic educational and management philosophy as the current administration, but who can make necessary changes. Changes and different directions are the two words that we heard or phrases that were expressed quite a bit throughout the stakeholder meetings, as well as you can see in the survey.

[00:18:58] And then division interaction, here's where we ask, basically, for example, within the last year, have you needed to speak to someone about a concern or a problem? And if so, how strongly would you agree that whatever interaction you had, you felt unsatisfied or you felt like your concern was addressed in some way?

[00:19:24] And you easily found out who to contact, had, again, a large percentage of strongly agree and agree. And also, you were able to make contact with the correct person. And often, if you have a problem or concern, it's sometimes hard, especially in a large division, who you should contact.

[00:19:45] So strong support there. And the person you spoke with was courteous. That received a high percentage, as well as you received the right information. That also is an area of strong percentage. But overall, I would say that as you look at this chart, the overall interactions have been very, very positive for those who funded in this area.

[00:20:11] And then the impact of the division interactions, what type of impact has been your past interactions with the superintendent, a staff member, a division staff member, a school staff member? And the largest percentage says very positive, 31%.

[00:20:30] And following that, no impact, meaning they didn't have to have an interaction. But then 22%, a negative impact, and then 12%, very negative. So, again, as you look at how people are feeling about the interactions they have with various members of the division staff, It is very varied, okay?

[00:20:58] And that would end the survey report. Again, just giving you an overview of how people felt as it relates to the area that we know are important as we continue the search. I'll now turn it over to my other colleague, Robert Alfaro, while I pull up the stakeholder summary.

[00:21:23] I'm going to end this PowerPoint and get the additional one. Hey, Aaron, I want to make sure I get the screen here.

[00:22:01] While you're doing that, Gloria, I want to also say that we will be sharing all this information with the new superintendent. That's part of our transition part of the new superintendent coming in. So the new superintendent will have access to all this information to help him or her transition into the position.

[00:22:26] And it's always good to have a little bit more information regarding the profile, especially before they start listening to her. So that's part of our service as well. okay and I think Aaron do I have to stop you you just I believe you'll need to reshare now

[00:22:52] we were seeing your screen before do that all right thank you okay there we go here we go and here we go there's several buttons you have to push but we are moving there okay you should be able to see it now, am I correct? Yes, we can see it. Okay, thank you. All right, so this is a

[00:23:31] summary of the stakeholder meetings that were held during the week that we were there with Robert Alfaro and myself, as well as having in-person and virtual sessions, and Robert, I'll go through this as you begin. Okay, thank you. Thank you, Gloria. Good afternoon, board members. Thank you for giving us the time to present to you the results of our listening tour. I will start by

[00:24:03] saying that I was most appreciative of the honesty, the time that was given, the thoughts. We heard from so many different groups in the four days that we were there. Gloria and I spent those four days from morning till evening Gary and Ricardo Medina one of our associates also did some interviews virtually there was about 60 stakeholder sessions as you can see there held with on face-to-face with stakeholders 22 were

[00:24:39] conducted virtually and of course the there were some that we besides the individuals from the board of supervisors the chiefs of police the County Commissioner in addition to of course the school board members over 260 participants that participated in this okay Gloria can you go to the next one thank you the major staff stakeholders stakeholder groups obviously included the teachers the students the parents support staff central office

[00:25:18] administrators campus administration as you can see principal system principals community members it took about an hour for each some went a little longer there was one that went for 90 minutes and that was the last one that we held on Thursday night eight questions were asked basically the same questions that you saw at the beginning dealing with uh how people felt about the division the community

the challenges the district faces of course leadership qualities they wanted to see in the next superintendent and in prioritizing those challenges into what the superintendent needed to do within the first three to six months of the significant strengths

[00:25:57] we we heard that diversity was a very powerful strength for many of the groups diversity of students in the community a majority of parents were very supportive they said that they were involved they expected results high expectations for education for their students there was a very strong and engaged business community. I was very, very pleased to see that you do have a very strong business community that supports the schools. They're very dedicated, committed teachers,

[00:26:31] of course, support staff and administrators. The next one. They talked about some of the great programs such as Fine Arts and the Performing Arts. They talked about the Academies of Loud, community activities. The families, they were great for families, including indoor and outdoor events.

[00:27:04] They considered the fact that the county was urban as well as rural and everything in between. There was great green areas. There was wineries, horse farms, and so forth, something for everybody. They were close to Washington, D.C., and other major areas, three major airports that they could go anywhere, international airports. The community is growing very fast, rapid rate. The job market was improving quite a bit. So there's growth and they felt that there was continuous, that growth will continue over the next few years.

[00:27:41] The critical challenges, you heard some of them in the initial report where people went in and did that survey. What they said to us was that teacher attraction and retention needs to be a priority. And in light of the fact that there were many teachers that were retirement age and that they were considering perhaps retiring early. And so there was concern about attracting and keeping those teachers. They also wanted to attract and keep teachers in special areas,

[00:28:21] special education and bilingual education in those areas. Staff morale, they felt needed, obviously some improvement. Employees feel that there's a lack of trust and there's the lack of transparency and honesty. The communication across the division needs to be more effective.

[00:28:42] There's not enough communication. It's not efficient. We need some consistency and it needs to be in a timely manner. They felt that the community is very divided. All groups within the division want to feel valued. They want to be heard, and not just heard. I think I heard, we want to be listened to and heard, not just those that are the loudest. They felt that the ones that were being the loudest were just the minority group, and they were attracting too

[00:29:15] much attention and taking away from things that should have more attention. The new literacy program was a challenge that they felt like they needed to be adopted, and they needed to be implemented and implemented with caution and done correct from the very beginning.

[00:29:34] They wanted the rigor and the support for all students in the division. They felt like it should not be determined by which school you attend or where you live. And then rigor and support for all students, regardless of where you came from.

[00:29:54] Negative publicity that does not allow the good, productive work of students and staff to be celebrated. That came out quite a bit. They felt that the negative publicity was drowning out the great things that are happening in the schools and that that needs to be turned around as soon as possible. Someone that when we talked about desired superintendent qualities, as you heard some before, they

wanted someone who was charismatic, personable, that relates well to everyone. Someone who has demonstrated experience in establishing programs and making decisions

[00:30:33] and one who values diversity and equity for all students, that wasn't just said by one group. Every group mentioned that. A great communicator who can speak to all publics with clarity and honesty. And obviously, they wanted someone who was an innovator and able to champion the good work that is taking place within the division. As we move on to the other qualities, they wanted an individual who was collaborative, not a micromanager. And we heard that clear. One who

[00:31:07] is able to engage others with various options. But once a decision is made, again, stay firm with the decision. And you'll see that in another area, when it came to communication, what they were asking for is make a decision and then tell us why you're making this decision so we can fully understand that they will get to work. Success, political savvy, but not be a politician. And someone who champions initiatives that are in the best interest, again, of all

[00:31:41] An individual with integrity, positive ethics, who works hard to increase staff morale, will listen to staff, and who will not be swayed again by the loudest voices and be able to make informed decisions.

[00:32:05] I was particularly impressed with students when I met with them. They were honest, they were articulate, and above all, they were very well informed. They kept up with what's going on.

[00:32:20] The students said that they wanted, that one of the great things about the district was the diversity of their student population. They said they have amazing schools. One student said, we love our teachers, high emphasis on learning.

[00:32:37] They were concerned about this, the grading system, the 50% rule. We didn't go too much into the discussion about the 50% rule. They did mention a couple of things, but that would seem to be a concern for them. They said that the trust between parents, the board, and the schools, it needs to be rebuilt.

[00:33:01] Coming from students, I was a little taken aback by that statement because they all agreed. When one said it, the others were shaking their head or would say 100%. Superintendent needs to be visible to all of us. And in this one, what they were talking about was we need a leader who will listen and hear us.

[00:33:20] And we have a voice. They said the superintendent who is trustworthy, honest, and caring, and most importantly, someone who remembers that students come first. The parents said that the division has been supportive.

[00:33:42] They have engaged parents who expect the best for their students. They said that trust in the division is a major problem. The superintendent should possess and deal with the vocal minority and get the system back on track.

[00:34:00] came from the parents. They continue to say that student safety is a concern. The superintendent, again, needs to be a good listener, collaborator, who can communicate with all, and also state the reason as to why you're making this decision. Just tell us, explain to us why you made the decision. They also were talking about equity of opportunity is lacking for some students, and they were talking about students from the part of the community where there are old facilities,

[00:34:38] older facilities. They were very much concerned about that. They felt that the business community was strong and engaged. They also felt that if they were to keep, if the division was to keep the business community involved in schools, then they needed to listen to them. Long-standing partnership with community organizations. They talked about innovative programming, such as STEM.

[00:35:10] They talked about the vet press needs to change and a new superintendent needs to understand the politics of the division. Understand the politics, but not be a politician. Passionate parents can be challenging because they expect accountability, like all parents do. The division needs to be reestablished trust and support for diversity, able to speak and engage with different cultures, and engaging superintendents who have a keen awareness of what is needed. It's in the best

[00:35:44] interest of the division and the savvy of wherewithal and know-how to be able to balance negatives with success. When we talked to the central office staff, we talked to almost every one of them. I think for the last count, maybe four, three or four did not participate, but we talked to most of them. They felt that they needed someone who could manage the growth of the division with the benefits all that benefits all while addressing neighborhoods with signing enrollment

[00:36:18] enrollment and aging building he said that the division has a high standard academic achievement but the rigor of academics for all students is a challenge they were concerned about the upcoming election of the entire board they said the new superintendent is to be good at building consensus but not afraid to make hard decisions and to be a risk taker and solve the problem.

[00:36:56] They said, superintendent, lead us in the right direction. We have his or her back. There needs to be a real alignment and a focus on all instructional matters, such as the literacy project. And the new superintendent needs to be creative, think outside the box and focus on students and all their needs, able to listen to everyone, not just those who are the most hopeful. You hear that time and time again.

[00:37:27] negative public perception, it tends to be louder than the great things that are happening in the schools. That needs to change. And the new superintendent will need to establish, reestablish trust. They would like transparency, stronger communication, along with improving staff morale. There needs to be a stronger working with community, the community leaders. The new superintendent needs to possess some courage, be motivating

[00:38:01] and engaging, and demonstrate a true investment in the division. By that, they want somebody who is willing to commit and stay for a period of time. Diverse communities need to feel valued, and all demographics need to have a place. And, of course, English as second language learners need more support. And teachers, they were -- you all have some great, committed teachers.

[00:38:37] You can hear it in their voice. You can see it in their face. Teacher retention and attraction, of course, is troubling to them. They feel that that needs to be a priority. Teachers who feel supported for the job they do, and they want to be supported. There are amazing things that are happening in schools, and that needs to be publicized more. They gave us several examples of the wonderful things that are happening. Too many initiatives that continue to be added.

[00:39:07] They also said nothing comes off our plate, just things continue to be added. The new superintendent will need to work with teachers on establishing new collective bargaining policies. We heard about that priority needs to be established to improve teacher morale to regain their trust and

rebuild their confidence the current discipline policy is a concern I heard that very clearly not only from the teachers but I heard it from students that the current discipline policy is a concern

[00:39:46] more like they were troubled by a lack of it some minority teachers need to be hired they wanted teachers to mirror the student population and the new literacy again needs to be leaders to program to be put in place. The support staff, they felt like special education is not being addressed, they should. It was interesting coming from support staff. They felt like they needed more resources for the special ed programs. The new superintendent felt they felt that he needs to address the toxic political situation that impacts the current workplace. And not only did I hear

[00:40:26] it from them, I heard it from teachers that because of what's happening in the media, It's creating some stress on that part. Custodial support is inadequate since staffing depends on square footage as opposed to student enrollment.

[00:40:43] Many buildings are aging. It felt like that needed to be addressed. Transportation should be provided for all students who want to attend special or magnet schools. And I think the students recognize this probably more than most of the ones that we talked to, but the support staff recognized it as well.

[00:41:05] There is a bit of an ivory tower in the administration building. That's how they felt. There should not be a top-down approach. There should be a collaborative spirit in dealing with issues. And that gets us to the summation and the summarization of board, stakeholders, and online services.

[00:41:28] Yes, I put this together with Robert and Gloria's help based upon the interviews of stakeholders, the surveys, as well as our interviews with the board members.

[00:41:47] And when you put together a profile, you can't put everything in. You know, otherwise it kind of detracts from people from applying. But what we did take, or at least attempted to take the top ones and put them together.

[00:42:08] And you can see them on the screen, the one that we've mentioned so many times as far as trust models, bystanders, and integrity, honest, ethical behavior, and all aspects of leadership. And you see it as an energetic, engaged leader who possesses excellent people skills with the ability to gather input and make decisions that put students first.

[00:42:35] That actually came out of the students themselves. Again, promotes a positive, professional, safe environment. The division employees and board is able to build consensus commitment among individuals and groups.

[00:42:51] And as a leader, as a team builder, and that was really important with especially the administrative staff. A good listener, approachable, and possesses political savvy.

[00:43:08] That came up loud and clear. He is an effective, open, and transparent communicator with strong listening skills, creating positive school, parent, and business community relations. He has demonstrated real leadership as someone who has done that and his understanding of equity, inclusion, and diversity.

[00:43:34] And has experienced and demonstrated strategies to improve teacher and staff retention. As a strong, collaborative leader with experience in making difficult decisions, there's not a group that came along and said that this is an easy job, and manage future growth of the division and the challenges of changing infrastructure, and ensures accountability for all and responsibility for action.

[00:44:05] The last one would be provide evidence-based interventions to gain equitable access to learning, opportunities, and to create productive environments for all students.

[00:44:26] And this last slide is our recommendation for the profile. Please keep in mind that we will post this on our website and we will also provide all this information to candidates as we recruit them, as we evaluate them.

[00:44:58] We will keep all the information that we have gathered in an effort to recruit the very best candidates are available so i kind of open this back and turn it back to the chair uh regarding our recommendations on their profile that's one of the things we want to get done and then kind of like to discuss the process following thank you very much for that comprehensive overview and i just want to thank you and and your team for everything you've done thus far in holding all

[00:45:36] the stakeholder groups conducting the survey and and pulling all of this information together board members any questions or feedback regarding the recommended superintendent profile that would be posted as part of the job posting miss okadigvi i just appreciated the comprehensive nature of the overview and being able to see in detail all of the data results from the surveys i um and it's helpful to definitely hear and you can see the sentiment from the community and finding that

[00:46:13] consensus among over 4 000 people in the surveys and then all of the stakeholder interviews that you did so just appreciate the work and pulling that together and walking us through all of the details which are also very important thank you additional comments or discussion mr mahedvi thank you chair i guess i'll just echo again this is a this is a collective process and i think as many of the the feedback that we i think the gr consulting was presenting tonight the ask for the community i guess i just want to simply you know convey the thanks of all the you know

[00:46:52] 4 000 plus members that responded to the survey and also the the folks that engage in the stakeholders meetings as well and taking time out and meeting with your consulting firm it's it's a collective journey and i think it's just we're just beginning at this again once again thank you additional discussion okay gary not seeing anything else on our end so i think we can turn to the the second topic that you would wanted to discuss with the the concerns about the the community panel for the finalist interviews yes um thank you uh for your

[00:47:30] comments um it was um it was a great team effort with not only with the people on the screen gathering up all this information but a lot of folks behind the scenes put this presentation together so thank you for your comments. One of the things that we are charged with is trying to recruit the very best candidates out there across the country in the state of Virginia as well as

[00:48:04] And, in fact, I had a couple of discussions with potential candidates today and right before this meeting. And, of course, their questions and their concerns was over about their exposure as a candidate.

[00:48:26] They both have great jobs. They are leading very large districts, very challenging districts. They have multi-year contracts. And their question was, what's the chances of my exposure? And my name getting somewhat leaked out there, or at least recognized.

[00:48:47] And I told him that we would be discussing it tonight. And I know Robert and I, and I'm going to-- and I'm going to be speaking at a conference in New Orleans where there's a bunch of top administrators in the country.

[00:49:03] And I'm going to get this question about the stakeholders. I think what's worked in the past for you has probably been a very good thing, and maybe it was workable, but we're in a different set of circumstances with candidates across the country trying to recruit them for various jobs.

[00:49:27] And what I have mentioned the panel, and Robert and Gloria have confirmed this, is that there are some great concerns on those candidates regarding having someone from other than the board interview them and have their name possibly leaked and exposed out there.

[00:49:51] It's just a different political atmosphere, not only for boards, but for candidates. And so I have to tell you that you hired us to recruit the very best and brightest that might be available.

[00:50:07] panel that you have will have an impact on the Canada pool. I can just tell you by two people I just talked to today that it's going to have an impact doesn't mean that we can't get good people. I'm just telling you that there will be some people that are going to be very concerned because of the political atmosphere, not only in your division, but

[00:50:39] across the country. And we are experiencing that in the recruiting process. I've been doing this 40-plus years, and I can tell you that it's a major concern. So I would like the board to at least reconsider at least what you've done in the past. It's not that these candidates are afraid to meet with people I mean these are going to be experienced people they're not afraid of meeting anybody you know and it's just a matter of uh of their own um job

[00:51:15] and their own security and their own reputation and integrity thank you uh and just for anyone who may be listening who may be unfamiliar with this process during the last two superintendent searches both for uh in 2014 and 2021 uh there was a community panel of members of the public two nominated by each school board member so 18 total that confidentially interviewed the

[00:51:53] three finalists for the superintendent position they signed a non-disclosure agreement because the names of the finalists are never made public because these are generally sitting superintendents somewhere else. So the unsuccessful candidates or all the candidates generally apply under confidentiality so that it doesn't affect their employment if they're not the successful candidate. So that's the issue that's being discussed and that has been brought up as a

[00:52:28] concern from uh from mr ray and his group so i'll just open it up to board member discussion at this point about whether we want to continue with with that approach or consider some alternative approach to having the community community panel mr morse thank you mr chair a question as we look at candidates for our position there are many other positions for whom you are you're searching. Many of those you've recently completed. Can you tell us what it looks like from those

[00:53:04] other searches that you conducted? How frequent is it that a community panel is put together such as the one that we have? In your experience, have they ever had issues with disclosures and do they do the NDAs like Loudon has done the last two times? Well, I can let my colleagues kind of weigh We had several issues last year with candidates' names being leaked out, and it really hurt the process.

[00:53:42] The problem you have is that if a name gets leaked out, you not only lose the candidate, you can kind of lose the entire pool. And I think we are in different kinds of times right now.

[00:54:01] I would say that the vast majority of the searches that we have done within the last couple of years has not involved panels. And those that have have been kind of in smaller districts and that have

allowed the candidates' names being announced.

[00:54:25] Some of those are because of the state statute that they have to, you know, release X amount of names. But I would say that the majority of ours have not been announcing who those candidates are.

[00:54:44] But again, sometimes we have to do that because of a state law. And I can tell you in places like Florida and other places where they have had to announce or we've had to announce that candidate or the candidate's name's been exposed in some way that that has diminished the pool of candidates and the quality.

[00:55:07] I don't know, Gloria or Robert, do you want to make a comment on it? I would say, as Gary mentioned, one of our larger searches where we did have a panel, it just, information did get out.

[00:55:25] And I think there was no ifs and ends about the ballot, and it caused concern for the finalists. And, you know, as I think the chair just mentioned, there are other ways sometimes to do this, but in this day and time, first of all, the superintendency itself is an area where superintendents are feeling very vulnerable within the climate within not only their district, but just across the country and what the expectations are.

[00:56:05] So they're being very selective about where they apply and wanting us as recruiters to be selective in how we protect them in terms of their current position and their overall career.

[00:56:21] I would just say if you think about it, you know, if the superintendent in your division was applying somewhere else and it leaked out and then the concern would come from parents and staff and so on. So it's definitely something to look at and think about very critically.

[00:56:40] Yeah, if the name or something leaks out, instead of bringing the community together, in several of those cases, when the name got out, it divided rather than united. And, you know, just with today's time, it's different.

[00:57:00] Have I done panels before? Yes. You know, many, many years ago, I did a lot of those. I probably was one of the pioneers in that area, but we're just in a different time period in the quality of candidates.

[00:57:16] There's only going to be X amount of candidates in the country are going to have the ability and the skill level and meet the profile that you have there that's qualified to be the superintendent allowed.

[00:57:31] And the more hurdles you put into this, it's going to cause more concern. And I don't know, Robert, you've been around for about three years. I feel like I've been around for 30 years.

[00:57:51] You're right. Here's what I'm professionally thinking and honestly with you, is that if you do have a board and these candidates are not going to apply because they, I mean, if you have a community group, they're going to be reluctant to apply. And typically what I have seen is that you're going to get deputy superintendent or maybe an associate superintendent, people that want to be superintendents that are not necessarily superintendents now,

[00:58:25] or somebody who's on their way out that needs a place to go. That's not what Loudoun needs. Robin needs an exceptional leader that can take you to the next level and someone who can meet the profile.

[00:58:43] This profile is always one of the strongest I've seen in a long time. But I will tell you that if they feel, I'm talking about the candidates, if the candidates feel that they're going to be rated around and they have not had that conversation with their board, they may not have a job if they don't get selected.

[00:59:07] And I don't think they want to risk that. I think the confidentiality is a major point. And I appreciate the confidentiality agreement. And I've had those and have utilized those over the years.

[00:59:23] The problem is there's no way to really guarantee anyone on the confidentiality. And there's really no way to enforce it. I mean, what's the penalty on something like that?

[00:59:41] Unfortunately, the process can come unravel. You know, there's an old saying about the best way to keep a secret and don't tell anybody. It's a little bit like this with the board.

[00:59:56] The more people you get involved, you know, there's more of a chance. And if you're setting superintendent under today's environment, you're going to be a little concerned. So that's all we have to say about it.

[01:00:12] I completely understand, but you, after the presentations that you just showed us with the transparency expectations of our community, we are in a catch-22. It's going to be extremely difficult for us to push back on previous boards where in Loudoun where we did have those panels.

[01:00:32] So we appreciate the expertise. Thank you. Additional discussion, comments? Ms. Reeser. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is there the possibility of something anonymous, perhaps virtually, with cameras off?

[01:01:00] Or some other creative way of approaching the situation so that there is the ability to persuade concerns while still having the input from the community group like we have in the past? Yeah, you know, there's always a possibility to do anything.

[01:01:24] I mean, you know, if we could work some way that we could guarantee the candidates as far as their name not getting out there and we could protect them, that certainly would help us.

[01:01:43] I'm not quite sure how we have to work that, but I've been creative in the past. We could maybe come up some way to do that, if at all possible. The biggest thing for us would be able to, when we're recruiting XYZ Canada, is be able to tell them that they're, or guarantee them that their name is not going to get out from, they're only going to have direct contact, eyeball to eyeball with the board.

[01:02:20] And so if we can figure out a way to how to do that, I'm all for that. Ms. Reeser, could you maybe explain? I'm imagining something like the old dating game where, you know, you feel like, you know, virtually you hear their voice, but you don't know their name or their exact background.

[01:02:38] Is something like that what you're proposing? Well, even in the meeting that we're in now, if someone had their camera off, nobody would know who they are or have to have their name. the participants that are virtual could the candidates could be virtual the meeting could still happen here we could still have our panel in this room like we did with the last superintendent search and the candidates could just be on the screen with no name no other identifying characteristics and no camera on and it would only be the I mean the consulting firm could arrange for this

[01:03:16] together with our Department of Digital Innovation so that the names never left the consulting firm thank you you know we certainly I mean that to me that's a possibility at least from a selling standpoint to candidates and kind of give them some security I mean obviously at some point kind of I

mean on the number of candidates, you have, you know, we just don't know what that number is going to be.

[01:03:54] But I can tell you today the numbers are small and the bigger the job, the fewer the candidates to be able to have the skill level to do the job. So I think the top couple of candidates, obviously, two to three candidates are going to want to meet with the board face-to-face.

[01:04:14] But if we could utilize this panel where it's anonymous, who they are, that might still work out. Right. This would not be in lieu of meeting the board.

[01:04:29] This is just a preliminary step that we took previously. Ms. Polivka. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that given the current situation that we are in as a school division, we should be comparing ourselves to ourselves.

[01:04:46] So not necessarily looking at what other school divisions are doing across the country, but where is Loudoun now compared to Loudoun in 2014 and compared to Loudoun in 2019? So we owe it to the community to offer as much transparency as possible.

[01:05:03] And if we were able to accommodate those types of interviews in the past, we should be able to accommodate those interviews now. I like Ms. Reiser's suggestion of keeping the individuals anonymous. I don't see why we can't do that. But I think for us as a board to retract a decision to offer those opportunities for our community members is not a good look for us.

[01:05:24] There is no one in this country that's going to apply for this position as a superintendent that doesn't know about the current situation in Loudoun County. So I would hope that whoever is applying knows what they're looking at, they know what they're getting into, but ultimately we owe it to this community to allow them to participate in their own interview with this potential candidate and the potential candidates.

[01:05:47] Thank you. And I agree. I would be very concerned with backing off of the community panel because we've already announced that we're going to do that, and that's consistent with what we've done during the last two searches. But that being said, I think Ms. Reiser offers an interesting compromise if that's something that's technologically feasible and that we can pull off to try and do whatever we can to protect the confidentiality of the finalist candidates while still having the panels.

[01:06:19] Ms. Ogaugbe. Thank you, Chair. I also appreciate that recommendation. I think that participation from stakeholders in the community is a really important part of this process. inclusion of the stakeholder meetings that happened over this past week are very important but I think that ability for people to meet with the finalists would be important I do like the recommendation from his reserve and I would add the suggestion that in terms of sharing information about the candidates background steps could also be taken to anonymize their CVs or

[01:06:59] resumes where names are removed and even institutions you could exchange for like this was a urban or suburban or rural school system with a head count rather than the actual location of the schools as well so that they really truly had the comfort in knowing that their identity was being protected and it I think it's important I think one of the one of you had mentioned that this for a candidate at this level to have their name leaked as a finalist in a

[01:07:38] search can erode the trust that they have from their current constituents parents staff students who are wondering why they're looking elsewhere sometimes there are opportunities that people are interested in looking at it doesn't mean that they're still not invested in where they are so being able to respect their need to have privacy is important thank you thank you mr.

[01:08:08] thank you chair so I guess I want to go back to think there this board is not making any decision about retracting going back to removing the the panel I think this that's not enough for discussion I think this is GR GR consulting firm which is coming up with a risk in finding it in large pool of candidates and I think we're just discussing how to mitigate that risk so want to be clear about that I think there should not be any understanding that somehow we are looking to remove that the panel or at least have that consideration so just saying that side so I think I there are ways to I think it's one of the options mr. reason mentioned so I'm wondering if

[01:08:47] if DDI can work with do your consulting firm to kind of create the scenario to put them at ease you know people logging in as anonymous without names and I think if you are a consulting firm you can experience it directly, what that scenario could look like. And I think you can take that and share with your pool of candidates about how that can be protected and make sure that the privacy and there's no risk of any leak or anything of that sort.

[01:09:14] So I think there are ways, and I think we can work to mitigate that. And I think if you guys can get a firsthand view of what that could look like, I think you'll feel more confident, and you can share that same confidence back with your pool of candidates as well. thank you any additional discussion mr. Beatty I would just also put forward the fact that this community panel is going to be comprised of board members selected members so there should be some level of trust and familiarity with the board and people who are going to be on the panel even though it is community members it isn't just anyone invited it's going to there will be some selection to it so

[01:09:51] I think that would help alleviate the you know that there is a lot of trust that we're trying to build additional discussion is everyone comfortable miss miss Rieser thank you I just wanted to thank mr. Mejedevi for reiterating and clarifying that the board was not ever considering changing the position it's already taken because we do often have confusion based on

[01:10:21] reported reporting that is confused seems to be confusing or create some confusion within the community about what the board was actually intending considering and that is not what was happening here tonight so i really appreciate that you said that out loud even though i think it was implicit thank you yeah so board members is there consensus for continuing to move ahead with the community panel but doing it in a a way that protects the the identity and confidentiality of the candidates in the way that miss reaser described or a similar

[01:11:00] similar fashion okay so we have board consensus for for for that approach okay with that i just I just want to, Mr. Ray, your team, thank you again for all the information tonight and very much looking forward to getting the job officially posted and starting to see candidates in a couple of weeks.

[01:11:26] Well, thank you so much. And I appreciate the compromise on the stakeholders. I think it will help us an awful lot. And we can work with that. And it will add something positive to the process. So we're looking forward to moving on and recruit some outstanding candidates for you.

[01:11:53] yeah okay thanks again okay thank you so much thank you okay with that we're going to move to item four on our agenda a motion to convene closed meeting mr mahedvi thank you chair i move to the longer county school board recess this public meeting and enter into a closed meeting person to 2.2 section 3712 of code of virginia for the following consultation with staff and legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as authorized by section 2.2 37 11 a 8 of the

[01:12:29] code of virginia specifically legal requirements and procedure regarding the certification of collective bargaining by employees of the lawrence county school board sir second second seconded by mr morris any discussion seeing none all those in favor please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with corvo and sheridan absent for the vote we are now in closed session we will be in closed session until probably closer to 6:45 based we're running a little behind so what we expect to be

[01:13:08] back at that time thank you good evening the board is coming out of closed

[01:45:30] session at this time is there a motion mr. Mahedvi yes sure I move that the closed meeting be adjourned and that the Dalaran County School Board reconvene its public meeting and that the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting I moved to the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of the public meeting resolution 30 - 22 / 23 whereas the Loudoun County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded board in accordance with the provisions of Virginia Freedom of Information Act and whereas section 2.2 - 3712 D of Court of Virginia requires a

[01:46:07] certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law now therefore be resolved that the Loudoun County School Board hereby certifies 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 closed convening close identifying the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Loudoun County School Board.

[01:46:38] I'll second. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corbo and Sheridan absent for the vote. We're going to begin our evening session with item seven, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem. The pledge leader tonight is Evelyn Boguch from Heritage High School. She is the Poetry Out Loud 2023 Virginia State champion 12 finalists from across the commonwealth participated in the virginia state finals on

[01:47:12] march 10th 2023 chosen from 35 school champions who competed in four virtual semi-final competitions bogus won first won the heritage high school pol competition during her freshman year and went on to become a virginia state finalist in her sophomore and junior years virginia's This Poetry Out Loud program elevates the literary arts by engaging more than 5,000 students from high schools and organizations across the Commonwealth.

[01:47:41] The program expands its reach through a statewide broadcast of the finals during National Poetry Month in April. This recorded competition will air Sunday, April 30th at 4:00 p.m. on PBS/VPM, and on Monday, May 1st at 8:00 p.m. on VPM+.

[01:47:59] Evelyn is a National Merit Scholar and attends the Academy of Science along with Heritage high school she enjoys singing with heritage's a cappella chamber ensemble 12 programming robots as team captain of the dead robot society and spending time in nature or with her pet bunnies immediately following the national the pledge we will have the national anthem being sung tonight by the freedom high school choir department which is part of the blue ribbon award-winning performing arts program at freedom high school under the direction of laura lazarevich you will hear a

[01:48:34] performance by members of bella bose and the advanced mixed chorus in addition to their many academic accomplishments members of the freedom choral department consistently place in lcps district state regional and national honors choirs the freedom choir students enjoy sharing their talents and passion for music with family friends and the community so at this time i will ask everyone to please rise for the pledge of allegiance and to remain standing for the

[01:49:04] national anthem immediately afterwards. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty

[01:49:24] and justice for all.

[01:51:04] Wonderful performances. Thank you all so much for being here tonight. We're now going to move to item eight, comments from our student school board representatives.

[01:51:25] the month. We're going to start with Ishan Parekh from Briar Woods High School. He is a senior at Briar Woods and one of the student council association presidents. Ishan is also the vice president of fundraising for the National Honor Society and the vice president of the Science National Honor Society. In addition, he's involved in other clubs such as the National Mathematics Honor Society and DECA. This year he hopes to lead by example and continue to promote school spirit, climate opportunities, and a culture that is involved, engaged, and excited to experience all the traditions, events, and activities that LCPS offers.

[01:52:04] Good evening. Thank you for letting me join you again and talk a little bit more about the place I call home from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. I'm Ishaan Parikh, and I am the Student Council Association Senior Executive President at Briarwoods High School. Thank you again to Ms. Alzate and Ms. Edinger for granting me this opportunity to speak with you tonight.

[01:52:25] I feel honored to share a few more words about Briarwoods. As I mentioned last time, our school has countless opportunities to get involved for each and every student. Our core values, known as FLY, ask our students to be fearless, loyal, and true. Tonight, I would like to highlight a few more programs and activities that embody these core values.

[01:52:45] The Briarwoods Sports Media Club is working on learning to use broadcast equipment to broadcast our games. This is a collaborative effort, including our athletic department and our student engagement and activities coordinator. We are very excited to bring Falcon athletics to a wider audience.

[01:53:04] This year, the SCA team hosted a winter festival during the lunch shifts so students could engage with their peers and teachers in fun events and school spirit without taking away from instructional time. We also have executed our winter pep rally, Falcon's Got Talent, and Falcon Madness, which is like a student faculty basketball game.

[01:53:22] On April 12th, we plan to carry out Falcon Feud, which is similar to the known TV show Family Feud, where it's kind of an academic competition between students and the faculty. Our junior SCA team has done a fantastic job planning for prom, and we are excited to host it at Morven Park on April 28th.

[01:53:42] On behalf of the student body, I would like to congratulate our 40 students who competed in DECA States in March. Of those 40 students, 12 of them qualify to represent our school in the international level at Orlando. DECA has also participated in community service, having raised thousands of dollars for volunteering for the Loud and Breast Health Network, Students for the Troops, and the Epilepsy Foundation.

[01:54:05] Overall, Briarwood's DECA helps students develop crucial skills for college and career success, and it often serves at the pinnacle of their high school experience. Our spring varsity sports have done a fantastic job this season, with our teams gaining lots of support from a Briarwoods family.

[01:54:23] Our varsity lacrosse teams, or varsity boys lacrosse and varsity softball are still undefeated, with our girls soccer team, boys soccer team, and boys baseball team being four and one. The PTSO is a very good supporter of the Briarwoods staff, students, and parents in a variety of ways, including hospitality events, enrichment programs, funding teacher requests, scholarships, special expenses, and much more.

[01:54:47] 100% of the funds go back to the Briarwoods. Some recent accomplishments of the school is organizing a self-defense class where students would be able to learn how to defend themselves in case of an attack and Irene's Prom Closet, which would help students pick out dresses for prom.

[01:55:05] Briarwoods is also one of 29 high schools nationwide and the only LCPS school to receive the Wise Platinum Star School Award for the 2021-2022 academic school year. The Platinum Star recognizes the entire school's achievement and it's a prestigious award that in order to get this award, there has to be a 90% pass rate on the WISE exam with at least an average score of 85% or more.

[01:55:30] Finally, I would like to reiterate how strong a culture is at Briarwoods. The experience we are provided to enrich our times in LCPS are unmatched. We come together as a community, we support our peers, and we cheer each other on whether it's a talent show, a basketball game, a concert, or an academic competition.

[01:55:47] Being a student at Briarwoods isn't about being in a classroom. It's about being part of the Falcon family. Thank you very much.

[01:56:03] Our second student school board representative speaking tonight is Trish Guevara. She 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 Varsity Volleyball. She is a member of the National Honor Society.

[01:56:20] She's involved in making Stonebridge a better place for the students and staff. Good evening. My name is Trisha Guevara, and I am a senior at Stonebridge High School. In SEA, we plan spirit days and pep rallies that are fun and allow students to interact with each other. On St. Patrick's Day, we had our spring pep rally, which was filled with lots of teamwork and competition.

[01:56:40] Outside of school, we worked together to gather toys and clothes to give to families that weren't able to provide gifts for their children during the holidays. We assisted at a shelter to package food and

resources for those in need of them. And in October, we were able to host our annual homecoming dance back inside of our gym after recovering from COVID in 2020.

[01:56:59] Our dedication and hard work made it feel like the challenges of COVID were forgotten and the students were able to enjoy the activities they once did. Our students strive for greatness in both their studies and in their sports. Last year, we finished the year with a total of nine state championship titles.

[01:57:16] In order for our student-athletes to perform at their full potential, we must continue to provide useful materials for our teams and athletic trainers. Student comes before student-athletes, and our coaches and staff have made great efforts to make sure that they are succeeding to both participate in their sport and perform well in their class.

[01:57:34] In February, our Stonebridge Jazz Department held an amazing performance in the cafeteria, filled with students, parents, and music lovers all over the county. More recently, we held our annual cluster concert, including our orchestra, jazz, guitar, theater, and art students.

[01:57:54] The choirs from Trailside and elementary schools also came to perform alongside our high schoolers, and it was a wonderful performance. Our staff is continuing to work hard to keep our students safe by continuously engaging with e-hall passes and by having hall monitors to ensure the protection of our students.

[01:58:14] Lastly, to further represent Stowbridge, I would like to invite you all to tune in to NBC at 9:30 p.m. to watch one of our seniors, Mary Kate Connors, perform her second round on The Voice. Excited to continue on to college and begin the next chapter of my life, I'm sad to leave the school that gave me the most memorable four years.

[01:58:36] I'm honored to be given the opportunity to speak on my school and share my experiences with you. Thank you to Dr. Flynn for choosing me to speak for Stonebridge, and thank you to Stonebridge for shaping me into the competent leader I am today. Thank you.

[01:58:56] And finally, we have Rusheel Amarataya, who is the student school board representative from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. Rusheel said, as student body president and lead sysadmin, I'm TJ's resident nerd. That's a bold statement.

[01:59:14] If he wasn't here, he'd be down at Rockridge High School. Rusheel is a jazz bassist and a varsity wrestler. He is ecstatic to be able to be here to advocate for TJ students on behalf of the student body. And he would like to run for the LCPS school board in the future.

[01:59:32] Yeah, maybe. I wanted to apologize for not being here last meeting, but hello, everyone. My name is Ruchel. Like you said, I'm the student body president this year. I've been involved with student government for the past four years over at Thomas Jefferson, one of the lead sysadmins.

[01:59:49] We run the syslab over at TJ. We manage a 320 core cluster, our homegrown student internet, and a bunch of other services. A jazz bassist, principal bassist for the orchestra and the jazz band, and a graduating senior this year. So I could spend a lot of time talking to you about our athletic, our academic achievements, and a lot less time talking about our athletic achievements.

[02:00:12] But, you know, I'd like to take this time to tell you my story and what I see for the future at TJ. So when my family first came to the States, we landed on Braddock Road, actually five minutes away from

TJ. My mom worked at the McDonald's that me and my friends go to now. And when my aunt got rejected from the school, we actually ended up moving right across the road from Briar.

[02:00:32] And she graduated as valedictorian. As she was graduating, she was raising me to go back to TJ, 45 minutes away. But I'm really grateful for the four years that Loudon has offered me. And just talking more about the transition from Loudoun to TJ, my class of 2023 sent 28.1% of the class was from the surrounding four counties.

[02:00:56] That worked out to be about 50 students coming from Loudoun going to TJ. Now, coming into TJ, on the day of the freshman orientation, I sort of walked into the building, and the administration gave us a speech, and I stayed after to talk to one of the administrators.

[02:01:13] I asked him, you know, why should I go to TJ? He told me, you know, well, you know, with the commute and everything and, you know, oh, you want to do sports, I don't think it's a good idea. Which is really interesting coming from a school administrator. But, you know, I've really learned over the past four years what blending in and becoming a part of the community really means for TJ.

[02:01:35] Coming in from a foreign area and with only, I think, about 15, 20 people coming from middle school, I really came into TJ not knowing anyone and with a clean slate and the one thing that did bring all of us together was the passion this rampant passion running throughout all of the hallways and and this is what led me to run for student government that freshman year and just speaking about my my experience in government really one of my main issues that I've been working to tackle over the past four years has been making these students feel welcome

[02:02:11] Especially with regard to Latin students, we are a very loud minority at the school and I've been working with our student government along with our PTSA on these year-round connection programs with division meetups before the school year starts, connecting parents through, you know, different WhatsApp group chats and whatnot, along with our Big Sib, Lil Sib program and our annual Diwali party held by TJ parents.

[02:02:35] But really nothing makes our TJ students feel more welcome than the support of our school board. When I applied for this position about a year ago, there was a lot of controversy going on about continued transportation for current Latin students going to TJ and about the continuation of sending new Latin students to TJ.

[02:03:00] Just talking about my day, I wake up at about 7 a.m. to hop on a bus for about an hour commute. School ends at 4, get out, and it's about an hour commute back. That's 2 hours times 7, 14 hours a day of commuting. These buses are one of the most crucial aspects to my experience at TJ.

[02:03:19] And the school board has a responsibility to the current students currently attending to provide them that transportation. But I did want to commend the school board on their maturity with regards to the establishment of the academies.

[02:03:37] I think looking forward on our future, there's a really strong value judgment to be made, which is, do we keep sending students to TJ and keep spending funding there and providing them with all the opportunities that Loudoun has, or do we take that funding and move it towards the academies and keep it a homegrown effort?

[02:04:02] And really speaking to my four years at TJ, I think there's four main facets that have really shaped my experience and made TJ such a unique school, really preparing me for college and life. And that's really the community of passionate individuals, the rigor, like the quantum mechanics test, I feel, the test was designed for master's students.

[02:04:25] The research opportunities, like the year-long research project I'm working on this year, and the focused environment of these students who are super interested in what they're doing. The TJ experience really is not like any other.

[02:04:42] It's prepared me and my fellow peers, not only to lead a successful life at college, but to be successful wherever we go. And with the recent mission changes, along with shifts in the administration, I really urge this board to reconsider their position towards the continuation of sending kids to TJ.

[02:05:10] Over my time, I've come to find that their resources could be a lot better spent keeping kids here and really working on the academies. And, you know, speaking to TJ, I mean, it's been an amazing experience and that experience has changed me for the better, but really the academies are something that Loudoun has to offer and keeping kids here might be the right move, but Loudoun still has that commitment to current students currently attending TJ and just keeping both those things in mind.

[02:05:46] - Thank you. - Thank you. We're now going to move to item nine on our agenda, which are our student and staff recognitions.

[02:06:03] First, 901, from the Department of Instruction, the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals Lifetime Achievement Award. And I will turn it over to Dr. Ellis. - Good evening, Chair Sorotkin, thank you.

[02:06:19] Good evening, members of the board. Dr. Martin, please join me. This evening, we have a special recognition, and I'm honored to be able to share it with you this evening. The Robert Lynn Cannaday Lifetime of Service Award is presented by the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals in honor of long-time Virginia educator and researcher, Dr. Lynn Cannaday, and provides recognition to those persons in Virginia who are members or non-members of VAESP and who have, by their deeds, enhanced the quality of elementary education.

[02:06:52] Last Tuesday, at the Elementary Principal Forum, we had the distinct pleasure of surprising Dr. Mike Martin, retired Director of Elementary Education with this Lifetime of Service Award. Thank you to VAESP Executive Director Krista Arnold for traveling to LCPS to present this award in person, and a special shout out to Paul Pack, Principal of Liberty Elementary, for organizing the 30 pages of statements of support for Dr. Martin and the spectacular surprise on Tuesday afternoon.

[02:07:23] Dr. Martin started his career in West Virginia as an elementary music teacher and then an elementary principal. 20 years later, he came to his senses and came to LCPS in 1998. He began a 22-year tenure at that time as the leader of elementary education in the fastest-growing school division in the country.

[02:07:44] During his first seven years in Virginia, Dr. Martin served as the elementary supervisor before taking on the role of director in 2005. Dr. Martin retired from LCPS in 2020 after a very eventful year and at the height of the pandemic.

[02:08:01] In his defense, he did tell me a couple months before the pandemic of his plans to retire. At the time of his retirement, Dr. Martin had hired 54 of the 55 sitting elementary school principals at the time and led those principals and the entire division in opening nearly 20 new elementary schools over his time here.

[02:08:23] With all of that growth, he remained there for everyone. One principal shared, he was always present. With thousands of students and staff in over 50 elementary schools, he was known by all. Dr. Martin was also instrumental in implementing full-day kindergarten and wasn't going to retire until every kindergarten student in LCPS had access to full-day K.

[02:08:45] Full implementation occurred in the 2018-2019 school year, and it's actually only since his retirement I think that we've started to just call it kindergarten. Since his retirement he has continued to serve the students and staff of LCPS by returning as a substitute principal and assistant principal in schools across the division. Thank you for still taking our phone calls and being able to help out in this way. Dr. Martin exemplifies what it means to provide a lifetime of service to public education. He exemplifies steadfast servant leadership, and dedication to the teaching profession. He leads with compassion, empathy,

[02:09:24] and a spirit of collaboration. He is student-centered and advocate for his principals, many of whom are here today, and what is best for students. He's a trusted mentor and dear friend to so many here in LCPS. The principals he's hired and mentored over the years all still talk about the lessons he's taught them and how he helped them become the leaders they are today. Every one of them has at least one Dr. Martin story. One principal said in their statement of support trust responsibility integrity commitment and respect are just some of the principles and values Dr. Martin modeled as a leader. He certainly walks the talk. Another principal remembers his

[02:10:03] holiday ties and his thousand watt smile. It is for all these reasons and so many more that are captured in the 30-page nomination packet that we are honored to recognize Dr. Mike Martin here this evening as the recipient of the Robert Lynn Kennedy Lifetime of Service Award. Dr. Martin, since you were shocked and speechless last week, we will give you a few minutes to share a couple words and congratulations and thank you for your

[02:10:27] years of service. That's good. Thank you very much. Actually, I had two pages and I think she just about said everything that I've

[02:11:02] got on my paper. Mr. Strachan, Dr. Smith, members of the school board, former central office colleagues, elementary principals, and others gathered here this evening. When I retired as director of elementary education in 2020, the elementary principals hosted a drive-by retirement celebration, and the school board recognized me virtually. You probably remember that because of COVID. Dr. Ellis did host a small in-person gathering with the DOI directors for

[02:11:34] which I was very grateful. And I thought that was that. At least I believed that was the most that could be done at that time to put this old horse to pasture. But little did I know that the elementary principals spearheaded by Mr. Pack would later nominate me for an award that would be the highest point in my professional career, even though my career ended three years ago.

[02:12:02] And I'm going to skip about a page and just say that there were a lot of people I wanted to thank. When I came to Loudoun County in 1998, I was attracted by a school district that opened two,

sometimes three elementary schools in a single year.

[02:12:25] The district I came from opened a new school about once every 10 years. But I was more attracted by the educational leaders that were here, Dr. Edgar B. Hattrick III, Mrs. Sharon D. Ackerman, Dr. Ronald E. Dyer, who was my boss, and he was the person who loudonized me, and I was very honored to be his, named his successor in 2005.

[02:12:53] But I would like to also express my gratitude to Dr. Ashley Ellis, who was my last direct supervisor. It was a well-known fact, I think, that I had pledged that I would not retire until Universal Full Decay was a reality.

[02:13:18] And that occurred in 1819, and I stuck around for two more years because Dr. Ellis squeezed it out of me. I don't know how, but she's that kind of leader, and I thank her for the additional years and the leadership she provided.

[02:13:37] The last person I want to thank is my beautiful wife, Betty Jo, who took my long hours and my unpredictable schedule to end stride.

[02:13:53] There were numerous sacrifices she made through the years in order to give me the gift of time so I could be the best director that I was able to be. She also nursed me back to health following my strokes and surgery in May of 2020. Although this award mentions a lifetime of service, I want you to know, as Ashley already said, that my service has not ended as I continue to be a principal substitute in Loudoun County Public Schools.

[02:14:21] My brother-in-law recently reminded me that when serving others, you serve God. I truly believe that and have believed that for a very long time. This thought has provided me with a deeper purpose in my service to the boys and girls of Loudoun County Public Schools.

[02:14:39] Thank you to the VASP for deeming me worthy of this award, and thank you for affording me this opportunity to speak to you this evening. Thank you.

[02:15:00] Mr. Morse has asked to say a few words, so I'll yield the floor to him. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So lots of great numbers that Dr. Ellis put out there with the number of schools and the number of principals. 1,000 teachers, I guess, that you helped hire. I wonder how many are still throughout our entire division.

[02:15:20] And full-day kindergarten. Now, you said that you accomplished that in 1819, but that was a school year. That was in 1819. I mean, you've been around for a while, not quite that long. But it was your accomplishment. And, you know, there were only two divisions left in the entire state that did not have full-day kindergarten, Loudon and someone else who we will not mention because I don't know who they are.

[02:15:46] But so we were the second to last. So I want to thank you for not being the last. It's not we're not quite Ricky Bobby, but we're doing well. And so for that, we do thank you. You know, you were Mike, you were very passionate with the youngest, always with the youngest. You were always on the floor, always dressed impeccably.

[02:16:03] But somehow you managed to get down on the floor with the kids, and you'd be doing things with them. You'd be putting together cars, battle bots, you know, things like that, rockets. We'll talk a little bit more about that in a moment. But you also were involved in a lot of the technology that we were bringing in.

[02:16:21] So computer science immersion, code to the future, STEMmer day. You were always active there, and not just with our children, but with your grandson as well. I remember you bringing him out to STEMmer day one day. I only hope your grandson didn't see our failure to launch of the rocket.

[02:16:39] And for those of you unaware of the incident, Paul Pack had invited several of us, Jeff, Joseph, Mike Martin, and myself, to demonstrate our knowledge and capability of launching a model rocket at Stemmer Day in front of hundreds of parents and students.

[02:16:54] Unfortunately, after four failed attempts, we abandoned our charge and will forever be known in the joke how many Stemmers does it take to launch a rocket? None, because we could not do it. And by the way, Jeff, it was your fault because I told you the fuse was going to be too damp.

[02:17:12] So, but, you know, Mike Martin, you were at all of these events. We saw you everywhere. You were at all the schools. I also understand that you had Saturdays reserved for your horticulture job where you would drive by schools, and you would take pictures of things that were out of place, and you would send them to the teachers or to the principals and say, hey, your school needs to trim those bushes. And he'd do this on his motorcycle on Saturday and he'd take pictures and he'd cruise around. And so I guess the principals got used to this, but I just want to let you know when your job with LCPS is finally done that I've notified Lawn Doctor

[02:17:50] that you'll be sending them a resume to help them with their bushes. You know, one of the comments that came out of the package was from Neil Slevin, and I'm going to use that. This was a quote that he attributed to you, Mike. It said, someone doesn't always have to lose for someone else to win. With Mike, all of our children were winners. I think a lot of kids look at Mike and they think, holy crap, it's Santa Claus, because he does, you know, he's got that resemblance. But if you take away the red suit and you put on a three-piece suit and you take away the sleigh and turn it into a motorcycle, you have the same heart. Thank you for all you've

[02:18:29] done for our children. Thank you, Mike. So at this time, Dr. Martin, we'll invite you to come up to

[02:18:44] the dais and we'll get a quick picture with you before before letting you go and we will now move

[02:20:10] to 9.02 for staff recognition for time of service and i will turn it over to dr smith thank you chair serotic and board members i'm here before you tonight to recognize dr asia jones for her service to loudoun county public schools that she'll be retiring at the end of this school year so i'd invite dr jones to come up here and join me please so as i shared dr jones has announced that she'll be retiring at the end of the school year and I want to tell you a little bit about her

[02:20:47] as we recognize her service this evening. Dr. Jones came to Loudoun from Roanoke City Public Schools where she served as the Executive Director for Student Support Services and as a principal for three of their schools. She also taught as an adjunct professor for Roanoke College and the University of Virginia. Dr. Jones served as the LCPS Director of Human Resources and Talent Development beginning in 2013. That was a big job at the time as a time of tremendous growth here in LCPS, and it was clear that Dr. Jones came to LCPS to do big things. Dr. Jones became the assistant superintendent for pupil services on August 1st, 2018. In this role, she provided

[02:21:26] leadership and coordination for the offices of special education, diagnostic and prevention services, student services, and related programs supporting student performance through special education, school counseling, student registration, health, social work, student assistance, attendance, homebound, assessment, diagnostic, psychological, and parent resource services.

[02:21:49] I can say this too was a huge job. What the job description doesn't capture is the difference maker that Dr. Jones has been for LCPS. In August of 2018, Dr. Jones led the Special Education Ad Hoc Committee created by the school board to research current LCPS practices, procedures, and policies affecting special needs students and worked with a large representative team of educators and parents to make recommendations for improvements in special education to the school board.

[02:22:18] This work helped to transform service delivery, as well as educate and involve parents in the special education process. In 2020, Dr. Jones helped lead LCPS's response to the pandemic, partnering with Loudoun County Government and the Loudoun County Health Department. When those first two weeks of the quarantine turned into a two-year journey, she led our ongoing response with compassion, common sense, and untiring energy.

[02:22:42] In 2021, Dr. Jones received the Ebone Image Award for Education for the Northern Virginia Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, recognizing her as an educator committed to the overall success of students, educationally and personally.

[02:22:59] She was also recognized for her instrumental role in navigating the effects of the pandemic for both students and their families, particularly of students and families of color. In 2021, Dr. Jones led the superintendent's mental health task force, which helped dramatically advance the work in our schools to support students as they returned to classrooms.

[02:23:18] Her unique leadership was pivotal in improving school mental health staffing and comprehensive mental health services for all of our students. Dr. Jones accomplishes big things. While her colleagues have no shortage of accolades for her leadership and dedication, I'd like to highlight just a few here that speak on how much she'll be missed on her retirement.

[02:23:37] Tedra Richardson, Director of Special Education of Specialized Instruction states, as one of the newest members of the Office of Special Education, Dr. Jones' leadership is what drew me to LCPS. During our initial conversation, it was evident that she leads with a servant's heart.

[02:23:53] Dr. Jones is always focused on students, schools, and the community. Jen Evans, LCPS Director for Student Mental Health Services, says, I would describe her as a courageous leader who lives her values. She never remains silent when faced with hard things, instead recognizes these as opportunities for leadership and sets an example for her team.

[02:24:13] John Lody, LCPS Director for Diagnostic and Prevention Services, states, Dr. Jones is simply the most amazing and child-centered leader I've worked for in my 28 years in public education. And while, although I'm not one for long speeches, I'll say when someone like Dr. Jones accomplishes big things, she deserves to be recognized in a big way.

[02:24:32] And we want to send her off into retirement at the end of this year with the very best of wishes. Dr. Jones, thank you for all that you've done for us. We are better for it, and thank you for all that you've done for the students of Loudoun County. Your work will impact their collective legacy for years to come.

Please accept this certificate as a small token of our appreciation on all the big things you've done for here in LCPS.

[02:25:23] Thank you so much, Dr. Smith. It continues to be an honor to serve the students of Loudoun County Public Schools, and I will be short in my comments because I did not prepare anything to say, but it's truly a privilege and I'm honored to work with such a dedicated team of administrators and boots on the ground individuals in the Department of Student Services, so I thank all of my directors who are here today as well as the amazing leaders and thank you to the school board for always being very supportive of what I've come forward to advocate for those

[02:26:02] programs that our department represents. And I'm grateful to have been in this position to be impactful, whether how small or large that it may be. So again, thank you so much for recognizing me tonight.

[02:26:18] Dr. Jones, Dr. Smith said it far more eloquently than I could, but I just wanted to echo his statements and thank you for your service to Loudoun County. Thank you for our service to our children.

[02:26:34] And I hope you're able to enjoy a very well-deserved retirement starting this summer.

[02:26:39] And we'll come down again for a quick picture.

[02:27:34] now move to item 10 on our agenda our quarterly advisory committee update this meeting it is from the school business partnership executive council so i will invite them up to the podium to present their report sorry about that i thought i was only hearing myself let me start over good evening

[02:28:11] chair suratkin vice chair mahadavi school business partnership council school board member mr baity and school and the entire school board my name is sharon wright and i am the founder and president of Loud and Clear Marketing. I am currently the vice chair of the School Business Partnership Executive Council and will be entering my third year on the Executive Council this fall.

[02:28:32] As vice chair, I will be following current chair, Denise Rowell, in the role of leading the council next school year. Am I advancing? We can go to the next one. Thank you. The School Business Partnership Executive Council was created in 1990. The school board asked the superintendent to create the council with the mission to support and engage the community in offering career shadowing opportunities for students titled job for a day recognizing and promoting school business partnerships throughout the division and retaining and sustaining active

[02:29:09] membership today the council is comprised of business non-profit foundation and higher education partnerships next slide please the council begins each meeting with the lcps mission and vision whether we have students of our own i have two in the system have graduates of lcps or are fierce advocates for all LCPS students, this vision and mission sets the tone for our collective work.

[02:29:39] The Council has embedded the one LCPS strategic plan into our work. Dr. Smith and Mr. Slevin presented to the Council on the strategic plan in the fall. The Council is an important through line to community and business partnerships. The Council takes pride in recognizing and promoting partnerships, providing and promoting authentic learning for students, and providing career examples of where and how students can apply the five C's of the LCPS profile of a graduate.

[02:30:11] A hallmark charge of the council has been the longstanding career shadowing program titled Job for a Day. The council was proud to increase our numbers of business participants and students from

the historic lows of 20 and 21 due to the pandemic to 362 students who participated and 46 business hosts in 2022.

[02:30:34] We are excited about increasing our numbers even further in the fall of 2023. An example of a premier school business partnership partner and long-standing job-for-a-day partner in particular is Inova Loudoun Hospital.

[02:30:50] Celebrating 20 years of partnership with this event, this school year is a great example for other future business partners who strive to replicate this level of commitment and opportunity for students. I want to note that there were 72 students who took part in the ANOVA program this year.

[02:31:07] I heard many colorful stories of students who maybe chose that day that they would not pursue a career in health care because they saw some things that they then realized, maybe health care is not for me. But it's a great opportunity to see that, which is what this career shadowing is all about.

[02:31:24] The council has many ways to engage with instruction in LCPS. These opportunities are shared in our monthly meetings and within the council members' networks. From guest speaking to judging to representing their industries at career fairs, the menu of levels of engagement for businesses strives to be inviting and rewarding for business partners of all sizes and representative of all career fields.

[02:31:48] We are always interested in hearing from members of the Loudoun business community who may have an interest in becoming involved the council five-year bylaw revision work this school year revolved around the theme of how does the council leverage our membership to continue to provide and enhance experiences for students the council proposed three main areas of revisions number one recruit membership that is representative of all 17 career clusters and include an honorary membership category to utilize veteran members who have served their terms to continue recruiting, engaging, and mentoring new membership.

[02:32:29] Number two, broaden our scope of career awareness from a single one-day event to incorporating the many workforce development opportunities that support authentic learning in the Department of Instruction. And three, continue to be fiscally responsible and transparent with Loudoun Education Foundation that the Council maintains its charge to support, enhance, and promote real-world learning and partnership opportunities.

[02:32:53] The council wants to maintain the mutual agreement that the school business partnership does not need to become its own and for that matter one more separate fiscal entity. Council leadership discussion involving membership has been vital.

[02:33:10] A council goal is to have representation from the 17 Virginia Department of Education career clusters on the council as well as an intentional inclusion of a membership committee in the bylaw revision. Our areas of focus include membership recruitment for the school year 2023-2024, from content expert to council member and strategic reach out to incorporate a career cluster not currently represented by membership, create a diverse membership that is representative of these career clusters to replace multiple members that have expiring terms at the end of the

[02:33:45] 2023-2024 school year, and encourage these veteran members to become honorary members, Leverage members, other network affiliations, and standing memberships with the Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, the Leesburg Economic Development Council, the Loudoun Economic Development Council, and the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

[02:34:04] At the last school board meeting, Chair Denise Rowell presented the VSBA Business Honor Roll to this school board. And you'll see the nice photo there from last meeting. The membership committee of the council has the privilege to select these partnerships to spotlight, recognize, and serve as models to other partnerships.

[02:34:23] We look forward to this experience each year. The process of reading and selecting nominees is both inspiring and encouraging. Speaking of recognition, the Spring Awards recognition taking place this year on April 24th is our main charge of the Council within the domain of recognizing great school and community collaboration.

[02:34:42] The Council looks forward to recognizing partners, schools, and students at the National Conference Center. LCPS staff set out Save the Dates in early February and last week sent out formal invitations to school board members. We hope you will be able to join us for this event.

[02:34:58] On behalf of the Council, Chair Denise Rowell, and the entire Executive Council, thank you for this opportunity to provide this update of our many activities and for your ongoing support. Thank you for the update.

[02:35:13] You're very welcome. Board members, do you have any questions regarding the report? Mr. Morse. I just wanted to congratulate you on the turnaround on the job for a day. That's amazing. I mean, in one year you went from just a handful of students.

[02:35:30] It is truly phenomenal. so I do want to thank you for that. - Thank you, it is a really important program and I have personally been involved with Job for a Day for many more years than I've been on the council and to see the light bulb moments that happen with these students when they come, to both see that the career that they think they want to pursue is maybe the right career or maybe it's not, right, that's the purpose and it's all about igniting that spark and we're proud of that program.

[02:36:01] - Ms. Reeser. - Chair, I'll just add to that in talking with local business owners one of the main items on on their top of mind for them is workforce development and I think what you're talking about feeds directly into that and I think part of providing an excellent opportunity in education at public schools is to provide these occasions where our students our children can look at different ways to be part of the workforce and want to thank you for what mr. Moore said just the incredible turnaround but also the very long commitment that you've made to this process and how much time you all spent in thinking about how to revise your

[02:36:40] bylaws to continue keeping the talent accessible to you while folding in new volunteers thank you miss Rieser we recognize as well that not every student will take the same path right that there will be many different paths that a student will take and we want those partnerships with the businesses to reward that and recognize that so whether a student is going off to college or whether they're going into the trades we we want to celebrate the path that they take and make sure that every child finds their way upon graduation thank you you're welcome any other

[02:37:19] questions or comments okay thank you again look forward to seeing you next quarter thank you we will now move on to item 11 on our agenda public comment the school board welcomes comments from loudoun county residents and community members and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted.

[02:37:47] Based on the number of speakers tonight, which is 69, and the agenda this evening, all speakers have been allotted one minute each for public comment. Please be advised that speakers who miss their time slot will not be called at a later time. All audience members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times.

[02:38:07] 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. Speakers should refrain from

[02:38:42] vulgarity obscenities profanity or other like breaches of respect nor may speakers target criticize or attack individual students during public comment speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official additionally complaints regarding division employees should be directed to the school principal or an appropriate school division official speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board per lcps policy members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public

[02:39:16] during the public comment period violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in on the decision of the chair public comment being tabled into until a later point in the meeting's agenda limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons or the public comment period ending for the evening copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information officer in the media box at the back

[02:39:52] of the boardroom prior to the start of the meeting please provide 12 copies of the 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 stream of the meeting may be viewed on the LCPS TV website. This evening, we are going to begin with our virtual speakers, starting with Meredith Ray. I'm speaking tonight to urge the board to

[02:40:30] support collective bargaining rights for LCPS staff for the following reasons. The Economic Policy Institute found that teachers in states with strong collective bargaining rights are more likely to have higher salaries, more job security, and due process protections. States with strong collective bargaining rights for teachers tend to have better student outcomes, including higher test scores, lower dropout rates, and higher graduation rates. Teachers with collective bargaining rights have been successful in negotiating for better working conditions, improved safety measures, and increased preparation time. Research has shown that

[02:41:07] these conditions can have a positive impact on teacher retention and job satisfaction. Support our teachers and school staff and vote in favor of collective bargaining. Thank you. Mary McClintock.

[02:41:54] 504 or IEP support or counseling during class time. There is no gift to our special ed support parents. There is no local community like there is with virtual learning elementary. Celebrate the success of our children and our educators in virtual learning industry. Our teachers have chosen to work virtually. They do an amazing job. Please give our children a way to observe the classes, talk to the parents and

students, and talk to the school's hardworking teachers who may get a huge difference for our students. Thank you. Sarah F. I am here in support of distance learning elementary. My child is currently in the program and has benefited

[02:42:30] from it academically, physically, and mentally. They already attended in person, and it was proven to be an inappropriate setting for a medically complex child, as young children are excellent at spreading infectious diseases. The other online programs from 5IK12 and Virtual Virginia are inaccessible for many families. 5IK12 would require a parent to provide education for five days a week for six hours a day each, which is not possible in a single-parent home or a dual working home. Virtual Virginia is not an accredited school and costs the parent \$4,550 a year to attend, which does not include a computer or materials. Both programs confirm they do not

[02:43:06] provide or honor IEPs or 504s. I hope the school board realizes that continuing VDL elementary is innovative leadership, progressing especially when we've demonstrated such capability when more LCPS is record along with harming medically or mentally vulnerable children. Thank you.

[02:43:22] Thank you. Liam F.

[02:44:00] not want to go back to in-person school. Please keep virtual learning elementary. Thank you. Thank you. Beth O. My family is in virtual distance learning elementary and it's been so beneficial for them to access education in the least restrictive environment most conducive to their learning. This is a wonderful program that provides free and appropriate public education for crucial segment of the student base while providing indirect benefits to the

[02:44:38] entire student population. I hope the school board favorably considers this continuation for many years to come. Thank you for the opportunity to voice support for Loudoun County's virtual distance learning elementary. Thank you.

[02:44:54] Scott Pacula. At the last school board meeting I spoke about the importance of virtual distance elementary for academic success. To my surprise many families had similar stories to my own. During the last school board meeting one-third of the speakers express their support for the program and its continued availability I'm here to reiterate how vital this program is and to plead again for its continuation once more virtual distance elementary provides children with a high quality education and a safe environment where they can avoid being bullied I ask that the school board hear the public support for virtual distance

[02:45:31] elementary and open a discussion to further explore how virtual distance elementary can continue thank you thank you key pan please continue the virtual audience distance learning elementary school for all children who need it unfortunately nothing was mentioned about it during the last meeting and i'm here to highlight the importance of this program for our children's academic success our children have benefited greatly from this program receiving better grades math test scores

[02:46:08] and enjoying the way of learning by having a method to avoid in-person conflicts virtual distance elementary also provides a safe and secure learning environment that is equitable and there is no bullying we really hope that every year virtual distance learning education should be an option for all grades level from k through 12. k to 5 should be funded by Loudoun County in the same way as 6 to 12. Thank you. Thank you. Ruth Kiefer. I teach in

[02:46:46] the elementary virtual Loudoun program and I am advocating for it to remain an equitable choice for students in all grades. My class is learning about the civil rights movement right now. We discussed inequities that still exist in schools. We listed the ways that our virtual program has made learning equitable for them this year. They were very vocal about the reasons why it would not be fair to cut our program. I told them that they were the reason why I would be speaking up at every opportunity. My students work very hard, are always on camera, actively

[02:47:21] participate, get the individualized attention they deserve, and surpass academic goals each and every quarter. Please allow us to advertise our innovative program and lengthen the registration time frame for entries because we should not be turning away any students who can benefit from and what we have to offer them in our methods of safe and high quality instruction.

[02:47:45] All students deserve this option. - Thank you, Jani Cho. - Please support virtual Loudoun students and teachers. The VAVA virtual program does not provide an equitable program for our students.

[02:48:01] The program has two live class days per week and consists of about 60 students. Questions to teachers can be messaged and asked only during teacher office hours. It does not provide real-time special education services to be accepted in the vava program grades three to eight must have at or above reading level um my kids are lucky to have our skilled trained and supported teachers helping them academically and helping them make significant improvements in their standardized tests and grades the program is culturally diverse and is filled with such committed teachers make it a

[02:48:35] capable virtual program thank you thank you heather malam r1 lcps one minute to speak one board member to vote, one teacher for every 13 students. We're one LCPS. We are 17 high schools, 17 middle schools, 52 elementary schools. We are William Roby High and North Star, the academies, and distance learning.

[02:49:02] If any of these represent one LCPS, it is distance learning. Any student can apply. There is no physical limit to capacity. There are no transportation costs. There is no cafeteria or gym or library. We connect through Wi-Fi and sheer will. If we are one LCPS, Then let every student have access, kindergartners to seniors.

[02:49:23] If one LCPS is inclusive, save distance learning for those who choose it. One LCPS for every Loudonite, wherever they are, however they learn. With distance learning, one Chromebook opens the doors to one LCPS. Be the one. Save K-12 distance learning.

[02:49:44] Thank you. Tim McClintock. Please continue Virtual Loudon Elementary. One of the reasons given to close this program was the stated cost of \$4.3 million for 88 students. After listening to the explanation for this discrepancy, it appears to be a combination of signing contracts for teachers before the number of students was known, not properly advertising the availability of the program resourcing to many people not knowing it was an option, and then refusing to let students join after the sign-up was closed, even though there was plenty of capacity left.

[02:50:18] This would suggest that going forward, the program cost could be much more in line with other programs. Cost savings would not require the closing of the program, and many people who don't have a comparable option, including many of those who are unable to take advantage of it this year, could be taken care of via a program which has set the standard for other school districts. Thank you. Thank

you. Pam Blackstone. I recently found out about the virtual distance learning program within Loudoun County Public Schools grades K-12, and I want

[02:50:55] to stress that this program should continue for the 2023-24 school year. I also would like parents of Loudoun County to be made aware that this program exists as an option for their children. Thank you. Thank you. Jennifer Solano. Yes, hi. Please continue virtual Loudoun Elementary distance learning next year. The program has helped my family tremendously. My son had half his lung removed during the height of COVID and the program helped us remain healthy during great

[02:51:32] times of uncertainty. I have two kids that are currently enrolled and they are both doing phenomenal with no classroom or social distractions. Students behaviors are drastically reduced. There is more direct attention and focus from teachers. My kids can focus on the instruction for more of the day which increases learning. Both my kids are advanced and excelling in all subjects. Teachers feel more connected to students in their home life which increases learning and connections. I hope you take this into consideration and please continue to support Loudoun Elementary

[02:52:08] Virtual. Thank you for your time. I appreciate all you do for us, our children's futures. Thank you. Heather Hughes. Please keep virtual Loudoun Elementary. So many children benefit from this program. Have you looked at the other two virtual options that are out there for these children? Did you know that VAVA and Virtual Virginia do not accommodate IEPs or 5 of 4s? VAVA only has limited synchronous times and the rest is left up to the student to do their work during asynchronous times. Also VAVA will only accept children that are on or above reading level. Did you know that

[02:52:45] Virtual Virginia is not an accredited school or that they don't provide transcripts? What happens when these medical children miss several days of school? Who's going to help catch them up? VAVA and Virtual Virginia don't excuse medical appointments. What about homebound? Did you know that homebound is only temporary and the teachers only allowed five hours a week? They try to teach as they can, mainly reading and math, but the rest is extra. Homebound is icing. With virtual Loudoun Elementary, these kids get everything. They get wonderful and amazing teachers to care.

[02:53:12] They accommodate IEPs and 504s. They care about our kids. The students are with their teachers live all day long. Think about these children and what they want, an equitable education just like the rest of the kids. Thank you. Michelle Warner. School board has a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of Loudoun County, and voting in favor of collective bargaining will be negligent and a violation of that duty.

[02:53:37] Collective bargaining will cost millions of dollars to set up and maintain. It will require more administrative staff when our county is heavy in administrative employees as it is. Why not just allocate those millions of dollars straight to teacher salaries? The presence of a unit will change the learning process in the classroom.

[02:53:52] It can result in fewer educational opportunities for students, and it will stifle innovation in teaching. Stop with the politics. It's time to return this county's focus to the education of each student in Loudoun. collective bargaining will not enhance the learning of our students. It will place a high price on mediocre education and tie the hands of the good and hardworking teachers that we love.

[02:54:12] Please vote no. Also, please vote no on virtual Loudon. There is a virtual Virginia platform, or they can come in person like everyone else. Thank you. Thank you. Sonia Aznarin. Please support

elementary distance learning. This wonderful program helped many children thrive, Children with health issues, children that are bullied, and children with disabilities are offered an excellent alternative similar to the in-person option.

[02:54:46] Thank you. Thank you. Elias Esnaren. Hello, I am Elias. I am a secondary middle school, and I'm in virtual Loudoun.

[02:55:03] So I want everyone to please support elementary distance learning. As I am currently, again, in virtual distance learning, I see that virtual learning is a great opportunity for kids that are nervous to go back in person because of certain health issues.

[02:55:21] And I feel like I stand corrected against removing it, as it's very important for those kids who really need it. And I feel like they should have the opportunity, as much as us middle schoolers have, because they have the right if they want to choose what program they want.

[02:55:37] Thank you. Thank you. Michaela Garrison. Good evening. I'm speaking tonight in support of funding virtual learning at the K-12 program next year. Students in the elementary program represent a diverse population of learners who all thrive in an innovative online learning environment. The students work in partners and groups, collaborating to work on projects, all while receiving the differentiated instruction they each deserve. Unlike other online programs or homebound instruction,

[02:56:13] This program meets the needs of students with 504 plans and IEPs, while providing a full day of rigorous instruction with many opportunities for social engagement. You'll continue to hear from families and educators who have seen success in and believe in this program, all asking you to streamline virtual learning next year to serve as a K-12 program.

[02:56:37] Make the equitable decision by funding Virtual Learning K-12. Thank you. Thank you. Ann Abruzzi. - Good evening. I am a second grade teacher .

[02:56:54] You are hearing many reasons why VDE should be allowed to continue next year. The success of our program has never been disputed, nor have the reasons for it. We need the funding from you. Please allow our school to continue to grow and commit to recruiting new students who will thrive in this learning environment.

[02:57:13] We need your help promoting our program so we can fill our classes again. Please stand behind making VDE a permanent option for families. Parents and students want a program they can count on being available each year. Virtual distance elementary is an equitable option for those who need it.

[02:57:31] Please pledge your support of VDE and vote to keep our school open next year. Thank you. Thank you. Aaron G. Thank you. If this board believes that every school-aged child in Loudoun County deserves the opportunity for an equitable learning experience, please continue to support the distance learning elementary program.

[02:57:55] Thank you. Thank you. Scott Whitehouse. I'm here to speak about collective bargaining this evening. I have three points to make. First off, the \$3.5 million that's currently budgeted would equate to a roughly \$500 point-in-time bonus for every teacher.

[02:58:16] Simply not signing up for collective bargaining, you could offer them a \$500 bonus just for re-signing the contract. And that doesn't even count for the fact that there's no cap to collective bargaining costs. Two, any good leader, any good superintendent can work on labor relations.

[02:58:32] That's a huge thing for any leader to be able to work with their employees, get them the benefits that they need, and the work conditions that they need. Finally, is LCPS ready for the teacher strikes that we saw in California recently? Their union declined a 23% raise for all teachers and walked out on their students.

[02:58:52] Are we prepared for that? Thank you. Thank you. Marshall Paquin. online learning isn't for everyone but it is a tremendous help and necessity for those who can't go to school in person for a variety of reasons including physical and emotional stress if a child can't attend school in person due to physical and emotional difficulties He or she should be given the same opportunity as a student who was blessed and able to attend school in person.

[02:59:34] There are all that talks about equity. You have \$1,000 or \$6,000 to make it equitable. Then you want to stop this program. So in the elementary school, some of you are part of this act on.

[02:59:53] So on a school day, if you're unable to physically get it. Thank you. Just to let you know, sir, your audio cut out quite a bit during that.

[03:00:08] You may want to submit your comments to the school board by email or in writing. The next speaker is Katie M. I really like the fact that whenever I feel free, I can just turn off my camera, and listen, and relax, and a little bit until I feel better.

[03:00:39] And I also have the task that whenever I don't really feel good, because of my medical disorders, I can have both with it, although my parents know a lot about it, more than me, probably.

[03:00:57] Thank you. Maura M. Please keep virtual elementary next year because I get to take breaks whenever I want, and it's a lot less stressful.

[03:01:21] Thank you. Bryce Hughes. I would like to keep virtual elementary, and I speak for a lot of students. I know that many other students would also like to keep virtual, and I would, too.

[03:01:40] Thank you. Thank you very much for your time. Thank you. Christina Ramirez. Good evening. I support collective bargaining because it retains the highest quality employees in the profession.

[03:02:01] Furthermore, the Loudoun Education Association needs to be a part of the resolution design process. Also, please continue the Virtual Loudoun Elementary Program. I am the kindergarten teacher for the Virtual Elementary Program.

[03:02:18] I support keeping the option for Virtual Loudoun open for our elementary students and families. Keeping this option available for families is the only equitable solution. Our students are worth it. Thank you. Thank you.

[03:02:36] That was the last virtual speaker, so we will start our in-person speakers. The first speaker is Suzanne Satterfield, to be followed by Sandy Sullivan. Ma'am, can you turn the microphone? It's not on yet.

[03:02:58] The hard truths about collective bargaining. Wage increases get held up in collective bargaining. There are no rewards for individual merit. It's impossible to meet the diverse needs of each employee in a union. The needs of a bus driver, a school nurse, custodian, and teacher are very different.

[03:03:16] Unions get to pick and choose winners and losers, and rank-and-file workers have little recourse to challenge union decision-making. Self-advocating is not allowed. The union controls how and when teachers can communicate with principals and other staff.

[03:03:32] The union will restrict the time that teachers can spend with students outside of class as with clubs and tutoring. Individual creativity will be gone as the unions will dictate how teachers set up their classrooms. Teachers that aren't union cardholders are bound to what the union dictates.

[03:03:48] Unionization means more rules against employees, not fewer. Once the handcuffs are on, they are near impossible to unkey. Keep teachers' ability to communicate openly with the school board, administration, and parents. Vote no on collective bargaining. Thank you.

[03:04:04] Sandy Sullivan to be followed by Brenda Bengston. LEA looks forward to working with the school board to adopt a resolution to engage in collective bargaining with your employees.

[03:04:18] LEA believes you should be LEA believes we should be a collaborative partner in determining the process to develop the resolution language in terms of the resolution language you have already received LEAs proposed collective bargaining resolution that is the language we urge you to adopt also I will remind you the school board and the community that the superintendent's proposed costs for staffing and budget of collective bargaining which is not in your adopted budget and is not 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 this school year

[03:04:55] richmond city schools approved a collective bargaining resolution and negotiated and ratified contracts with no additional staff hired on another note school board members have been aware of lea's concern about our inability to schedule school visits in order to meet with members and not yet members dr. smith i appreciate your response from my email earlier today thank you Brenda Bengston, to be followed by Cheryl Underchain.

[03:05:27] To amazing women not in history books. To women who fought cancer or grieved their son's deaths. Who graduated summa cum laude at age 70 or earned an LPN degree at age 45. To teachers who believe in the freedom to read and think critically.

[03:05:48] To all who do not project their own fears onto children. To Grace Lynn, 100 years young, who took her banned books quilt to a school board meeting to ensure that lessons learned in the past won't be forgotten since banning books and burning books are done for the same reason, fear.

[03:06:10] To those unafraid to parent their children, but who do not use the state to parent the children of others. To women who do not fear history or diverse people's books, no fear of music or art or inclusive books.

[03:06:29] Thank you. Cheryl Anderchain to be followed by Abby Platt. Good evening. At your last meeting, you all had several questions about collective bargaining, basic questions that Falcone could not answer.

[03:06:55] questions like if you vote yes tonight can you back out later and what happens if the collective bargaining agreement is violated like if classroom size requirements are exceeded these are good questions did you get the answers where is the discussion was it in your earlier closed session why isn't that discussion part of this public meeting why is everything such a big secret remember the special grand jury do you remember them telling you to be more transparent if you don't understand the basics of collective bargaining then why would you vote for it in your daily life would you sign a contract that you don't understand

[03:07:30] because this is a binding contract that gives away your role as decision makers to lawyers and then there's no turning back and to you teachers out there if you don't like dealing with lcp's admin now wait till they add 3.5 million of outside negotiators and lawyers there's no guarantee your salaries will get better but the new admin will get paid thank you abby platt to be followed by Dina Griffiths. On Friday afternoon I received a call from my son's principal about an incident

[03:08:05] at school. While at recess my son called a friend using a silly voice. Another child listening said are you gay? He said no. And the other child said are you sure? He said yeah I'm sure. A teacher quickly intervened and shortly after they were in the principal's office. These are second graders.

[03:08:27] The principal explained on the phone and this phone call with me that this is considered a racial slur and hate speech, and that they're required to report it to you all. The question that I asked the principal is, do these kids understand what it means to be gay?

[03:08:45] Well, I don't know, she said. I can guarantee you that my son has no idea what that means. While we have several members in our immediate family who are gay, we have made no effort to explain to him what that means. I would encourage you to vote no on collective bargaining.

[03:09:02] It will not help our teachers stop looking for hate. Dina Griffiths to be followed by Beth Hess. I say no to collective bargaining.

[03:09:19] It's a detriment to the teachers and the school board. The school board should be about building bridges. I would like to protect the teachers and increase pay. However, unions are not the way to do it. Unions put a barrier between the teachers and the parents. Teachers are here to help our kids excel.

[03:09:34] This is about educating our kids. People are already leaving the teaching profession because of these obstacles. I ask that you not vote for collective bargaining. and as a former union member, I would like you to think twice about it. Teachers will not know where their dues go.

[03:09:50] Their dues will go to political campaigns that they may not agree with. They will have no choice to withdraw once you're in, you're in. Teachers will not be accountable for bad behavior, and our kids will suffer. Teachers will not be able to do their job effectively under a union. The unions will have a say over everything.

[03:10:09] They will be locked into multi-year contracts that ensure limited job advancement. Individual freedom will be stifled. Thank you. Thank you. Beth Hess, to be followed by Catherine Cody. How do you make an already struggling school system worse?

[03:10:37] You make it worse by taking on collective bargaining. It's nothing more than a power and money grab by the LEA. When public education is unionized, it hurts school children, parents and taxpayers, and teachers. The union controls how and when you communicate with your principal and other administrators.

[03:10:55] It sets parameters on extracurricular clubs and time before and after school. And teachers don't have the opportunity to be recognized financially for merit or hard work. The list goes on and on. Also, unions show an inverse relationship with student achievement. Studies show that students learn less in states with strong teachers' unions.

[03:11:14] Virginia jurisdictions that have granted monopoly bargaining privileges to union officials have realized significant negative fiscal consequences. Finally, we see higher costs from litigation,

administration, and increased tax burdens. Higher tax burdens lead to taxpayers fleeing unionized jurisdictions in favor of lower tax union-free jurisdictions.

[03:11:37] Thank you. Say no to collective bargaining. Catherine Cody to be followed by Alicia Coleman. First, I want to thank everyone for all the work that has already been done to draft new policies 5046 and 5047.

[03:11:55] Although much has been improved, I do have some feedback. The current drafts are vague when defining what's prohibited in libraries. As written, depictions of a romantic hug or even a kiss could be considered explicit and would be banned. I personally would not advocate for putting bans into writing at all. But if we do, we need to be clear.

[03:12:13] We have already seen how much opinions can vary within our community. As an example, I brought my family's copy of Drama by Reena Telgemeier, which is very well-loved. That's because my children became obsessed with it after they found it at the Legacy Elementary School Library. Unfortunately, elementary school students in LCPS no longer have the same freedom to read this book because in 2020, it was banned from every single elementary school in the county.

[03:12:38] Why? Because on one page of this book, two boys kiss, and not even a romantic kiss, a stage kiss. Our community holds many varying opinions on what is appropriate and what is not, but the library can and should hold them all. Please work to clarify policy 5046. Thank you. Thank you. Alicia Coleman to be followed by Gina Longerbeam.

[03:13:02] Good evening. I'm an elementary school librarian in LCPS. I'm here tonight representing the Loudon Association of School Librarians. Research tells us again and again that independent choice reading has demonstrated the ability to develop reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling, improve reading fluency, nurture empathy, increase content knowledge, and increase the likelihood that students will read outside of school creating lifelong reading habits please continue to protect our students ability to access materials for both

[03:13:38] reading and research empower our students to make choices that fit their personal needs and place trust in Loudoun County librarians who are educated and prepared to guide students in these endeavors please feel free to visit my or any other Loudoun County School Library and see firsthand how school libraries implement the national school library standards set forth by the American Association of Libraries. Thank you. Gina Longerbeam to be

[03:14:09] followed by Shelly Schlieber. Number one I want to congratulate Briar Woods and John Champ High School for winning their state championship in ice hockey. I don't think they ever get recognized and that's in the MVSL state championship.

[03:14:29] I'm saying no to collective bargaining. Please make a u-turn onto the highway of of real education not the broken road full of erotic glass that you've been on do not spit on our children's faces parents taxpayers and the real educators who've guided our kids and our communities i say no on collective bargaining bring back what where i went to school where loudon county public school system was awesome you know if you don't vote no why do we even need

[03:15:02] you guys. You know, that's the bottom line. Thank you. Thank you. Shelley Schlieber to be followed by Bill Wilkin. Atusa tweeted, sorry, no one should have to wonder if their child's going to survive

being a victim of a mass shooting at school. You're right. We also shouldn't have to wonder if our child's going to survive the ramifications of vaping in the bathrooms, sexual assaults that

[03:15:37] aren't reported to the state and you won't release the report. 80-40, SEL while you deem Dr. Seuss and advanced math dangerous a subcommittee met today on the consequences of closing schools during covid which lea didn't want open you're literally handing your votes to lea it's not just salaries it's curriculum it's school safety they decide if teachers should be armed every decision will affect our budget it isn't budgeted a one thousand dollar raise for teachers will cost six million dollars what programs are you going to eliminate to fund these wants so yes atusa we You shouldn't have to wonder, but your vote for collective bargaining is dangerous.

[03:16:13] You're handing LEA a loaded weapon who's getting their ammo from VA and NEA. This is by far the most dangerous, costly vote. It's not reversible. You've had years to sit at the table. Thank you. Bill Wilkin to be followed by Elizabeth Boyko.

[03:16:33] My name is Bill Wilkin. I live in the Ashburn District, and I'm a Republican member of the LEA. I wish to address my comments specifically to our school board members who are independents or Republicans. I ask for your support of collective bargaining and LEA involvement in the resolution process.

[03:16:50] A surprising number of our LEA members are independents or Republicans. This should not be a them or us issue. Now, some will bring up the Political Action Committee. No dues are ever used for the PAC.

[03:17:06] The PAC is made up of contributions from individual members, and frankly, that's not a big group. Teacher strikes are illegal in Virginia, and neither NEA nor VEA control our members or in our classrooms.

[03:17:23] I'm sure I can't see where the clock is. There we go. We're coming down. Thank you very much. I urge you to support collective bargaining. Thank you. Elizabeth Boyko to be followed by Mike Holmes. It's pretty embarrassing that Ms. Corbo has convinced some of you up here and some of her constituents that she is too disabled to attend meetings and other events in person.

[03:17:51] Meanwhile, she parties in Florida. She's played you all for fools. Deception about a disability is particularly egregious. It's disgusting. She is simply a cowardly school board member who refuses to face the people she was elected to serve. Ms. Corbo, you should be present for your constituents at every listening session over the next two months.

[03:18:10] If you're unwilling, then you should resign. Also, I ask that you vote no on collective bargaining. Employees will lose their voices, and there is absolutely no benefit to students. In fact, they are a hindrance to student performance. Thank you. Mike Holmes, to be followed by Daniel Brubaker.

[03:18:30] I'll be brief. I'm here to lend my voice to the others in support of collective bargaining. Please give these folks, these professionals behind me, the respect they need in order to do their jobs. I also want to support distance learning. I think that that is the wave of the future.

[03:18:47] I think that there are a lot of kids that do need that sort of service, and that to discontinue would be a shame. Thank you. Thank you. Daniel Brubaker, to be followed by Andrew Pihonek. I'm Daniel Brubaker, candidate for school board in the Catoctin District for Wichita is not seeking re-election.

[03:19:14] And I'm here today to speak against all of you on the day which I expect to be your greatest single act of malicious harm against the children, parents, and taxpayers of this county. Your reign of destruction began immediately when your progressive majority took control in 2019. You removed class ranking. You began treating students different based upon race.

[03:19:33] You allowed sexually explicit picture books in our schools. You needlessly barred in-person learning during the 21 to 22 school year. You covered up a girl's rape by a skirt-wearing boy until the passage of policy 8040. You persecuted teachers who refused to lie. You passed policies to hide information about children from their own parents.

[03:19:52] And implementing your hair-brain schemes have already cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. That is to say, in four short years, you've steered one of the finest school districts in the nation at full speed into a brick wall. And today, you are poised to doom the people of Loudoun to blood-sucking unions, harm to children, and endless waste of our tax dollars.

[03:20:10] I hope I'm wrong. Please do not vote for collective bargaining. Thank you. Andrew Pihonak to be followed by Chloe Duncan. There's not much else I could add to the wonderful speakers from the LEA. Support our wonderful teachers in the county.

[03:20:26] They work extremely hard to make sure our kids have great educations. So I support collective bargaining. Thank you. Thank you. Chloe Duncan to be followed by Megan Jenkins. Megan Jenkins to be followed by Kristen Washington.

[03:20:52] Kristen Washington to be followed by Corey Brunet. Listening to the SEAC report was heartbreaking. Having lived through it, it wasn't surprising.

[03:21:07] What she described is exactly what occurred with my oldest daughter. You all have been so caught up in teaching social-emotional learning that you have forgotten to teach academics. It is my job to teach morals, values, and ethics to my children. It is your job to reinforce them at school.

[03:21:25] It is your job to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. My job to reinforce them at home. It's been three years since the literacy evaluation, and we are still using the Lucy Calkins curriculum. 66% of our fourth graders cannot read, and yet we're still using it.

[03:21:45] You're supposed to work for the parents and our children, your students, but you don't. You work for yourselves. Now you're cutting 10 speech language therapists hurting our most vulnerable students. Stop investing in the administration and start investing in our children.

[03:22:02] - Thank you. - Cory Brune to be followed by Renee Champaglia. - Good evening, my name is Cory Brune and I'm an English learner teacher at Broad Run. I want to thank all of you for your service as school board members. You, like me, have thankless jobs and usually don't hear from anyone saying something nice.

[03:22:21] I sincerely am grateful for what you are doing to help LCPS continue to be one of the best school districts in the state. I am also optimistic about your vote for collective bargaining tonight. This is new territory for you, for anyone working in central office and any employees who have only worked in Virginia.

[03:22:39] It's natural that you feel like you're diving into the unknown. We want to collaborate, be partners, work together as we all take next steps to get a written resolution. LEA has provided you with

one already written and proven to work. I urge you to adopt this language or ensure that LEA is a member of the resolution committee.

[03:22:58] Tonight, history will be made. LCPS will never outperform its educators. Do you believe it? - Prove it, thank you. - Thank you, Renee Champaglia to be followed by Brandon Kerr.

[03:23:17] - Hello, I am a special education teacher with the virtual Loudon distance learning program and I'm here asking you to please fund the program for grades kindergarten through fifth for next year. I reached out to my students today for their comments so I'm gonna be reading a few.

[03:23:32] My favorite part of distance learning is that all the kids want to do virtual school. We get to connect to new classmates that I can see and talk to every day just like in regular school. My friends in distance learning are kind, loyal, respectful, helpful, and funny, and I love to hang out with them.

[03:23:50] The best part of this school is being able to learn and to be with kids and teachers all day when I have to be at home because I can't get sick. This is my favorite school I have ever attended because at my old school I was bullied a lot. Here I have not been bullied even once. Everyone says friendly, nice things to me.

[03:24:07] Please fund the elementary program for next year. LCPS families deserve a choice and our children are thriving and they need you to say yes. So they can continue to do so and I just like to point out that I'm the 25th person today in support of our small but powerful program Thank you. Thank you. Brandon Kerr to be followed by Yolanda Lemon. Good evening I'm here to speak in support of collective bargaining. It's simple the school employees Over 50% of us signed cards saying that we want LEA to represent us in negotiations with the county

[03:24:45] This is something that will benefit our students who are the ones that we're here to do this work for allow us to be part of the process of forming a resolution adopt the one that's already been given to you by lea if possible thank you thank you yolanda lemon to be followed by and donahue good evening i am an lcps educator i want the board to think on of the consequences of collective

[03:25:18] bargaining on all teachers while i can't be forced to pay the lea they will still hold exclusive representative rights for my employment. The LEA is affiliate to NEA, which is a political powerhouse. This means that dues paid to the LEA go directly to the NEA. What do they do with this money? The NEA spends \$2 on politics for every \$1 spent representing members. According to the NEA's financial report. The union contributed 66 million dollars in 2020 to political

[03:25:57] organizations. A 16 million dollar increase from the year before. These organizations do not speak for the politics and morals of all teachers. In closing, LCPS is known for pushing diversity, but failed to ensure for all educators. Please vote no. Please refrain from public applause during public comment thank you uh and donahue followed by to be followed by sherelle ashwell good evening thank you board members for your service to our kids in our community my name is ann donahue i'm a resident of loudon county and a parent of two kids in elementary

[03:26:36] schools in our system i i'm also a proud volunteer with loudon moms demand action but i'm here tonight to speak to you about my own thoughts in 2022 there were 46 school shootings in the united States. There have been 17 already this year, including the tragedy that we saw unfold yesterday in Nashville and the horrifying incident in Newport News in January when a six-year-old in our own

Commonwealth took a loaded gun to school and shot his teacher. School shootings have been sharply on the rise since approximately 2018, and it has been astonishing to me to sit

[03:27:12] and listen to the comments of people here talking about the quote-unquote alleged dangers of books and pronouns and unions and social emotional learning when three nine-year-olds were shot dead yesterday. We need to look at the facts and tackle the real dangers to our kids.

[03:27:30] Thank you. Thank you. Sherelle Ashwell to be followed by Carrie Kidwell. Good evening. I am an educator here in Loudoun County. I come to you this evening asking the board if you feel like you have enough information to vote on collective bargaining. Do you feel pressured like some of us did when we were presented a card to sign at staff events? Were you told information? We were given little or no information and asked to sign so we have a voice. What does this mean? I have a

[03:28:06] voice. I know for myself, LEA cost is prohibitive, but with high dues, no one has questioned them giving hundreds of thousands of dollars to political parties. How will this ensure they will speak for all teachers and staff? This is a clear indicator that they will not remain unbiased. What kind of support can be promised to us we do not already have with an elected board. Will dedicated staff potentially lose their jobs? I have a voice. I vote. I ask the board to pause and take time to

[03:28:41] find out what your staff and community really want. Thank you. Carrie Kidwell to be followed by Hugo Brunet. Hi, good evening. I'm here because children are dying because firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens in america and i know all this is important but it doesn't make any

[03:29:14] sense if they're gone and if our teachers and our children aren't safe so infuriating ann talked about the shooting yesterday which was one of the many school shootings in 2023 in the first three months of our year more than 3 100 young people die from firearm suicide each year from from having access to these weapons.

[03:29:42] In 2023 so far, there have been at least 63 unintentional shootings by children, resulting in 25 deaths and 39 injuries nationwide. Approximately 4.6 million children live in a household where one gun is stored and loaded, and time is up.

[03:30:00] But we need to do something together as a community, please. Thank you. - Thank you. Hugo Brunet, to be followed by Lisa Chamleon.

[03:30:16] - Good evening, my name is Hugo Brunet, and I'm a special education bus driver for LCPS. The proposed budget for next year includes millions of dollars for 14 staff to be hired just for collective bargaining. This is a lie, an unnecessary scare tactic to make you vote against collective bargaining, assuming it is too expensive.

[03:30:40] Nothing could be further from the truth. Richmond City Schools adopted their resolution with Richmond Education Association, and you know how many district employees they hired to do this? None. Not one. They used their own central office staff, including their lawyers. It was collaborative. It was fair. It was history-making.

[03:31:02] Please do the right thing by voting yes for collective bargaining tonight, which will benefit all staff, students, and the Loudoun County community. Thank you for listening. Thank you. Lisa Shamlian to be followed by Tricia Fontanilla.

[03:31:19] I am one of more than 74 speech language pathologists serving students in LCPS. A hundred years ago we would have been called speech correctionists and like Henry Higgins we would have helped people change the way they pronounce their sounds. Later we were speech teachers and we spent a lot of time fixing R's and S's. Now we are speech language pathologists. We still help children say those pesky sounds correctly but we also help children who stutter communicate confidently if a child does not yet speak we teach them

[03:31:55] to use technology to communicate we help autistic students navigate the world of social communication we help preschoolers with language delays combine words into phrases and we help older children understand the structure of a narrative we help high schoolers with disabilities transition to the workplace throughout their school years we help children your children your neighbor's children to exercise their human right to communicate. Every child deserves a voice and it is our role and responsibility to make sure that those voices are heard. Thank you. Tricia

[03:32:30] Fontanilla to be followed by Megan Howard. I am here to address the 10 FTE speech therapist positions which were attributed to ARP temporary funding. The fiscal year 22 and fiscal year 23 adopted budgets, both list 78.0 as the number of FTE speech therapist possessions, demonstrating no actual increase in speech therapist staffing over the past two years.

[03:33:01] If 10 FTE speech therapists were funded for one year out of COVID ARP funds, that was simply an adjustment of funding and represented no increase in capacity of staff providing services to students. Any reduction of positions for fiscal year 24 cuts staffing and directly impacts services for students with communication disorders.

[03:33:22] As of February, 3,739 students receive speech language therapy services through LCPS, representing a growth of 150 students since October. An additional 249 students are currently undergoing speech language evaluation at this time.

[03:33:39] Clearly, speech language needs are increasing. Megan Howard to be followed by Cara Vesey I am an LCPS graduate parent and employee I'm here to discuss the workload of speech pathologists we give direct therapy services indirect therapy services we attend IEP meetings for each student initial evaluation meetings re-evaluation meetings FBA BIP RRT IT quarterly meetings and staff meetings we are never consulted on when

[03:34:17] We have time and are expected to rearrange our schedules to attend these meetings. We do screenings, we case manage, the only related service to do so. We write IEPs, evaluate students, observe students, write reports, do Medicaid billing, do plans of care for Medicaid.

[03:34:32] We are the only direct service for ISP students. We see virtual students create materials, educate parents on devices, meet with parents to discuss progress towards goals, drive time between schools, have bus duty, lunch duty, progress reports, 30 hours of continuing education units, go to job sites for secondary students, have no subs, no TAs, no set planning time, and no lunch.

[03:34:56] Thank you. Kara Vessi to be followed by Sherry Holtridge. I come before you tonight in order to ask each and every one of you for your help and your support. As you know, there are 10 SLP positions that are proposed to be eliminated from the budget.

[03:35:13] We SLPs stand united in asking you all to make sure that does not happen. We are indeed not overstaffed, but grossly understaffed. You all know that SLPs, we don't get subs. If we take a sick day or a

personal day, there's no one to cover for us. When we need to take a leave of absence, we have to have another licensed and board-certified SLP take our caseload on top of our own caseload.

[03:35:35] Are you aware that last year and this year, the Special Education Supervisor for Related Service, the Speech Language Specialist, numerous CIFAT ATs who are also SLPs, Child Find SLPs, and many of us school-based SLPs have had to step in and cover for another SLP?

[03:35:52] When they're out, when we cover for another SLP, our caseloads go above our staffing standards. If you agree to eliminate 10 of our positions, and please understand, and parents of students who have received speech, that there's no one to cover for us, and LCPS will be out of compliance.

[03:36:09] - Thank you. - Sherry Holdridge to be followed by Stacey Brosnan. - Good evening, I'm proud to be a speech pathologist in this school district, and I'm here to join my peers and colleagues in advocating for our children.

[03:36:26] Yes, when you cut 10 speech pathologist positions, it's impacting our children. School is about the kids, so let's talk about them and the impact it would have on them. Impact is that instead of seeing our large numbers of children with autism who have higher needs, instead of seeing them individually in small groups to teach them new language systems on an AAC device, we will have to increase our groups into larger sizes.

[03:36:56] will have less time to collaborate with teachers to teach them. Teachers who have students with devices can't communicate with them if we don't teach them. So there will be voices that are silenced if you do not continue to approve these positions. Please do not exclude special education students in your plan for excellence. Thank you. Stacey Brosnan to be followed by Monica Lumba.

[03:37:25] Good evening. I'm a parent and speech-language pathologist here in Loudoun County Public Schools. I come before you to speak in response to and opposition of the elimination of the 10 full-time speech-language pathology positions in this upcoming budget.

[03:37:43] I'm certain you're aware of the VDOE foundational principles, the five C's, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creative thinking, and citizenship. For the thousands of students countywide receiving our services, the speech-language pathologist plays a critical role in supporting each and every aspect of those five C's.

[03:38:03] We are so much more than correcting basic sounds. The collective effort of each and every SLP supporting our students and their families, giving a voice to those who need it most. Communication skills lead to academic access, participation, and success. Positive mental outcomes and social relationships and ultimately independence.

[03:38:23] and a sense of pride and ability to obtain and maintain gainful employment. The demand for specialized instruction from a speech-language pathologist has only increased. - Thank you. - Please do not eliminate the position. - Monica Lumba to be followed by Michael Rivera.

[03:38:43] - Good evening, members of the school board. I'm Monica Lumba, a speech-language pathologist at Potomac Falls High School and Harper Park Middle School. I'm here today to advocate for increasing the number of speech-language pathologists in our school system. The end of COVID ARP funding has put specialty population in a precarious situation with 10 FTE speech-language pathologists

expected to be cut in the FY 24 budget. This would take us back to the current staffing standards which are simply not enough for our students with disabilities to receive the care they need.

[03:39:12] As a speech-language pathologist, I understand the gravity of the situation. We are constantly evolving to best serve our student population and our cost workload far exceeds the number on our caseload. We are essential in providing our students with equitable access to resources they need and deserve.

[03:39:28] That is why I'm advocating for LCPS to consider increasing the number of speech-language pathologists beyond the current staffing standards. Let us come together to empower our students and guarantee them the resources to succeed both inside and outside of the classroom. Thank you for your time and consideration.

[03:39:45] Thank you. Michael Rivera to be followed by Kathy Ellen Davis. The LEA is the VEA, is the NEA, is the AFT, and we all know that Randy Weingarten doesn't give a hoot about children. It's interesting that in the last two years I've been attending school board meetings, the red shirt brigade has never showed up. So the old adage of follow the money is very relevant here. Amidst declining enrollment, two officials under indictment, rape cover-ups,

[03:40:24] a school board member resigned in disgrace. That would be the Leesburg district member. We now want to further plunge this school district into more disarray. It's funny also that all you hear about is how this is going to be great for teachers. It's going to help teachers. It's going to be great for teachers. There's going to be dues. There's going to be more cost to the school district. And I don't really see any examples of how this is great for students. Vote no on collective bargaining and just do your jobs. Thank you. Kathy Ellen Davis to be followed by

[03:40:59] Heather Binkley. No matter who we think we are or are not co-parenting with, we all want our kids to be safe in school. I don't know about your school, but the one my kid goes to, they don't run up and quickly lock the door when a book with an LGBTQ+ character enters the school.

[03:41:20] They don't shut the blinds and turn off the lights when they have social emotional learning lessons. And they don't herd the kids in the corner and hope for an all clear when they talk about skin color, race, racism, and our country's complicated and racist history. They do all of that when someone with a gun enters the school. What's most likely to kill our kids? It's not learning that LGBTQ+ people exist. It's not talking about emotions. It's not empathy, learning our country's history, race, or racism, though systemic racism does still continue to hurt all of us, have no doubt about that. What kills the most kids is gun violence. We all want our kids to be safe. Can we all agree to put some noise and effort behind something that is actually a problem and actually harming and killing kids and advocate for gun

[03:41:59] sense legislation? Thanks to our current school board members who support gun sense legislation and were gun sense candidates, I urge voters to look at which candidates in the fall receive that distinction from Moms Demand Action. Thank you. Thank you. Heather Binkley to be followed by Tony Simeno-Johnson. Good evening. My name is Heather Binkley. I am a Loudoun County teacher, parent, and resident, as well as the vice president of the Loudoun Education Association.

[03:42:28] I'm speaking tonight in support of collective bargaining. LCPS employs more than 10,000 educators. That's more than 10,000 people with firsthand knowledge of what works and what doesn't in buildings across the county. Perspectives informed by experience on the front lines of education. By

voting in support of a collective bargaining resolution, you gain access to this incredible resource. Winston Churchill said that courage is what it takes to stand up and speak.

[03:43:00] It is also what it takes to sit down and listen. Educators want to help tackle the challenges facing our schools, and we have ideas that can make a difference. Now is your chance to include our voices. Relying on the expertise and experience of people who work with students when making policies that affect students and staff isn't radical, it just makes sense.

[03:43:22] Vote yes for collective bargaining. Thank you. Tony Simino-Johnson to be followed by Brandon Michon. Brandon Michon to be followed by Brian Davison. Our teachers are overworked, and right now they're being offered a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

[03:43:46] But if they ever get there, they'll find out it has been looted by the elusive leprechaun. These proposed resolutions call for 13 new administrators and an average salary of \$178,000. \$178,000. What bigger poke in the eye to teachers than new administrative roles that are more than double their salaries? What teachers will end up with are more fake coins like they got during the pandemic, while the fat cats of this building continue to write themselves bonuses and pay raises. If your commitment is to the teachers of this county, then pay them more money. We don't

[03:44:23] need unions and we don't need higher paid administrators to do that. What solves this problem is getting more teachers in the system, rewarding them with higher pay while cutting the bloated budget of this building's administrators. As a taxpayer and parent of this county, we deserve better. Our teachers deserve better. Thank you. Thank you. Brian Davison to be followed

[03:44:45] by Lucy Salazzo. First, I'd like to issue a warm thank you to Ms. Asa Jones for retiring this year.

[03:45:04] I'm sure that the majority of the special education community shares that sentiment. Second, can somebody please explain to these people in the Marxist church what a red herring actually means? Third, let's talk about the superintendent search. Mr. Smith here said that during his listening tour that he was committed to giving us the transparency and information we need. Yet when we ask for anonymous academy scores, you say no. Or do you even have a say in that? Are you just a little figurehead? You're not interested in transparency. The loud message

[03:45:40] of the parents from the meeting on last Thursday was that they don't want any of y'all making the decision. They said, just wait it out because you're going to give an incompetent person. And lastly, do we really understand that your strategic plan for mediocrity only has a goal of 50% student growth, which is like the minimum standard? You're letting Ashley Ellis write her own goals? Thank you. Lucy Salazzo to be followed by Alicia Brand. Alicia Brand to be followed by

[03:46:13] Andrea Weiskal. Think carefully about the implications of collective bargaining.

[03:46:29] Voting no is the only option if we want to foster a healthy environment that benefits students and teachers. Collective bargaining creates a protective shield for those teachers who are not motivated to go above and beyond for students, leading to poor outcomes. This is not what we want for our students who deserve the best education possible. Collective bargaining will severely limit our school's budget, compromising academic, social, remote, and mental health programs that are critical for students.

[03:47:00] Never forget the harm caused by the unions during the pandemic when they selfishly kept our schools closed, using our children to gain benefits having nothing to do with the crisis, and causing

immeasurable and irreparable harm to their mental health.

[03:47:15] If you care about our students' and teachers' well-being, vote no to collective bargaining. Thank you. - Thank you, and Andrea Weiskopf is our final speaker.

[03:47:34] - In August 1998, on my first day of teaching ever, there was a fire drill. One of my students used a wheelchair. At that moment, I realized I was responsible for keeping her safe.

[03:47:50] It is my job to teach your children, but it is my duty to protect them. If you expect me to take a bullet for your child, At least give me collective bargaining.

[03:48:08] To our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students, know that with or without collective bargaining, I will protect you. Black Lives Matter. Thank you. Thank you.

[03:48:26] That will conclude public comment for this evening. We will move to item 12, the Acting Superintendent's Report. Dr. Smith. Good evening, board members. It's my pleasure to provide you with tonight's Acting Superintendent's Report.

[03:48:47] Let's start with talking about some of the amazing things taking place in LCPS. Earlier this month, I was very pleased to attend Launching Your Leadership, a conference designed to encourage LCPS staff to learn more about leadership pathways within LCPS.

[03:49:06] More than 350 LCPS staff members participated in the conference. The conference provided excellent discussion about the skills required to become a school-based or center office leader and best practices in leadership. Three universities were also on hand to discuss their education and administration programs.

[03:49:23] We received great feedback about the conference and look forward to building off this success and on continuing our support for future and current LCPS leaders. Congratulations to Travis Mirabella, an 8th grade math teacher at Willard Middle School, for being selected as the March Year of the Educator winner.

[03:49:40] It was my pleasure to present Travis with the March Year of the Educator prize earlier this month. Travis's fellow math teachers were in on this surprise and joined in on the prize presentation. Year of the Educator is a joint initiative between LCPS and the Loudon Education Foundation. to thank LCPS staff members for their dedication to LCPS and its students.

[03:49:59] The March prize, which LEF coordinated, was a weekend getaway in Luray, Virginia, and a signature experience for two at a local venue. Three Academies of Loud and VEX Robotics teams qualified to participate in the Virginia State VEX Robotics Competition Championship, held in Doswell, Virginia, on March 4th.

[03:50:20] One of the three teams, Team Vexcellent, was named tournament semifinalist and will compete in the World VEX Robotics Competition Championships in April in Dallas, Texas. The VEX Robotics Program encourages students to apply STEM skills to build semi-autonomous machines.

[03:50:37] Competitions, which are held throughout the year, also teach students communication, project management, time management, and teamwork. Loudoun Valley High School has been chosen of one of 16 high schools across the nation to receive the prestigious First Amendment Free Press Award for 2023.

[03:50:54] The award was announced on February 23rd, Student Press Freedom Day, to honor those schools to support the support of their student voices. This is the 23rd year for the award and the second year in a row that Loudoun Valley High School has been recognized. Congratulations on this prestigious award.

[03:51:13] LCPS was honored to welcome Senator Tim Kaine, co-chair of the Senate's Career and Technical Education Caucus, to the Academies of Loudoun. The senator and his staff visited the culinary, health care, and automotive education areas at the academies and spoke with students and staff. Nearly 50 businesses, county government agencies, and military service branches will participate in LCPS's third annual Career and Apprenticeship Fair on Wednesday, April 12th from 6 to 8.30 p.m. at the Academies of Loudoun.

[03:51:44] The fair, open to grades 8 through 12, offers students the chance to learn about career and apprenticeship opportunities, allowing them to make informed decisions when choosing high school classes or making post-graduation decisions. Fair organizers anticipate this year's fair will return to pre-pandemic attendance levels of more than 400 participants.

[03:52:04] On Saturday, March 18th, the Roundhill Gym was filled with cheering parents and students as 5th graders from 8 elementary schools came together for a friendly handball tournament to celebrate Sportsmanship Day. In their PE classes, students learned how to play handball. Think soccer, but using your hands rather than your feet.

[03:52:26] PE teachers also used this occasion to talk to their students about sportsmanship. Prior to the competition, a student from each school shared a brief essay about the importance of sportsmanship. Now on for a few operational updates. On Wednesday, I hosted the first community listening session at Potomac Falls High School.

[03:52:46] Ms. Reaser and I engaged with about 35 community members, including students, who were interested in everything from academic rigor to state support for the LCPS budget. We're working on a summary of the topics, which we posted on the LCPS website. We're especially thankful for the parent-teacher organization, which provided cookies, water, and advanced publicity to their cluster.

[03:53:06] The next listening session will be held on March 30th this Thursday at Trailside Middle School at 7 p.m. with Mr. Mahedavy of the Ashburn District. In addition, I want to take this opportunity to remind our students, staff, and parents to take the annual LCPS family, staff, and student survey by April 1st.

[03:53:24] Please look in your spam or junk mail if you've not received the dedicated link. If you're still receiving reminders, please take time to complete the survey. It only takes a few minutes, and we really ask that you take us time to give us this important feedback. Just a reminder that the school name suggestions for the Dulles South Area Elementary School, ES32, set to open in the fall of 2024 are being accepted.

[03:53:46] Submit your name suggestions, please, by April 10th. On March 16th, the county deliberated the LCPS budget and ultimately voted to provide an additional \$3 million to what was included in the county administrator's proposed budget, bringing the total to \$72.1 million.

[03:54:02] That's \$3.1 million less than what was requested in the FY24 school board adopted budget and \$16.1 million less when the \$13 million revenue loss from the skinny budget is added in. The Board of Supervisors expressed frustration with the state and stated they didn't want to fix the state's problem.

[03:54:21] They discussed their openness to LCPS year-in funding requests from their FY23 year-in funds. They also voted to support LCPS and using LCPS year of in funds to fund resources for collective bargaining if adopted staff will work with the county staff on Specifics of how this would work based on the direction of the school board since the Board of Supervisors will adopt its budget on April 4th staff will provide Recommendations to the school board for a path forward at the April 11th school board meeting on Wednesday March 22nd The Department of support services held a community meeting at Mercer Middle School

[03:54:57] Related to the capital improvement program with a focus on the Dulles South area projects specific topics presented and discussed included the expansion of the Arcola Elementary School parking lot capital renewal and alterations project crosswalk from FY23 to FY24 CIP safety and privacy in school restrooms accelerated construction of ES32 master planning of the Watson Mountain Middle School in the future HS14 high school and addition of the modular classrooms at Willard Middle School.

[03:55:28] school. As you can see, we continue to outreach and provide information to the community about these important projects. A record number of high school students are participating in VHSL athletics and activities. This year, we have 14,306 participants in athletics and 1,512 participants in other VHSL activities such as yearbook, debate, and theater. This includes some who are in multiple sports and activities. In addition to the VHSL participation, we currently have nine high schools, four middle schools, and eight elementary schools engaging their students in unified sports and activities. Unified sports and activities provide opportunities for students with disabilities

[03:56:08] to engage in athletics and other activities with their non-disabled peers. This is exciting information to share because we all know the more students get involved and connected to their school the more invested and successful they will be. LCPS is proud to launch a student design challenge this spring. LCPS is a 150-year-old brand represented visually with the adaptation of the Loudoun County seal or design. LCPS is looking for new graphics and artwork to help represent our organization. Artwork may be used across the division in its many buildings for display, chosen to inform the development of a new logo design, be used on the LCPS website,

[03:56:47] social media sites, business cards, letterheads, digital communication, posters, promotional materials and many more. The design challenge will engage students to create new and differentiated graphic representations that provide a positive perception about LCPS. The challenge is open to students K through 12 from March 29th to April 29th. Students may submit artwork or individual graphics. Students interested in participating can visit the LCPS design contest webpage starting tomorrow to learn more. The first of two middle school school nutrition renovations are about to

[03:57:23] begin utilizing the School Nutrition's Fund excess fund balance. Updating the dining room and server lines will create a more efficient and inviting environment for students and staff. Blue Ridge Middle School renovation began yesterday March 27th and Sterling Middle School begins on April 10th. All work will occur after hours until the summer break and no meal service will be interrupted. We're very excited about these updates. Thank you for your time and attention and that concludes my report. Thank you Dr. Smith. We will now

[03:57:56] move to item 13 the continuation of our work session for the one lcps 2027 strategic plan for excellence goal one update and i will turn it over to dr ellis and mr slevin thank you mr shiratkin i will actually turn it over to the goal one update team including dr jones dr cramp

[03:58:21] and principal Compton and others that are joining them this evening welcome back good evening chair and the other school board members.

[03:58:55] We are delighted to be back in front of you this evening, sharing our progress on goal one of the one LCPS strategic plan for excellence. My name is Lenny Compton and I'm the proud principal of Simpson Middle School. I'm happy to be joined by Dr. Asia Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, and Dr. Ashley Cramp, Acting Executive Director of Teaching and Learning.

[03:59:17] I am especially proud to have two guests tonight to help us with 1.4, and that is Ali Coker, who's from Briar Woods, and Cora Wilkerson from Independence High School. You will notice that our presentation this evening aims to bring to life one LCPS, the goals and aligned actions.

[03:59:39] We will do this by highlighting stories of our communities that exemplify the heart of each aligned action. We have included accompanying documents and board docs to detail our accomplishments since the November 2022 presentation and describe our upcoming initiatives.

[03:59:59] Additionally, in board docs, you have the one pager of the data and the updated targets document for goal one. The stories you will hear today demonstrate what our vision and mission mean. As such, our shared vision, mission, and core beliefs guide our collective work as one LCPS.

[04:00:19] We place students at the center of our work, helping every student pursue and reach their full potential, and empowering them to make meaningful contributions to the world. Next slide.

[04:00:35] Goal one is centered around empowering students through core academic excellence, providing them with multiple accessible pathways for success, prioritizing care for students, and creating opportunities to amplify student voice.

[04:00:51] Through all of our actions, we aim to prepare students to make meaningful contributions to the world. Goal 1 has four accompanying goals, as you can see illustrated on this slide.

[04:01:11] Now we will take a few moments to delve into a story that brings our strategic plan to life. We will also provide an update on the metrics for targets where available. Now I will turn to Dr. Cramp for Aligned Action 1.1.

[04:01:27] - Good evening. Action 1.1 focuses on enabling student academic excellence through the use of the LCPS profile of a graduate, providing rigorous and culturally responsive instruction, implementing evidence-based literacy instruction, and developing a balanced assessment system.

[04:01:47] For the purpose of comparisons, we have the baseline data in teal and the updated 22-23 data in yellow. As you can see, the baseline for Aligned Action 1.1c PALS data for the fall of 2022 showed that 78% of students met the grade level benchmark in the fall administration of PALS.

[04:02:09] During the most recent administration of the assessment, 81% of students have met the grade level benchmark. Our target was 80% and we have surpassed the target by one percentage point. The spring data for 1.1c will be available in June.

[04:02:24] The availability of data for all other metrics under 1.1 are listed on this slide. Next, I will share highlights of Aligned Action 1.1. Goal one is centered on empowered students and Aligned Action 1.1 around core academic excellence.

[04:02:43] Our goal is to provide rigorous and culturally responsive instruction to develop all students as knowledgeable critical thinkers, creators, communicators, collaborators, and contributors. Each month there are highlights from our schools, many of which exemplify the work being done around Aligned Action 1.1.

[04:03:04] Tonight I will share with you some pictures and brief snippets of stories which also demonstrate some of the identified strategies for 1.1 and how they are coming to life for our students. Instructional planning is driven by the LCPS profile of a graduate and supported by Collaborative Learning Teams, or CLTs.

[04:03:22] A CLT is a group of educators who meet regularly to share expertise and work collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. CLTs focus on unpacking standards, determining instructional strategies for units and lessons, sharing resources, developing balanced assessments, analyzing data from various sources and making instructional decisions and adjustments, determining interventions for students who need it, and planning for the extension of learning.

[04:03:53] At the center of instructional planning in CLTs is the incorporation and development of the five Cs, deeper learning and rigorous instruction with our students. Rigor is about providing cognitive demand and appropriate support so that every student our classrooms is engaged in meaningful and complex intellectual work. CLTs include special education and English language teachers and the team of teachers is truly a unit making collaborative decisions to ensure students get the best of what we can provide and to ensure student achievement

[04:04:26] and empowerment goals are met. Establishing, refining, and strengthening CLTs are a focus K through 12. Professional learning for school administrators and teacher leaders has been occurring this year through workshops collaboration time at forum and meetings and through on-site visits with level offices the division instructional facilitators are also supporting this work the professional learning and support for clts will continue into school year 23 24 and beyond next slide thank you intentional planning in clts yields instruction which engages students in the

[04:05:05] five C's on a regular basis where students have multiple opportunities to collaborate, solve problems, share with others, and find success as teams. Students develop critical thinking around projects, real-world scenarios, and authentic experiences such as Bloom, Robotics, and Science Night. One specific example was at Lunsford Middle School where students were tasked with creating accessible equipment for their peers. They had to research, design, build prototypes, test, revise, and work through challenges to ultimately succeed in helping

[04:05:41] someone else. Some of the projects include a sensory keyboard and an automatic scorekeeper for a basketball hoop. Ms. Imani wanted to break the barrier that students are different and wanted to bring everyone together. Powerful instructional environments are places where all students can see themselves and take pride in who they are. One such example is the celebration of Black History and National Hispanic Heritage Months, where students share stories and cultures with one another. Food is one way we all connect to our culture, and our nutrition department is focusing on more offerings that represent the many cultures of our students. This focus has provided

[04:06:20] opportunities to hear from students about the food they like, giving them a voice. It has also provided additional opportunities for our cafeteria staff to engage with students. Some of the offerings include pupusas from El Salvador and chicken curry from India. Our food service coordinator says food

brings people together. Waxpool Elementary also held a We Are the World celebration to honor and celebrate their many cultures. And at Belmont Station Elementary, students use the skills of reading, researching, writing, and presenting as they explore their family culture, family history in Virginia, and cultural contributions within Virginia.

[04:06:59] This is one of many examples of culturally responsive instruction in action. Evidence-based literacy instruction remains a priority and there are numerous professional learning opportunities centered around literacy as well as the science of reading. School administrators and 18 cohorts of teachers have participated in letters volume one professional learning and just this past March 13th at the countywide PD day we had over 800 elementary teachers and staff participate in literacy professional learning. Our secondary English office is leading a science of reading book club with our secondary reading specialists and is working with leadership teams on instructional

[04:07:38] strategies for literacy across the curriculum. We want students to engage on a daily basis with effective literacy instruction that meets them where they are, builds their skills and knowledge, and focuses on developing independent readers and writers. Core academic excellence is the driver of our work. Through rigorous instruction, focus on the five C's, and teacher collaboration, We will graduate students who meet our LCPS profile of a graduate.

[04:08:09] Aligned Action 1.2 states that our goal is to expand student access to participate in specialized educational opportunities. We will do this by developing accessible specialized programming, developing targeted supports to prepare students to access specialized programming, revising the program of studies to expand electives and new course offerings, and developing college and workforce readiness through enhanced transition programming.

[04:08:36] This slide shows the updated data that is available. Enrollment for Propel, Edge, and Campus not only increased, but we also surpassed our target. Enrollment for Level Up decreased by 2%, and therefore we did not meet our enrollment target for that program.

[04:08:53] Additionally, please note that the percentage of students with disabilities participating in school-based transition experiences increased across the board. The first opportunity that we would like to highlight this evening is our Campus Program. The College Achievement and Multicultural Program for Unique Students, or Campus, their staff and student ambassadors have presented to all 8th grade students to provide information about the campus program and the application process for the 23-24 school year.

[04:09:23] They are currently collaborating with high school campus facilitators to inform curriculum and instruction for the 9th through 12th grade course delivery of campus for next year. One LCPS campus student had the following to say about the program. We love going on college trips.

[04:09:40] This helps us learn what college is like. Everything is paid for and free for the student. The campus program provides support and encouragement to students in achieving academic success and accomplishing personal goals for life after high school. The Amazon Web Services Think Big Space has opened at J.L. Simpson Middle School.

[04:10:01] Loudoun County Public Schools partnered with Amazon Web Services, Loudoun Education Foundation, and Code VA to create an innovative learning center for teachers and students. The Learning Lab has started to engage students in authentic learning activities and provides professional development for teachers.

[04:10:21] Students at J.L. Simpson and surrounding elementary schools have started engaging in the AWS Think Big Space. On February 23rd, students from Evergreen Mill engaged in computer science integration experiences. One of our instructional facilitators of computer science shared the following comment, I just left parent night at Evergreen where we displayed our projects and talked about the field trip over to AWS.

[04:10:46] A parent said, I just have to thank you because my daughter has never been so invested in her learning and I have even learned from everything she did. Another program that we would like to highlight this evening is our summer math discovery camp. The coordinator of this program continues to meet with the LCPS BEAM students at their school for lunch and problem-solving tasks.

[04:11:06] They are currently going through the admissions process with prospective students for this summer's program, which includes a Q&A with last year's students and a problem-solving challenge at each school. One of our students had the following to say about this program. BEAM was truly an enriching experience.

[04:11:24] The staff was engaging and never let the positive vibe die down. BEAM has opened my eyes in many ways. I am forever thankful for this opportunity. BEAM has shown me many ways to combat challenges. This year I have displayed increasing progress in mathematics.

[04:11:41] The courses I took in BEAM have served to my advantage in mathematics so far. In the past year, I have never felt a strong feeling for math. It was just always another subject. This program has introduced various ways to think of math, and math is now my favorite subject.

[04:11:57] The EDGE program is designed to nurture and challenge students with gifted potential from historically underrepresented populations. The program provides additional academic challenges for students designed to develop students' individual potential. Grade-level teachers and gifted resource teachers work together to find and nurture the gifted potential in young learners and prepare them for more challenging and rigorous academic pathways.

[04:12:22] A few of our elementary students had the following to say about this opportunity. EDGE makes me better at critical thinking and solving puzzles. EDGE will help me by growing my creativity and learning new things. Also, how to work together in groups and help each other.

[04:12:40] Propel and Level Up students from 10 elementary schools and 4 middle schools experimented with robots and engaged with students and staff at the Academies of Loudoun's Hour of Code event in December. We had over 400 students in attendance at this event. Our Propel and Level Up coordinator said, We want to make sure we are giving them a large scope of activities as they consider their high school pathways or college pathways and what direction they may want to go in the future.

[04:13:07] Additionally, just this past weekend, we had an amazing day at our Propel and Level Up VEX Robotics Competition and STEM Day. Again, nearly 400 Propel and Level Up students participated alongside 75 student volunteers from the Academies of Loudoun who served as volunteers for lessons and judges for the competition. In addition, there were about 10 community volunteers and an unbelievable number of parent chaperones and LCPS staff. It was an awesome day.

[04:13:36] Loudoun County is kicking off our Start on Success or SOS program this year. SOS is a school-to-work program designed to increase readiness for college and career success among students with disabilities. LCPS is implementing SOS in collaboration with the Center of Transition Innovations, the

Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services. During their first semester through this program students learn workplace readiness skills in an education for employment class. During the second semester students participate in a paid internship at a local

[04:14:15] business. Students discover interests and preferences and practice workplace readiness skills, self-advocacy skills, and self-determination in the workplace. We are excited to announce that we have partnered with Inova Hospital to provide internships. Two of our newest special programs, LCPS pre-IB at the high school level and dual language immersion at the elementary level, are making excellent progress and are on track to begin this fall. As you can see through these highlights, we are and will continue to create many opportunities to empower our students to help them reach their full potential and achieve

[04:14:52] their dreams. At this time, I will turn the presentation over to Dr. Asia Jones. Thank you, Dr. Cramp and good evening again Board. Strategies for Aligned Action 1.3, Care for Students, reflects our whole child approach to supporting deeper learning and the success of the LCPS profile of a graduate. The aligned work within this area of Gold 1 is to ensure a safe and affirming learning environment for all students by implementing a multi-tiered system of supports to address student academic, behavioral, and socially emotional needs.

[04:15:32] We will do this by implementing a culturally responsive framework, providing socially emotional learning and mental health, nutrition, and wellness services for all students, and also by cultivating an inclusive environment for providing high-quality, specially designed instructional opportunities to meet the unique needs of students.

[04:15:56] Next slide. Our progress on three of the metrics for the Aligned Action 1.3 can be seen on this slide. Data for Aligned Action 1.3A, School Climate Annual Student Survey data, and 1.3B, Discipline Referral and Suspensions, will be available at a later date as noted.

[04:16:20] As reflected by the pie charts for the Aligned Actions 1.3C and 1.3F, we have surpassed our baseline data as well as our targets. Since the start of the school year, all of our schools have been focused on engaging, providing prevention, and community-building activities through social-emotional learning, classroom lessons, advisory lessons at the secondary level that were developed in collaboration with the division-wide student advisory planning team, as well as presentations and student leadership campaigns focused on prevention, growth mindset, and student engagement.

[04:16:58] Aligned Action 1.3E reflects baseline data that is being collected this year. As you may recall, this is our first year with a phased, division-wide implementation of the Phoenix Student Information System NTSS Intervention Module.

[04:17:18] The baseline data reflected is representative of 51 elementary, middle, and high schools that have been onboarded since the start of this school year. As of this month, just over 4,000 Tier 2 targeted intervention plans and almost 3,000 Tier 3 intensive intervention plans have been developed to support the academic, behavior, and socially emotional needs of students who have been experiencing challenges in these particular areas.

[04:17:49] The MTSS intervention module has been embraced by the implementing schools as it supports school CLTs, as Dr. Kramp mentioned earlier, as well as the problem-solving teams as they analyze student response to interventions, communicate across stakeholders, which include parents, unified mental health team members, and other service providers that are supporting the student's needs.

[04:18:17] The multi-tiered system of supports, also known as MTSS, is a framework that is designed to meet every student's academic behavior, social and emotional needs through proven evidence-based strategies such as PBIS, or Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, restorative practices, and response to intervention.

[04:18:45] The MTSS pyramid on this slide illustrates tiered services, starting at the base of universal support, which is tier one, for all students, additional targeted support, tier two, for some students who may need supplemental intervention, and tier three, intensive supports for a few students who require more intensive support to meet their needs. Recognizing all students learn differently and have unique behavioral and emotional needs, we do not tier students. Rather,

[04:19:21] we tier and differentiate supports based upon the unique need of each student so that they may thrive in an academically challenging and affirming learning environment. On this slide, we've plotted an example of a student who is doing well with social and emotional development, attendance, as well as math. However, this student needs supplemental and targeted support in the areas of writing and reading instruction. And like all other children, strengths have been identified and focus areas needing improvement that require different

[04:19:58] levels of intervention and support are also identified. Regardless of the area of need, the MTSS framework is integrated to enable differentiated intervention to improve academic performance, attendance, and engagement that results in improved student experiences and achievement.

[04:20:20] In this particular example of a student's profile across the various tiers of support, the CLTs and the teachers working with this child are able to promote the student's many strengths and develop a Tier 3 intervention plan to address the concerns related to reading and writing.

[04:20:39] This Tier 3 intervention plan, which we are able to monitor through the MTSS module, would likely involve intervention supports such as the expertise of a reading specialist, close progress monitoring that is ongoing as well as regular communication among the teachers the students teachers of support as well as their parents and now I will turn it back to mr. Compton aligned action 1.4 focuses on student voice by creating regular opportunities to hear and act on student

[04:21:15] interests experiences and dreams strategies that support this aligned action include conducting reviews of co-curricular and extracurricular activities, developing balanced listening structures with students, administering annual student surveys, and using the data to inform decision-making, and establishing and implementing a consolidated annual report capturing student feedback to inform system-wide priorities.

[04:21:46] Align Action 1.4 is a new construct we're measuring with the current strategic plan. Therefore, we are in a baseline year for all metrics. We do have initial data available for metric 1.4 D, principal-led student focus groups.

[04:22:02] Currently, 50% of schools have a principal-led student focus group. Our goal is for 100% of schools to have this as student voice as an integral part of empowering students and valuing their input and ideas. On the next slide, I will highlight what we are currently doing to provide students with opportunities to build leadership skills and build on their current interests, and we will hear from our wonderful guest speakers tonight. Our first district-wide student leadership conference, student leaders had opportunities to both hear and act on

[04:22:38] their interests while they focused on developing leadership skills. A call went out for breakout presenters and 88 students developed their own topics to present 38 breakout sessions, including Cora, who's going to talk about that in a few seconds. Attendees followed their own interest by selecting the topics they wish to attend and participated in the breakouts. Five tough topic sessions also allow students to become more aware of topics they care about and get ideas for how to take action on those topics. With that I'm going to turn it over to Cora

[04:23:15] to give her a rendition of what she did. Hi thank you for having me my name is Cora Wilkinson and I'm a senior at Independence High School. I'm a part of our Student Council Association and I was able to both participate and present at the wild leadership conference my group presented on innovation for managing change and boosting spirit and it was a privilege to be able to share how our sea has innovated and adapted to challenges like coven 19 to better our student atmosphere our audience was able to share struggles that they've experienced planning school events and how they can use the strategies that we

[04:23:52] presented on to overcome these challenges moving forward being able to share these critical leadership skills to my peers without a grade being attached was extremely beneficial to my own leadership development and it was very fulfilling doing all the creative ideas that the attendees could bring back to their schools. The Weill Conference did an excellent job at bringing together leaders from all different perspectives to collaborate. We learned all about innovative leadership and we were able to voice our opinions, share how we could promote inclusivity and innovate our spirit events. We also were able to connect on how we struggle sometimes as a student council and how we can innovate to manage that.

[04:24:33] Overall, the WILD conference gave me an opportunity to demonstrate my established leadership knowledge while also gaining creative ideas to grow my leadership at Independence and past high school to make a lasting impact to my community. Thank you.

[04:24:49] - As you all know, all secondary schools are represented for a student equity ambassador and I'm pleased to have Ali with us tonight from Bayer Woods to tell us about his experience as a Student Equity Ambassador. - Salaamu Alaikum, peace and blessings to all. My name is Ali Coker, and I am the Student Equity Ambassador for Briarwoods.

[04:25:07] Now when I first received that email stating that Briarwoods was searching for a Student Equity Ambassador, my parents were ecstatic. They were telling me about all the different things that I could speak about, all the changes that I could make, and they wanted me to instantly apply. Now as a teenage boy, I did only what was most natural to me.

[04:25:25] I closed the email and took a nap. But anyways, I was just thinking, What could I do as a random high schooler? What change could I really make? Well, either way, my parents didn't care. They made me apply. And now here I am, standing in front of, sorry, sitting in front of the LCPS school board as that same random high schooler.

[04:25:47] So now, getting straight into it, the Student Equity Council, or the SEC, provides me a space to express my ideas that my peers and I have generated through our time in high school. For example, to give some context, I am a co-president of the Briarwoods Muslim Student Association, or the MSA, and this year I worked extensively with the Briarwoods faculty to establish a prayer space. Essentially, we made a safe area for students of all faiths to come and pray during the school day. Now, I can only do so much as a club officer at my one school,

[04:26:23] and that got me thinking about how I can help aid other students at other schools and provide this privilege to them. Now, this is where the Student Equity Council comes in. My role as a student equity ambassador has put me in a place where I can speak directly to those people that are capable of creating these significant changes such as potentially implementing prayer spaces in every LCPS high school. Without the SEC, I would not be able to express my ideas to the adults, policymakers, or students of LCPS. For the students are the ones who I hope to inspire with my example and one day work alongside in initiatives such as this one. Thank you.

[04:27:02] think they demonstrate that we're doing a good job with 1.4 next slide so this concludes our presentation this evening we are happy to answer any questions you may have thank you very much for the update and a special thank you to our two students for being here on a late night for bearing with us I have one brief question before I open it up to questions from board members the wild student leadership conference where did where did the idea for that come from

[04:27:35] and who organized that conference I'm gonna ask mr. Derek Ferry to respond to that. He was very integral in developing that. I don't know if he has a microphone. Oh, now he does.

[04:27:54] He does now. Our extracurricular specialist, Lynn Fiscus, she helped organize it. Wild means we're intentional about leadership development, and we were fortunate enough to be able to host that at Rockbridge High School. She was the brainchild behind it, and I just helped where needed. Okay, thank you. I've had a chance, in addition to the comments today, I've had a chance to speak to a couple of the other students who were able to attend and unanimously they felt that it was a very meaningful experience and we're looking forward to it being offered again in future years so I really appreciate that new program being set up and it sounds like it's it was a

[04:28:32] success board members can I any questions for the panel mr. Morris thank you mr. chair I love to hear the the high school students getting so engaged I mean it is really it's it's very exciting to see the leadership opportunities that you're running into and I'm eager to see where that takes you but congratulations on on where you are today and where you're headed I do have one comment on slide 18 where we talk about the MTSS and we talk about the whole child there's a profile on there and I found the profile fascinating I don't think I've ever seen MTSS illustrated that way when you look at it

[04:29:12] it's got all the different attributes of the student from academics to the personal learning the and I just I found it enlightening just to see how that's set up and I wonder do we have that profile for each student is that something that that we develop for each student so that we could you know their their teachers and their counselor can look at them and they can see where they're strong where their weaknesses are because I think the information in that would be would be vital for for any of the teachers thank you for that Mr. Morris I would say that we wanted to show an illustration to further clarify

[04:29:50] the framework of the multi-tiered system of supports that exists in all of our schools with the from the universal what's in all of our schools that most students thrive through those areas recognizing a growth mindset building upon their strengths but students require differentiated instruction and differentiated approaches and when that occurs and it may impede their barrier to their learning that is when our problem-solving teams our unified mental health teams the CLT's are looking at the differentiated approaches to instruction then look at the levels or tiers of services needed now with the

[04:30:29] implementation of our MTSS module we are able to teachers are able to see where the students strengths are build upon those and develop specific plans of intervention monitor those plans for periods

of time to see where the the student is whether they're ready to go with reducing that barrier or continuing with additional specialized supports you learn so much about that student and you know if if the profiles were similar you could use common strategies so I I just

[04:31:07] think that there's something there and I would encourage staff to to really kind to think about that. I just found it fascinating and very easy to digest. Thank you. Additional questions and comments? Ms. Polifko. Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is related to the social-emotional learning 1.3 .

[04:31:28] I think I asked this question earlier in the year. I believe it was in the fall when we were discussing goal number one. And I understand that the goal here is to increase participation, but I don't understand how we are measuring the effectiveness of these SEL lessons. So So there is some data that has been put out regarding the effectiveness of specifically Second Step, if you will, because I know that's the program that we use in Loudoun County.

[04:31:55] And oftentimes in that data, it states that students with these competencies tend to do better in school. However, the program isn't itself necessarily responsible for producing those outcomes in students.

[04:32:12] And so I think it's important that if we're focusing so heavily on social emotional learning, we should probably be making sure that the actual delivery of it is effective and we should be measuring that. So I don't understand how it's being measured, and I would like some clarification on that.

[04:32:29] Thank you. We are continuing to draw those parallels between the explicit instruction for appropriate decision-making and all the other competencies that come with social emotional learning the curriculum that we're using is just one aspect of that and as these students mentioned the student growth and the leadership the engagement all of those things will manifest themselves through a strength space based approach through improved attendance student engagement we're

[04:33:08] looking at discipline and the correlations of that and how we are engaging students even at the secondary level at the middle school level with second step that is one of the explicit areas for students problem-solve and decision-making and build relationships monitor their own self-control and engagement but then what just how does that translate into those predictors of success with again being contributing members within their own community and outside of that advocating for other students engaging students in affirming environments such as the affinity groups as this young man explained one those

[04:33:46] are all of the ways that we are measuring that information additional questions mr. Madby thank you chair I guess I'll stay with slide number 18 I guess with mr. Morris I think this is something maybe not potentially appear but I think this is something of all this sort of vision or at least ask for a profile of a student to help them in putting them in perspective with data.

[04:34:16] I think I like this kind of a triangle, and I think, Mr. Morse, I like perhaps the staff to perhaps build some sort of model because the data exists, and how can we create a profile of each student? And I understand every student requires differentiated help and support, but in order to make sure that we can provide the right services, I think as you're providing, but having that data is really helpful and key.

[04:34:42] So I'll definitely support what Mr. Morse sort of asked for. I'll jump back to slide number 12, and I'm just curious where you talked about the edge and Propel, the metrics being not met. I don't know if

you can speak to it, saying what transpired or what sort of approaches are we taking to help mitigate or to make sure that we catch up with those numbers and beyond.

[04:35:04] Thank you so much for your question. Enrollment for Propel, Edge, and Campus increased, and we surpassed our target, which is great. The one area where we decreased was in level up at our middle school level, and it decreased by 2%.

[04:35:22] And I did have a chance to talk to our coordinator earlier today because I thought this might be a question, right, as you see a decrease in a metric. And essentially, she boiled it down to some staffing challenges in a couple of different ways. One, recruiting enough staff in the fall to be able to run full programs.

[04:35:40] And we had several staff leave. We had two staff members who left positions, and many of our eighth graders chose not to participate again because of that. They were very attached to the teacher who they were working with, and when the teacher left, they chose not to participate again.

[04:35:57] So essentially just some staffing challenges around that, not a lack of desire really in our students or communication about the program or any of those things. And our coordinator is already beginning to think about how might we recruit a little bit differently staff to ensure that we are fully staffed so that we can maximize all of our rosters.

[04:36:18] We are also adding an additional school next year, so that will bring us additional students as well. Thank you. So my next sort of, I guess, question or feedback, I guess, for the students and Ali, waalaikum salam, I should say. So it's a piece back to you, what he greeted with.

[04:36:34] So I think coming back to what you're working with Equity and I think even with the Wild, I think I shared at the last board meeting, my son kind of overlaps with both of them. He was at the Wild and also was part of the MSA too. So what are the things, Ali, that you have heard besides, for me, Equity, sort of the student-led things?

[04:36:55] What are the other initiatives that have come up that you can share with the board here? Thank you, Mr. Mahedvi. Awesome question. So besides the prayer space proposal, I know at Briarwoods, my other two ambassadors and I, we are working on a grading policy change where we've noticed that a lot of students suffer from test anxiety.

[04:37:15] So rather than having a large sum of their grade be dependent on their tests, we're trying to find alternative measurements such as, you know, homework formatives or project-based assessments. And we're trying to create a proposal for that actually right now.

[04:37:31] Yes. Thank you. Additional questions? Seeing none, thank you again, and we look forward to seeing you back again during the next goal one update.

[04:37:46] At this time, we are going to take a short recess. Board members, please be back in your seats, ready to go at 9:50.

[04:52:03] The board is now in recess. All right, the board is coming out of recess, and we will pick up on our first action item, 1401, collective bargaining. Is there a motion? Ms. Reeser. - I move to amend the FY24 school operating fund budget to add three point three million dollars for 13 FTEs and associated operating costs for the purposes of collective bargaining administration to seek a supplemental FY 24

budget appropriation from the County Board of Supervisors in the amount of three point three million and to commit to

[04:52:40] returning three point three million of FY 23 appropriated unspent year-end funds to the county for reappropriation to Loudoun County Public Schools in FY 24 for this purpose and I further move that the Loudoun County School Board adopt the following resolution resolution of the Loudoun County School Board considering whether to establish collective bargaining between the school board and certain school board employees whereas in April of 2020 the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation permitting local governing bodies including school boards to enter into collective bargaining agreements with

[04:53:17] respect to any matter relating to employment provided that the public body adopts an ordinance or resolution authorizing as much and where is pursuant to section 40.1 - 57 to see of the code of Virginia any school board that has not adopted a resolution providing for collective bargaining may receive any employee certification from a majority of employees who self identify as a bargaining unit and within 120 days of receipt of such employee certification shall take a vote on whether to adopt or not adopt a resolution to provide for collective bargaining and whereas the code of

[04:53:53] Virginia does not require any school board to adopt a resolution authorizing collective bargaining. And whereas on January 31st, 2023, the school board clerk received an employee certification submission from the Loudoun Education Association on behalf of all licensed classroom teachers had signed in support of collective bargaining on January. Sorry, I skipped ahead. And whereas on February 28th, 2023, the Loudoun County Public Schools staff verified that a majority of all licensed classroom teachers had signed in support of collective

[04:54:27] bargaining and on January 31st 2023 and whereas the school board has 120 days from the date the certification was submitted or until May 31st 2023 to take a vote to adopt or not adopt a resolution to provide for collective bargaining now therefore be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board hereby agrees to adopt this resolution authorizing collective bargaining by licensed classroom teachers and any other school board employees deemed appropriate by the Loudoun County School Board be it and be it further resolved that the Loudoun County School Board directs the legislative and policy committee to draft a collective bargaining resolution which the school board shall vote to

[04:55:06] adopt or reject by December 31st 2023 and be it further resolved that the execution of this resolution is conclusive evidence of the Loudoun County School Board's approval of this action is there a second seconded by Miss Ogadeg Bay. Ms. Reiser, would you like to speak to your motion? Also, I noticed that the resolution you read is slightly different from the one that's posted in board docs. Could you call out the differences between your version and the staff recommended version during your comments?

[04:55:37] Yes. The second paragraph with the be it further resolved language that the Loudoun County School Board directs a legislative and policy committee to draft a collective bargaining resolution which the school board shall vote to adopt or reject by December 31st 2023 is different from what was in board docs for the purpose of making it easier to understand what the deadline would be in board docs there was a hundred and eighty days from a date certain so instead of having the the

[04:56:12] more complex language I changed it to include a date certain and it's also a little bit longer just based on conversations and concerns from board members regarding having enough time to to do that but also have it come to the board I came up with a fixed date certain so that nobody would have to do long math so speaking to my motion I like to start by saying that I think we can all agree everyone allowed and

can agree that we want to do what's best in the best in the interests of the students so I want to talk about how I

[04:56:49] feel collective bargaining results in an excellent educational experience for our students. Collective bargaining can allow for staff to be part of the discussions that include identifying and solving challenges that impact our ability to deliver an excellent educational experience to our students.

[04:57:06] Collective bargaining can help identify the mentoring and professional development that our staff needs, all of which impacts their ability to deliver an excellent educational experience to our children. Collective bargaining can provide an opportunity for the staff to advocate for resources that they need to create an excellent learning environment for our students which also results in better working environments for the educators and staff and that's key when we're attracting teachers and staff to work for our division we heard tonight

[04:57:36] about the 4,000 plus survey results that put retaining teachers at the top of the list for concerns from our community. We need the unique perspectives and input of the adults who spend the majority of our children's waking hours with them at the table when the decisions are being made. We heard from the students tonight about what a difference it makes when they get to sit at the table when decisions are being made. In states where public educators have negotiated their contracts, we've seen improvements in class sizes, resources for students, and

[04:58:15] safety because our teachers working environment is your children's learning environment for those reasons I will support this motion thank you further discussion miss okay thank you chair Sorotkin this evening I am proud to support the vote to allow for collective bargaining as an important part of recognizing the importance of supporting our teachers by bringing them to the table and helping to improve our recruitment and retention efforts educating our children begins at home but it is continued in partnership

[04:58:51] with our teachers in their schools in the classrooms my experience both personally and through friends who have also worked in unionized environments have been positive and I look forward to working through the process over the next several months to come to consensus on the terms of a resolution that specifies the scope of what will be included in the forthcoming negotiations thank you thank you further discussion mr. Morse all government employees should realize that the process of collective bargaining cannot be transplanted into

[04:59:27] the public service. It has its distinct and insurmountable limitations when applied to public personnel management. The employer is the whole people who speaks by means of laws enacted by the representatives in Congress. This is an excerpt of a letter written by FDR who I believe every one of us would call a champion in the unionization and rights, employee rights. It was written to the president of the National Federation of Federal Employees in 1937. Article 8, Section 7 of the Virginia Constitution is quite clear. The supervision of

[05:00:06] schools in each school division shall be vested in a school board, not the state legislature, the county supervisors, the PTA, a political party, a social movement, or a union. A union would not represent all of our employees. It wouldn't even represent all of our licensed employees. We spent the last two years merging our pay scales, deleting the classified label, and creating a universal pay scale so that our employees were treated equitably.

[05:00:38] A union takes us backwards. It creates a divide between union members and non-union members who will face perpetual pressure to join the union, and they may not even be allowed to join. We are setting up yet another distraction that's taken away from teaching.

[05:00:54] We are once again becoming a catalyst for us-versus-them mentality, pitting employees against one another, another unnecessary division of our workforce. Our budget is a zero-sum effort. Every dollar we spend is focused on the children.

[05:01:11] No one has yet given us evidence of having the union present showing positive results on the education of children. They talk about a lot of other pluses and happiness and things like that, and more resources and smaller class sizes.

[05:01:35] what are they giving up because every dollar has to be accounted for so we're gonna what's the most beneficial program to spend our limited resources let's see we heard tonight about SLPs we talked about ECSE classrooms step programs EL teachers first grade TAs library books counselors those are all things that we've talked about in the last six months that we want to fund and 3.3 million dollars would go a long way to covering all of those we are facing a 16 million dollar budget reconciliation and we're about to take another three

[05:02:12] million dollars and park that somewhere else not addressing the needs that were identified in our adopted budget we will remove important resources from approved critical education programs and then we want to remove more so that we can pay for the Union before I could take funds from our budget to support this agreement I would expect a cost-benefit analysis not a union survey that states the teachers are happier board members we know the process we use year-end unexpended appropriated dollars only for one-time expenses not

[05:02:50] continuing requirements for instance we wouldn't hire more teachers with year-end funds as that would be an ongoing indefinite commitment in a violation of generally accepted GAP practices best practices so we're violating GAP best practices by spending funds on a continuing requirement, one-time funds. And we're doing this with a shell game with the board of supervisors. So once again, the board of supervisors are controlling our budget. Are we going to break our own rules to apply year-end resources to hire an

[05:03:26] ongoing staff to help us exclusively deal with the union? Do you feel comfortable not hiring any expert staff, as one of our speakers said tonight, because we don't need them? Do we think that Richmond really has a great process that they've signed up with their union without any support?

[05:03:47] I wouldn't be comfortable in Richmond right now. Do you feel comfortable not hiring any staff? And if it were true that they're aligned with us, why would we hire any staff? There must be a reason, and the reason is we have different missions.

[05:04:06] Annual reports from our stakeholder groups outline very different priorities. Who decides which priorities to follow? Does it make sense for only one constituency group to have sway over the decisions of all other constituency groups? Is that equitable or equal or fair?

[05:04:22] Do we have a student union? Do we have a parents' union? A union that represents the community at large? We overwhelmingly rely on the recommendations and guidance of our administration. Most of our administrators have spent years in the classroom and have a wealth of experience that new teachers and old board members just can't replicate.

[05:04:44] But in this one case, suddenly the same staff whose recommendations are so valuable to us haven't said anything about supporting this. Not one. I have not met a single administrator, whether school, department, or division level, who has stated their support for school division employee unionization.

[05:05:03] Not one. Because it interferes with their ability to manage their responsibilities, adding time and cost, while reducing flexibility and authority. What responsible management organization gives away its authority to become a party in negotiations or arbitration?

[05:05:22] Our mission is to empower all students to make meaningful contributions to the world. Everything we do must be done with students in mind. Our teachers serve the most critical role in the mission, no doubt. And I will stand side by side with members of this board and the two previously elected boards that I served on when I state publicly my complete support for our teachers.

[05:05:44] opportunists may pronounce our vote on this as pro-teacher or anti-teacher. Voting on this agreement is not a vote for or against teachers. I'll happily stand on my voting record for the past 12 years for validation. I'm not here to disparage our LEA reps. They're valued and they're appreciated. They're hard workers. They are our employees. They just have two masters.

[05:06:11] They have a school board and they have a union. At a board meeting two years ago this month, our community was in the depths of despair having survived the year of covid but the public comment overwhelmingly pushing us to full open to fully open our schools and the facts all supported this masked families turned out in force parents in tears pleading with us children isolated and lonely begging for us to open schools mental health issues going through the roof but you

[05:06:48] But you know what the LEA leadership spoke about at that board meeting that night? You guessed it, the labor union agreement. I cannot think of an example that more adequately demonstrates that the focus of a union is not always aligned to the best interests of our students.

[05:07:06] They never voiced a strong opinion to get the children back in the classroom. That wasn't their priority, but as a school member, it is mine. It was ours. In fact, eight months before that occurred, I spoke to this board supporting the American academy of pediatrics recommendation to return to classroom learning eight months before this the lea didn't support it even when the facts showed how critical it was to get the kids back into school but many many teachers did god bless those who had the courage to speak out even

[05:07:41] privately they were scared eventually most school board members came around eventually most we We approved every mitigation possible: HEPA filtration, desk spacing, mandatory masking, virtual options, surface cleaning, bus seat restrictions, desk screens, safe distances for teachers' desks, heat sensors, tracking protocols, prioritized vaccinations, and paid COVID leave.

[05:08:08] Tens of millions of dollars we spared no expense to help our workforce feel safe. We approved every single safety protocol our workforce requested, except keeping the schools closed. you are respected. You are heard. Your safety was vital. Your inputs were valued. That is what good leadership does. And you know what? We did it without a union. We should not be bound by decisions made by unelected, unaccountable officials who represent only some of our employees,

[05:08:45] whose mission is not the same as LCPS, who have demonstrated that they place the passage of this agreement above the importance of returning children to a classroom, who take funds out of

operating budget to pay our employees to do union administration during the workday and force the board to hire additional staff to respond to their demands and by the way the contract that that they proposed was interesting they want the school board to pay for mediation so any time that they they want to they can just drag out the mediation and the school board would pay

[05:09:24] for that the county would pay for that lastly this is a quote from Terry Moe who is a professor at Stanford University. Some things are obvious. It's not good for children that ineffective teachers cannot be removed from a classroom.

[05:09:41] It's not good for children that teachers cannot be assigned where they are needed most. It's not good for children that excellent young teachers get laid off before mediocre senior colleagues. Yet these are features of American schooling that the unions fight for in their own interests.

[05:09:59] I cannot imagine supporting \$3.3 million a year, every year, from now through eternity, to support something that I believe this school board already holds, and that's the interests of our employees.

[05:10:16] I believe we hold that close to heart. And I will continue to support the employees, whether this is passed or not. But this does not demonstrate my support to our employees. Thank you. Further discussion?

[05:10:33] Mr. Beatty. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, what does an agreement like this get us? And really, what does it gain the teachers? And what does it gain the parents? And most importantly, what does it gain the students? I don't want to debate the merits of unionization or the fact that teachers aren't heard sometimes.

[05:10:54] But I just, we've got to ask the question, does it make our schools better? Does it help us get to our goal of educating every student in Loudoun County? Now, just last week at the HRTD meeting, we had an LEA board member come to public comment. she gave concise feedback on a policy and we put those changes into the policy with no issue and then we sent it as an information item 1503 on the agenda that's being that's listening and that's being a partner and we listened about teacher pay as my colleague talked about we listened about remediation every single budget that this board has passed has an across the board pay raise

[05:11:33] especially his most recent one you know and lea already has a seat at the table with hrtd with this current meet and confer policy now if there are grievances true issues that need to be corrected teachers have as much recourse now as they would under collective bargaining because what if this passes and lcps doesn't live up to its past you know what if we we don't uh keep up our end of the bargain teacher can't strike so what do they do they come to a board meeting like they already do they email their board rep like they already do again we're adding three million two hundred sixty five thousand six hundred eighty nine dollars and we have a board of a commitment from

[05:12:10] the board of supervisors to add that money to our request and this is going to increase taxes which have already gone up and that's going to be on top of likely increases in the bond rates because of the end of low interest rates. We're going to be removing a collegial atmosphere in our schools and we're going to pit those outside the bargaining units with those inside the units. Now I just don't see the need for collective bargaining. Without the ability to force change any agreement is going to be toothless and it will become a waste of people's time and money and I believe that every complaint can be ameliorated can be healed and solved all without any more indirection

[05:12:45] and by taking away all without taking away power from the individual the lcps administration is not a bunch of steel magnets who allow their workers to fall into vats of molten metal it's a public funded organization mandated by law to provide an education for our students and i say we keep educating and focus on the students and their futures thank you further discussion miss Blivko. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can speak to you all as not only a board member, but as a mother of children in Loudoun County Public Schools and as a professional in the field of special education

[05:13:22] for over 20 years. And I can assure you that my number one focus is children, and it always has been, whether it's in my professional life or my personal life. But I also know what it's like to be a teacher. I know what it's like to work in the classroom. I know what it's like to have your boots on the ground I know what it's like to have your plate overfilled and to be frustrated because you feel like you can't focus on the things that you need to focus on because you keep having more added to the pile but I can also assure you that collective bargaining will not be what you think it's going to be in the end I know you've been delivered promises I know that you have a lot of

[05:14:02] hope of getting your needs met that you may feel that you're not already getting met but at the end of the day, unions are about power and control, and they are not about our children. I am here for kids, and unions are anything but that. Please listen to what I'm about to tell you.

[05:14:22] Becky Pringle of the NEA colluded with Randy Weingarten in the AFT, with Rochelle Walensky of the CDC, Dr. Fauci, and the Biden administration to continue to keep schools closed long after it was safe for them to be open.

[05:14:46] We felt that here in Loudoun County. I felt that with my own children. I walked through it. Other people walked through it. My kids might've been fine. Other people's kids were not fine. And I'm not here just for my children.

[05:15:01] I'm here for all of the 83,000 kids that we have in this school system. And I can tell you that parents and families went through hell when their kids were not in school. the mental health issues that they suffered from not being able to go to school, the lack of socialization opportunities, maybe just not even feeling motivated to get up in the morning, kids using drugs because they had nothing else to do, kids going down a rabbit hole, all because the people at the top of the hydra, and it is a hydra because as soon as you cut off one head, there's four more, all because they didn't think it was safe enough for kids to go to school,

[05:15:42] for kids to be in the classroom. Well, why was that? Because we had medical information that proved otherwise. Ultimately, who will pay the price in the end if collective bargaining passes? I know Virginia is a right-to-work state, and I know you can't strike.

[05:15:59] I'm not worried about that. Who will pay the price are the students who struggle the most. When was the last time that you heard Becky Pringle talk about special education? I don't think I ever have. I've never heard Randy Weingarten mention special education. She's too busy standing behind the podium clapping for the teachers, dancing in the streets with their umbrellas.

[05:16:19] But who's teaching those kids to read while teachers are dancing in the streets? No one. Have you seen the literacy rates in California schools? Less than 50% of students are reading proficiently. That's an abomination.

[05:16:36] And they're the ones who are struggling the most. Special education, let's go back to that. I am so glad that the teachers, or not the teachers, excuse me, the speech language pathologist came out tonight to advocate for children. And I remember one of them saying, we're here to educate. Our job and the purpose of schools is to educate children.

[05:16:58] Yes, that's why we're here. That's why I'm here. I'm here for children. I know you're here for children. I know that's what you're here for. And so if that's what we're truly about, then we should recognize that unionization will fail our most struggling learners. And it has proven to do so time and time again. I think it's also important that we point out some facts regarding the type of money that VEA, who is affiliated with the Virginia Education Association Fund for Children

[05:17:32] in Education, which is a 527 group, is allowed to raise unlimited amounts of money to influence elections, and from 2017 to 2019, 84% of funds raised went to Democratic candidates, while only \$6,950 went to Republican candidates. Now, listen, for me, this is not a Democrat-Republican issue.

[05:18:02] The issue I have is that they're funneling money into politics. What about our kids? I'll be the first one to tell you that both the Republican Party and the Democrat Party is what has gotten us into the current mess that we are in in education. You need only go back to the Bush Obama era. Go back to Common Core and you'll see what I'm talking about. But again, who kept our kids out of school? It was the unions. In 2021, the National Education Association vowed to approve

[05:18:38] a plan to promote critical race theory in all 50 states. And I know that the fact checkers will be on me for this one, but you'll be able to find it if you go look it up. In the resolution, the union said publicly that they conveyed support for CRT, oppose restrictions in state legislatures, and use schools to promote political activism. Is that what we want for our kids? To become political activists? I just would like them to learn how to read and to be able to write a coherent

[05:19:16] five-paragraph essay. They can worry about that later in their lives. This is why we have curriculum like Second Step, Learning for Justice, and New Zella, which don't measure anything. But they make a lot of people feel good with their happy words. But it's our kids that are paying the price in the end. Unions use their power and control to shove left-wing ideology down our kids' throats about how to disrupt and dismantle systems of oppression in 2023. But I think our kids should probably just

[05:19:52] be going to school to learn because our schools exist to educate. They don't exist to turn our children into political activists marching along the streets with their signs and standing in campus hallways booing judges who come to speak to them. If we want to retain teachers, we need to give them good training and we need to support them. I know there's a lot of frustration amongst

[05:20:26] teachers regarding the support that they get. I know there's a lot of frustration feeling that disciplinary actions are not handled appropriately, and I can understand because I walked through it and I lived it myself, but those are the things that need to be fixed, and collective bargaining will merely put a band-aid on these issues, and it will not yield the return that you think it will.

[05:20:49] So I think what we need to do is we need to take a serious look at the systemic issues we have in our school system, and we need to uncover those problems and address those, and that will lead to better teacher retention. It will lead to better teacher attraction, and it will lead to better teacher satisfaction. I support teachers, and I support your right to find the voice that you need to have a seat at the table, but I do not support standardizing something that simply cannot be

[05:21:24] standardized. Just like you can't standardize the work that a lawyer does or a doctor does, you cannot standardize teaching thank you mr madamey thank you chair it's uh there's a lot to say on this um but i guess i'll begin with my sort of initial i think a lot of people have asked me you know where has been my position on this collective bargaining and it's it's been a lot of a lot of thinking and a lot of deep searching into this um but i would go back to the time when we

[05:22:00] were looking to open school and i think there's still one board member that did not vote to open open the schools as we remember i think to mr morse there's only one board member that's still on the record that not did not support to open the schools that played heavily with me quite a bit because it's concerning that again our as a school board members and again as somebody who have been here you know covid was something um nobody planned nobody learned nobody understood what it was and we i guess you know again going back to what mr morse said we we went with the best knowledge with the best information we were given and making the decision about that

[05:22:38] so it's very difficult to go through the process and and eventually we opened up open up the school having said that I think we also started a process here in Loudoun County so we asked through the process that we asked the teachers and the LEA to go collect the signatures I think our ask was to have 50 plus one signature that the LEA body collects it and they did so for me sitting up here I can talk about many things about um you know pros and cons of it but I think when I look at majority of the teachers want this and that's why I'm going to support this tonight

[05:23:16] I support the rights of workers to organize and to effectively negotiate for better working conditions period we talk a lot about employee morale about attrition about the nationwide teacher shortage well as mr. Mehedeve just said a majority of our licensed teachers have indicated that they support collective bargaining that that is something they want that it's important enough to them for them to sign their name to it that it may play an important factor in where they choose

[05:23:52] to work in the future again if you're worried about employee morale about attrition about teacher shortages this is going to play a factor in the future when other school districts in Northern Virginia either already have moved or are moving this direction.

[05:24:09] The idea that unions kept our schools in LCPS from being open during COVID is simply wrong. That was the school board's decision. The buck stopped with us. That wasn't a union vote.

[05:24:25] There wasn't collective bargaining. There was no binding arbitration forcing us to do that. Just a majority of the board making that decision. So you can blame unions for things if you want to, but I was up here every week at that time, and the idea that the unions kept our schools closed here in Loudoun.

[05:24:42] I can't speak to what happened in other places in the country, but the idea that that's what happened here in Loudoun is simply wrong. Further discussion? Ms. Reiser, closing comments? No. Seeing none, we'll place the motion to a vote.

[05:24:58] All those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. Those opposed? That motion will pass 4-3-2, with Morse, Beatty, and Polifco opposed, and Corbo and Sheridan absent for the vote.

[05:25:20] With that, we will go right into 14-02 from the Legislative and Policy Committee. Revision of Policy 1030, a code of conduct for school board members. Ms. Reiser. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[05:25:42] I move that the Loudoun County School Board approve the staff revisions to policy 1030 a code of conduct for school board members as amended by the legislative and policy committee. Seconded by Mr. Morris. Was that seconded by Mr. Morris? Miss Rieser, would you like to speak to your motion? Sure. Thank you. So this policy came to committee with some revisions initiated by division counsel after the grand jury issued its recommendations.

[05:26:18] There are some minor language changes that we went over last time when this was an information item and I'd like to make a motion to strike the word "should" and replace it with the word "shall." I'm just trying to look for the line number.

[05:26:48] I lost it here. I'm sorry. Red line copy line number 20 so it would read that my fellow board members and I shall take the initiative in helping the people of this community and I can explain why if I can get a second. Is there a second? Seconded by Mr. Mahedive. Would you like to speak to your amendment? Mr. User, thank you. So at line 39 we see that the word "shall" is used and it's giving a directive instead of being aspirational, which is the difference between "should" and "shall."

[05:27:25] So I just to keep it consistent would like to make that motion further discussion on the amendment. Mr. Morse, I think I think "should" is a suggested recommendation where "shall" is mandatory. So but I support it. Did I say the opposite? I think we all agree. Okay. Violent agreement. I think we're good. Further discussion on the amendment seeing none all those in favor of changing "should" to "shall" on line 20. Please raise your hand. Say aye. Aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corbo and Sheridan.

[05:28:02] Absent for the vote so we are back to the base motion as amended further discussion seeing none. We'll place the policy changes as amended to a vote. All those in favor please raise your hands and say aye. Aye that motion will pass unanimously. A board members present with Corbeau and Sheridan absent for the vote. We're now on 1403 from the Student Services Committee revision of policy 8155 school assignment. Mr. Madby, thank you. Chair, so this is a policy that was brought up as an 8155 was brought up as an information item last time around and

[05:28:39] This is in response to the special grand jury recommendation. I could read to the summary of the entire thing but I think we discussed it. This policy I'll just go through the summary. The policy 8155 was presented initially back in student services committee on December 15th then brought it back to student services committee for a second reading on January 25th. The committee recommended changes can be committee voted to move this to full board. The amendment and the consent was then sent to back to discipline committee because they had some items in there. The Mr. Falcon he presented the policy on February 27 to

[05:29:16] Discipline committee it went through its process and voted to move the policy from discipline committee to the full board in March 14th it was presented as information item and we are here for the action item for it so I don't know if there any further questions. I know Dr. Jones is up here to help answer some questions. Board members, questions or discussion on the policy? Mr. Morse, I would propose either an amendment or a substitute motion, Mr. Mejedevi, whichever you prefer. That includes the language that I added in the red line,

[05:29:55] Lines 247 through 254. I'll just move to add that language to policy 8155. So it's the blue text. - It's the blue text, lines 247 through 254. I'll read it.

[05:30:10] After July 31st, parents may request a reassignment to a different school per section A instructional suitability by contacting the director of student services or their designee who will facilitate a review of the request in collaboration with the student's current school principal and chief of schools.

[05:30:26] Issues concerning student mental or physical health or that arise to significant life events may be addressed any time during the year and shall be allowed review by the appeals process captured in policy 2350. And I will second that. I had the same exact concern.

[05:30:42] Mr. Morris, would you like to speak to your amendment? No, it's just making sure that there is the possibility for a family that's in crisis to run through the entire appeal process. Thank you. Mr. Mahedavy. Thank you, Chair. I don't know, Dr. Jones, do you have any feedback on this?

[05:31:00] I recommend changing. Thank you, Mr. Mahedavy. I reviewed it with division counsel. fine with the addition further discussion on the amendment Ms. Ogadugbe just expressing appreciation I know this had come up in previous conversation so I support that change as well further discussion so we're I think we're a little out of order because mr. Mahedvi never made the base motion so we're

[05:31:40] gonna go back to that and then you can make you can make your amendment thank thank you okay so mr. Mahedvi I moved to the school board approved the revised policy 8155 as amended by mr. Morris second okay so that'll be the policy 8155 school assignment red line copy Morris recommended version from board docs which includes the amendment that was just under discussion mr. Mahedvy would you like to speak to your motion I think we have I've spoken I think mr.

[05:32:12] Morris has spoken so nothing further to add further discussion seeing none all those in favor of approving the Morris recommended version of the policy please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. That motion will pass unanimously. Board members present with Corbo and Sheridan absent for the vote. And we will move to 1404, also from the Student Services Committee, revision of policy 8290, threat assessment for the protection of schools.

[05:32:42] I'll start with a motion. Thank you, Chair. I move that the school board approve the revised policy 8290, threat assessment for the protection of schools. Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Mr. Morris Mr. Mahed we would like to speak to it thank you chair this one is like this is again a policy that's came out of recommendation from division counsel and responses of the special grand jury recommendation this policy started back and again student services committee back in January 25th this

[05:33:16] committee was voted out of the committee 2-0-1 on February with 2-0-1 back in February 15th and brought those information item last time around March 14th and here's tonight for action item uh i don't know if this is mr falconi to you if there any further questions uh on the policy i don't know if anything you want to add to this uh no mr pedigree i'm happy to answer any questions about it if uh any board members have any any questions or discussion regarding this policy and i don't remember there being any last meeting

[05:33:52] either it's just this was a recommendation from the special grand jury so we didn't place it on consent. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All those in favor of adopting the revisions to the policy please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. That motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corbo and Sheridan absent for the vote. We'll now move to 1405 from the Department of Student Services Autism Acceptance Month proclamation and right back to you Mr. Mahedvi.

[05:34:23] Thank you chair. I move that the Loudoun County School Board adopts the proclamation recognizing April 2023 as autism acceptance month. I'll read the proclamation: Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that one in 36 children have been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and whereas statistics from the Virginia Department of Education in December 2021 reported 25,373 students with autism as a primary disability in December of 2022, Loudoun County

[05:34:56] public school reported that 19,255 students with the primary disability category of autism are served in LCPS, whereas the increase in the number of students with ASD in Virginia mirrors national statistics and the subject of research is to better understand the causes of autism and the factors contributing to the rise in the number of children diagnosed and whereas Loudoun County's public schools celebrate autism acceptance by wearing red to support LCPS students with autism and their families on April 14, 2023, and support school-based efforts to

[05:35:35] provide special events promoting autism acceptance and whereas Loudoun County public school empowers all students to continue to grow in the five C's: critical thinking, critical creative thinking, communications, collaboration, and citizenship skills, an engaged community including families and caregivers are part of valuable collaboration with LCPS staff that supports open communication and respectful relationship resulting in positive outcomes for all involved and whereas Loudoun County public schools support these efforts and will continue to provide support and training to students, staff, and their families, now therefore

[05:36:11] we resolve that the Loudoun County School Board proclaims that April 2023 is declared an autism acceptance month. Sir, seconded by Miss Ogadeh Bay. Mr. Mahad, be anything further? No, chair. Thank you. Any further discussion on the proclamation?

[05:36:30] Ms. Polipko. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to make a brief public note of thanks to the Vice Chair of Communications, Mr. Metz in SEAC. He actually brought it to our attention that we had the incorrect information regarding the numbers of children who are affected by autism spectrum disorder.

[05:36:51] It's now one in 36. And he caught that error on the proclamation and notified us yesterday. So I just want to send a public note of thanks to him. Thank you. Further discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of adopting the proclamation for April as Autism Acceptance Month, please raise your hand and say aye.

[05:37:12] Aye. That motion will pass unanimously. Board members present with Corvo and Sheridan absent for the vote. That will bring us to 1406. Also from the Department of Student Services, the month of the Military Child Proclamation. Mr. Morse. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move the following proclamation.

[05:37:28] Month of Military Child, April 2023. Whereas April is the month of the military child, a special month to recognize and pay tribute to military families and their children for their daily sacrifices made and for their commitment, courage, and unconditional support of the armed forces.

[05:37:45] And whereas the Commonwealth of Virginia is home to more than 80,000 children whose parents serve in the military stationed in Virginia, 1,524 self-reported military-connected students attending Loudoun County Public Schools. And whereas military families and employees in Loudoun include active duty service members in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy, and Space Force, and as members of the Reserve and the National Guard.

[05:38:12] And whereas LCPS has 876 students who have a parent or guardian who is active duty, 340 students who have a parent or guardian who is in the Reserves, 308 students who have a parent or guardian who is in the National Guard, and 247 employees who have self-reported as military veterans.

[05:38:33] And whereas the children of our service members continue to make significant contributions to schools, communities, the nation, and our commonwealth, despite prolonged and repeated absences of one or both parents. And whereas military-connected children often demonstrate resilience, perseverance, maturity, and cultural competence in the face of frequent moves, family separations through deployments, and reintegration following deployments.

[05:38:59] and whereas the month of the military child provides an opportunity to salute our military children and acknowledge their contributions they bring to their families our schools our communities and our commonwealth and whereas virginia is a proud member of the interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children which addresses key transition issues encountered by military students including enrollment placement attendance eligibility and graduation and whereas across the nation individuals are encouraged to wear purple in april on april 19th 2023 in celebration of purple up for military kids to show support for

[05:39:39] military connected children and to thank them for their strength and sacrifices now therefore be it resolved that we as the loudon county school board recognize april 2023 as the month of the military child and encourage loudon county public schools and communities to celebrate this recognition with activities to honor the contributions of our students from military families and be it further resolved that the Loudoun County Public Schools expresses its sincere gratitude to military-connected students throughout Loudoun County for their service to our great nation.

[05:40:10] Seconded by Mr. Mejedevi. Mr. Morse, would you like to speak any further? Just as a military child myself and as the son to a military child, my father was a military child and my grandfather was a military child, so I would fully support this. Thank you.

[05:40:26] further discussion and thank you for your service seeing none all those in favor of the motion to adopt april as the month of the military child please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with miss corvo and miss sheridan absent for the vote that will conclude our action items and we will start on our information items starting with 1501 from the finance operations committee supplemental request for supply chain assistance funding for the school nutrition services fund mr. Morris thank you mr.

[05:41:04] chair I'll pass this straight to miss Willoughby thank you so this is a request to increase the school nutrition services fund by 1 million 316 thousand four hundred forty one dollars this is a result of a second round of USDA funding to school divisions to assist with the ongoing supply chain disruptions price fluctuations etc so of this fun of this funding it is still limited as it was with the first round in its use that we can only use these funds to purchase unprocessed or minimum minimally processed foods this is coming

[05:41:43] out of committee and once the school board if the school board should approve this then we would continue with sending this to the county to increase the budget allocation thank you any questions or discussion on this item interest in placing this on consent for our next board meeting looks like thumbs up all around so we'll place this on consent that will take us to 1502 from

[05:42:15] HRTD future school calendar update and options miss Boland good evening I know you thought you were done with calendars but not so much as mentioned during the development process for the 2324 school calendar HRTD's goal for

[05:42:50] staff and families has been to develop and present for your approval multi-year school calendars. HRTD has gathered stakeholder feedback and has drafted several calendar options for the 24-25 and 25-26 school years for your review this evening. LCPS is committed to centering the work around helping every student pursue and reach their full potential and empowering them to make meaningful contributions to the world. The creation and adoption of the student school

[05:43:26] calendar is a foundational step to fulfilling that mission. Tonight, we bring before the board future school calendar options for two additional school years, 2024, 2025, and 2025-26. As you can imagine, it is a difficult and complex endeavor to build a school calendar that meets the needs of more than 80,000 students and their families and follows LCPS policy and Virginia code,

[05:43:56] All while recognizing that it will also set the foundation for more than 30 working calendars impacting over 12,000 employees while staying true to our core values and the 2027 strategic plan for excellence.

[05:44:15] We have not taken lightly the responsibility this task calls for. In preparation of tonight's presentation, our team has gathered feedback in a variety of formats from various stakeholders. Before beginning the drafting phase of future calendar options, HRTD reviewed previous feedback received during the development and adoption of the 2023-24 school calendar.

[05:44:41] This included re-watching school board meetings, listening to public comment, as well as feedback and board member discussion. The team utilized the licensed staff survey sent out in September 2022 to better understand staff priorities for a successful school year.

[05:44:57] Those lessons were a great place to start. However, the goal was to provide future calendar options that met the needs of the largest majority of families and staff members. To accomplish this, additional surveys were sent to staff and families in February of 2023.

[05:45:18] I will review the outcomes of those surveys in greater detail in the next slide. From this initial information, the team drafted three calendar options for the 24-25 school year and two options for the 25-26 school year. These drafts were presented for feedback at the principal advisory committee. During this session principals shared the need for an additional option providing for an earlier end date to the school year. This feedback resulted in the development of an additional calendar option for each future school year. Four draft calendar

[05:45:57] options for the 24-25 school year and three for the 25-26 school year were then presented for feedback at the teacher advisory committee in this meeting teachers were asked to prioritize the three most important factors to be considered in the creation of a school staff calendar in order of priority the top three responses were one an earlier end date two a two-week winter break and three, a mid-August start date.

[05:46:32] Additionally, HRTD team members are actively participating in a calendar alignment committee, which consists of six local school divisions. In these meetings, discussions center around calendar development best practices and opportunities for future alignment of calendars.

[05:46:51] In reviewing standard practices, most participating divisions have either already adopted or plan to propose multi-year calendars. As mentioned on the previous slide, HRTD worked collaboratively with the research office to create and distribute the staff and family calendar survey for future school calendars.

[05:47:20] Questions included preferences for the start of school length, length of break, school holidays, and the end of the school year. The data shown on this slide reflects the preferences identified by both staff and families. Full survey results are also included in tonight's information item for your reference.

[05:47:41] In relation to spring break, responses from both groups indicated a preference to maintain a longer one full week spring break, and neither group reported an interest in re-evaluating when spring break occurs. Both groups indicated a preference to represent Veterans Day as a school holiday, but differed in their preference to reevaluate the current number of LCPS school holidays.

[05:48:08] 35% of staff stated LCPS should not reevaluate its holidays. However, 41% of families responded that they would like for LCPS to reevaluate the number of school holidays. As requested, we also included a question focused on the possibility of alternative school calendar schedules for consideration in future years.

[05:48:32] Although 68% of staff responses showed interest in a four-day student week, only 26% of families expressed an interest in this option. The majority of family respondents, 35%, preferred none of the options presented.

[05:48:54] As we commit to centering our work around students, we recognize that teachers are an important factor in helping our students meet their educational goals. As such, it is critical that we provide educators with the time needed to prepare for a successful school year. The student school calendar lays the foundation for the creation of an effective teacher work calendar, and it is this pair of calendars, the student calendar and the teacher calendar, that then creates the standard by which all other staff calendars are developed.

[05:49:31] Based on the feedback we have received, we have drafted five calendar options for the 24-25 school year. All options include 180 instructional days for students and 194 scheduled working days with three unscheduled working days for 197-day contracted teachers. This is consistent with the adopted 2023-24 school calendar. If I could take a moment to highlight just a few things in each

[05:50:04] of the options specific to student calendar option one. The first day for students is Thursday, August 22nd, and would maintain current practice occurring two Thursdays before Labor Day and allowing for both an A day and a B day to occur that first week for secondary students. This calendar offers fairly consistent quarters and provides students with Veterans Day off and a full two-week winter break with a last day for students on Wednesday, June 18th. In the corresponding

[05:50:40] option one for teachers, staff would return to work on Wednesday, August 14th, six days prior to the first day of school. Teachers would be provided the Friday before Labor Day and the Monday holiday off, Veterans Day off, two full weeks off for winter break, and a year ending on Monday, June 23rd. Specific to student calendar option two, the first day for students is again August 22nd. This calendar offers equal quarters at 45 days each, provides students with two full

[05:51:19] week winter break, but does not have Veterans Day as a school holiday, and provides a last day for students of Tuesday, June 17th. The corresponding option two for teachers would have staff return to

work on Wednesday August 14th again six days prior to the first day of school and would provide teachers the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off a full two weeks off for winter break but does not recognize Veterans Day as a school holiday and again has a year end date of Friday

[05:51:55] June 20th. Specific to student calendar option three the first day for students is again Thursday August 22nd. This calendar offers consistent quarters, provides two less days off for winter break, does not have a Veterans Day recognized as a holiday, and provides students with a last day of school as Friday, June 13th. The corresponding option three for teachers would have staff return

[05:52:28] on Wednesday, August 14th, would again provide the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off, does not have Veterans Day as a school holiday, and again provides less days for winter break, with an end to their year being on Tuesday, June 17th. Student Calendar Option 4, which came out of the Principal Advisory Committee, identifies Thursday, August 15th as the first day of school.

[05:53:00] This calendar offers consistent quarters, recognizes Veterans Day as a school holiday, and provides for a full two-week winter break with a last day for students as Wednesday, June 11th.

[05:53:16] In the corresponding option four for teachers, staff would return to work much earlier on Wednesday, August 7th, again, six days prior to the first day of school. Teachers would be provided the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off. They would have Veterans Day off and two full weeks off for winter break and end their school year on Friday, June 13th.

[05:53:41] Calendar option five, which was the result of the teacher advisory committee, has a first day for students of Monday, August 19th, occurring two full weeks before Labor Day. And again, that is a Monday start. This calendar offers consistent quarters, recognizes Veterans Day as a holiday, provides a two full week winter break, and has a last day for students as Friday, June 13th.

[05:54:10] The corresponding teacher, option five, would have teachers return on Monday, August 12th, five days prior to the first day of school, would not offer the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday as a off day, would have Veterans Day recognized as a school holiday and provide for two full weeks off for winter break and have teachers end their school year on Tuesday, June 17th.

[05:54:38] In summary, the most significant difference between options one and two is whether or not Veterans Day is recognized as a holiday. Option three mirrors the adopted 23-24 school calendar option. And options four and five were drafted, again, as a result of staff stakeholder feedback.

[05:54:59] Moving on to the drafted 25-26 school year calendars, we have options which include the same considerations as what was presented in the 2425 options however you will notice there are only four options for this school year due to the days of the week on which christmas eve and christmas day fall there's not an option for the 2526 school year that mirrors the 2425 calendar option with less than a two-week winter break taking a moment to highlight a few things in each of the 2526

[05:55:35] calendar options specific to student calendar option one the first day for students would be thursday august 21st and would maintain current practice occurring two thursdays before labor day and allowing for both an a and a b day to occur that first week for secondary students this calendar has consistent quarters recognizes veterans day as a school holiday and provides students with two full week winter break. The last day of school for students would be Wednesday, June 17th. The

[05:56:13] corresponding teacher option would return staff to work on Wednesday, August 13th, six days prior to the first day of school. Teachers would be provided the Friday before the Monday Labor Day off, have Veterans Day off, and two full weeks off for winter break. Their year would end on Monday, June 22nd. Specific to student calendar option two, the first day for students is again Thursday, August 21st. This calendar offers consistent quarters but does not have Veterans Day recognized

[05:56:46] as a holiday but does provide a full two-week winter break and a last day for students of Tuesday, June 16th. In the corresponding teacher option, teachers return to work on Wednesday, August 13th, six days prior to the first day of school. This option provides the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off does not have Veterans Day recognized but offers two full weeks for winter break and ends the year on Thursday June 18th. Specific to student calendar option three

[05:57:24] the first day for students is Thursday August 14th. This calendar has inconsistent quarters recognizes Veterans Day as a school holiday and provides two full weeks for winter break with a last day for students of Wednesday, June 10th.

[05:57:42] In the corresponding teacher option three, staff return on Wednesday, August 6th, six days prior to the first day of school. Teachers would again be provided the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off, have Veterans Day off in two full weeks for winter break with a year scheduled to end on Friday, June 12th.

[05:58:04] Specific to student calendar option four, the first day for students would be Monday, August 18th, Occurring two Mondays before Labor Day, this calendar offers consistent quarters, recognizes Veterans Day as a holiday, and provides two full weeks for winter break, with a last day for students of Friday, June 12th.

[05:58:25] In the corresponding teacher option, staff would return on Monday, August 11th, five days prior to the first day of school, and would not have the Friday before the Monday Labor Day holiday off, but would have Veterans Day off and two full weeks off for winter break.

[05:58:42] their school year would end on Tuesday, June 16th. In summary, the most significant difference between options one and two is whether or not Veterans Day is recognized as a holiday. There is no option that mirrors the 24/25 calendar option with a shorter winter break.

[05:59:03] And options three and four were drafted as a result of staff stakeholder feedback. The chart on this slide provides the board with a snapshot of the differences between each option for both staff and students as discussed on the previous slides.

[05:59:20] As mentioned earlier, all proposed student calendar options offer a total of 180 student days and all presented teacher calendar options include 194 scheduled working days and three unscheduled working days for a standard 197 day teacher calendar, affording teachers non-student working days for professional development, unencumbered planning, online annual training completion, and other work-related activities.

[05:59:53] I know that was a lot to digest, but it is my hope that we have provided the board with well-thought-out and researched options and the information necessary to confidently discuss and ultimately decide how to move forward as a division to support our students and staff for future years.

[06:00:15] So what's next? Ideally, the team would send out a survey to families and staff asking that they prioritize or rank the calendar options following tonight's meeting. However, recognizing that spring break begins with the end of the school day this Friday, March 31st, HRTD has decided to hold the survey until staff and students return from break.

[06:00:38] Therefore, the survey will be sent on Monday, April 10th and run through Monday, April 17th. Once closed, HRTD will work with the research office to collect and summarize survey results to provide to the school board along with future calendar options as an action item at the April 25th, 2023 board meeting.

[06:01:01] HRTD will continue discussions and review of all feedback received tonight and in the future for the development of all future year calendars. We intend to continue to participate in principal and teacher advisory committee meetings and work with neighboring school divisions to provide calendars that best support the needs of all students, staff, and family.

[06:01:24] Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions. Board members, any questions regarding the future year calendar options? Ms. Okadekbe. Thank you, Chair Sorotkin, and thank you for the presentation.

[06:01:40] I had two questions. The first was, were we able to survey more specifically, have a follow-up to prompt both employees who are veterans as well? I guess we haven't done the outreach to parents and guardians yet.

[06:01:57] But for employees that are veterans, would we specifically do a follow-up to prompt them for a response? So we sent a reminder based on what is self-identified, but that was all that we can do. That's a self-identified feature for employees.

[06:02:13] And do we have a way with the survey results to, is it anonymous, or can you track back and figure out from veterans what the sentiment is? I'll just say from a, I was moved by Mr. Morse's expression of his experience as both a military child, a veteran himself, about how he views Veterans Day and what it means to him as a veteran to be in the schools and be able to celebrate with his children.

[06:02:44] And so I am not a veteran, nor do I have veterans in my family. So I want to be respectful of that population because it's not my experience. So I'm curious what we can glean from surveys. So the survey is anonymous, and I would have to work with the research office to see how that could potentially be determined.

[06:03:10] The other thought I have just off the top of my head is whether or not we could add a self-identifying checkbox on the next survey that goes out in regards to the prioritization of options.

[06:03:27] but I can work with the office to see if that's possible. Okay, I would appreciate that. The second one was, and you and I had had a brief conversation about it, and I think we said we'll talk about that in more detail later, but I know there's often a lot of questions around the number of snow days that are baked into the calendar, so I wanted to ask if you can provide an explanation because it's not as easy as just remove them and the year is shortened, So if you can talk through that with us, that would be helpful.

[06:04:00] So I think there's a couple ways to approach snow days. The code specifically determines a formula for instructional hours and snow days in regards to students. We don't factor in snow days when determining the number of work days for staff.

[06:04:22] Staff work days are based upon the number of days that they are contracted for. So if we decided, if the board, it was the consensus of the board to decide to reduce the number of snow days, thereby reducing the number of instructional days for students, there would need to be a conversation or a discussion in regards to the reduction of the number of days that we are then asking staff to work and whether or not that would then

[06:04:56] result in an impact to salary does that help and I just I wanted to ask for those who have been on the board previously has this ever been a discussion before I'm just trying to get some background on this particular topic just because every calendar cycle that I've been through even just before being on the board snow days always comes up and unfortunately and sad for me as someone from New England there was zero snow all winter so mr. Morris thank you surprise

[06:05:35] you're seeing as I'm the only one up here left no it comes up every year I mean the discussion is always trying to determine you know why do we have so many snow days built in but if you're working backwards from the teachers calendar then it makes sense that the student calendar obviously has to mirror that and we talked about an adjustment that would be necessary to the contract language if we were going to change the number of work days per year and that has all kinds of other implicate but but the discussion always comes up and it's

[06:06:08] never been tackled miss Reeser and then mr. Maddy so if I understand what you're saying correctly we could reduce the number of instructional days since there are extra minutes baked into every day for snow days and we could leave the teacher contracts as they are and teachers would then have if we reduce it let's say by one day they would have an extra unencumbered day and that would not have any

[06:06:45] fiscal impact so that would that would need to be the consensus of the board um if that was the direction we wanted to go if I can just give an example as to this school year for an example um the the school calendar adopted for this school year was reduced from 180 instructional days to 170 instructional days, and in turn, that reduction led to the staff-teacher calendar

[06:07:21] being reduced from 194 scheduled working days to 184 scheduled working days, so a total of 13 unscheduled, unencumbered working days. I'm not sure that those 13 days were understood, that they were still part of the contract.

[06:07:51] So technically could be considered unencumbered, unscheduled work days. Sure. And I think that was an exceptional and unusual situation. Of course, we're talking about doing this intentionally, so there would be no confusion.

[06:08:08] And there's a big difference between one and 13 days. In fact, I think when we added holidays, we didn't discuss how it would impact the teacher calendar. That happened without anyone on the board realizing what was happening, so it probably should have been discussed at the time.

[06:08:25] So I think this is a completely different conversation, so I'm not sure if that example correlates in a helpful way. I think what my colleague is, I was trying to paraphrase what Ms. Ogadegebe and what a lot of students may be trying to get at, which is we do have a lot of extra time built in, and I'm not advocating for removing it.

[06:08:49] I think especially with the period of time that we lost to COVID, it may not be the best time to reduce instructional days, but to answer the question, that's how it would be done. Oh, sorry. I said you could go next. Okay. I think another way of phrasing it, a different way of phrasing it is we're teaching kids

more than the minimum number of hours that's legally required, and I'm not sure that's a bad thing. Mr. Mejedevi.

[06:09:20] you chair I was gonna say that but I think my question was different and I'm Miss Bowen thank you for this count multiple year calendar I have two questions and I'm gonna go back to my I think the same question I asked you was year-round schools considered during this build all of this calendar because I think I did hear some feedback that there are many folks that could be open for that especially the staff and so just asking you know why that was you You know, I know it's going to be a radical idea, but I think just to kind of put it up, I mean, that was considered.

[06:09:57] And second, I think, you know, spring break, again, this is another challenge. It changes every year. And that's also the feedback I've heard is can we stabilize that or can we make it consistent that every year we can expect the spring break to happen every year the same week versus now, you know, it's different and so on and so forth.

[06:10:21] So thank you for those questions. We did, in the survey, in the February 2023 survey, as well as in the license survey, we asked two questions. One of those questions was, essentially, would you want us to consider any of the following in consideration of drafting future calendars?

[06:10:49] And year-round schooling was one of those. Actually, it was two of them. One was year-round schooling, as is done at Middleburg Charter, and another was year-round schooling with larger breaks in between.

[06:11:05] So that was one there and was not identified as a large majority at all. In fact, families were heavily against changing the calendar and reevaluating any of the alternative options.

[06:11:24] As far as spring break was concerned, we did ask and part of being participating in this community group with the local school divisions is to address some of those concerns.

[06:11:41] and if we are going to select a specific date to align it as much as possible with our neighboring school divisions where we may have employees that have children in those divisions or vice versa. So essentially the result to that question in regards to having spring break be consistent, there didn't seem to be any desire from staff or from families to have a consistent spring break.

[06:12:19] So I'll stay with that, the spring break. Is that because it just that's something that they haven't thought about or that's just something? It was a specific question asked, so I'm not sure if it wasn't because it wasn't thought about.

[06:12:36] but it will be something that we continue to speak about in the calendar alignment committee with the six local school divisions because i think that would be really i mean fantastic there's one more radical idea i have but i'll i'll come back to come that so could you go back to you saying the parents the families were not i shouldn't use supportive but they're they were not supporting

[06:13:01] the idea of year-round school is that is that how you expressed it so only 26 percent of families expressed an interest in any option or in the four four day student week and the majority of family respondents preferred none of the options presented can you elaborate so the options were four days a

[06:13:40] So the options were a four-day student week, year-round school, similar to the way that the Middleburg Charter does, and year-round school in regards to longer breaks.

[06:13:56] I think there was an additional option, but I can't remember it off the top of my head. I'd have to dive into the survey results. And we asked that same question in the fall, in September, before the 23-24 calendars were presented. and we asked it again in February in regards to these calendars.

[06:14:15] And only 19% of families preferred year-round school. I mean, again, I'm sure the numbers speak for themselves. At the same time, I think it's just a matter of getting more awareness in education. It's not on your part, on LCPS' part, to do that, but I think the awareness needs to be in terms of the pros and cons and the value of having year-round schools versus not.

[06:14:41] So as far as coming back to the spring break, so the options are, I think I see that the spring break is being set for the week of April 13th, I guess, going for the year 24-25.

[06:14:58] And so that's not going to change. I mean, that's what the staff is proposing right now to be there. So right now, spring break moves with Easter. And as far as staff were concerned, 51% of staff want spring break to move with Easter.

[06:15:17] And 45% of families want spring break to move with Easter. So it was an overwhelming percentage that wanted spring break. And what was the families that did not, I guess, if it's not 45%, was it just simply 55% or was it something else then after that?

[06:15:35] I'd have to dive in. I'd have to pull up the results to dive into those specifics. They are included, and I can certainly dive in. And the third item is, again, I know it's kind of getting late, but this is the time that's being presented, so I apologize.

[06:15:57] But coming back to the winter break, I think this year we have, well, not this year, yeah, I guess next year, we're going to be having less number of winter break days. There's also some thoughts presented about, again, if people want to take vacations during the spring break, and it's pretty costly to go in the end of December, but I think I like the idea in one of those options where it's kind of bleeding up into January week, so it goes all the way to, over the 5th is Sunday, so the 1st, 2nd, 3rd are our holidays, student holidays, and holiday and student holidays, and 4th and 5th.

[06:16:34] Has that also come up? I don't think you did a survey, but just to kind of break it up, so folks want to take a break in winter break, the flights, I'm sure, are much cheaper on January 2nd than they are on December 24th. So that's not something that's come up or something we can even poll in the future, I guess.

[06:16:52] I mean, that has not come up. We've never heard of the desire to change when winter break is, and it does align with other local school divisions. But that has not been presented as a survey option.

[06:17:10] I'm sure it certainly could. And just to pull up, I did pull up the spring break responses. It was 51% of families preferred that spring break move with Easter. 38% considered moving it to a fixed week, and 17% had no preference.

[06:17:33] Any additional questions or discussion? Okay. So board members, I've been working with staff, and they've identified four information items that are time-sensitive, and we have to cover tonight. So without objection, we're going to go 1503, then 1505, then 1509, and then 1511, and then postpone the rest until another time or next meeting.

[06:18:01] so we will move to 1503 from HRTD committee policy 7304 licensed employee transfers and involuntary reassignment miss Okedegbe thank you chair I move that the Loudoun County School Board

accept the revisions to policy miss Okedegbe this is an information item tonight my apologies also there it's a yeah it's getting very late so as background on this policy this was this had actually come before the board as an information item in February and an

[06:18:40] action item on February 28th and through a gratuitous amount of back and forth it was referred back to committee as mr. Morse mentioned we met on this last week and the committee voted 3-0 to send the policy back to the school board as as an information item with some revisions which are now reflected in the red line version

[06:19:13] I'm just looking at something hold on just double checking that the version is there hold on one second it's very late okay so I was looking at the regulations so the red line version of the policy is now there and essentially the conversation that was going back and forth on this was related to where the line was between policy and

[06:19:51] regulation and in the version that we were looking at in February really the majority of the content was moved into the regulation and during the committee meeting last week and as mr. Morse mentioned with input from LEA we moved to bring two sections back from regulation into policy and the result of that is that the eligibility criteria for who is eligible to ask for a transfer

[06:20:25] transfer and who may be selected for involuntary reassignment is spelled out in policy so that there is more transparency and visibility into this process and oversight from the board so that was that was essentially the result of the adjustments that are now in board docs for review board members are there any questions regarding the policy revisions seeing none interest in

[06:21:00] placing this on consent for our next board meeting and I see all thumbs up so we'll place this on consent for our April 11th April 11th for meeting okay so that's we're gonna skip to 1505 from the specialized programs and centers committee recommendation regarding Middleburg community charter schools mr. Morse so we had lengthy discussions at the last SPC concerning the audit and the findings on Middleburg Community Charter School it's been an ongoing

[06:21:37] issue. I think what what I'm going to propose we end up doing is that we we return this to committee so that we can actually have an audit that's going to be performed sometime further in between the time of notification and the time of the audit. My understanding is that they received the letter on January 10th. The audit was conducted 21 days later and a lot of the audit findings when we went

[06:22:11] back and looked through it they were from errors that were preceding the committee meeting so in other words what had what the what the Charter School did not have time to do was go back into the entire year and go through all the books because they only had three weeks so what we'd like to do is what I'm proposing we do is just send this back to committee so that because we have two audits available we have another audit available we can provide some time for them to thoroughly review all of their documentation all the way back to July

[06:22:46] 1st because the audit covered the period from July 1st all the way through December 31st I believe they were informed in December and the the note the letter came out signed by you and signed by them on the 17th of January I believe and the audit was conducted three weeks later so what what what I'm proposing we do is allow allow this to return back to committee for us to review the timing and to make a recommendation as to whether to go ahead and proceed with the second audit provide a date to

Middleburg Community Charter School on when that second audit would be and hold that probation in abeyance until we

[06:23:26] know what what occurs at that at the second agenda at the second audit I'm sorry. So are you making that as a motion to refer back? Yes. So I will move to return the recommendation to the SPC for re-evaluation. Is there a second? Second. Seconded by Mr. Beatty.

[06:23:48] Do you want to speak further to your motion? No. I just think that if we're going to have an audit and this has implications just beyond the audit as well. Part of my concern is that it may impact their teacher recruiting and student recruiting as well and I certainly don't want to tear into that without them having a full period in which from their notification to the audit that they're able to go back and and you know they just brought on a new financial advisor so for them to have the opportunity to go back and look at the entire year and go through the the books

[06:24:25] for the year before we address the second audit. Mr. Madby. Thank you chair I guess I just want to like the staff any recommendations perspective on this to send it back to committee or I know since this is brought up I guess we only bringing these two items forward tonight versus others so I'm just curious thank you for that question I would just mention that the reason why we are here is that this has been five years in the making so it wasn't just the result of one audit

[06:25:03] necessarily that what we were doing as part of the corrective action plan that the school board had approved on January 10th was to do additional unannounced on-site audits to help make sure that they were making the necessary corrections identified in the external annual audit so I'm concerned that we're kind of stripping my perception is that perhaps we're stripping away the history and focusing on just the one single audit, but that really, this has been a concern that has been brought forward.

[06:25:43] And then I just had one clarifying question, if I heard you correctly, Mr. Morse, did you want us to provide the date of when we would be going back out there for the second audit? I don't know that we have to provide a precise date. What I'm more concerned about is that there's ample time for them to go back through the entire year through the fiscal year to July 1st so that with their new bookkeeping in place that they'd be able to go back through the entire year of books and review that before we attempt the

[06:26:16] second audit. I just found that the timing was difficult given the circumstances. I agree with you in that it's been they've had problems with the books for several years. As the chair of the SPC last year, I was the one who made the recommendation to have the two audits, and the board had approved that.

[06:26:34] My intention on having the audits is to be able to ensure that they are on track to correct those issues. I don't think that they have, in fact, based on that audit, we know that they have not completed those corrections, but I also believe that if we're going to audit them, we should provide them sufficient time after the audit notification to go back through the entire year to audit their own books to get financial advisors in there to address those so you know I'm not letting up on them I believe we have that second audit and the whole reason behind the second audit was to put teeth

[06:27:13] into this process and so the first audit identified the issues they continue obviously we're not happy about that but we also have to be realistic in that we We didn't set them up for success by giving them an audit so quickly after we signed the letter or the chairman signed the letter.

[06:27:30] Ms. Reiser. Maybe just because it's late, but I'm having trouble synthesizing. We're supposed to be giving them unannounced audits? Per the corrective action plan, what was included in that was two unannounced on-site financial audits to occur before June 30th.

[06:27:54] Okay, and if I could address Mr. Morse, Mr. Chair, is your trouble with this that the unannounced audit was too close to the previous one? Yeah, it's not the fact that it was unannounced. It's the fact that given the amount of time, given the amount of work expected to go back through the entire year and to correct the books and to make all those adjustments, to get the notification signed by the board here on June, I believe, 17th, and then have the audit the first week of February.

[06:28:27] I just don't think we set them up for success in that first audit. We still have the second audit available. That's there in order to make sure that they are going to comply, and I think we can continue to hold that over their head. That will happen between now and June 30th, so we will have the opportunity to go back and revisit this, and I expect we will.

[06:28:49] And if the results aren't up to our standards, then there's absolutely no excuse. Was it January and February or June and February? January. So the audit covers the period of the whole fiscal year from June 30th or July 1st all the way through December 31st, I believe, was the period that they covered in there.

[06:29:11] No? What was the end date on that? No. So, again, the external audit was for fiscal 22. So that ended June 30th. Because of the ongoing repetitive nature of the concerns and deficiencies, we brought forward concerns for the second year.

[06:29:33] So you may recall last year we also brought forward the same concerns to the committee as well as to the school board. And at that time for the fiscal 21 audit, the school board issued a letter and they needed to respond and provide what they were going to do to fix the issues.

[06:29:50] Then we proceed to fiscal 22, the external audit identified the same deficiencies as well as additional deficiencies. So at that time, I brought forward to the committee, to the specialized programs and centers committee, the findings as well as the ongoing concern.

[06:30:09] And then that's when the plan, the corrective action plan was put in place and adopted by the school board or approved by the school board on January 10th. The audits that LCPS was going to conduct internally was to help them make sure that they were making progress on the matters identified from the external audit.

[06:30:34] So I want to emphasize, I see our audits being more complimentary to the external audit and also just trying to provide some additional checks and balances because what happens, obviously the external audit, it only happens once a year. And so to wait a whole year cycle, I mean, that's a very long time, especially when we have a pattern of five years of ongoing concerns.

[06:30:58] So that's why we wanted to get in there sooner to see what was going on. From my perspective as well, even though this was approved on January 10th, we had discussions beginning earlier than that with the committee as well as with MCCC regarding the concerns.

[06:31:16] as well as that they obviously receive the auditor's report. So respectfully, I would say that I would expect them to have immediately, once you get the auditor's report, to start making sure that remediative actions were occurring, that they were going back and making corrective actions.

[06:31:37] We should not be the catalyst because we came out and did an additional audit to be that catalyst. And to me, that's not where the expectation starts. So if the issues that are internal audit identified in fiscal with regard to fiscal year 21, are those still problematic as of the most recent external audit?

[06:32:06] Can you repeat your question? You threw me when you said fiscal 21. Sorry. So you said that there were issues with fiscal 22 and fiscal 21, right? Correct. Yes. I'm sorry. Yes. Yes. So the most recent external audit, the unannounced one was in February?

[06:32:27] Correct. February 8th. Is that identifying issues from fiscal 21 as well as fiscal 22? No, we just reviewed year to date for fiscal 23. So we went from July 1st through February 8th.

[06:32:44] So it wasn't either 21 or 21. Right. Fiscal 21 is done. Fiscal 22 is done. We were looking at this year more as, again, kind of like an in-progress audit rather than waiting. Are they the same types of problems as you saw in the previous two fiscal years? Yes.

[06:33:04] - Mr. Beatty. - Thank you Mr. Chair. I would just speak out loud, I guess we can't talk to our colleagues, but I think going through, working in a school and going through the audit process, like these things take time. So I think that's why I'm sympathetic with Mr. Morse's idea of sending this back to committee to give the school more time because when you have findings and stuff like, especially as egregious as they seem to be, I think it takes time to fix those issues and to correct the matters.

[06:33:36] So I think it's not, again, it's sort of the timeline of setting when you're going to agree to a plan and then checking up on it in a short amount of time when it is, again, a small school, I believe a part-time bookkeeper.

[06:33:53] So I think those are the factors that go into this, and it's not trying to get them off the hook or something, but it's trying to provide a better opportunity for them to fix these issues and to correct the material errors and then help them have a healthy operating procedures and stuff going forward.

[06:34:19] So I think that's kind of the idea behind it, and that's why I think this is something to go back to the committee for us to talk about more. So I want to, speaking as, I'm not on the SBC committee this year, but I was on it in 2022 and 2021, and I think also in 2020 when it was the charter.

[06:34:37] I think I've been on it all three years back when it was the charter committee. there this it's been the same issue the same audit findings with Middleburg Charter for at least three years five years five years so the the the argument that they need more time to resolve it I just I can't I can't buy it at this point like I understand that the corrective action plan wasn't finalized by January but they knew months before that in the fall that that's the recommendation that was coming out of committee, that's what the board was likely going to

[06:35:14] approve. I just can't make any more excuses for them on why they didn't have these audit findings corrected. So we could have gone straight to probation. We settled in committee on the corrective action plan in the fall instead, which I supported at the time. But given that the issues are still ongoing, even knowing how seriously the board was taking the issue and that we had put them on the corrective action plan, I can't support bringing this back to committee again.

[06:35:45] Additional discussion. Ms. Okadekebe. I think two points. The first one, understanding that this wasn't a surprise that this corrective action plan would incorporate unannounced on-site audits.

[06:36:04] was known that this would be asked and you know I don't know if there's back and forth with them in terms of informing the final language or if that's stipulated by the board but presumably there I don't know that's a question they have the option to say but not to be you know but not to be sooner than 30 days from the point at which it's enacted you know is there I don't know if they had presumably you could have scheduled an unscheduled audit on January 18th so I'm

[06:36:44] also I understand the concern but I think hearing that there are long-standing issues I think the other concern is it's one thing to correct the books and correct to correct the errors but what I'm not hearing is although it does sound like there's a new staff member on board procedurally and process wise what's changing to allow them to adhere to best practices from an accounting standpoint mr. Morse yes so there the history is there I mean obviously they

[06:37:24] they've had issues in the past what I'm looking at is the actions that we gave them the two audits that we proposed we're supposed to help them you know review for them to get everything together to review and to set them on the right path.

[06:37:42] And that's why we had two audits. I didn't, because I did not envision that one audit would throw them over into probation. That's why the whole, doing an audit, doing one audit is a single point of time. But when you're making adjustments to your system and when you're bringing in new people and you have new training, then, you know, the second audit was supposed to be the final, was supposed to be the graduation.

[06:38:06] It was supposed to be where all of their problems were cleaned up. They've admitted that they had the problems. They also admitted that they lost their part-time financial person, and I believe they replaced them. Now they have external financial people coming in to help them straighten out their books.

[06:38:23] So that's why we put two audits in there, not just one. I do worry that we're looking at the livelihood of the school at this point. them on probation could impact their recruiting and their their student enrollment that's why I would be of the mindset to allow them to complete their their corrections do the second audit and that's that's the end game that's the the graduation point at which all the all the corrections need to be completed at that point so again that was the intention behind the two audits I did

[06:39:00] not even really consider that at the first audit which rolled out very quickly that we were going to immediately put him on probation so as as the chair of the committee that was that was my thought process as to why I put two audits in there Mr. Madby I'll be quick Ms. Villaby I guess the probation means that I mean that just be on probation and they'll have to act get their act together to make sure that they they get out of the probation what would the next step being being in probation and what the next steps I think Maybe Dr. Ellis or perhaps Mr. Falcone

[06:39:39] could probably be better to ask. - So probation is authorized by the charter agreement and that requires that the board issue a written notice of any deficiencies or violations of breaches of the charter agreement.

[06:40:03] And then the charter school has to submit a remedial plan to the board. And it's essentially a step before revocation. So, I mean, they can still operate during the probation. They just have to go and do the remediation of that. So that's, I mean, that would just put some unnoticed versus just giving them, it's been five years.

[06:40:22] So I think, I mean, again, from what I'm hearing is that if it's been consistent and even given ample chance, perhaps probation is the way that they go back and really clean up their books and hopefully meet the audit in the future. Ms. Soka Dugbe.

[06:40:40] Thank you, Chair. would tend to agree with mr. Morse on this that the corrective action plan called for two unscheduled or unannounced audits and we have had one so I understand again the concerns the history but we said we'll give you two chances so I'm wondering why we're moving to recommendation for probation at this point so I understand my misunderstanding I believe I'll ask staff to correct me if I get this wrong but I think the language of the corrective

[06:41:16] action plan said if at any point during this process that the staff or the school board feel that appropriate or sufficient progress is not being made that further steps could be considered so there's we I think the best case scenario was we certainly wanted them to get through the two audits and correct their problems but i think after the first audit staff raised concerns that they had not made what in their opinion was sufficient progress and recommended i don't know if actually i don't know if staff recommended probation or if they just left that up to the committee but

[06:41:52] probation is what came out of committee correct there was no staff recommendation further discussion miss reaser and then mr madby so just to make sure i've understood correctly i want to summarize it wasn't that they were promised to audits it's more that we gave them notice that there may be up to two and if at any point you're not keeping on track with where we think you're going to be one of you shaking your head no one of you shaking your head yes no I mean between so that's what I'm

[06:42:29] understanding mr. Serrat can to say I I just if this was us as in our board or LCPS, can you imagine what we would be hearing if we were giving ourselves this much leeway?

[06:42:49] I'm going to leave that right there. Mr. Madby. I chuckled on that, Ms. Reason. I guess the two audits make sense if, I think Ms. Villaby, I have to kind of drag this thing on.

[06:43:06] But if there was a progress made in the first audit, internal audit, you saw some progress made, then you can give them saying, hey, you know, it looks like you're making progress. We'll come back to the second audit. But it looks like where we can come into an understanding that no progress been made and and that's why the second audit is just almost a futile effort if anything that's i'll share um briefly just some of the high points from what i shared at the committee i think it might be helpful um because i don't take this lightly either by no means um the audit

[06:43:40] from fiscal 22 from the external auditor highlighted seven areas noted deficiencies When we went out, when our internal audit team went out for the audit on February 8th, their scope was to focus on those deficiencies.

[06:43:58] However, we had discussed that in the course of an audit, just like with any other audit, if anything else happened to be discovered, we would notate that as well. Out of the seven items, only two of them were completely cleared, meaning there's no further concern.

[06:44:17] And then within BoardDocs, there's the actual audit report. And so then we rank in terms of severity. So out of the seven, three of the items still have a level three, which is the concern that there would be, that the risk is significant.

[06:44:34] Specifically from my perspective, the audit is helping to, you know, it's wanting to make sure that the financial statements are presented, you know, accurately, where that the Charter is following generally account accepted accounting principles as well as that they have proper internal controls to limit risk to make sure that there is not an environment for fraud in particular two of the items two of the seven items that continue to be a level three we're still seeing concerns with so that's where my red flag goes up because this

[06:45:13] is about risk and again as I as I had stated during the committee meeting last week I have by no means I'm suggesting that there is any fraud occurring but without the proper controls and what these audits in these you know the repetitive nature of the lack of correction what it is signaling is that there's environment where fraud could occur and so one example for example one of the examples that was discovered for example is that the bookkeeper had paid themselves first before having even an approval by a principal you know obviously that's a concern

[06:45:48] another area which would be my my top rated which has been an ongoing concern for the full five years has been deficiencies related to the bank reconciliation and to me that's one of the heart of the internal controls that's how you're checking your checks and balances between your bookkeeper between the principal and so that is very very important and I can't stress enough where that is how you're trying to limit that risk and where you can catch if anything is occurring.

[06:46:21] So the fact that that continued to be a problem is why we're still bringing this forward as a level three. In terms of what Ms. Reiser was alluding to or mentioning regarding our other schools, when we started this process with them last year, because it was a little bit of new territory because it's a charter school, So they're not our school, but the school board does have financial oversight.

[06:46:49] So last year, when we brought forward the concerns for the fiscal 21 audit, our recommendation was to follow our guidance in terms of how we treat any of our other LCPS schools, where we have a structured plan, where we do level one, level two, level three.

[06:47:06] There's letters, there's training. So we followed that same protocol. So last year, they got their first warning. So we're, I can't say we're treating them the same as we are any of our other schools, because if anything, we would not have allowed this to have continued on.

[06:47:27] And one quick last tidbit of information, out of our 98 schools for our fiscal 22 audit, out of our 98 schools, my office only had to issue 11 level one letters, which is like minor, and then only three level two letters and we had zero level three letters and i think that is indicative of the expectations and the standards that we have for our schools so that's where i also have a concern because we we're not necessarily treating them all the same

[06:48:01] miss reaser okay so it's not a motion so i can't call the question and there's a motion to refer oh that's right thank you well um let me first say that we have our cfo telling us sorry we have our cfo telling us that there is a liability here and at midnight we're sitting here discussing what i'm calling the question is there a second seconded by mr uh mehedovie uh calling the question there's no debate permitted it requires a two-thirds a two-thirds vote to pass uh to

[06:48:37] proceed directly to a vote all in favor of calling the question please raise your hand and say aye that motion will pass unanimously of uh board members present which meets the two-thirds threshold with corvo and sheridan absent for the vote so we'll now proceed to a vote on the motion to refer back to

committee uh without without further debate all those in favor please raise your hands and say aye those opposed please raise your hand say nay nay that motion will fail 3-4-2 with Rieser, Mejedevi, Sirotkin, and Okadegbe opposed, and Corbo and Sheridan absent for the vote.

[06:49:16] So this item will continue and will be brought back as an action item for the April 11th meeting. We will now move to item 1509 from the Technology Steering Committee. The updates to policy 8650, student technology, acceptable, responsible use.

[06:49:39] Mr. Beatty. This was a policy that went up for normal review. One of the suggestions from the grand jury report was that we add whitelisting.

[06:50:02] And in the discussion outside of this policy was that that just wouldn't be possible just because there's so many websites. So I think we're trying to kind of clarify some of the things that we aren't going to filter.

[06:50:19] The fact that you cannot go around filtering, that's okay. So trying to clarify our policies and make it clear just based on sort of what's feasible based on discussion. Again, these are kind of much more clarifications of what we're already doing, clear to students how they should behave on our school networks and with our school technology.

[06:50:52] Any further discussion or questions on the policy? Seeing none, we will place this on action for our next board meeting. And our final information item that we're covering tonight, 1511 from Ms. Okadegbe, Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month Proclamation, April 2023.

[06:51:16] Ms. Okadegbe. Thank you. So this is an item around Sexual Assault Awareness Month calls attention to the fact sexual violence is widespread and impacts every person in the community and as such we are bringing forward a proclamation which I'll read out now my hope from a scheduling standpoint because I'd like to ask some of our community partners to join us when this is up for action that we can somehow not

[06:51:48] be at midnight when that happens but whereas April is sexual assault awareness and prevention month and calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and its effects impact our entire community and everyday children youth and adult survivors in communities of misogamy yes it's not if you would like to you're more than welcome to but as an information item you're not you're not required to read the resolution out because you will do so when it's an action item so i just wanted to give you that information prior to you reading reading the

[06:52:23] entire uh resolution there you go well i almost um got us past midnight so i it hearing that i'll i'll it is in board docs and we'll come back to that when it's up for action okay mr mahedvi thank you uh miss ogadabay or i think in this i think i pronounced it correct right midnight make sure I haven't lost is this a VSBA proclamation or no this was

[06:52:57] this was collaboratively worked on between laws and myself I also conferred with miss Rieser and staff had had an opportunity to review and provide feedback and input into the development of the proclamation any further discussion okay so we'll place this as action for our next board meeting that will take us to item 16 our closed meeting is there a motion mr. Mahedby yes chair I move the Loudoun County School Board recess the public meeting and

[06:53:36] enter into a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2 - 3712 of Cota Virginia for the following consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation where such consultation or briefing in open meetings would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body as authorized by Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as authorized by Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, specifically the legal obligations of public bodies in responding to requests for records

[06:54:16] under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and discussion and consideration of the assignment and appointment of specific public employees under Virginia code section 2.2-3711A1. - Seconded by Mr. Morris.

[06:54:32] Any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye, that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with Corvo and Sheridan absent for the vote. We're now in closed session,

[06:54:43] not anticipating any motions coming out.

[07:33:31] Is there a motion, Mr. Mejedevi? - Yes, Chair. I move that the closed meeting be adjourned that the Lowron County School Board reconvene its public meeting and the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting. I move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of the public meeting, resolution 29-22/23, whereas the Lowron County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded board and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and whereas section 2.2-3712D of the Court of Virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law and now therefore be resolved that

[07:34:10] Loudoun County School Board hereby certifies that the 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 business public business matters as were identified in the motion convening to close meeting were heard discussed or considered by the Loudoun County School Board I'll second is there any discussion seeing none all those in favor of the motion please raise your hand say aye aye that motion will pass unanimously of board members present with reaser sheridan corbo and polifco

[07:34:46] absent for the vote given the lateness of the hour without objection we're going to skip over board member comments and committee reports which brings us to item 18 new business is there any new business tonight seeing none we are adjourned thank you board members



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com