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Loudoun County School Board, Human Resources and Talent Development (HRTD) Committee Meeting, Thursday, April 27, 2023

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[00:01:37] Good evening. I am calling to order the HRTD committee meeting for the month of April. It is April 27th. Joined with me today are Mr. John Beatty and Mr. Jeff Morse. Do we have anyone signed up for public comment?

[00:01:55] Okay, thank you. Moving ahead to item number three, related to the draft minutes for March 23rd. Is there a motion to approve the minutes? So moved. Is there a second? Second. Thank you.

[00:02:11] All those in favor of approving the minutes for March 23rd, please raise your hand and say aye. Aye. Aye. That motion passes unanimously with all committee members present. Next up, we have information item, HRTD policy number 7640, workers' compensation.

[00:02:33] Thank you so much. So, as you stated tonight, we have a revision that the employee benefits team has worked on for policy 7640. And I'm going to turn over the mic to Ms. Jeanette Evans, the HRTD director of employee benefits, to walk us through the proposed changes.

[00:03:02] Good evening. So, there are just a couple of minor changes on the, you can see in the red line. mostly the biggest change actually is on line 10 where we take out benefit eligible employees and it's all employees so workers comp does apply to substitutes to hourly employees etc so we wanted to clarify that

and then make sure that we reference the code correctly then down on line 17 we took away state and put Virginia because it is specific to Virginia we also on lines 19 through 23 we no longer do paper claim submission everything is

[00:03:41] electronic so we wanted to reference that and that it is done by the third party administrator for by the person designated complete the form or the third-party administrator generally it's a principal or assistant principal or a dean or if the principal chooses perhaps sometimes the school nurse will be the person that does the entry and then it we changed it from business and finance to HRTD because leave and disability programs has moved over to HRTD as of a couple of years ago.

[00:04:14] And then at the end, lines 28 through 33, we're referencing specifically looking on the website for the panel physicians, the workers' comp panel physicians for treatment of a work-related injury, and that information is in every LCPS facility.

[00:04:31] It is on our website. We took out the specific page reference because things move around sometimes and change, so this way they know to look on the website, but we did not put a specific page that may or may not be there when somebody clicks on a link.

[00:04:48] And that were all the changes. Added a legal reference to the code at the very end of line 46. Anybody have questions from the committee members? Mr. Morse? Did we get any feedback from LEA on the posting and the listing of the physicians?

[00:05:08] Was there any response on that yet? So we haven't put it out for public comment yet. First, it comes here. Thank you. Okay, my question was also about that. I was interested in why we have a specific list of approved physicians, just understanding that people live in different areas, And if somebody had a workers' comp claim and were no longer coming to work but lived some distance away, just trying to understand if that is limiting their access to a provider.

[00:05:49] Okay, so we try to have providers throughout the county. When you're dealing with workers' compensation, there are specific practices that have to be followed, et cetera. So we work with our third-party administrator to develop the list of physicians that are the initial contact for an employee so that we can make sure that they're getting the care that we want to make sure they're getting the care that they need to get.

[00:06:15] An employee can always go to an urgent care or an emergency room first, and then any follow-up care has to go through the panel physician. So they could go to an emergency room, to an urgent care, and then follow up with a panel physician. And just following that a little bit further.

[00:06:31] So I know we have staff who live as far as, say, West Virginia. Does that mean that they're continuing care, not just the initial contact, because that could also be urgent care or a hospital, but their continuing care would need to be with one of these designated providers?

[00:06:48] So it depends. If it's as simple as taking out stitches, probably. If they're being referred to an orthopedist, our provider works with them to find an orthopedist that's on their list of approved providers that's close to their home address.

[00:07:03] So we also have an initial panel provider in the Winchester area. So we do try to, you know, spread out that as much as we can so that people do have access without having to go long distances.

[00:07:20] Okay, thank you. And then my second question was just can you tell me a little bit about who the third-party administrator is and what their role is? I'm familiar for other purposes. For example, you know, there are companies that will handle an FMLA claim or something like that.

[00:07:37] I'm assuming it's something similar, but can you explain that? Absolutely. So our third-party administrator is PMA Companies. We've been working with them for at least the past eight years that I'm aware of. They work like any third-party administrator.

[00:07:54] They manage the claim. They get the documentation from the health care provider. They pay the employee their indemnity, so if they're missing time, they're going to pay that indemnity. They, you know, basically manage the claim on our behalf.

[00:08:15] Okay, thank you so much. I don't have any further questions. Mr. Morris? Thank you. I do want to go back to the attending physician. This is specific to workers' comp. We have health care program at Cigna, I'm sorry, that provides health care wherever our employees are, whether they be across the country, on a trip, or anywhere else.

[00:08:40] So they can be seen by any of those. This is specific to workers' comp claims, correct? That's correct. And so when you say the injured or ill employee must be attended by a physician on the approved list, that's not for ongoing care. That is for confirmation that they're eligible for workers' comp?

[00:08:57] Is that? Well, yes and no. So an employee who's injured and the claim is approved by the third-party administrator as a valid claim, then the employee is going to continue to care with a health care provider under the workers' compensation program.

[00:09:16] So whether it's an orthopedist that is approved or a, I don't know, I'm trying to think what other ones we have, primarily the orthopedist neurologist, if we have somebody with a head injury, If someone, that's a lifetime benefit, medical benefit for that injury.

[00:09:33] If someone leaves the area and they need to seek care, then PMA will work with them to identify a provider in the area that they're currently residing in. Okay, so would they also work with them to provide care for, if they, suppose they did live in West Virginia, a care from a physician in West Virginia as well?

[00:09:56] If there was a physician in West Virginia that is on the approved provider list, yes. And there are some, most of them are in Virginia because it's Virginia workers' compensation. So I'm just a little concerned that the number of physicians available to our employees is much more restrictive in a list from workers' comp, Virginia's workers' comp, than it is for Cigna.

[00:10:24] That's correct. But we do try to make sure that they have a minimal amount or as close as possible. We also pay mileage. So if they're going to see a provider, if they're going to a physical therapist, if they're doing a work hardening program, we pay mileage for all of those.

[00:10:40] Is this common for neighboring counties? Do they do their workers' comp the same way? Yes. Thank you.

[00:10:56] And just, sorry, one more follow-up question on that. Is that a requirement of our insurance, or is it more so just the general practice and how that runs? Again, I'm thinking not so much the cost of the travel, but if you require physical therapy and you're in pain and not having to drive yourself to your

appointment, the closer your appointment, the better for yourself and your comfort as you're trying to handle your injury.

[00:11:27] So I do not believe it is required that they be providers in this state, but we have more negotiating power with providers in this state. The TPA has more negotiating power with providers in the state.

[00:11:45] If we have somebody who is further out and it is not practicable for them to get to a care provider, then PMA would work with them. But generally speaking, yes, they're going to be in Virginia. It's Virginia Workers' Comp. And so that's kind of the guidelines that we operate under.

[00:12:00] Okay. I would say if there is a practice where we have been able to work with people to find a kind of off-list provider in the past, that that should be something that we should be upfront about in the policy. Okay.

[00:12:20] Thank you. Moving on to item five, we do not have action items tonight. Our two discussion items, the first one is related to the continuous improvement updates from HRTD.

[00:12:40] Don't you have to vote to move it to action? My apologies. Sorry. Thank you. is there a motion to we don't have to vote we don't have to vote yep we you will as the as the committee chair you would say that you you are going to place it on internal yes so thank you very much for those reminders we will place um policy 7640 as an action item for the next hrted meeting in may thank you perfect thank you on to item number five now with the hrted update on

[00:13:18] continuous improvement? Thank you so much. So we, like I said last meeting, we're trying to return to a previous practice in which we bring before the committee items that HRTD is really pushing towards in our continuous improvement approach. Tonight, the first essential piece that I'd like to talk through is, um, the, the mental health fair. So I am going to turn it back

[00:13:53] over to, uh, Ms. Evans to talk through this amazing event that, that her team has put together. Thank you. So the employee benefits team has been working very hard to coordinate the first annual, what we hope will be annual LCPS mental health fair on May 13th here in the admin building for employees, retirees, and their families.

[00:14:17] So the fair will be including guided experiences for meditation and laughter, which is a great stress reliever, as well as presentations by Cigna Disability on a variety of topics, including rediscovering your why, how to get a good night's sleep, and how beating loneliness by creating a culture of community.

[00:14:39] Also, our employee assistance program provider, Lytle EAP, will be presenting information on services that are available through the EAP. The EAP provides not just counseling services, but they can also provide assistance in identifying services in the community for somebody who needs assistance, locating housing opportunities or daycare opportunities in a specific zip code and providing that list to an employee to save them some time going through and looking for that information.

[00:15:11] And employees and retirees, as well as their families, will have the opportunity to learn about the health benefits of dark chocolate, the calming effect of planting and working outdoors, as well as ways to increase their water intake through the use of infused water. The fair will have representatives from Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging, Loudoun County Mental Health, Cigna Insurance, to provide answers to questions and information to employees who are enrolled in LCPS Health Insurance.

[00:15:42] We're very excited to offer this opportunity to our employees, retirees and their families, and hope that they will come and get some information and learn about how to manage all the stress that we all deal with day to day. Thank you.

[00:16:03] I had seen the postings about this, but it sounds like a great event, and I'm planning to stop by, provided soccer games allow me to on a Saturday. Perfect. Okay, so we'll just continue to move right ahead.

[00:16:21] If you recall, we brought some information in regards to the revival of the Support Services Leadership Academy. And since the return of Mr. Dickerscheid, who is right there, to our department, We have been working together to determine how to expand on his expertise and provide talent development for a larger group of individuals.

[00:16:54] And so I'm going to hand it over to Executive Director Chris Bennett to talk you through some of what we are doing and what we hope to do in the near future, recognizing, again, he's a team of one at the moment. Yes, so when I say team or program, that's it. So we did, as Ms. Boland said, we wanted to take an opportunity to talk about some of the other aspects of what we have Matt doing right now as our talent development supervisor, in addition to the support services leadership program, which I know two of you will

[00:17:33] be coming to on Tuesday. We're excited about that. But another aspect of his job is working with senior leaders, division level leaders, because we know we bring people on board. They're often and very versed in their particular area, but they can use someone to kind of be their thought partner, their, you know, someone to bounce ideas off of.

[00:17:53] So Matt's working with a cadre of those senior leaders. Again, we're talking about non-instructional departments. So that's another aspect of his job, to kind of be that thought partner. Also important as someone that's non-evaluative, not within the department, it's not meant to be training, But again, it's someone, a trusted advisor.

[00:18:15] So he's working with approximately 20 of our senior leaders, supervisors, and director types on a regular basis at this time. He's working with several leadership teams as well. So that's just to give you some idea of another area that he's working on.

[00:18:35] If you could go to the next slide. Just can I interject and ask a question? Is this something that the me, myself, and I team, is this something new this year that you've been working on? You can sit up there, Matt.

[00:18:59] In 2019, I came up to HRTD as a leadership development supervisor. Obviously, the world changed drastically during the pandemic. And my awareness of leadership needs really morphed during that stage.

[00:19:15] And it was through the year one, year two principal mentorship program we had rather than providing PD for them. It was more providing support through those challenges that sort of snowballed while I was in DOI.

[00:19:31] We added a second leadership development supervisor and then we split tasks. I've always been really compelled to work with non-instructional leaders because they've been under supported and under provided for as far as professional development.

[00:19:48] That's what really led into this. Then we also had a significant hiring cycle where we brought in a lot of new directors, supervisors, and they needed support with the personal human skills. The hard skills they sort of had, as we know, Loudoun County is a unique environment.

[00:20:08] So I sort of organically started helping them through those challenges. So that leads to sort of what this need was. And it was by referral, which was really powerful. It was I worked with one director and they said, oh, Matt really helped me. We need to go work with this director, go work with this director. So it's really grown. And then recently that's when Ms. Bolin brought me back to HR because we saw the need expanding greatly for this work and this support. So again, that's sort of how this sort of evolved. No, that's perfect. Thank you.

[00:20:47] I just wanted to also highlight some of the other things that Matt's doing, working with these non-instructional departments. So as I kind of mentioned earlier, he's working with several directors, but he's also working with some supervisors. He's working with leadership teams, which can be departments. It can be teams within departments where he's doing workshops and different coaching there. He's doing facilitated and managed book studies. So if a particular unit of a department might want to do a book study, they reach out to Matt. He talks through what they're looking for maybe they need there's a particular need of the team more team cohesion

[00:21:25] more teamwork communication skills and he sort of tailors a book study to work through with that team and then of course our support services leadership academy where we're hoping to go you could go to my the next slide where we're hoping to go again we we need people so we need some additional staff to add to our team of one. But what sort of our dream is, is that every new senior leader that comes on board would get assigned to a talent development coach. That

[00:22:01] person would work with them, ideally, at least for their first year in some capacity or another, could start off more frequently, kind of based on the needs. You know, there are leaders that Matt works with now that have been in their roles for some time, and they're yearning for that extra support where it's weekly. There are others that sort of are kind of on call. So we, in our world, we'd like to have that person available. In a dream world, we'd also like to assign that to new supervisors as they come on board, because we find the same thing there. People, they know

[00:22:37] their craft, they know their area, but they really need that extra leadership support. How do I, how do I work with a team? How do I help move them forward? We believe both of these things significantly help with retention because they help that director, that leader be far more successful.

[00:22:55] And ideally, if we're working with supervisors, we're preparing them to be the next director. So we're also helping our pipeline, if you will. Another thing we really want to do, again, once we get the leaders sort of set, is figure out how do we do grow our own programs?

[00:23:10] How do we prepare for the next generation supervisor of leave and disability or any of our other non-instructional departments. We know we have lots of people out there with skills and interest. What could we provide to them for PD to get them ready to make that next step?

[00:23:27] So again, kind of how could we do grow our own? I know last month, Matt presented, we'd love to do the support services program with greater frequency. So we're kicking that back up. We're gonna figure out how that fits into our schedule, but we would love to do that more than once a year.

[00:23:46] We'd love to get into a routine because that's a very large workforce. So again, that's another one of our goals. And then we've also started talking, Matt and I, about how do we create other academies? You know, we've got lots of people in this building that are on the front lines that might benefit from some communication and some customer service.

[00:24:06] So kind of figuring out, are there other academies we could do that we could use the format of that one, but tailor it toward a certain position type or a certain need. If we look globally sort of at the kind of the senior leaders, there's 26 senior leaders in the division, and this is non-instructional. So I'm talking about support services, business and finance, our office, and digital innovation. There's 26 senior leaders, about 68 supervisors, so we have a large amount of those leaders. But then if I also look at the

[00:24:42] workforce in general, there's about 2,500 employees. And I'm talking everyone through all those departments, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, folks that, as Matt kind of alluded to earlier, often don't get opportunities. So we'd love to be able to expand the team of one to be able to offer more of these opportunities if I compare it to the the professional learning office and even though they work with a much larger employee base of then of the 2500 that we've identified a team of one

[00:25:21] versus they have a team of 11 supervisor director level folks and then and about 37 facilitators and coaches. So it certainly demonstrates that we could benefit from an expanded team. So that's our hope, our goal.

[00:25:38] I know this isn't gonna happen overnight, but we thought we would take an opportunity to share with the committee what some of our thoughts are. - Can I just add something on too? We talk about hiring concerns, retention concerns, And something we've learned is we often have individuals very good at their jobs, but maybe not so great as a manager or supervisor because their leadership skills aren't where they need to be.

[00:26:14] Anyone can be a manager. Not anyone can be a leader. And even if they want to be, sometimes those skills take work and they don't know where to start.

[00:26:36] And that's where Matt can come in to help support those individuals who may feel like they know how to do their job, but don't know how to be a director, don't know how to oversee a step away from the work and oversee the work. And we find that more and more that we need to have the ability to promote from within someone that is really good at their job, but may just need a little something extra coaching-wise to take on that new role.

[00:27:03] And it has really expanded. They really appreciate all of his work. I'm not really sure how he spreads himself so thin. It started from a place of we need help with this culture because the other piece that isn't added here is if there is a department, Matt spends a tremendous amount of time working with transportation.

[00:27:29] If there are offices within or divisions within the Department of Transportation that need support, Matt will go in for whole programs. And really, in the beginning, it's sort of like the Support Services Leadership Academy. In the beginning, they were really resistant, and now they have bought him this honorary mechanic shirt, and they really do love when he shows up.

[00:27:54] So that's impactful, and that's more of what we need to turn the culture and the morale around and to keep people wanting to work here, wanting to refer people here, and that's part of why we want to expand it so much.

[00:28:12] I just want to thank you for this, and I know you and I have had this conversation But there are other kind of leadership qualities that are really important, one of which is the openness to hearing your staff bring you concerns or differing opinions. And I think, you know, one of the things that, and we've talked about this in other settings, but there is in some places a culture of fear about disagreeing because they don't want to tell their supervisor that I don't agree with that.

[00:28:42] When, in fact, when we have teams that have varying opinions, we always end up with better work because it takes all opinions, obviously respectfully, but that's a skill that you have to learn as a leader to, one, kind of not take it personally or feel like this is because somebody disagrees with me, maybe they don't respect me.

[00:29:04] And so being able to really show and mentor and model those types of leadership qualities as well is really important and I think has great promise for shifting some things with the system.

[00:29:19] So I appreciate your work and appreciate the update and the thoughts about where you want to take this. Any other questions or comments? Mr. Beatty? I think you mentioned it, but so there is a similar program on the instructional side that kind of does the same thing for our teachers.

[00:29:43] So the Office of Professional Learning within the Department of Instruction that focuses more on the teacher and the instructional side, yes. Thank you. Thank you so much. Our next item is item 5.02, the HRTD data update.

[00:30:01] So this is a return from our previous meeting in the hopes that we have more detailed information to answer your responses. We also have Paige Carter here from special education.

[00:30:19] She's representing Tedra Richardson. So at the end, if there are additional questions, she's here to help support us. But I am going to turn it over to Mr. Phillips to walk through the data. Thanks, Ms. Bowen.

[00:30:36] This slide should look familiar, but we've added another line, so here you will see the fill rate for both license positions, blue, and the license sped positions, in orange, over the course of the school year until March 15th. March 15th was chosen as the chalk line for the last run of the data because the next week, end-of-year postings were removed from the vacancies, and we talked about that last meeting.

[00:31:00] Numbers were added to each line graph to give you a better numerical representation of the fill rate. To offer some comparisons, we wanted to provide some data nationally as well as within the Commonwealth of Virginia. According to a December report put out by the National Center for Educational Statistics, based on data as of October 1, 2022, the national fill rate for public school positions was 96%.

[00:31:26] According to that same report, 93% of special education positions were filled. Digging deeper, according to the Virginia Department of Education and Workforce data and reports based upon the PEC data released around that same time, 10-1, the Commonwealth of Virginia has an overall fill rate of 96.14% and a SPED fill rate of 94.1%.

[00:31:52] Looking at our two main closest neighbors, our main comparators, Fairfax County and Prince William County, Fairfax County has an overall fill rate of 96.69% with a SPED rate of 96.6%.

[00:32:07] Prince William has an overall fill rate of 93.48% and an 81.3% sped fill rate. So you can see that we are above national, state, and main competitors. At that report time, which was 10-1, 98.86 is our

overall fill rate.

[00:32:29] And then our sped fill rate on 10-1, according to the PEC report, is 97.3%. Next slide, please. The Fairfax numbers, can you just repeat those again?

[00:32:46] Yes. I think I wrote them down correctly. Overall fill rate of 96.69 and a SPED rate of 96.6. This graph shows the total posted vacancies for licensed positions for the division and for special education.

[00:33:10] Numbers, again, were added to provide better clarity. Just a reminder, the total posted vacancies is inclusive of the SPED posted vacancies at each data point. SPED posted vacancies hovered between 30 to 36% of the total vacancies throughout the school year.

[00:33:30] Next slide, please. This graph and data show the number of special education assignments committed to Oracle requiring a teacher with a special education endorsement as of 3-29-23, right after the last HRTD committee meeting.

[00:33:51] Note that this number, which is 1036, is different than the number of full-time special education positions from 315, which is 992, because some secondary positions were broken out into extra assignments or extra .2s at some schools.

[00:34:11] If you look at the graph, we have 50 pending licenses for this year. 41 of those pending licenses are anticipated to be received from VDOE for special education. The remaining nine relate to switching the type of SPED license or moving from a provisional license to a regular license, and we are waiting on word from VDOE.

[00:34:34] For the three who are a no on this chart, one, the first picked up an extra section in math at a high school and is certified in general ed math. The second is teaching self-contained and teen-taught social studies in a high school and is certified in social studies.

[00:34:52] And the third, at a middle school, is actively working on a SPED endorsement waiting for a provisional. The third is a co-teacher for English and Social Studies with a general ed social studies endorsement. Next slide, please.

[00:35:08] To help mitigate vacancies in our special education, the Office of Special Education works closely with our subcentral team. And you could see on March 15th, there were a total of 24 SPED vacancies.

[00:35:25] For those 24, long-term subs, LTS, the second column, were requested for 15 of them. 14 of those vacancies that were requested were filled by subcentral, and you can see that there was one unfilled, and we'll get to that in a second.

[00:35:42] But of the 14 going across, there were four licensed subs, three of which were licensed in special education for those 14 filled positions, and nine of those other subs had college or advanced degrees.

[00:35:58] For the 10 that were unfilled by Subcentral at this particular time, one class, and this is getting information from both Subcentral and the Office of Special Education, one class was combined into another classroom under a licensed teacher.

[00:36:15] Two caseloads were collapsed and serviced by the other SPED teachers of those programs. One was filled by a SPED transfer. There was a vacancy one place, and they moved the teacher to fill that

vacancy. And then six were filled by either a consulting teacher, an outside SPED contractor, a SPED dean, or using other SPED teachers from that program specific to the disability, deaf and hard of hearing, or vision.

[00:36:46] Next slide, please. At the last meeting, more information on the Early Childhood Special Education Program, or ECSE, was requested. And working with Ms. Richardson and the Office of Special Education, you can see a breakout of all of our locations where there are ECSE programs.

[00:37:08] We have a total of 567 students in the ECSE programs, with a total of 59 teachers serving these 567 students. Currently, there are three vacancies. All three vacancies are being filled by long-term subs currently with the Office of Special Education supporting schools with assistance from ECSE and school-age SPED consulting teachers and specialized instructional facilitators, SIFs, for behavior.

[00:37:47] And that's just an alphabet. It couldn't fit all of the schools on one chart. Questions?

[00:38:11] Mr. Morst? Thank you. I do appreciate the update, the information. My understanding is that there are two types of classrooms. There is a reverse inclusion, which should have six children, and then there is just an ECSE, which has eight.

[00:38:29] What is the state minimum standard for staffing for ECSE? I can speak to that. Okay. Give me me. ECSE is a little bit confusing, but the state requires a teacher for every eight students if they are full-time class-based.

[00:38:52] So if you come every day, all day, you can have up to eight students. If you have only resource students, let's say that you see some students twice a week, some students it's not a class at all, you just serve those students individually, you can have up to 12.

[00:39:08] If there is a combination of those two things, you can have up to 10 to be within the state standard. And the Loudoun County Staffing Standard is 1 to 10 for ECSE. but with extra para-staffing. Okay, so there are classrooms where those numbers are mixed.

[00:39:30] There are some students that require the extra attention and some that do not require the same amount of attention. It's based on their service time. But yes, there are some students that don't come every day. But there are some classrooms where all the students come every day. Okay. So when I look at the numbers, like Madison's Trust Elementary, one classroom with 12 students.

[00:39:54] Are all of those students part-time students? No, they're not. How many of the students would be part-time? I would have to look that up for a specific program to know, but I can tell you that a lot of our classrooms are at 12 right now, and the majority of the students do come every day.

[00:40:14] Are we required to provide a waiver or request from the state permission to have more than those minimums, more than the 6 or the 8 given full-time students? When we do our state reporting, we report those numbers out.

[00:40:33] Okay, have we reported any classrooms that are over those standards? I would have to speak to Tedra and get back with you about that, but it is our practice to stay in regular communication. So I will talk to her and get back to you about that, about reporting.

[00:40:49] But our December 1 count is the official time when we report all of our counts and those kinds of things, and we would have been not quite this high at that point. But that much I know, but I can speak to her about that and get back with this committee.

[00:41:05] Okay, because what I'm concerned about is after visiting two ECSE classrooms, what I'm hearing is that the teachers are being encouraged not to pursue either full-time status or the appropriate levels of support in an effort to keep the numbers artificially low.

[00:41:31] And that is extremely concerning for me to hear that any teacher or any special education teacher would ever be discouraged from full and transparent reporting of the student's needs. Absolutely. And all of our services are determined by the Individualized Education Plan IEP team.

[00:41:54] And that is how services are determined. Okay, and the participation in the IEP includes the ECSE teacher? The ECSE teacher, a general education teacher, a principal or designee, and any related services providers that support that student, and of course the parent.

[00:42:13] Okay, and so again, what I'm hearing coming out of the IEP meetings is that the encouragement is not necessarily to provide the full requirements of the student, but it's more or less, we are maxed out we need to perhaps look at the amount of services we're providing and see if there there's a shortcut so what I would what I would state is I'm very concerned when I see a classroom of 12 with only one teacher and perhaps one one assistant and if they go over 12 you have

[00:42:48] a second assistant that we have afforded for an hourly person to come in to all for all classrooms who reach that 12 are they there for the entire duration of the day and yes yes and are they fully staffed? I am not sure about fully staffed on ones that just reached 12 but as they reach 12 they reach out to our office and HR and secure someone and then I get an email and Tedra gets an email that says that person has been secured. Okay we know from historic numbers that the numbers of students identified increases during the school year and yet when we begin the school year we

[00:43:24] begin with only the minimum numbers for the students in the classroom. So immediately once the school year starts, we're already behind trying to place those new positions. Is there a smarter way that we could identify the trends that we expect to see and staff the standard to that instead of trying to play catch up where we're looking for ECSE certified teachers to come in halfway through the year when it's much more difficult to find them? Absolutely. And we are right now are engaging in a work group with ecse teachers i attended their monthly meeting and asked

[00:44:02] for volunteers we're going to meet a minimum of three times there's 17 teachers that volunteered to be on the committee i was very excited about that i was hoping for 10 and got 17 and staffing and recruitment and retention are what is one of the priorities also creative ways to serve students Because we serve students as they come in.

[00:44:25] It's rolling. We serve students beginning at age two, and they come in all throughout the year. That is absolutely always true. And so we're also speaking about the practice of moving over the next few years to requesting exactly the number of teachers that would get us to a comfortable level below the state standard.

[00:44:46] I was surprised to hear that we often, not every classroom, but a lot of classrooms start in the fall full. Part of that is transition students that are moving from infant and toddler programs into the school division that have moved here and weren't accounted for.

[00:45:04] But it is not unusual for several hundred students to be referred during that time. So planning for that, but making sure we're amply staffed in order to get below that state standard. But with vacancies already, even with the numbers we have, we have three new positions for the fall.

[00:45:23] So filling those positions becomes the challenge. That's why we're talking about recruitment and retention as well. But we have absolutely identified this as a need and have reached out to the stakeholders, the teachers themselves, to get them to work on this work group with us so that we can identify new ways to do this, especially recruiting, retention, and service of students.

[00:45:43] - Okay, and I appreciate that. I appreciate the detail. I'm still uncomfortable, and I would like just a lot of attention to be paid for that, because when I hear a classroom of either six or eight, and then, oh, but there are exceptions, and now the exceptions have us up to 12, and I look down here and I see half a dozen classrooms that are at the maximum 12, that tells me that they're overloaded.

[00:46:09] I think we need to really look hard at how we're staffing at the beginning of the year to put it into next year's budget to add the positions prior to us getting into the mid-year where now we're looking at trying to bring in part-time or temporary or shuffle the children.

[00:46:27] It's just very difficult. And for that reason, I've asked the Auditor General to do a audit of the ECSE program to see if they can provide us more insights on how we can more efficiently address the needs of those teachers. Because, you know, once I started talking to the teachers, more and more of them wanted to talk about this concern and the concern that, well, we're not encouraged to identify necessarily the needs.

[00:46:53] Within the IEP meeting, sometimes, you know, the ruling goes against them, I guess is what you would say, but that should never be the case. So I just want to make sure that the teachers are being encouraged to identify all of the services that the children need and to identify any time that they're exceeding a state or a policy mandate.

[00:47:13] Absolutely, and that is our obligation. Great. Thank you. Mr. Beatty. Thank you very much. Going to the fill rate, we're trying to compare ourselves against state and national and other counties and stuff. That 100%, is that strictly based on our staffing standards or the self-reporting of other counties and sort of the state staffing standards, especially the state percentage?

[00:47:38] But, for example, you gave the October 1st number for Fairfax, And I believe that was about 96.9%. Like, that's based on their interpretation of the state staffing standards? Like, they're 96% out of 100% based on how they would read the state staffing standard or how they interpret that?

[00:48:01] Both state and local staffing standards, because we have different staffing standards than the entire state. So the SOQs dictate our staffing standards, and then we do a better job of the SOQs in some of our areas. for the staffing standards.

[00:48:18] So for example, this report, it's called the PEC, it's done twice a year. You have to list each school, all the positions, and all the positions that are filled in each one of those areas. And then from there, you submit that data to the state and that's where they break it out and disaggregate it by all the different content areas for that, CTE, social studies, math, science, English, the different categories that you can break out the certificates for teachers and education okay so

[00:48:52] that i guess that 98 98.87 we have on the blue line on october 1st that's our internal number or is that a state designated number that's our number that was given to the state 98.86 percent fill rate uh on 10-1 there's this graph has like two lines right the 10 the nine the 10-6 is a little bit lower or higher and then the one before it right but at that snapshot which is the state the 9 30 the september 30th report that everyone has to turn in across the commonwealth

[00:49:30] that was our number 98.86 for overall 97.3 percent for special education fill rate okay but again So 98% out of 100, that 100 is strictly the state standards, or is that our...

[00:49:47] The 100 would be we would be fully staffed. If we had every licensed position that we had in our budget and in our division, every position would be filled by a licensed teacher, not a sub, but by a licensed teacher.

[00:50:05] And we were at 98.86% of that. - Okay, so that's clarifying. Is that the same number for Fairfax then? So when you say Fairfax is 96%, that's based on their interpretation? - That's based on all of their positions.

[00:50:20] Obviously, Fairfax has a lot more positions than us, but that's based upon all of their positions that they have available. Again, it differs, right? When you're, depending on your school and your population, you might have more English teachers this year, the next year you need more math, depending on what the course selections are, so.

[00:50:40] And then comparing us versus state and versus national, is that a reasonable comparison? Again, because there's going to be, I guess, on the state level maybe, but on the national level, every state's going to have their own kind of interpretation.

[00:50:56] So how reasonable of a comparison is that? It was very difficult for this year to find a national report because it's hard to disaggregate that many divisions. Now, remember, a lot of divisions across the country are towns and townships.

[00:51:14] So they might have three schools, four schools, not 97, 98 schools. So it is a little bit different when you're talking about that. So it is more challenging to compare apples to apples nationally than it is to compare against our Commonwealth competitors and other divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:51:35] Yeah, no, I would agree. So I guess it's just it's tough to. Can I add? Sure. to that kind of following on that line of question I mean my understanding is we would have an open position based on our staffing standards where if we filled all of them we wouldn't have any vacancies and we would be meeting all of our ratios the issue is we have vacancies as do others I think the comparison is still accurate regardless of the staffing standard the question is

[00:52:08] is if a division is fully staffed and you don't have vacancies, you would have a fill rate of 100%. So their kind of level of service may be different if their staffing standards are different than ours.

[00:52:23] But the concept of a fill rate against 100% of your, you know, budgeted FTE for a given academic year would still be an appropriate comparison across divisions. i would agree with that but again it's just very difficult to get a recent report after covid on on teachers across the country that's that's the challenge because of covid and the impact it's had on retention and recruitment of teachers thank you any other questions okay thank you thank

[00:53:01] you for this presentation and for bringing the data back to us um is there any new business Okay, and just to put out there, is there anything else that any of the other committee members would like to see during our May meeting, just looking ahead and thinking about items to bring forward?

[00:53:24] You can obviously contact Ms. Bullen before then, but okay. Thank you. With that, we are adjourned.



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