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Loudoun County School Board, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting, Wednesday, April 12, 2023

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Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 2h 49m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/817068636?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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[00:00:39] Hello, everyone.

[00:01:16] If we could. This isn't working. Where'd Kim go?

[00:01:19] Was live in that way.

[00:02:21] Hello, everyone. I don't know what I'm supposed to do.

[00:02:41] Check one, two. Yeah. Good evening. Okay. Can I get everyone to take your seats?

[00:03:29] I can't hear me. We have a whole new system up here, so I can't hear myself to know if you can hear me. Can everybody hear me in the back? Awesome. All right. Let's go ahead and get started. My name is Sharon Troff, and welcome to our April 12th monthly SEAC meeting.

[00:03:51] If this is your first time here, welcome. And if you are a member, please make sure you sign in on the QR code. If you're a community member, even a first-time person, please sign in and let us know that you're here and who you are so we can reach out to you in the future.

[00:04:11] See if I can work this new technology. Okay, we're going to start out. Okay. Now I can hear myself. We're going to start out with our centering work. I'd like to introduce our director of special education for specialized. Okay. Hold on. Virtual instruction. I'm Tudra Richardson, but I've just been

called that we need to do a little bit of business to accept our virtual participants. So one moment, Craig, you want to go ahead and make a motion for that?

[00:04:46] No, we have Heidi, Melissa, and Kathy Lambert. Kathy? Lambert. We have Heidi Bunkura, Kathy Lambert, and Melissa Waugh would like to join virtually.

[00:05:03] Are there any objections? Seeing none, they are invited to the meeting. Come on up. We're going to start our centering work. Ms. Tedra Richardson. Good evening. How are you? Thank you all so much for being here.

[00:05:20] It is truly a pleasure to have such a consistent showing here to support SEAC. Back in September, when we first kicked off the year, which it's so hard to believe that it's April, my goodness, we did an activity called Finding Common Ground.

[00:05:36] And so for each meeting, we have chosen three aspects that group members worked on to highlight. So our first one is we care about equitable opportunities. The next one is we come with a student-centered lens, and then we would like to see more parent participation in SEAC, and we have certainly achieved that common ground aspect, and that is absolutely phenomenal.

[00:06:08] We also have one of our bumper stickers highlighted. That was a really fun time back in October, whereas our SEAC participants created bumper stickers or visuals to represent our strategic plan of 1LCPS 2027.

[00:06:26] Our next slide is our connection before content. And so at your tabletops, you're going to do a little reflection. As we embark on the fourth quarter of the 2022-23 school year, and you reflect on your participation in and work on SEAC, what is one word?

[00:06:53] You have to think of one word that summarizes the work that has been done and or the work that is still left to do. We'll give you two minutes. So take at least 30 seconds to reflect back over the course of this year. Think of your one word, talk at your tabletop, and then we'll call in just a few tables to share

[00:07:20] that one word. Thank you. All right. Thank you all for participating. Is there a table that would

[00:10:25] like to share one word? Okay. Transitional. Okay. That's a good one. All right. Thank you for getting us started. Who else would like to share one word that has come to mind? Back in the back.

[00:10:45] Yes. Tom's table. Collaborative. Awesome. Transitional and collaborative. All right. Another table. Here. Feedback. Transitional, collaborative, and feedback. Another table.

[00:11:12] Accountability. Nice. Transitional, collaborative, feedback, and accountability. Can we get one more so we have a five. Here, Shanaz. Hopeful. Let's see. Transitional, collaborative, feedback, accountability, and hopeful. Thank you all so much for participating in that Connection Before content. Again, it is truly a blessing to have you all here. We're excited about the work that our SEAC committee has planned for everybody. I know you're going to be breaking out

[00:11:49] into some subcommittee work and reflecting back on the year and also getting us well positioned for next school year to kick off the subcommittees as soon as the school year starts. So I will hand it over to Mrs. Trofe.

[00:12:05] Thank you. Okay.

[00:12:21] So as I said earlier, my name is Sharon Trofe. I'm the current SEAC chair. I would like to introduce, for those of you who don't know, our current executive committee. To my right is my vice chair of planning, Shanaz Khan, and my vice chair of communications, Craig Metz.

[00:12:39] To my left is Liz Crotty, our vice chair of membership, and our secretary, Katie Rosenbrook. Then our school board liaisons, we have Ms. Richardson. Our school board liaison is Tiffany Polifco, and our alternate school board liaison is Erica Ogadegby.

[00:13:03] So the role of SEAC, SEAC is regulated by the state of Virginia regulations, and our job is to look at the needs of our special education students and to report on the unmet needs of our students with disabilities to the school board, to keep the school board informed.

[00:13:23] And we do that through periodic reports, our annual report, our survey, which I will talk about a little bit later, was just put out on Monday. We take in information from our SEAC survey about what's going on in the community so we can inform our work for next year and our annual report.

[00:13:42] And the other important thing that SEAC is tasked to do is to review policies, which you will see this evening. We have several to review, and to provide that feedback to the superintendent to share out to the school board before the school board votes on any changes to these policies.

[00:14:05] So that is a very important aspect of what we do. And then the last thing that we do that's very important that we have input in, which you will also see this evening, is input on the annual plan, which is the funds that we receive from the state and the federal government and if you were watching the school board last night you will know that Ms. Richardson did present the annual plan to the school board last night

[00:14:33] and she shared some of our SEAC input whoops you all can't see my slides at all can you um is there a way we can switch to my slides so everyone can see thank you okay I didn't realize you couldn't see them i'm sorry um we're going to move right into our public comment um i can we grab the sheet

[00:15:02] from the back i think we have two public comments this evening thank you kim so seac uses our public comment feedback to inform our work so we use all all comments that come through get referred to a subcommittee um miss richardson can comment on those public comments at our the following seac meeting to give us a status on those. We ask that you focus on system-wide issues rather than

[00:15:39] maybe a small personal issue that you're having with your child. We ask that you please submit a written copy of your public comment. So we do include those in our annual report and that we give you three minutes to make those public comments. So our first public comment is Lisa Williams. Good evening. My name is Lisa Williams, pronouns she, her. I'm the mother of two girls in

[00:16:17] Loudoun County Public Schools, and our youngest, as you may remember, is extremely and profoundly dyslexic. And we've been on a journey of dispute with Loudoun County Public Schools to ensure our daughter receives FAPE. As mentioned, our daughter requires a certified academic language therapist due to her extreme and profound dyslexia. Loudoun County Public Schools does not have anyone on staff trained at this level. In addition, as we all have heard in recent specialized instruction working sessions, we've learned that the reading specialists haven't had the 30-hour OG training in many years. On our continued journey to fight for FAPE, I also learned last

[00:16:55] week that Loudoun County has a policy that does not allow third-party providers to deliver educational services in school. This is a policy that we see is not in the best interest of the child. As we know, Loudoun County does not have the staff trained at the necessary level for extreme and profound dyslexics. They don't teach the science of reading at all, as we found by recent findings of Loudoun County Public Schools. And now we've learned that there's a policy that blocks the child from receiving services from a trained professional during the school day. This prevents

[00:17:29] equitable access to education on an individualized level. What I've learned as I become more active and my daughter's advocacy is that Loudoun County Public Schools has a narrative, a well-versed, practiced, and possibly taught narrative that is so consistent many seem to believe it. We need to make sure we all fight for equitable services for our special ed kiddos. And tonight, as I do when she uses her voice, I want to share her persuasive essay that she wrote two weeks ago, three weeks ago, using her assisted technology to the Loudoun County Public School Board in her fight for

[00:18:06] dyslexia font books. Dear Loudoun County School Board, if you put five people in a room together, there's a chance that one of them has dyslexia. So I think we should have dyslexia font books in school libraries because they're cheap, also to help kids learn and it's fun to read. But either way, they're really cheap, like \$10 or below. That's pretty cheap. It helps kids learn because dyslexia font books are easy for dyslexia people to read. I think some people get books just to feel included, but they don't ever read them. Dyslexia font books will help people learn. It makes subjects really easier to study. They have really good books that are fun to read like the

[00:18:44] spelling pen. Dyslexia font books would be good in everybody's library. Please search for See Dyslexia Differently on YouTube to hear about dyslexia. She's hopeful for a response. I'm concerned this is just another part of the narrative to make kids think they're at the center. At a minimum, I assured her that my public comment tonight will go on record, so she knows I'm sharing it tonight. Specialized instruction team, as you look to continue to make a positive impact with the new team, please consider getting libraries access to books with dyslexia font for

[00:19:18] those children that can benefit from it. As she mentioned, they're cheap, really cheap, and will help kids learn and are fun to read. Next, we have Erin Poe. Good evening. I thought it was important to bring an issue up that concerns a lot of families of special education students regarding the compliancy of IDEA at the high school level.

[00:19:53] Once our students reach high school, it's no longer a hands-on approach, but a hands-off one. How does this even work when you have children who are significantly behind grade level in reading, basic mathematical skills, and more? It would seem to me that this is the time when teachers and students must work harder since these children are four years away from post-secondary schools.

[00:20:11] Our high school staff in the general education classroom are not trained appropriately to understand specific goals, accommodations, and the general language of an IEP. The lack of communication and transparency from the leadership to the staff to the families of what is taking place in terms of these policies must be upheld for these documents.

[00:20:30] As parents, it continues to be grueling processes for the implementation and compliancy of these documents. If you hold an IEP meeting and present a concern to your team regarding a specific issue, not only are you labeled that parent, but your child ends up seeing the ripple effects and the lashing out of from staff this is not only unacceptable but extremely unprofessional staff does not realize that

these documents they're not optional parents every year are told that goals are being run their child is making progress and the team is there to support your child and you find the opposite to be true the only words that come to mind are hypocritical

[00:21:06] in violation of FAPE whether you believe it or not the culture of most of our high schools High schools, towards our children in special education, is essentially an inconvenience. Special education does require more work on the teachers. However, when you have parental concerns looked at like a nuisance, it's no longer in the best entrance of the child, but what's best for the staff.

[00:21:29] This is backwards and outdated thinking. I will acknowledge that there is change slowly starting for our students in special education. and as a parent of two children with IEPs I do applaud the efforts of our school board member Tiffany Polifco and Dr. Richardson. However these are two people amongst many stuck in outdated procedures. It's going to take time and teachers that want to be here and not having to be here starting from day one when our children are in grammar in school to the day they graduate from high school. Once we have this type of culture then as parents we will see our children in special

[00:22:02] education make the academic growth they're entitled to have. Kristen Washington. So I came here tonight not really knowing what I was going to say so I'm just kind of winging it. I apologize but I think what I want to share with you all is my experience with eligibility. So I started to suspect my

[00:22:38] daughter, my oldest, was dyslexic in second grade which was the COVID year when schools were closed. I homeschooled her because I also have another special needs daughter who has high needs and I couldn't do distance learning with both of them at the same time. So I put her back in public school in third grade. Come January, she had already had seven assessments between DRAs, PALs, MAPs, SOLs, whatever, and she scored for tier three intervention in all of them. When I went to the parent-teacher conference in January and expressed my concerns, she checked with the

[00:23:16] assistant principal and I was told that they wanted to wait till after assessment palooza in the spring to do anything and I said you know what no because you have 60 days to do it after I request it and now it's February so I had the meeting to determine if they would even evaluate her and they said no they wanted to run a response to intervention and they were concerned because I homeschooled so they couldn't prove that she had appropriate instruction, even though the evaluation

[00:23:49] of LCPS's own literacy program failed. So I hired an advocate. We had our meeting again. They agreed to evaluate her. We had a difference of opinion about whether or not she had orthographic processing issues, so we did an IEE. She got formally diagnosed with dyslexia through the IEE.

[00:24:10] We met, the neuropsychologist said in his report that LCPS needs to re-evaluate her eligibility. And we had our IEE meeting, and they said no again. We requested an administrative review, and we're told that they do not do administrative reviews of IEE team meetings.

[00:24:28] I spoke with Mr. Lodi on the phone, and he told me basically my only option at this point is to file due process. Well, if you don't know, due process retainer fees are \$10,000. And I have a 1% chance of winning that.

[00:24:44] So I decided, my husband and I decided, that that \$10,000 would be better spent on a private reading tutor for my daughter. And we homeschooled her because she wasn't getting the help she needed through public school. So I'm glad to report that she is doing much better.

[00:25:02] She made more progress in four months with a private reading tutor than she did in all of third grade in public school. But I'm lucky that I am able to do that. And not everybody is. And it should not be that way for those families that weren't. And if I thought for a second that going to due process would change anything for any other family, I would gladly spend that \$10,000 to do it.

[00:25:32] Dina Griffiths. I am also going to wing it.

[00:25:52] I didn't know I was speaking tonight. But I did want to mention that I am concerned about learning loss due to COVID, especially how it affected our special education students. I don't think a lot of care was given during the COVID period as to where a lot of kids had a huge learning loss.

[00:26:14] My child is not an IEP, but she had a learning loss. So I can imagine kids with special needs, what they went through. And that's why I'm here today. I wanted to talk to everybody here or whoever has a concern. Please chat with me about what your concerns are.

[00:26:33] heard about dyslexia so far I would like to hear more concerns about the learning loss during COVID and any other issues you may have because I think that was a big that was huge we had a lot of kids entering kindergarten that were wearing masks and could not enunciate properly so there was a loss there as well so I'm here today so if anybody wants to chat with me and let me know their concerns, I would really appreciate it. Am I allowed to take questions? Oh, sorry.

[00:27:10] I'm running for the Ashburn School Board. Dana Griffiths running for the Ashburn School Board. So if anybody has any questions or concerns, please come to me because I don't believe we should be getting rid of any programs for this special education. And Rockridge Performing Arts.

[00:27:42] Hi, my name is Kaylee Rivers. I'm Julia Freeman, and we're visiting you today from Rockridge performing arts to tell you about our spring musical which is bring it on that's opening at the beginning of May we have eight performances during bring it on one of which is on Saturday May 6th at 11 a.m. and that is our relaxed performance so a relaxed performance is an adaptive performance that's catered towards all ages all abilities the audience doesn't need to remain seated and it's basically just a summarized version of the show that's compressed

[00:28:19] into like 30 to 45 minutes with only the key songs and plot points. And all special effects, meaning all flashbangs, loud sound effects, haze, smoke, all of that will be turned off as to not upset or disturb any of our audience members. I don't know if Kaylee said it, but the house lights are also, like all of the lights in the audience are dimmed, so they're not fully dark. And I'm pretty sure that you can leave. Like if you need to leave, go in and out, like do whatever you need it is perfectly okay if any of the audience members are speaking we love when

[00:28:54] they interact with us while we're on stage um because that i think builds the best community when we get to interact with them from the stage we've had people run up on stage like whatever happens happens it's just a really awesome performance and we love for everyone to come which we're also removing trying to remove all barriers so admission is by donation only at the door um and you choose where you sit yeah yes that's all we hope you come and we put little postcards with information on the back tables where everyone signed in yes so that gives you information about the relaxed performance as well as a qr code to any of our full-length shows

[00:29:33] thank you thank you i always love when they come um so i'm getting a message that you all can't see that the computer is going to restart in three minutes and 54 seconds um never fails so we'll try to

move forward and if the shuts down it shuts down won't let me move

[00:30:08] forward oh no it went away so I don't know Kim we'll see keep our fingers crossed okay so we're going to move into new business and we're going to go into that policy review so you should be able to click on the QR code these were on the back table or you can it's not up here you can scan this code so you can

[00:30:44] have access to all of the there we go all of the policies that we're going to review so I just want to let you know that if you don't have one you can scan this so you can follow along with the policies so I'm going to go back so what oh I'm sorry everybody get it awesome okay I'm going to go back so you can see

[00:31:20] So the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee reviewed Policy 8440, Policy 5047, and 5048. So we received these, or I received these policies the day after our last SEAC meeting on March 2nd.

[00:31:47] So you'll notice on the slide that it says they needed them by 420 and 410. and so of course today is 4-12. So we are doing what we can do. Often we get a review request.

[00:32:04] I got one today. So of course we couldn't review those policies to have feedback on them in time. So they will be reviewed this month and we will look at them again next month because the CEAC schedule is published every year and we meet the first, usually the first wednesday of every month okay i always have technical problems in my meetings always i'm like

[00:32:38] jinxed oh ted are you gonna save the day for me can we can we hook it up you think try yay awesome so i just wanted to let you know that that is an ongoing issue that we're working with lcps on

[00:33:16] is letting that getting the policies in a timely manner for us to be able to review them and get them back to their subcommittees on the date that or before the date hopefully that they're requesting. So all of our SEAC members have received these policies in advance. So from the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee, I'm going to let Shanaz Khan and Craig Metz come up and walk you through these. But if you have, if any of our members have any feedback on these policies that you would like to raise from the floor be please be prepared to make your motion

[00:33:54] we're going to ask our SEAC members to vote on our we're going to ask our SEAC members to vote does anyone have any discussion on these three policies that we did not feel that we had any recommendations on seeing none can I get

[00:34:27] a motion um so when we say I I think they can just unmute Katie go ahead I - I second that.

[00:34:59] - The motion is that there are no recommendations to these three policies. Are, is there any further discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. - Aye. - For our remote folks, do we have some eyes? - Melissa Wa says aye.

[00:35:15] - Heidi Bunkua says aye. - Thank you. All those opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. Are there any abstentions? Motion carries by unanimous consent. - So the next three policies, we had some recommendations come out of the policy subcommittee.

[00:35:34] We had policy 3310, policy 5045, and policy 5046. Policy 3310 was the evaluation of new and established programs. LCPS supports a culture of continuous improvement that drives the fulfillment of its mission to empower all students to make meaningful contributions to the world.

[00:36:01] LCPS will therefore employ a systematic approach to program evaluation for the purpose of evidencing high-quality programs and practices that produce positive outcomes for students and other key stakeholders.

[00:36:19] Our concern, number one, SEAC supports having relevant stakeholders involved in decision-making process. However, draft policy 3310 does not reference relevant stakeholders. And we felt that if you have a program you're introducing or a program you're taking away, that the relevant stakeholders, especially your advisory committees, should have some input on how that would affect their relevant community members.

[00:36:49] So our recommendation one is line number six, add relevant stakeholders to include those outlined in LCPS Policy 2310 should be identified and involved in the evaluation process. Our next concern, Draft Policy 3310, is very vague and does not give clear guidance or procedures for implementation.

[00:37:11] SEAC recommends the superintendent promulgate a regulation to define the process. So basically, this was stating that we didn't see how the new program would be introduced, how it would be evaluated.

[00:37:28] There was no process. Is there anything else you want to add? Right. And it's very common in the new kind of model for policies is often that the policy states kind of, here's the objectives, and then the implementation details are written by the staff into a regulation.

[00:37:44] But that way, everyone can see what's supposed to happen procedurally. So we're recommending the same thing be done here. So recommendation is line 91, add new section E, superintentional promulgate a regulation to implement policy 3310.

[00:38:01] And these are two recommendations. Any discussion from the floor? Seeing none, can I get a motion? I'll make a motion that we adopt recommendations one and two for policy 3310.

[00:38:27] The motion is that we accept recommendations one and two for policy 3310. Is there any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. Further remote virtual members? Melissa Wall says aye. Melissa says aye. All those opposed, please raise hand and say nay and are there any abstentions motion carries by unanimous consent policy 5045

[00:39:01] criteria and selection of supplemental instruction material lcps board provides a wide variety of instructional materials to support and enrich the educational program of the school the purpose of this policy is to define the criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials Many of our recommendations for policies have included this concern.

[00:39:26] LCPS is required to provide accessible print materials to students under the ADA, IDA, sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Policy regarding the selection and purchase of instructional materials should follow federal guidelines and be reflected in the policy.

[00:39:45] And recommendation one has line 36, remove the word and. At line 39, add an F, accessibility, and at line 39, add G, evidence-based as appropriate for the intended purposes.

[00:40:01] Line 86, remove the word and. At line 89, add an F, accessibility, and at line 89, add G, evidence-based as appropriate for the intended use. Our second concern is LCPS has a policy that governs family life education materials, And these should be accessible and compliant with policy 5048.

[00:40:27] So in recommendation two, line 63 afterward materials add all family life education materials are compliant with policy 5045 and additionally governed by policy 5048, family life education.

[00:40:46] These are two recommendations for this policy. Any discussions? Yes, Tom.

[00:41:04] Okay. Do we have to? Put that in. Any other discussion? As an aside, I always feel like the FLE information, I truly feel it's not very accessible for our kids with special needs.

[00:41:27] I feel like they, whether they're in the gen ed setting, whether they're in the special ed setting and they get any information from FLE, I don't think it's modified enough for their understanding. And I think some of it is very important. And obviously parents have the option to opt out if they don't feel that their child needs that type of education at that moment in their development.

[00:41:52] But I do feel that those who do want access to that don't. And it does go above their heads. And that's my, just wanted to put that out there because that's how I feel about that. So seeing that there are no other discussion, I would like to go ahead and make a motion.

[00:42:09] If someone can make a motion. Go ahead, Tom. as amended the motion is to adopt the two recommendations to policy 5045 as amended is there any further discussion seeing none all those in favor please raise your hand and say aye aye virtual melissa wall votes aye all those opposed please raise your hand and say nay

[00:42:49] are there any abstentions motion carries by unanimous consent policy 5046 criteria and selection of school and classroom library materials each school within Loudoun County Public Schools provides a variety of materials resources and equipment support and enrich their respective instructional programs this policy sets forth the relevant consideration surrounding the selection of school and classroom classroom library materials so our first concern is LCPS is required to provide accessible print materials to students under the

[00:43:27] ADA, IDEA, Section 504, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Policy regarding the selection and purchase of instructional materials should follow federal guidelines and be reflected in the policy. So our recommendation is at line 22 after the word variety, add of accessible formats and evidence-based as appropriate for their intended purpose.

[00:43:53] And that is the only recommendation for this policy. Any discussion? Yes, Tom. Absolutely. Can we get a motion? Lori, I'll second that.

[00:44:17] The motion is to approve the recommendations for policy 5046 as amended. Is there any further discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. Virtual.

[00:44:34] Melissa Waugh says aye. Eddie Bunkua says aye. All those opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. Are there any abstentions? Motion carries by unanimous consent. The Policy and Compliance Subcommittee also met and reviewed the 2324 Special Education Annual Plan.

[00:45:03] All local education agencies, which include local school divisions, state-operated programs in the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, are required to establish their eligibility to receive funding under IDEA. And its federal implementing regulations require that each LEA, in providing for the education of children with disabilities within its jurisdiction, has in effect policies, procedures, and programs that are consistent with the VDOE policies and procedures, which have been established in accordance with IDEA.

[00:45:42] The Annual Plan Part B flow-through application is a component of the VDOE's overall responsibility to ensure that each LEA's compliance with the implementation of the requirements of IDEA and its federal implementing regulations. Page 8, current data and evidence, including parental complaints, findings of systemic non-compliance by the VDOA and lawsuits do not support the statement on page 8 of 16 that states that the school division has adhered to IDEA state and federal regulations.

[00:46:22] So the annual plan is the application for the money and some of the conditions to get the money are you followed the law last year and you're going to follow the law this year and there's a very direct statement that said we followed the law last year and when we we sat down and we looked at what is the body of evidence that's available on that subject we found a lot of things that would let us to really have some concerns about that statement whether that's a fully true and correct statement um you know and that's always been the statement that's been made in the past we've just

[00:46:56] said okay fine but you know lcps and the loudon county school board are under a lot of scrutiny right now and so i think that we shouldn't just you know accept that statement out of hand but we might want to really think about is that a true and correct statement cac is concerned with current data and evidence that LCPS has not adhered to IDEA, state and federal regulations in the past year. And I think this is basically what you just summarized. Yeah. And then as we look forward,

[00:47:32] we're not seeing evidence of making improvements versus last year. We're seeing cuts to services. So that's probably not leading us to reasonably believe that things are going to get better next year. SEAC has shared specific concerns about inaccurately documenting special education service minutes in IEPs and choosing not to provide required related service minutes in IEPs due to regularly scheduled holidays that fall on the day a student is scheduled to receive a service.

[00:48:04] Therapist is unavailable due to being out or in an IEP meeting. Number three, failing to reschedule services when a student is made unavailable by the school to receive those services due to an assembly or a student doing testing. These actions do not support the statement to fully adhere to the regulations for the upcoming school year item 14 set aside funds set aside allocation specific to sub grants 611 619 a proportionate share of the school divisions section 611 sub grant will be set aside to be expended for children with disabilities

[00:48:44] age 3 through 21 who are parentally placed in a private school within the school division or homeschooled within the school division and a proportionate share of its section 619 sub grant will be set aside to be expended first children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 who are parentally placed in private school with the school division to provide special education and related services. SEAC is concerned with LCPS engaging in discriminatory practices by capping the breadth of services provided by 611 and 619 sub grant set aside by

[00:49:21] limiting the provision of the funds to just two distinct services, speech services and transition services, versus addressing areas of unique need for all qualified special education students ages three through 21. So basically LCPS has decided that those are the only two services and thus the only two disabilities that they will service. So if you need OT, a decision has been made by administration you will never ever be able to get OT with that money. That would seem like

[00:49:57] discrimination proposed use of part b section 611 funds grant period july 1st to september 30th 2025 SEAC is concerned with LCPS engaging state and federal 611 grant funds for FTEs that are

administrative and do not provide direct IEP services to our students and with disabilities our concern is specific to the FTEs listed as coordinators supervisors and financial analysts

[00:50:33] FTEs. While SEAC believes these positions may be important, SEAC proposes those indirect positions be funded through the school board budget. Section 611 funds should be reserved for positions with direct IEP services for our students with disabilities. SEAC has raised specific concerns with the projections for 23-24 school years budget to cut funding and resources for our growing populations of students. With the proposed cuts in teachers and related service providers, SEAC is concerned that the calculation of maintenance of, SEAC is concerned

[00:51:08] with the calculation of maintenance of effort. The IDEA regulations contain a maintenance of effort requirement to prevent school systems from cutting special education services from one year to the next. SEAC is concerned that the board's cuts to teachers and related service providers are the budget items that are, that these requirements are written to prevent. The school board should consider the statements and certifications they are making to the VDOE and evaluate changes that need to be made to be in compliance. There are actually two pages of the application being discussed there. So the first is there's a there's a list of here's what we're going to take the

[00:51:47] federal dollars and spend it on. And our thought is this money is supposed to be spent on special education and related services. Why is it not being spent on special education and related services? And there's a bunch of overhead positions being funded. If the school system wants to do that, feels that it's necessary, let the county transfer money pay for that. But this money is coming for special education related services. That's what it should be spent on. Second part of that, there's another page that's called maintenance of effort. Maintenance of effort is something that the IDEA has, and it's designed to prevent budget cuts. And I think it was

[00:52:27] envisioned, I mean, this is all the way back to the EAHCA back in the 70s. It was envisioned for world where the budget was spent on teachers and so dollars and teachers were basically the same thing in the modern world we see that there are substantial overheads and other things the dollars are being spent on according to the page we are not backsliding in dollars spent even though that we know the proposed budget cuts teachers at the very least the spirit of the idea is not being followed in that teachers are being cut when there's a specific provision to prevent that

[00:53:03] Even if the dollars might work, it certainly seems like it's not what we would have intended for the IDEA to do to say we can cut a bunch of teachers but spend the money on board administrators or whatever and that be not making a cut.

[00:53:19] But that's just the way that worksheet works. So we certainly don't feel that it's in the spirit of the IDEA. And it certainly does not meet the needs of our community. That's the end of that.

[00:53:37] - Yeah, so I think what we were trying to do here is just share the concerns that when we reviewed the annual plan. - Do we want? - Do we? - Huh? - Why don't we open up the discussion first? - I need discussion.

[00:53:57] Yes, Lauren. You know what? - Do you have a microphone? - Sorry. Thank you for sharing SEAC's concerns. I'm just curious how these concerns have been communicated beyond the SEAC community.

[00:54:16] - Our concerns were shared with Ms. Richardson an email we did send our concerns over to her follow-up question is when can we expect a response to the outlined concerns we haven't gotten to my section yet but certainly I do plan on going over an update for the annual plan

[00:54:42] application later on this evening any other discussion can we get a motion to adopt these concerns I'll second that the motion is to adopt the concerns raised on the annual plan is there any further discussion seeing none all those in in favor, please raise your hand and say aye.

[00:55:16] - Aye. - Virtual, please. - Melissa Waugh says aye. - Heidi Bunkua says aye. - Opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. Are there any abstentions? Hearing none, motion carries by unanimous consent.

[00:55:37] - Well, let's let Liz, your name was right there. - Oh, that's sharing too. - Yeah, Lisa. - I'm going to ask for Carla Sola to come forward. She is, thank you.

[00:56:03] She is heading up our nominating committee. Kim, thinking about it.

[00:56:17] It's just, yay.

[00:57:00] So we had two co-chairs of our nominating committee, and Nancy couldn't be here this evening, but I have Carla Sola here to present our slate of officers for the upcoming school year. Good evening.

[00:57:18] We have a few members, existing members of the committee that will be changing positions, and we have a couple of new members that would like to join the executive committee.

[00:57:34] So the nominating committee would like to nominate Liz Crotty. To my left, Liz is a mom of three children with IEPs who all attend Loudoun County Public Schools. She currently serves as her PTO's treasurer as well as the SEAC Vice Chair of Membership.

[00:57:55] Before pivoting to serve in volunteer roles, she was a tax accountant. We'd also like to nominate for the Vice Chair for Planning, Lisa Williams. Lisa Williams, pronouns she, her, is a biracial cisgender woman that identifies as black.

[00:58:14] She is a wife, mother of two girls, currently enrolled in LCPS, her youngest at 10 years of age, in special education, diagnosed with double deficit dyslexic, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia. She's lived in Loudoun County for over 25 years and is passionate about building community across differences.

[00:58:36] Professionally, she's a seasoned executive, inclusion and belonging practitioner and coach specializing in diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging, leadership and executive development, and resiliency-informed programming.

[00:58:51] Lisa is an adjunct professor in Georgetown's Executive Certificate Program in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which is housed in the Georgetown Institute for Transformational Leadership. She's passionate about serving her community, a passionate advocate for literacy.

[00:59:10] She sits on the Board of Laws, Loudon Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Child Advocacy Services. Previously, she enjoyed over 24 years in the technology industry, 16 years in executive management. I would like to nominate myself.

[00:59:29] I'm Carla Sola for the Vice Chair for Membership. My family and I have been residents of Loudon County for over 20 years. We have a daughter and a son. Because of medical issues, our daughter

had a 504 plan throughout high school.

[00:59:47] Our son's on the autism spectrum and has had an IEP since he entered the ECSE preschool program 17 years ago. I've witnessed a lot of changes in the special education program since our son was diagnosed. But one thing that continues to trouble me is the lack of necessary related services, specifically speech services for students with autism and other disabilities.

[01:00:14] For students with communication challenges, speech therapy services are critical, yet many students are denied services because of a lack of staff and resources. Having attended the SEAC meetings for the last four years as my son's high school PTO representative and the last two years as a voting member, I'm eager to assist SEAC on the executive committee.

[01:00:40] We'd like to nominate as the vice chair for communications, Shanaz Khan. She is the mother of three, her youngest diagnosed with Down syndrome. She's been a SEAC member since 2014. She served as the vice chair of planning for the last several years. She served in the past as Rockridge High School's PTSO president, and she currently serves as the Stonehill Middle School PTO secretary. Professionally, she worked as a forensic DNA analyst for the Department of Justice.

[01:01:15] That's so cool. Until her son was born. During her time with SEAC, she served as co-chair on the SEAC Transition and Policy and Compliance subcommittees. She's participated in the specialized reading and meaningful inclusion subcommittees and she believes that while there have been some positive outcomes for our students with disabilities there's still a lot of work to do. And finally Katie Rosenbrook has agreed to serve again as our vice chair secretary. She's been

[01:01:51] in Loudoun County for over 15 years. She's a special education teacher at Smarts Mill School and has served as RCX secretary for over three years. So we will post our slate.

[01:02:11] If anyone has any comments or concerns, please reach out and share. At our May meeting, we will vote on the slate, and our new officers will step into their roles. So now we want to move into our last section of our new business.

[01:02:32] This is something new that we're very excited about. I'm going to let Liz Crotty speak to this. She is one of the co-chairs of the Meaningful Inclusion Subcommittee. Heidi Bunkua is our other co-chair, but she is sick this evening, but she is online, and talk about the inclusion spotlight on schools.

[01:02:52] We have two schools featured this evening. Hello, everyone. So we started our Meaningful Inclusion Subcommittee this past December. It took a little while to get things going, but in our first meeting, One of the first ideas that really kind of started bubbling up was, you know, obviously there are things that we want to address to improve meaningful inclusion in our schools, but we also really wanted to celebrate the awesome things that are happening around Loudoun County Public Schools,

[01:03:30] you know, to show, to highlight these things to other departments and schools, so in case they would also like to, you know, copy. We love that. So, tonight we have two schools that we would like to highlight.

[01:03:46] We have some representatives from Buffalo Trail Elementary and then Hillside Elementary. So, is Alyssa Rogeliner and Frank Bogdan, are they here? All right, hi.

[01:04:02] Would you guys like to come up? So, the way this works is that we had a form, and anyone from the public or SEAC is welcome to fill out this form. and nominate someone from their school community

that they think is doing an awesome job and wants them to come and share their information.

[01:04:25] And so we really appreciate representatives from the school coming and just sharing a little bit more about the great work that they're doing. So they've prepared some slides, so I will let them take it from here. Good evening, everyone.

[01:04:47] I'm Elisa Rogeliner, principal of Buffalo Trail Elementary School, And I'm delighted to be here tonight to share with you a little bit of what happens in our building for inclusion with students with disabilities and the joy and the friendships and the wonderful relationships that develop every day.

[01:05:04] In addition to introducing this Before the Flight Show, I'd like to introduce Mr. Frank Bogdan, who was a Teacher of the Year nominee. He is now our IFT, which is our technology teacher, and is very passionate about making sure that every child is represented connected and included in all the activities there so without further ado mr bogdan when we got the email about meaningful inclusion there's a lot of stuff we do as a school in general i mean speech to text things chunking assignments um we do so much just to meet everybody um but when the meaningful kind of clicked and so when we got the email they're like

[01:05:43] hey frank do you have because i take a ton of pictures and videos this is kind of what we do And we celebrated on a lot of different formats. And I said, yeah, I got something. And it might not make sense until you, I give some context. So the first thing I want to share is a kindergarten video.

[01:06:00] And so the beginning of the year, kindergarten is learning the alphabet. Okay, they learn letters. And we have three self-contained classes at Buffalo Trail, and they're included. They have partner teachers, and they involve themselves with. And if you're in the school system, you're familiar with this. And so the song Chicka Chicka Boom Boom is very, very popular in kindergarten.

[01:06:20] I think everyone knows it, and some parents are like, oh, my God, if I hear it again. So it's when I, Mrs. Durth and Mrs. Tyler Black had an idea of filming the kids with the Chicka Chicka Boom Boom song, but using gross motor movements to form the letters.

[01:06:39] And she goes, Mrs. Durth's class will be involved. So when we were doing this in front of a green screen and taking pictures of the kids forming the letters, we had to modify things as much because people kept getting caught on the floor and that would just mess up the thing. So when you see the video, you'll notice things jump up and down and things, but it's, the context of it is, is it formed a community because after the video was made, the kids were learning the alphabet from the letters they made in the video and the kids that were involved, and this is the part I don't have evidence of, were so excited and they were like talking to each other. That was a great Y, you know, that was a great L, you know, and it formed

[01:07:15] the community. And when we talked about meaningful inclusion, I thought that was important because when I went back to talk to both teachers, they were like, oh my God, the kids loved it. They were just like little heroes in their own little moment. It's going to have to require someone to sign in. I was afraid of that. Would it let me sign in as myself,

[01:07:49] but it's not my learner? You know what? Oh, you need to log in. Give me a second. I'm

[01:08:25] sorry. I can have theme music. We do need some music, don't we? You don't want that. It would end the meeting early. You know, expression can't carry a tune in a bucket to me.

[01:08:46] Thank you for your patience. It is exciting to see. And as Mr. Bogdan was sharing the first time, I saw the video as they compiled everything together and integrating those gross motor movements and putting those things into play really helps solidify that content learning with the children.

[01:09:05] And so this has been an exemplar for a lot of our classes to take off with, making sure that some wonderful learning opportunities and experiences take place for our students with disabilities. But sometimes they're like best-kept secrets.

[01:09:20] And as children in general ed who are having difficulty with their memory, they're having difficulty learning this, they start emulating the letter shapes and the L's and the M's and things. You suddenly now have your own elementary version of YMCA going on in the classrooms. But the children do love it and they get so excited.

[01:09:38] And so we're hopeful that you'll get to see this as well. Oh, I'll get it. Microsoft. She's got it over here.

[01:10:00] Did it pop up? It came up on Strove Street. Oh, good. Yours? I'll use mine as backup. Try. All this waiting for a minute and a half. Yeah.

[01:10:17] Assuming everyone is like, oh, there we go. Thank you. No, we're muted. Hold on. Unto this.

[01:10:36] Yeah, we did, but it didn't work.

[01:10:47] The coconut tree.

[01:11:06] The coconut tree. Chicka, chicka, oh, you're not afraid.

[01:12:31] But anyway, I focused, when we found evidence, there's just a lot of things that Buffalo Trail does that incorporates all the students. And it makes the kids have success and feel part of the team. So we have a news crew that we head up.

[01:12:48] And the news crew is made up of fifth graders across the school. And they have to apply to me to get accepted to be part of the news crew. And we try to take everybody from anywhere. If they're interested, the guaranteed spot to get in, if you get on your application and go, I'm shy, but I'm hoping this will make me better, you're automatically in.

[01:13:10] So a lot of times you'll get kids get in there. But Mrs. Lemp is one of our self-contained teachers. And at the beginning of the year, she goes, I would love to have the kids get involved. I know two of the boys love the new show. She goes, but we have to get there. In the fourth quarter, they sent an application in. And the new show has a script.

[01:13:27] And we always end with be responsible, respectful, be ready to learn. It's our three R's. And that was their, they've been obsessed with that part of it. Every day in class, they would say, be respectful, be responsible. So Nehemiah and Anthony were really big on that.

[01:13:42] And that's the part that they really wanted to play in the new show. So we modified the script, created a background for them. And we just started this fourth quarter about a week and a half ago. And I'm going to start this. We have theme music.

[01:13:57] The kids pick out a music. And so there's a couple different parts to the new show that makes it part of a community in which I keep going back to but we have a joke segment that the kids are part of and

we have a laugh track sorry she's bashful she wants to learn so the laugh track is something we all have to do and we have Friday when we draw like tickets for

[01:14:33] our PBIS plan we have drum rolls and things like that these kids are so into it and it doesn't matter what background they come from they they laugh they get into it and on this one Nehemiah was absent when he's here he gets so into the laugh track and then he does the end of it and i don't i can pull it up but it would take too long but um we go to the end of the show and we get to that's a commercial sorry one more respectful be responsible be ready to learn bye

[01:15:11] that simple thing if i showed you today's you're going to see those two boys and they have the other kids in the background saying it with them so it's a group together afterwards when we say bye we switch to the bye song and we have our closing music whatever they picked whether it's the burger king whopper commercial song you don't know how popular that is oh my gosh yeah it's our fifth graders they put it on the new show all the time i let them they have free run um as long as it's appropriate and it's just yeah anyway um so after today they're like nehemiah and anthony's

[01:15:47] like yes and they're like clapping and they're high-fiving people and it brought them together and it's a simple thing but it built that community with everybody and those are the two things we showed and I could probably pull up the last couple episodes with Nehemiah and Anthony at the end and in the laugh tracks what you don't see is them being part of the group them asking to sit next to people or having people sit next to them and high-fiving and clapping and that is a big deal you don't always see that and they are part of our group and you know I saw nehemiah yesterday in the hallway and he's like high five and that's a big thing um for um him and

[01:16:26] it just made him feel part of the group and so i focused on these two things because i know that this is just two of many many many things that built community and that's why we want to

[01:16:36] share this new technology yet just reflected them get to it to you thank you guys so much um our next

[01:19:07] Honorary is Jessica Butler from Hillside Elementary, who's a librarian over there, and she also has some wonderful things to share with us. So thank you so much for coming out tonight. Thank you. So first, I'd like to let you know that this month is School Library Month, so I just want to wish you all a wonderful School Library Month.

[01:19:33] What you see behind me is the first slide that any student at Hillside sees on the first day of school. Welcome to our library. And that sentiment is something that we continue on through the entire year of school.

[01:19:53] It is our library. Every single learner, staff member, community member that comes into our school, this is a place for them. As librarians, we really see our role as a significant role in supporting students and providing equitable access to resources.

[01:20:15] And we ask students every day to think, create, share, and grow. And so they need to be in a space where they feel safe, they feel heard, and they feel part, an integral part of the community. So I always ask myself every single day, what are the needs and preferences that students have in the school library environment?

[01:20:42] This is my guiding question. And I am a career switcher, so I come from a research background. So always look to the research first. And to be honest with you, there's not that much research out there regarding meeting all of the needs, especially for students with disabilities, in the library setting.

[01:21:04] So I've kind of condensed it in three areas that I really focus on. The physical space, what is access to resources, what is the layout of the library, inclusion, how do we celebrate our differences, and how do we make everyone know that they're an integral part of the community, and also lessons, how do we make active lessons where students really have meaningful voice and choice.

[01:21:35] So here's a few examples of what we do at Hillside. What you don't see here are our spaces in our layout where we have space for full classes, where we have space for small setting, small groups, and for individuals.

[01:21:51] You're also not seeing our large variety of resources that we have for all members of our community. We've really made a point to make sure that every student has representation so that they can see themselves in the books that we have, that we have a robust online presence, and that they are also able to get access not only to our physical library, but to our virtual library.

[01:22:20] But here's some things that we've done. One, universal design. We're really big on universal design. You can see from my presentation, I have the black background, I have a high contrast. We have recently changed our letters in this right corner over here for our everyone section.

[01:22:39] It's much easier for our students to find books that they love when they can see what it is they're looking for. So I'm always saying, oh, you want Pete the Cat? Look for D-Duck, and Pete the Cat books are right there.

[01:22:56] So giving them visuals and words to help them with their search in an easy, accessible way. You're also seeing that we have in the center over here, genre-fied or fiction section. What we found in our library is that our students, especially our students who needed the greatest support in finding resources, we had no time to help them because in a 30-minute or 45-minute class, we're teaching a mini lesson and then there's 10 minutes to check out. So how do we support our students? One of the ways we did this was by genrefying the library. So if you want a mystery

[01:23:36] book, all the mystery books are together. There's a label that has not only the word mystery but has a symbol for mystery. There are signs all over the library that show you what that mystery is so that our students can find their just right book, whatever that just right book is.

[01:23:55] We also looked at our nonfiction section. We know that our students, especially our students with disabilities, love nonfiction. But how do they find their books in the mass of books that we have? What we did was we recreated with these white bins over here a very quick and easy access point for students to find nonfiction books that are high interest as well as tied to our curriculum.

[01:24:24] So it's easy for them to find what they want. We've purchased for the nonfiction section dividers that not only have Dewey Decimal System, they have the words and they have the images, all of this to help them find what they need.

[01:24:39] And as you can see now, we're starting in this corner over here to use dynamic shelving And seeing how that is going to work for our population, I will tell you, it is a huge hit. So we're going to be

doing more and more of that. So when we think about the needs and preferences of our students, we're trying to reach them and reach everyone where they are in terms of the physical space.

[01:25:04] Inclusion. Inclusion is so huge for our students. So here's just a few things that we've done. Number one, my lessons most often start with the dynamic opener. These are questions that lead students to different parts of the library that they may have never even thought that they should have access to.

[01:25:23] Most of these questions don't have a readily knowing answer, or there should be differing viewpoints. What I find is that our students, especially students with disabilities, love to talk. And they have such specific knowledge points that they could teach us entire year-long lessons on some of these topics.

[01:25:48] And this really gives them the ability to shine and grow and to really be part of the conversation and to see how important they are in the discussion. We've also done things like create, whenever we create anything in the library, every student's work is shown in the library.

[01:26:06] You can see rows and rows and rows of pop-up books that our kindergartners and first graders made. Every student's work is highlighted in our library. Up on the top corner over here, you can see one of our fifth grade groups.

[01:26:22] We had a club called the Duck Squad. They're trying to make sure the ducks don't stay in our courtyards. They created material. Where do we show this? We show it in the library. Why do we do this? Because this is where all of our students think, create, share, and grow.

[01:26:38] And you can see our classes are coming in to learn from the information, and they are part of it. We also do a couple other interesting things. We have a maker moment. We know that some of our students just need an extra time. They get frustrated during the day.

[01:26:55] Or they do something amazing and they want to celebrate. The maker moment is an area in our library where they can come for five or ten minutes and do a project. Do a craft-like project, color a bookmark, just anything that gives them that time out that they might need.

[01:27:13] And finally, we do grade-level inclusive events. For example, our second grade is in charge of deciding for our entire school who wins our mock Hall de Cot Award. That's for the best illustrated book.

[01:27:29] The second grade does head-to-head battles. They pick a winner. And then I promise them that I will reach out to the illustrators and see if they'll give us some of their artwork. And so what that does is that every student sees that they are adding to the library.

[01:27:48] This is the work of Elijah Cooper. He is actually a Caldecott winner in previous years who donated his work to our school. This year, the winning book was Night Owl, and Christopher Denise also kindly donated some of his artwork to our library.

[01:28:03] He's a Caldecott honoree, so that's in our library, and every second grade student and every kindergartner and every first grader knows that they are the ones who are going to decide what illustrators are on our walls.

[01:28:19] And finally, lessons. We want meaningful lessons with voice and choice. This is just one example of something we've done recently. We had a local author come speak to our students, and we could have very well have had just several lessons where we read the author's books and then had the students so they knew what was happening. But instead, we really wanted to give them voice and choice.

So kindergartners and first graders, they were going to see a lesson or a presentation on poetry and verse. So they made

[01:28:54] their own pop-up books with their own verse and poetry and rhyming words, which you saw that picture of all of their work so that when the author came in, she saw all of that they did. Our second and third graders, they were seeing a session on the illustration. So we gave them the words to these authors' books, and they created their projects. So you can see Little Red Rhyming Hood is in the middle. Rumble and Roar, the rocks over on the corner

[01:29:27] here. And then we also have one of her other books where there's like a screeching sounds in the book and they recreated that. Our fourth and fifth graders, they were seeing a session on using nonfiction in books. So what did they do? They used nonfiction topics to really delve into all the things that they love, whether it was using the author's books, whether it was coding and using Makey Makey or even just illustrating or making three-dimensional creatures that combine

[01:30:02] two creatures that you would find in a habitat. And so for us at Hillside, we are continuing to try to push the boundaries of how we include everyone, how we embrace everyone. And so next year our big to-go project is our biography section and actually having our students create their own genres or categories, having them create their own labels and getting those printed out

[01:30:35] and having them put braille on the signs and really taking that up just further of what we're doing. So I welcome you all to Hillside if you'd like to see what we're doing, but thank you for having me. Thank you so much Mr. Bogdan and Ms. Butler. I am so inspired by all of that and I just want to put out a little plug to everyone to please take a look around your schools and if you see some things that you'd like to have shared at our meetings we always include the form the

[01:31:14] submission form in our minutes and in our PTO PTA representative notes so share that with your school communities during your PTO and PTA meetings so that we can hear from the broadest audience possible so thank you so much for coming and for sharing all of that with us okay so moving into the report section or the from the executive committee every one of our members should have also received an

[01:31:51] email with our meeting minutes from last month from I don't know where that went or I forgot to put it on here but we do need to approve our minutes from last month so does anyone have any comments on the March 1st meeting minutes that was shared with you in draft form okay seeing none we will move forward with posting those are for executive committee our meeting is tonight if anyone would like to join us we will be at Clyde's after our meeting to go

[01:32:28] through we're currently working on our awards which takes me into our my next bullet point um our SIAC annual awards will be June 6th at 6 30 we had 220 nominations this year that is the most that we have ever had um the executive committee uh went through and read and rated every nomination and we have made our first cut through those and we are getting ready to go through and make our go through and our final grading of those and rating of those and to have

[01:33:07] our final award recipients and we will be ready to announce those on May 3rd at our next SEAC meeting. Our current survey data from 22 or the current survey is out. It came out Monday. Did everybody see the survey? Yes. Awesome. So that came out Monday and I think that's open through the first week of

June if I'm not mistaken and then our 2122 data is currently being analyzed and our 2021 report has been submitted to the Office

[01:33:43] of Special Education I presented the highlights of that to you in November but the final written report has been submitted to the Office of Special Education then once it's looked at and approved we will post it and we will share it out to everyone and and the school board our membership we currently have 71 schools with PTA PTO reps we have 25 schools outstanding and we currently have 20 voting members I'd like to

[01:34:14] welcome our newest member Kathy Lambert you want to stand up say hello welcome and we have one applicant that we've received and she is working to fulfill her meeting requirements if you would like to be a member the information is on the back table and our SEAC bylaws are on our website so you know what your responsibilities would be. If you have any questions please see anyone on the executive committee we would be happy to talk to you. So on March right after our SEAC meeting on March 14th

[01:34:53] I did our quarterly report to the school board and I just wanted to give you an update on what I presented so I presented our top concerns at this point in the school year if you recall when I presented in when did I present December or yes December our number one concern was teacher retention and we voted on those concerns we had a whole activity and our number one concern was the retention of our teachers and our related service staff and making sure that we are providing

[01:35:30] an environment where we encourage our new teachers and our current teachers to stay with LCPS and to grow. We have gotten a lot of feedback from our teachers and teaching assistants on the current climate. We were very concerned with the budget cuts that were outlined in the budget and so we focused our quarterly update to the school board on those two issues of teacher staffing and our

[01:36:01] related service staffing. So some things that we identified as some inputs that we had received on things that our teachers do outside of their planning time that impact them to be able to fulfill their requirements that are unaccounted for responsibilities. So we came up with reports of no planning periods. We hear that all the time from our teachers. They have to attend a lot of

[01:36:36] IEP meetings. They have to write IEPs. They have to take on the roles of related service providers, meaning that the related service providers often will want to do a consult model to where they're consulting with the teacher, and then the special ed teacher is responsible for implementing a particular goal in the IEP. They do evaluations and training, and they also are part of that behavior and crisis support related services unaccounted for responsibilities that don't go into that when you think about that staffing standard is can they

[01:37:15] conduct evaluations they do that 60-day kindergarten screenings they attend eligibility meetings IEP meetings planning report writing and they often travel between schools because they may have more than one school they're responsible for they may have up to three schools and so they have all that travel time between schools that also is unaccounted for.

[01:37:40] So SEAC requested that based on our previous vote and recommendations to the school board that they revisit the related services staffing standard and to revisit staffing our teachers at and not to cut any positions.

[01:37:57] When we cut our teacher positions and when we cut our related service providers what we see is a reduction in students receiving services services being cut or students not being found eligible for

related services and ultimately it's a denial of FAPE or free appropriate public education that was our concern that we shared or I shared with the school board in March so new issues that have come up since then as you may recall or this is something that

[01:38:31] hasn't been talked about, but in the searching, I had gotten some feedback from parents about the name change from a child study to our multidisciplinary team's new wording that they're using for team reviews, and there was confusion because we've called it child study for so long, and then when you click on the link on our webpage, it takes you to an older document, our 2018 LCPS procedures for implementing regulations governing special education programs for children in Virginia and that regulations document still uses our old

[01:39:07] verbiage so there's some with a little bit of a disconnect there so I let Ms. Richardson and Ms. Smith know that that document needs to be updated so there isn't any confusion for our parents and that SEAC would love to be involved in that and last month I believe it was last month that Ms. Crotty brought to our attention that our ECSE programs did not have any academic focus.

[01:39:37] And in researching that, we discovered that the ECSE program, our program is not utilizing the Virginia Department of Education standards of learning that were developed. And so in the fall of 2021, and now that the Virginia Department of Education has updated their website, they actually put this right on their website, Then the fall of 2021, Virginia has the new set of comprehensive early learning and development standards for young children, birth to five, and those new standards were expected to have been adopted.

[01:40:14] So we brought that also to the attention of the special education department because we have not adopted those standards. We have an opportunity for any parent or special education teacher or teacher who would want to be on the SOL Item Review Committee, the open enrollment is until this Friday, so you don't have much time, but they're going to be reviewing the math and reading standards and all the information you would need to know about that is in the VDOE Superintendent's

[01:40:51] Memo 045-23. It's right on their webpage if you go to the SOL page. And our subcommittee reports the policy and compliance subcommittee do you have any updates no you want to turn we are going to break out into our subcommittees today so we did not have a meeting planned for an upcoming meeting but we do have some policies that were sent to us so since we have received policies today I

[01:41:28] mentioned that earlier we will schedule an additional policy and compliance subcommittee meeting to review those policies so we will be prepared to present those to the membership at our May meeting transition in knowing that we were going to meet today we decided not to meet outside of this meeting so

[01:41:51] we will be meeting today and I believe that same for specialized reading we'll get it we'll get it out on our website well you emailed one out but I emailed one out we have an agenda that we're gonna post on the website right yeah I I think that was getting posted.

[01:42:31] - Right, so the date was April 17th at,

[01:42:56] so the collaborative meeting is going to be here on April 17th at 9:30 in the morning, and then the last subcommittee will be a virtual meeting on April 19th at 5:30, and that agenda will be posted.

[01:43:14] Okay, meaningful inclusion. So we met as a subcommittee on March 21st and we ended up just kind of, we had put together a spreadsheet to address some of the barriers that we'd spoken about as it comes to implementing personalized learning.

[01:43:38] So we are going to continue working on that on our next scheduled subcommittee meeting, which is this upcoming Tuesday, April 18th six o'clock and it's a virtual meeting so an agenda will be going up shortly for that and hopefully others can attend and we will also of course be meeting this evening as well and at the May meeting the gifted advisory committee I could find no information on May 11th okay and the equity meeting will be tomorrow

[01:44:16] night here at the admin building at 5:30 whoops parent resource services good evening everyone as you can see my normal slides are not here it is my fault entirely i did not send them to kim so i apologize so i will be speaking about our upcoming workshops they are

[01:44:49] in the back um one of the reasons and it's not an excuse is parent resource services has moved into our new facility we are now at 407 east market which is the douglas school i have a gorgeous suite i'm very happy with it unfortunately it's not been open to the public yet so as soon as it's open um please come and see me i'm very lonely down there i'm on the whole first floor by myself but so we're in uh next week we have specialized reading and math demo so it's an

[01:45:29] interactive workshop with the cif r's and cif m's they will be giving you strategies to use with your kids now and over the summer so that's here at the admin building next thursday then we have distracted driving on the 26th which is i do believe a wednesday and he is also going to be here and the sheriff's office will be here and the rap program so that will be everything you need to know to help your teen stay safe in driving and then finally this month on

[01:46:05] the 27th which is Thursday we have trauma-informed emergency safety procedures so it's going to talk about trauma-informed care and also the is Allison here I thought I saw her earlier it's also going to talk about about MANT and UCARA, however you say that.

[01:46:27] So that's all going to be tied in there. So the flyers are in the back. Come see me as soon as the building's open. And I will see you next month. Thank you. So our next business meeting, we're going to have a similar meeting next month where we are wrapping up our subcommittee work for the year.

[01:46:50] So all of our members should have received a subcommittee work form that when you meet with your respective subcommittees after here are about three slides for our work session that we are going to be wrapping up the work that you did this year between this this meeting tonight and in May so those worksheets those completed worksheets will then go to the CEC chair hopefully would be a Liz at that time and that will information will be what is utilized for the annual report.

[01:47:27] So those forms are very important. That's going to inform the annual report once we receive the data analysis. So all of that will go into that report. And an update from our school board liaison, Tiffany Polifko.

[01:47:45] Thank you so much. I'm happy to be here tonight. I wanted to review a little bit of what occurred last night in our school board meeting. We had some discussions that went quite late. So for those of you who were not able to tune in, I did wanna just provide a quick recap. I wanted to thank all of the speech pathologists who came out to speak last night at the school board meeting and for sharing their passion and their advocacy for the students that they serve.

[01:48:11] We had a discussion later on in the evening about our current staffing standards and my understanding from Dr. Smith, if I'm not mistaken at this point, is that we were at one to 55. Now we had at least one person come up during public comment and state that her caseload was over that number.

[01:48:29] We know that there are students in our school system that are not receiving the related services that they need. And this is not just a speech issue. It's also an OT issue. It's possibly a physical therapy issue. We also know that our kids with disabilities do not often just need one type of service.

[01:48:50] They need multiple services to gain access to a free appropriate public education under IDEA. So as we were discussing funding and where we currently are with the budget, I understand that those 10 positions were considered the hold harmless positions, and that what we've been told is that they were supposed to go away at the end of this year anyway, and that we currently have two positions in speech therapy that are not being filled, that I guess have been open for quite some time, and LCPS just has not been successful in filling those positions.

[01:49:27] However, it doesn't mean that just because we're not filling those positions doesn't mean that they're not needed. It doesn't mean that our kids don't need those services. So I would like to continue this discussion. This is not something that we can sweep under the rug or forget about because we constantly have kids going through eligibility.

[01:49:47] So it's not something that just ends with what's happening in the current school year. We're always going to have kids in the eligibility process. I believe there was a speaker last night that said there are currently, I think it was 245 kids that are in eligibility right now.

[01:50:04] And more than likely, those children will need related services. So I wanted to follow up on that and just, again, reiterate my support for a continued advocacy and more staffing to meet the needs of our students.

[01:50:23] Additionally, I have received some outreach from a few families regarding policy 8155 school assignment and their concerns with their children not being found eligible to receive special placement on their request to do so.

[01:50:40] And so I think that's something that I just want to raise awareness to because we know how important it is for kids with disabilities to maintain consistency in their schedules and their routines and how that helps them maintain success in their school and social lives as well.

[01:51:01] So I'm hoping to get some more information on that and be able to provide more concrete understanding for these families because I'm not sure if they're receiving a specific answer as to why they're being denied those requests to have their children be placed in an alternative school.

[01:51:21] But I'm hoping to get more information on that and be able to continue my outreach with them. So that's all I have this evening. Thank you. I'm going to turn it over to Ms. Tedra Richardson for her Office of Special Education update.

[01:51:44] Thank you. Update on current vacancies across the division in special education. For special education teachers across the levels, at the elementary level, we currently have 10 vacancies. middle school six vacancies high school 11 teacher vacancies for support staff vacancies at elementary we have 12 vacancies middle school has six and high school has 29 again as I have been doing in most recent meetings if you know anyone who was interested and qualified to be a teacher or interested in being a

[01:52:22] teacher assistant please have them apply through our LCPS website an update on the annual plan application for the 23-24 school year. The plan was presented as an informational item to the board last evening on April the 11th. We started with who are we serving because that tells the story of the meaningful work that we get to do on a daily basis. At the time of our December 1st child count, we were serving 9,445 students. When we pulled our data yesterday at

[01:52:58] 2:31 p.m. and I emphasize that time because it's changing quite rapidly we were serving 9,835 students. Also at the time of that pull we had 881 students actively in the eligibility process. The school board was provided an overview of the plan. We discussed the fact that Loudoun County houses the Loudoun juvenile detention center, which is considered to be a state-operated program.

[01:53:33] LCPS serves as the fiscal agent, and that funding from the state is about \$624,000. Our maintenance of effort, which is calculated in conjunction with business and financial services, is a combination of state and local funding required to meet our obligation for students with disabilities, is roughly \$261 million.

[01:53:56] For school-aged funding, the grant application is coming in at about \$14 million for school-aged students. And for preschool funding, it's around \$189,000. The plan did and does currently cover 130 special education teachers, five teacher assistants, two coordinators, two supervisors, one audiologist, one program assistant, one specialist, one behavior specialist, and one financial analyst for school-age services.

[01:54:30] For preschool services, it covers two early childhood special education teachers. Our proportionate share calculation is \$81,000 for school-age students, and we do not have any preschoolers identified with disabilities that are parentally placed as homeschoolers or in private school at this time.

[01:54:50] We currently offer speech-language services, support with transition planning for students ages 14 and above, and we also provide educational consultative services. A summary of the SEAC feedback and acknowledgment of the SEAC's positive and collaborative support was acknowledged during the board meeting.

[01:55:11] We did share a summary of the concerns, which was that the plan should focus on our compliance as a school division, the consideration of the expansion of proportionate share calculation services, staffing concerns, and the overall impact to our maintenance of effort, and positions that are assigned to the grant.

[01:55:32] The school board had questions and acknowledgments. Mrs. Polifco, indeed, acknowledged the substantial growth in our special education population and emphasized the impact that we maintain and enhance our staffing for teachers, teacher assistants, and related services providers.

[01:55:51] Mr. Morse did ask a question about increasing the amount that we've requested in our grant application based on our increase in overall enrollment for students eligible under the IDEA.

[01:56:06] The school board agreed to approve the application as moving forward as a consent agenda item for the April 25th board meeting. I remind SEAC that the submission is due on May 12th, 2023 to the Virginia Department of Education. Updates from the Office of Special Education on special education staffing, especially for 2023-24. As a department, we continue to work collaboratively with the following Division stakeholders for the upcoming school year, business and financial services, human

[01:56:44] resources and talent development, the Department of Instruction, and individual school sites. Planning for 24-25 is already underway to consider revisions to the current factors that are considered in our special education staffing standard.

[01:57:04] Such factors are the number of transfers that we experience in and out of our school division, the number of students that are in the eligibility process and the amount of students that are found eligible over the course of a school year, the amount of students that are currently being monitored in Tier 3 interventions and that are slated for a referral for a child study, and evaluations from the mandatory screenings.

[01:57:33] We are also talking about the roles and responsibilities of special education teachers and the related services providers. There's a focus on cross-categorical teachers and maintaining our LCPS staffing standard of one cross-categorical teacher to every 10 students that are slated to receive services, and then the role of our speech-language pathologists.

[01:57:59] The OSCE is sharing data points with division leadership to consider workload, caseloads, and all of the additional responsibilities that SEAC shared with the school board during their quarterly report back in March.

[01:58:16] The OSC would also like to publicly acknowledge and commend our speech-language pathologists that have been speaking and advocating on behalf of their discipline at our school board meetings. And we would also like to publicly acknowledge, again, the continued positive advocacy of SEAC on behalf of our needs for special education teachers, teaching assistants, and related services providers.

[01:58:44] We also have a focus on early intervention, looking at our ECSC services. Our needs this year have grown exponentially. Most of our center-based programs have reached or have exceeded the state staffing standard.

[01:59:02] We have addressed this by sending individualized parent letters to parents of students who are in center-based programs. We have also been able to support our building principals with the addition of hourly teacher assistant staff to meet this new need.

[01:59:21] The Office of Special Education has also formed an ECSE teacher workgroup. The focus of that workgroup will target current service models, looking at the developmental appropriateness of curriculum and instruction for two-year-olds, three-year-olds, and four-year-olds, and also looking at our services for preschool exception students.

[01:59:44] We're also looking at the impact of our class observations, which is our classroom assessment scoring system, which is required by the Virginia Department of Education, using that information to inform the way that we move forward across our early childhood special education classrooms.

[02:00:05] The work group will also look at improving inclusive practices and Opportunities in Preschool, our IPOP initiative, and how we can increase that. We're also looking at our curriculum alignment for our current tools of the MIND and the Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards, birth through five learning guidelines.

[02:00:32] That's the update from the Office of Special Education. I now pass it over to Dr. Asia Jones, our Assistant Superintendent of Student Services. Good evening, everyone, and thank you so much, Mr. Richardson.

[02:00:53] That was a lot of a comprehensive update. I had IM'd her just to ensure that we were providing that update that was shared with the board on yesterday evening regarding the annual plan. The only thing that I would add to that is the federal dollars from that application is a very small percentage of our operating budget.

[02:01:13] It is approximately 6, 6.5% and has been about that over the last number of years. And so we continue to be very appreciative of all of our special educators and the advocacy and the board listening and supporting those positions.

[02:01:30] It is important to note that, and you might recall two years back when we were divisions across the Commonwealth were receiving COVID ARP funding, that we requested, although our numbers did not, based on our staffing standard, because all of the budget appropriated positions, education and special education are related to staffing standards that are also related to the standards of quality for Virginia Department of Education with a number of children in classes and we've always worked to try to reduce the pupil to teacher or the student to teacher educator ratio across the board

[02:02:09] and what we wanted to do is although during the COVID years and when we were actually remote we didn't have as large of a number of students we did not want to lose special education positions because we know it is very challenging that is a critical shortage area.

[02:02:26] And we were able to maintain those and also roll into the next year as well. What we are doing, as Ms. Richardson mentioned, is working very closely with our business and financial services team to review and also the digital innovation, our tech team, to review the number of students who are receiving services across the board and to ensure that if there is growth, that we have to make appropriations to increase the number of FTEs to meet that and also to not to reduce FTEs.

[02:03:00] So when Mrs. Polifko mentioned hold harmless, that's what that means, that we hang on to those FTEs, although there are 10 positions that were above the staffing standard to maintain those as our numbers and student needs would grow. So I do appreciate that.

[02:03:16] do want to say thank you to our speech-language pathologists. We support them in the information that they are sharing, as well as the added responsibilities as a former special education teacher, recognizing the additional above responsibilities and monitoring that we do in the classrooms each and every day. So thank you. And that brings us to a conclusion of our business portion of the meeting. So we're going to move into our subcommittee meeting. So if you

[02:03:51] can break up into our subcommittees I don't know how the chairs want to have maybe Lorraine since you and Elizabeth are there that could be the reading and math transition here okay just turn around there okay so we'll do transition over here and then meaningful inclusion where do you want to meet just pick a

[02:04:26] table maybe over here policy and compliance all of our members on policy and compliance are in other committees. So if you can find your committee and start to work on those worksheets that were provided.

[02:04:47] Thank you everyone.



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