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Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum and Instruction Meeting, Monday, June 5, 2023

Date Monday, June 5, 2023
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 15m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/834159947?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-22. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] I have one. So I remember reviewing this policy briefly last fall when we started talking about the beginning music books and whether those were textbooks or workbooks or consumable materials and kind of where those sat. So two questions related to that. First, if I recall correctly, there's in regulation a more detailed list of what counts as each one of these materials. Is that right?

[00:00:30] that is correct okay so i i know assuming it gets finalized this way in the fy24 budget those beginning music books are now covered so will the once that's completely finalized will the regulation be updated yes exactly okay and then my second question there is is there anything i was it was a it was a small ask when we were just talking about the the the music workbooks But I know there's, you know, a million different categories of things that might be consumable or might be a workbook or might be a textbook.

[00:01:07] So is there anything that would fall into that same general category where, yes, it might be paperback, but it is the primary instructional material for the class that we might want to take a look at or do a review on to make sure that we're being consistent with the way that we apply that?

[00:01:24] Yeah, we did take a look at this when you brought it up, Mr. Sorokin, because it did stand out as different from others. So the teaching and learning team didn't identify any others that weren't already listed on the detailed list in Regulation 4020.

[00:01:47] Okay, thank you. So this is the first time we're seeing this policy. So next step, assuming there are no objections, would be to send this out for advisory committee review and then get it back after that? Yes, please. Okay, any objections to sending this out for advisory committee and public review?

[00:02:03] No. Okay, we will move forward with this one. We'll now take up item 502, policy 5080 class sizes. I think this is coming back as a second time as an information item.

[00:02:21] Yes, good evening. So when we left last meeting, we agreed to put this up for public comment. And so tonight I have the results and comments from the equity committee, LEAF, MSAC, and a couple of parent comments that were added. So I'm here to share those with you.

[00:02:37] So the equity committee was proposing, would like to propose a max class size of 25 for all elementary grades. If you recall, currently it's 25 at K through 3 and 29 at grades 4 and 5. And they also proposed an assistant added at 20.

[00:02:54] So I will add, I was curious as to what that might look like when I saw that comment. And at the elementary level, as of this moment, that would be 56 additional teaching positions. I did not calculate the assistance since almost every class is over 20.

[00:03:11] So that would be an assistant for almost every elementary classroom with our current budget and staffing ratios that we use. We don't have a lot of fourth and fifth grade classes that are over 25 because we use the lower number to divide across all grade levels, even though our max in four and five is higher.

[00:03:27] So just as a point of interest, about \$6 million or so at the elementary level. Middle and high are a little more complicated because it has to do with caseloads more than it does class sizes, course demands. So that would be a more complicated calculation. They also proposed a max class size of 30 in grades 6 through 12 with additional staff added for any class that is over 30 with the exception of music and PE.

[00:03:52] So those are their proposals for consideration. I will also add that our elementary class sizes that we've used the last couple of years in budgeting and staffing for the year have been less than what the policy we're currently revising reflected.

[00:04:10] So you can always do better than the policy, which we have been staffing at lower ratios for the last three or four years than our policy had listed. So this would be something that could happen in the budget process next year if there was interest in lowering those numbers. Well, are you talking about the maximum class sizes that are reflected in the policy, or are you talking about the staffing standards that are adopted?

[00:04:33] The maximum class size. They proposed the maximum class size to be 25 at the elementary, which is, it is 25 at the elementary, K-3, but it's 29 at 4 and 5. So this comment was specifically directed to the 4 and 5 being at 29. They wanted to bring that, recommended bringing that down to 25 as well.

[00:04:52] And then LEAF asked three questions about the policy as proposed. One was, why are there bigger gym class sizes for grades 7 and 8? And I can tell you that's because it's directly out of Virginia code, which breaks students by grade level a little differently than we do in LCPS, which is it talks about K to 6 and 7 to 12.

[00:05:16] So that's why 6th grade has different parameters than 7th through 12th grade. Because, as you know, in many school divisions in Virginia, sixth grade is in the elementary, and that's how Virginia code

defines it. English classes, why do English classes have a lower class size was another question that was asked.

[00:05:33] It was 24 to 1, if you recall. That's also straight out of Virginia code, a requirement out of Virginia code. And then the third question was, code requires us to send a letter home. Remember when we were looking at this, if a class exceeds the class size, And the question was, why send a letter home rather than keeping the class sizes below the max?

[00:05:52] We do strive to keep the class sizes below the max. And to my knowledge, we haven't had to send a letter home at the elementary level, at least in all the years I've been in the office, seven years. But that is a Virginia Code requirement that you have that language in there. So that's why that was included. I'll pause for any questions.

[00:06:09] Do you all have any questions at that point? No? Good? I do have one. Okay, go ahead. Well, but if you're not done with presenting, please go ahead. I have two more current comments. I'll go for it. There was apparent concern about class sizes this large.

[00:06:25] And in reading the comment, I realized that the redline version that was posted for comment, remember we went through a couple of iterations of this policy. The redline version was the redline of the proposed changes by division council, which had gone all with state code language, if you remember, and we decided, no, let's stick with what we do here in LCPS since we exceed the requirements of state code.

[00:06:48] The original policy, which is still posted on our website, has larger class sizes. The parent read this as increasing class size because at one point we had 28 and division council made it 30 to agree with our budget documents.

[00:07:03] But the current proposed maximum class sizes are lower than our previous policy. Our previous policy had a max class size of 28 for grades 1 to 3 without an assistant and 30 with an assistant. and 31 at grades 4 and 5 without an assistant, and 32 with an assistant.

[00:07:24] So this proposed, our current language is far lower than that at 25 and 29. So that was the parent wondering. And the other parent comment was max class sizes do not consider small schools with smaller classrooms. And that's correct.

[00:07:39] We don't call that out in any kind of a particular way, which is something to consider. I will say that we don't make any blanket decisions for smaller schools. Anytime a classroom reaches the max, that's a one-on-one conversation with the principal. Is there a sufficient capacity to add an assistant and more students, or would we regionally assign, or do you have the room to add another classroom?

[00:08:01] Those are the kind of questions that we ask. So we know all of our older schools have smaller classrooms, and we don't put them up at the 28, 29, 30 level because they can't accommodate that many students. But we have not spelled that out in the policy.

[00:08:19] And that's it. Questions? Yes, I will say my daughter being in a fourth grade classroom of 31 students at one of our oldest elementary schools with the smallest classroom square footage was one reason why I ran for school board back four years ago, to try and prevent that from happening again.

[00:08:39] I was a teacher in one of our oldest elementary schools with a lot of children in my classroom. so yeah I appreciate the comment about we don't put 30 and 31 in the classroom I that may be true now but a couple of years ago that was not the space not the case especially in you know the parts of Loudoun

that had severe population growth and overcrowding and in that time period so the the committee had a discussion last meeting about whether we wanted to put the staffing standard class sizes in the policy or just put a link to the website or the budget

[00:09:19] information. So I see what looks like it's intended to be a hyperlink on line six. It doesn't go anywhere on my version. I assume that's just because it's a draft PDF version, but where is that intended to go on the website? To the staffing standards document, the budget document that has the class size, what's the word, not max, staffing standard, yes, to the staffing standards document, because that's what is flexible and can change.

[00:09:46] So as far as I know, the only place where that's listed is in the actual operating budget itself, unless it's somewhere else. So that would require that, if that's true, that would require that that link be updated every year to get to the most recent version.

[00:10:01] Good point. So I think if we're going to link to the website somewhere, I think it makes sense to have a dedicated page somewhere where the class size where the goal class all either all staffing standards are laid out or just the ones related to general education class sizes i don't know but if you're just if you just have a static hyperlink and the budgets are getting updated every year it's not as of right now it's not going to be accurate nor if it's you would still have to know as a member of the public looking at this even if that's that's taking me to the right budget document, you would still have to know

[00:10:40] that it's an appendix whatever in the back. It would still be difficult to find. So I'm okay with it being a link like that as long as it takes you directly to the information that we want people to be able to get to. Does that make sense?

[00:10:56] That makes perfect sense. It does make sense. I am not familiar with policies that have hyperlinks in them. Is that something that we have in other policies? I don't believe we have them in any instructional policies. I know we have references to state code, and if you click on it, it'll go to the appropriate place in code.

[00:11:17] I imagine we have some instances where it takes you to the LCPS website, but I'm not 100% sure. I just wonder if it's also not safer to say found on the LCPS business and financial services website, just in case hyperlinks ever break, somebody can still go to it.

[00:11:37] Additional comments or questions? Okay, so this one's already been out for advisory committee and public review, right? Okay, so without objection, we'll bring this back as action next meeting. All right, so we'll now move to policy 5-1 philosophy, which I believe is being recommended for deletion.

[00:12:01] We'll turn it over to Dr. Ellis. Thank you, Mr. Sorokin. So policy 5-1 philosophy is a very outdated policy, and we are recommending, so it is overdue for its five-year review.

[00:12:18] Staff recommends actually deleting the policy in its entirety because the substance of the policy is addressed in policy 1020, strategic framework. Ms. Reeser. So the only thing I noticed is I think inadvertently the very last sentence of the draft, the red line doesn't have, is not stricken through.

[00:12:40] Yeah. We will certainly change that. Okay. Any additional questions or comments? Okay. So I guess it's an interesting question on whether deletion of a policy needs to go out for, I guess, I suppose it should.

[00:12:57] We treat it the same way as everything else. So no harm in sending it out for public and committee review. Ms. Reeser. I think Dr. Ellis was saying that maybe Division Council said it did not need to go back. Oh, is that correct? Feedback. Okay.

[00:13:14] I'm certainly happy to, but I did ask Division Council, and they felt like it didn't necessarily have to go up. Okay, if Council's comfortable with that, then so am I. So we'll just bring this back for action next meeting then. And our final information item is Policy 5-17, Access to Programs, Courses, and Activities, which I believe is in the same boat.

[00:13:36] Dr. Ellis. Thank you. Yes, this policy is in the same boat. So Policy 5-17 is also an outdated policy that is overdue for its five-year review. When staff and Division Council reviewed this policy, we determined that it is now addressed in Policy 8035, Title IX, Sex-Based Discrimination and Sexual Harassment.

[00:14:00] So for that reason, staff recommends deleting Policy 5-17. Committee members, any questions or discussion? No. Okay, so we'll, without objection, we'll bring this back for action next meeting as well. That will take us to item six, new business.

[00:14:19] Is there any new business tonight? Seeing none, in 27 minutes, we are adjourned.



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