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Loudoun County School Board, Communications & Outreach Committee Meeting, Monday, April 10, 2023

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Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 45m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/816332054?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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[00:00:00] to attend the meeting but must refrain from interrupting the meeting's agenda members of the public who wish to address the committee made use so at this time and it looks like we have one public comment for this evening public comment is designed to support strong community engagement and informs a strong school system by gaining input from the public public comment will not include responses by the committee to the question or comment presented decorum civility including respect for all parents guardians and staff gathered for this meeting are expected seeing

[00:00:33] as we only have one public comment tonight I will allot five minutes please state your name and you may begin your comment when you are ready thank you um I appreciate the opportunity to be here today um I am interested in this topic of communication with families and about emergency

[00:01:11] because I have a child in, I have three kids, one in elementary, one in middle school, and one in high school. And I feel like there's such a disconnect between, obviously there's a difference in the way that different administrators communicate and the timeline in which they communicate and what they choose to share or not share.

[00:01:40] And of course, we want to be respectful of personal information, But I am interested in the discussion here today because, as a parent, I have a daughter that has a phone, and she will text frantically.

[00:01:58] So in the month of February, there were four overdoses at Loudoun Valley High School. That is terrifying. And when your child sees another child that is in danger and needs immediate help, and she just turned 15, That is so scary and awful to see.

[00:02:22] And then you ask what is happening and nothing, everything's fine, everything's fine, everything's fine. So that is really hard. And then at Blue Ridge, they had an overdose there too, and it was handled completely differently there.

[00:02:39] So the type of exchange is different, and of course you can appreciate that you don't want kids or parents in complete frantic states but you sometimes will get it really late in the day and sometimes you get it immediately and but at Valley it's always like everything's fine we had emergency vehicles here it's fine so I think consistency is important and I think it's important to be honest

[00:03:14] and not lie and then the second thing I wanted to talk about with regard to FOIAs I don't want get too much into the weeds on this but i have received in response to a foia request a 72 000 bill that concerns me i do know that i can be very specific and narrow it down and then get get small pieces of information but of course and that gets tricky because then you don't know what you're going to get or you're not going to get and then also i did submit a request for information

[00:03:53] regarding an rfp that i was told was confidential but the online link goes to a milk contract i know it's not a milk contract i'm sure that it has been misfiled but i want to know why a milk contract would be confidential so things like that i think are that cause concern for a community that just wants to be involved i want to know what's happening in my kids education and i want them to be safe I want them to learn to read write and do math just really basic things so

[00:04:31] thank you for the work that you're doing that was amazing thank you for that time thank you so much for your comment this evening we'll now go ahead and move on to item number three on the agenda minutes meeting minutes for the March 6 meeting were posted for review and board docs I will entertain a motion to accept the minutes from the March 6 2023 meeting as submitted what I'd recommend we do is just postpone that as an action item for the next committee meeting when

[00:05:08] Harris is back because I would not be comfortable voting on it. Okay, thank you, Mr. Morris. Seeing as Mr. Mejedevi is not with us this evening, we'll go ahead and move that as an action item for the next meeting in May. I believe it is on May 1st. Thank you. Okay, we'll go ahead and we'll move on to an agenda item number four which is our action item for this evening 4.01 policy 3070 safety and emergency related communications red line at the december 13th 2022 school board meeting

[00:05:46] mr falconi presented a series of recommended policy revisions along with information regarding actions that have been or will be initiated by staff in response to each special grand jury recommendation. Policy 3070 was reviewed at the February meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee and Wesley Allen, Assistant Division Counsel, presented it as an information item at last month's C&O meeting on March 6th. Staff was directed at that time to bring this item back as an action item for tonight's meeting. Is there any discussion on item 4.01, Policy 3070, Safety

[00:06:24] and Emergency Related Communication, red line? Mr. Morse. Thank you, Madam Chair. Looking at the red lines that were included in line 96 it says uh there are two permitted to the extent permitted by law lcps should provide as much relevant information as permissible so uh a little redundant

but i'm wondering if the should should be a shall and i'm wondering if you had that discussion mr morse thank you for bringing that up i think i would agree with you that we should

[00:06:57] change on line 96 LCPS should we should strike should and replace it with shall provide as much relevant information as permissible to community members thank you madam chair also the same is true in line 120 division counsel should be consulted I also believe that should be shall there I can't I can't foresee a circumstance where there's a safety or emergency related discussion where we would not want the legal counsel to review thank you mr. Morse I agree

[00:07:31] with your conclusion that on line 120 we should strike the word should and replace it with shall any further comments or discussion at this time I'll entertain a motion that the committee approve the red line of revised policy 3070 to move it to the full school board as an information item second the motion okay all in favor say aye that will pass uh 201 with Mr. Mahedovey absent for

[00:08:10] the vote we'll go ahead and approve that red line revised policy 3070 and move it to the full school board as an information item at the next scheduled meeting on April 25th 2023 with that we'll go ahead and we'll move on to item number five on our agenda this evening information items the next item is 5.01 which is quarterly FOIA information and Ms. Sahlgren would you like to

[00:08:43] begin presenting tonight's information thank you Madam Chair yes every quarter we do a report to school board of the number of FOIAs this time we thought it might be interesting to show you the January February and March FOIAs that Q3 here by year year over year comparison and by subject for for lack of a better word so did we do a full release did we not find any records were they exempt from release excuse me sometimes people will submit something that's not a FOIA

[00:09:22] request it might be a question so we we do a little call them up and say what did you mean for this to be FOIA this is how you know you might word your questions so or word your request so we can fulfill it sometimes people withdraw a request with a school system of 82 000 students and 13 000 plus employees people may not realize how many emails might be included in a general request so we often i say we dan our FOIA officer will work with them on an individual basis to make sure they they can get their request to match their parameters that of what they really want a partial release or FOIA requests that were in progress so you can see

[00:10:01] there the breakdown and this quarter year-over-year we're down slightly from last year's high of 175 in this quarter to 132 all we have on that just wanted to show you that update Thank You Miss Sahlgren board members are there any questions or comments mr. Morris thank you madam chair oh two questions there The number of the not a FOIA request is over 10%.

[00:10:32] I wonder how many of those, after you reach out to them and notify them it's not FOIA, how many of them come back with a properly annotated FOIA request? Or are we just more or less shutting that down? Thanks for the question. That's a great question.

[00:10:49] The vast majority is we're able to point them to information where it's readily available and public-facing. The term exempt, I'm sorry, not a FOIA request, a lot of times it has to do with people who ask general questions about the work of the division, not specifically in regards to reports or information that's normally kept as a course of business, but just asking general information.

[00:11:13] And while FOIA doesn't require us to answer those questions in the vein of wanting to be helpful and responsive, I always try to point them to where that information is readily available. Thank

you. Also, no records exist at 30% of the FOIA requests this year. Can you give us some background on that, because that is an extremely high number. What kind of records are they looking for, and what's the primary reason why information that they are seeking that we're not able to provide?

[00:11:45] Again, a good question, but a difficult one to answer because it really runs the gamut. There are just a lot of requests for information that is not kept as a normal course of our work. Some of those requests we're not required to, but sometimes we are able to do the research and satisfy those requests.

[00:12:07] But very often we're not able to. or information that either doesn't exist, is not tracked, or is exempt, even if it were available. So, again, that's a pretty broad topic, so it's hard to give you a really good example of what that could entail.

[00:12:28] I think that what I'd like to see from our communications division is that I don't think we're doing a great job of letting the public know exactly what kind of information we provide in a FOIA request.

[00:12:45] Because when I look at that, and I see that less than 70% of the, I mean, less than 40% are fully responded to or full release. And a lot, if you look at the no records, exempt and not a FOIA request, that's 50%. That's half of the requests we get are probably misguided in some way.

[00:13:06] So I think we probably need to do a better job of educating the public on what freedom of information perhaps is and what kind of records we normally release in a Freedom of Information Act request. Thank you for that, Mr. Morse. We do have an extensive FAQ on the website.

[00:13:22] We can do a better job of publicizing that and bringing that forward for people over the course of the year. So it's present maybe in top of mind when they're not ready to submit a request and they know where to go. And then GovQA does allow us to have very specific information.

[00:13:39] And in addition, we do post the full Virginia code and an interpretation of that online. But you have to be on those pages to find it so we can do a better job of spreading that information around a little bit better so people understand it. Absolutely. Thank you for that. Could we walk them through the process?

[00:13:55] Could we include? I mean, if they're going to the page and they click on Freedom of Information Act and they want to submit one, perhaps the narrative that they're reading as they go through the process should be captured there and not just in a standalone policy. It is. It is. Thank you. Yeah, and in fact, one of the first paragraphs you get to is five or six, seven bullet points of what is and what is not.

[00:14:16] But again, you have to be there looking for it. So we'll do a better job of surfacing that. Thank you. I have a few questions and comments. My first question is, has Loudoun County ever provided any kind of workshop or town hall for constituents relative to questions and concerns around FOIA requests?

[00:14:41] what is acceptable what's not acceptable what's permissible specifically regarding Virginia law I think sometimes those topics are cumbersome and difficult to understand especially when you're not in a forum where you're able to have a dialogue back and forth so I just wondered if that's ever been provided to the community that's a very good question I there are folks here that go back a little further than I do certainly not since COVID and I will say that we do take the opportunity when we do have for instance our leaf group of parent volunteers right that represent every school we always educate them on FOIA so they also become an ambassador if someone in their community has a question.

[00:15:19] So we do take that opportunity to educate those folks that can answer questions in their own community, but more broadly, a dedicated town hall or a dedicated event, I would have to check, but I think it's a great idea. Thank you. So is that something that I could formally request?

[00:15:35] Is that something that we could more specifically look into as a division to provide that type of a forum or a platform for our community members to be able to gather in a location, receive information, ask questions, and almost conduct somewhat of a behavior skills training session in terms of providing question-answer, but also an opportunity to then practice that skill.

[00:16:05] Meaning, if a constituent or a parent, any kind of stakeholder had a question about specifically, what can I FOIA? Or I have a question about this type of information that I'd like to receive. What would my next steps be? And then receiving that back and forth dialogue in a situation in which not only is that individual able to get the feedback, but other people that are observing would also receive that information at the same time. I wonder if that would have a bigger impact on the takeaway message, because I do think, I mean, people are very intimidated by submitting

[00:16:42] FOIA requests if they just, if they don't know what they're supposed to be doing. And that's probably one of the reasons that the requests often get denied, because they're not requesting the information that they're able to receive in those circumstances. Thank you for that. Yes, I can take that as a question. And, but I do think that more education is always better, whatever the format, whether it's a virtual seminar that you offer, whether you also educate the staff, you know, whether you educate the community. So, you know, I think it's, we're all not lawyers, right? So the closer we can get people, and we don't want the community to spin

[00:17:21] their wheels at something that's already publicly available, right? A lot of times we'll get a request and we'll say, oh, that's already on the website, right? So we're working hard to optimize the website searchability as well, so people can find the things they want. Thank you. My final question, maybe not necessarily a question, but more of a concern, is that we do, you know, I have been made aware and other individuals have been made aware, I'm sure, over time of people who are reaching out to the division, seeking information regarding test scores for whatever

[00:17:57] they may be, whatever assessments they may be. And sometimes those individuals are looking for, Well, more broadly, what they are looking for is specific test scores. And those types of FOIAs are often denied because they are stated to be specifically attached to students.

[00:18:18] And then in that case, we're violating or could be violating Virginia statute if we're offering up information that's attached to a student profile. How can we better educate the public on instances such as those? I think that's a great question, and it's something that we've been tackling recently because we do have an extensive dashboard available on the website.

[00:18:42] So you can sort by your school's results, you can sort by attendance, you can sort by your cluster. There's a lot of information there. What it doesn't do is go to the links of specifically student-specific identifiable information.

[00:18:59] However, we're working with RASI and with Instruction to further modify that dashboard so we can put up things, perhaps like test scores, in a way that are batched, right, for that school. So some things are on the dashboard, some are not, but you've hit on something really important.

[00:19:15] We've got a data governance working group. We're working on how do we treat this data, what can we release, you know, what does it make sense to do? And I know I'm probably preaching to the choir here of tech people. But, yeah, it's always a fine line. We want to make sure that FOIA doesn't allow us to create a record where it doesn't exist, right?

[00:19:35] Because we can't produce what we don't have. However, the closer we can get to a timely release of information for students and parents, I think, is great. Okay, thank you. That's all I have on this. Are there any further questions or comments?

[00:19:50] Mr. Morse? Do we have a set time that we expect to be able to release results after the county receives them? I think it would be helpful if the public knew that within 30 days of summary SAT results that the community would be notified. So what is our guidance to the community on that?

[00:20:07] So I didn't hear part of the question. The county receives it or the – you said – When the county receives summary results from SAT or from any of the standardized testing, what is the typical response time for us to publish that for the public?

[00:20:25] I will take that as a question and ask DOI more specifics about that. My limited knowledge does say it varies, right? It varies by how quickly the vendor processes it and where it's available, right, to students directly. If I could go back to one of your earlier questions, I was thinking about it.

[00:20:46] Not a FOIA request. Probably the most common one that actually falls under that is parents seeking to look at their student's scholastic records. They don't have to file a FOIA for that. Under FERPA, they can go into the school and view those. Some people may not be aware of that or think that it needs to be more official or want it to be more official, and so they file a FOIA.

[00:21:05] So that would actually be the most common reason for not a FOIA request, probably about half. Thank you. Mr. Adams, I do have one more question for you, and you jogged my memory. Could you please provide us with some examples of items that are exempt from release?

[00:21:24] So when someone reaches out to – or when someone submits a FOIA request and the response is that is exempt, could you please provide us? might offer a little bit of help here certainly the most common examples at least the ones that I've been seeing in the last few months or so our attorney client work product attorney client privilege material personnel file information and scholastic student identifiable information those are probably the three most common that I see and there but there there are many from security measures to information some information against the contracts

[00:21:57] there's there's quite a few but those are the three most common thank you with If nothing else, we will go ahead and move on to our next agenda item, which is 5.02, and that is an update on quarter three strategic initiatives.

[00:22:14] Ms. Saugren, would you like to present sharing or begin presenting that item? Thank you. Yes, I will. So you all have seen our strategic plan goals before. So everything we do, of course, in communications ladders to these same goals as does the rest of the school division.

[00:22:31] So the first thing we've done in Q3, January, February, March, to start a family newsletter so we have previously published a staff newsletter two days after each board meeting letting the staff know you know what the board's been up to what the good news was the operational news that the superintendent shared and so beginning in February we started doing a family newsletter and this newsletter hits in

between the two school board meetings so that week in between gives us a little time to gather new information to dedicate an editing stream to make sure that it is relevant to families and

[00:23:07] meaningful to them so we've sent three newsletters so far the inaugural edition was the most highly viewed with 130,000 this newsletter is sent to more than a hundred thousand parents and staff and has an average open rate of 67 percent people who have opted in to be a part of LCPS and expect to receive our communications typical open rates for self-selected marketing list would be about 27 to 30 would be outstanding so this is we're really pleased with this and we're really continuing to hone this vehicle to make sure that families are getting what they need from it they

[00:23:44] don't get tired of it and they want to open it so it's a brand new vehicle for us and here's a little feedback that we've received about the family newsletter I thought you all might like the middle part of the quote on the right where it says I especially like the section on the latest school board meeting so far very positively received I thought we would cover a little bit

[00:24:22] about content campaigns as we covered in our last meeting together we've really transformed with the school board support the model of the communications department from a one-way information department let's just put out a press release let's just put out some information let's hold an event very transactional to a real content division it's a real two-way communications model we want to make sure that at each of the of in each of those family newsletters there's a way to give feedback we've got feedback offerings such as ask the superintendent on this on the website we want to make sure that our our students and staff when they see the content can like it share it understand it it's

[00:24:59] translated they can really be part of that conversation as they want to because as you know that engagement leads to empowered students it leads to exemplary staff people who who care about where they work and what they do so we thought we would just take you on a journey of a little bit of content here it's very quick it's not a long trip but I'll let you see that we wrote about michael lunsford middle school student wins 41st annual lcps regional spelling bee that's something that we we showed you in the in the school board meeting so let's see where that where that uh story falls so first we wrote a story about it we posted on the website then we included it in the

[00:25:38] operational update for the superintendent to present to the board directly so you all were among the first to know then we post in social media right then this is all could be within a day could be within two or three days we use that same content to post on social media you can see there were eight comments two shares we really try to make sure we have pictures of children who are succeeding and pictures of teachers who are happy we found that and it's a simple thing but you know during covid it was all about covid it was there were no pictures there was no good news there was no real flavor of who the people are that are engaged with us at lcps so we really try

[00:26:17] to make sure that every story is complete both both with imagery and with text right so the becomes a social media post we'll take that same news and we'll put it in the newsletter for the staff and or the community depending on what kind of news it is and then we'll do a media release and we'll say hey we have a great outstanding achieving student here and and will the media cover it sometimes the media has already been here and covered it the night that we announced it and sometimes not so they're always looking for pre-written written stories and help so we try to make it as easy for our media partners as possible

[00:26:51] so we we may do a media release and that's the the cycle of the content so we try to make content that is relevant to our students and staff we use it in more than one way if it is a video or if it is an investment of time to create it not just a little story and a picture but a little more involved we want to make sure it's what we call evergreen can we use it again we might do a celebration of this month is military child month right we might do military child that whole circle of content would support the month of the

[00:27:30] military child but we probably wouldn't put the date on it because we can use it again next year so we can write that content we can make sure that that video that might be a little more bigger production can be used again and again so we make choices about is this quick is it more in-depth and how can we use it over time to drive eyeballs back to we might use that same video from month of the military child we might use it to get on Veterans Day right because we have another holiday that reaches that same community that cares about that so so I just thought it would be interesting we talk about content campaigns

[00:28:04] but we really don't interpret them for you so that's what one looks like next I thought we'd cover briefly the design challenge that we announced at the last school board meeting as you can see it's got a look and a feel it's got it's been rolled out it'll be open for a month we do have some entries already one from each level elementary middle and high so we're very proud of that and now that we're back from spring break we'll be doing a full-fledged communications campaign to drive more participation in that students who participate in the design challenge may

[00:28:41] have their artwork chosen to use graphically for the division it might be displayed in the hallways it might be on a greeting card right it could be we're looking for outstanding art very happy to have student participation and family support for that and then just so you all know one pledge that we had to the division was to go on a listening tour as a department and we really we couldn't do that during covid we couldn't do it shortly thereafter we are finally on the road to visit our schools as a department and talk with our

[00:29:16] principals and their staffs and ask them what do they have going on for communications what's working what's not how can we support them and help make their communication stream to their community or their staff better what do they need from us that they're not getting or most importantly we've got some principals and some school buildings who rocket work where communication is concerned so how can we take their best practices and and maybe a brand new principal doesn't have to invent the wheel because we can share those best practices of what works generally for a community and a new principal or a less experienced principal might be able to benefit from those sharing those best practices so we're

[00:29:53] really engaging with our schools our learnings to date you can see their parents receive regular communications from their schools students for the most part are copied when parents receive a note at the middle and high school level students are copied many schools have reduced or do not use social media very very I was surprised by that but they really when I thought about it and when we've explored this with our the folks that we visited with you know when when twitter was in

[00:30:26] its infancy you know 2008 2009 it was one of the first instant news sharing platforms and we didn't have parent view where we could send you a quick note we didn't have schoology where we could get hold of our kids really quickly right so we've substituted newer platforms that are really targeted to our

audience's needs and we have a very robust participation from our principals on on being them being their voice in their community they send a newsletter their teachers send newsletters and people trust that information they know that person they know that they should open

[00:31:02] it that there may be an action in there right or something they care about a fundraiser or a meeting at school one night so I was a little bit surprised by that but I'm a little bit also relieved because when you think of students at the elementary middle and high level they have different needs and different social footprints and maybe we we want to make sure that we're giving our parents the news the way they want it so i'm really pleased that we have a lot more dedicated streams of communication now than we did even 10 years ago so that was that was heartening to learn from this tour and we do still work with peach jar flyers and they are almost exclusively

[00:31:42] lose use at the division level not really by schools very much so we'll just show you a little bit of information here we visited 47 schools so far principals are appreciative of any incident templates and incident information we can provide for them they tell us that we're responsive you know if someone calls communication and they do have a an incident or a crisis or an emergency it is important to them in that moment and they're not they're they're trained to handle it but i i hope they're not used to handling it, right?

[00:32:13] So we want them to call us so we can support them. They have plenty of other support through their directors and other offices as well. And the newsletter platform is going strong. We've expanded our partnership with S'more, and principals are using that quite frequently. We wanted to show you a little bit of information.

[00:32:35] As the auditor general took shape and that office opened, CCO consulted with them to make sure that the visuals were aligned with our strategic planning look they're aligned with the goals of the office so we're really working hard and embedding ourselves with offices so we can hear in advance what they want and really bring that level of design and interaction and professionalism to as an offering to them rather than reacting and say hey I need to send out a message I need a poster we want to work with them

[00:33:07] in advance and really be a consultative advisor to the process of communications and then returning to our strategic plan, just to let you all know, we have in phase one, of course, rolled out extensive toolkits for our principals, logo, design, brand assets, presentation templates, virtual backgrounds. You'll just see them scroll through here. And now we're on to phase two where we're creating additional assets that the principals may need or that the division level employees may need to further expand the use of the 1LCPS theme and visuals. We've

[00:33:44] We've also incorporated one LCPS visual in our email signature, and we've recently produced four videos that would be useful if you're having a meeting about your exemplary staff. You can show the exemplary staff video. If you're having a meeting with your community and you want to talk about your engaged community, you can show that video to kind of kick it off.

[00:34:02] So we'll just play one of them here for you. It's very quick.

[00:35:04] was our student video and there's one for each goal so staff participates engaged community and enriched division and then lastly we thought we would just show you one more important accomplishment we were charged by mr. meheddy i think last year as the budget season rolled around

And two years ago, the budget was, it's always an award-winning budget book because the people who understand the numbers understand the numbers.

[00:35:24] But I think the public might have a bit more of a challenge because we have such a big budget and a robust budget. So last year, we took steps to design a PowerPoint template in a storytelling approach that really helped take a first step at that. Now that we have a graphic designer, thanks to the support of the board, we have been able to work with budget.

[00:35:43] And you all saw these presentations as they came through, right? they're very tight, they're storytelling, they're understandable, they let you understand that where the budget fits and what it addresses in each of those decks, they're all posted on the website. So we're really proud of this work, we were able to take it to the next level this year and really come up with graphics and information that are easily understandable and accurate and convey the sense of the budget to somebody who doesn't have that big book sitting on their desk, right?

[00:36:12] and here we also did infographics for each of the areas so you can a quick snapshot of each area with easy to understand numbers visuals and this again becomes evergreen content we can take a snapshot of one of these numbers pull it out and make it into a social post we can support that you know this this becomes additional content as we have these discussions across the county and we were very mindful when the Board of Supervisors and the school board had their joint session that we heard that appreciation from our elected officials

[00:36:51] for Loudoun County and we just thought we'd bring this quote up I appreciate all the hard work that's gone into this I think it's a terrific plan to tie its specific strategic objectives is wonderful I wish I could put my finger on why I feel so much better about this budget than the previous three budgets I've seen it's well presented it's easy to understand the layout and the fact that it is based on a strategic plan is superb kudos again what I think is a reasonable and database request so though communications cannot take credit for the budget levels and the numbers I hope we made your life easy and I hope that it was easy to understand and that it is easy for our constituents to appreciate the numbers and the complexity of

[00:37:31] what you all deal with so we just wanted to highlight that as one of our recent works and that brings me to the conclusion of our brief update it's been a busy quarter thank you for all of that information this evening Ms. Sahlgren board members are there any questions or comments on what we just received mr. Morris thank you madam chair I received very positive response from the community on the on the slides they were certainly much more digestible than they were in the past and I agree with mr. Turner I thought it was a very reasonable budget unfortunately they did not fully fund

[00:38:07] it so we're gonna have to face that but we do we do believe that the process was well done and well documented so thank you and your team I do have a few questions backing up a little bit moving moving backwards to the video that you presented earlier on students and i i have a question maybe you can provide me some more information on how you're soliciting student success throughout the county obviously we have a very large student body and i just wondered how you do solicit that information how you determine which students

[00:38:43] and under which circumstances you will highlight them that's a great question and i appreciate that we actually track what schools we've covered and what we haven't we want to make sure we're balanced with high school middle school and elementary stories you know high school is i want to say somewhat easier they have state championships they have regional championships so we likely wouldn't

feature a lcps baseball team beating an lcps baseball team right but once it gets to that division level that district regional we that becomes a filter right it's community news it

[00:39:18] involves more than one team so that's a pretty easy example um we also work with our schools to self-select and i can let aaron speak more to that how she does the outreach to the schools to make sure we're balancing the the students represented thank you so um we every time that we do have a video we do put a call to action out in the principal's update we reach out to all of the schools um so everybody has a chance um to respond to us and then um we do take that list that Joan was saying that we track, and if we haven't heard from one of them, we'll reach out

[00:39:52] directly. It may take one or two times, but we do. We try to get them all. And since we're in marketing, right, we do mention to our principals on our listening tours, we've visited, you know, 47, almost 50 schools so far, so when we have a video coming up or a piece of content or a theme or we'll say, hey, do you have any students that might be good for this? You got anything going on in your school? And they are happy to tell us. Great. We'll also be implementing a process.

[00:40:21] The division has grown so rapidly, and the way good news gets shared with communications right now is very organic, and we want it to be very easy for principals. Hey, this student just won the spelling bee. Can you do a story? We got you. We'll take care of it.

[00:40:37] We'll make the phone calls. We'll take the pictures. We'll make it easy for you, right? But not every principal thinks to do that, so we want to make it easy for them. So we'll be implementing a process where they can share their school news with a click of a button, and we'll pilot it this spring, and we'll see. Does that help principals who might not be coming to us actively, hey, I had something good happen, it's right here, I'll share it with the CCO and see if they want to do a story about it, right?

[00:41:03] So we're working on piloting a program for that, and that will also involve organizing the division requests in much the same way. So we often get requests from the division, we work with them on transportation campaigns, lunch money campaigns, budget, HRTD recruiting campaigns, right?

[00:41:23] So as we work with them proactively and we start that communications planning to meet their goals, we want to make sure that we're representing schools, all staff. Thank you very much.

[00:41:40] Finally, you know, piggybacking off of this topic, you know that my background is in special education. I just wonder how often you receive positive feedback from your schools, whether they be middle school, elementary, or high school related to student success and the Department of Special Education, specifically in some of our special education program classrooms, because I think it would be really nice for us to be able to highlight, you know, specific milestones or moments of achievement in those areas as well.

[00:42:10] Thank you for that, and we agree. So we will be showing you tomorrow night at the board meeting an update on the unified sports participation in teams with a video that we've created with those teams in mind. Just a spoiler alert, it was a very high-performing video, very heartwarming. So you'll be seeing that tomorrow night.

[00:42:27] and we do want to ensure that we're telling every child's story right so we'll be working because we're able to have our communicators embedded with the departments Amy Freeman still here is embedded with the Department of Student Services so she just took a look at the details from the special ed events that they did last year what the results were I know how did they how did they do what topics

were most popular what times a day were most popular and then we're working with them on next year's school year so we can be strategic and we are really after

[00:43:04] aligning communications to be a through line on a theme so last year we were sort of waiting on the strategic plan and we got there right and we rolled that out and we have these four pillars of information and goals and everything drives to that but in addition we have some really big things to tackle as a division right we need students to come to school right we need students to be well behaved when they get there we need them to feel like they belong there have ongoing mental health issues they may have our special ed population is rising right and those services are in demand so how do we do community information events how do we do positive information to the community that lets

[00:43:43] them know the resources available to them and aligns all that work in a really strategic way so it makes sense so we're really working on that for this coming year and we'll be having a strategic planning session internally in about a month. Great question. Thank you. Board members, any further questions or comments this evening? Okay. With that, it looks like before we have or before we move on, is there any new business that we need to discuss this evening? Okay. Well, with that, the business portion of

[00:44:16] our meeting has concluded. The next meeting we will have will be on Monday, May 1st, 2023 at 5 p.m. right here in this room. And we'll go ahead and move on to item number seven, which is our adjournment. Thank you all for your participation in the meeting this evening. We are now adjourned.



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