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Loudoun County School Board, 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting, Tuesday, April 9, 2024

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- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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[00:00:20] - Good afternoon. I call to order this April 9th, 2024 Loudoun County School Board meeting. At this time, we will start with disclosures and I'll start. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and/or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:00:46] Specifically, as a school board member, I'm eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included.

[00:01:04] I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Ms. Chandler. - Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

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the three statutory and the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected which i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you ms donohue thank you madam chair as a member of the loudon county school board i

[00:02:13] make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries the budget and or health insurance and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, my spouse, my two minor children, and I are enrolled in LCPS health insurance that may be affected by any potential changes to employee salaries, the budget, and/or health insurance. Additionally, my sister-in-law is an LCPS employee who does not reside with me and is not dependent on me. These subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of the

[00:02:50] the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which my spouse my minor children my sister-in-law and i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you miss donohue miss shirnoff thank you madam chair as a member of the loudoun county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS

[00:03:27] employees. Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees while in the excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:03:46] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. When Ms. Griffiths arrives, we will circle back and get her disclosure. We will now move on to agenda item three, approval of the consent agenda. Board members, are there any changes to be made to the consent agenda? Seeing none. Before we vote on the consent agenda, we have one proclamation to read, which is the proclamation for the National Student

[00:04:18] Leadership Week, which will be read by Dr. Deans. Dr. Deans? Thank you, Madam Chair. Proclamation, National Student Leadership Week 2024.

[00:04:35] Whereas, schools sponsor student leadership opportunities to provide students with vital experience in exercising a voice in matters of common concern, reconciling diverse interests and selecting leaders. Whereas, student leaders are a positive influence on their peers, modeling good character and scholarship in and out of the classroom and serve as change agents to improve the overall climate and academic performance levels of their schools. Whereas student leaders do not automatically

[00:05:15] develop sound leadership skills and require trained, dedicated faculty advisors to help them develop the essential traits and characteristics of a leader and to provide the positive experiences necessary to expand their skills and foster their path their paths to becoming effective leaders whereas the support of school administrators and faculty parents and community members is

[00:05:49] necessary to help ensure the successful education of all emerging student leaders. Whereas National Student Leadership Week, April 22nd through the 26th, 2024, serves as an ideal time to bring

attention to the important and integral contributions that student leaders and all student activities make in our nation's schools. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County

[00:06:27] School Board hereby proclaims April 22nd through the 26th, 2024, as National Student Leadership Week in Loudoun County and urges members of our community to seek opportunities to recognize and provide encouragement to student leaders in our schools and to support their training and activities as they prepare

[00:06:57] themselves for their future stations as leaders of our city, state, and nation. Thank you, Dr. Deans. I will now entertain a motion to approve the consent agenda. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. I motion to approve the consent agenda. We have a motion by Ms. Chernoff to approve the consent agenda. Is there a second yes miss donahue i second we have a second by miss donahue it's been properly moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda and at this time we'll take an electronic vote clerk

[00:07:35] would you mind please opening the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote the motion passes five with uh with mrs griffiths vice chair streffi Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle absent. We'll now move on to Agenda Item 4.01, the Special Education

[00:08:11] Advisory Committee update presented by the SEAC Chair, Ms. Elizabeth Crotty. Good evening, Chair Mansfield, members of the school board, Dr. Smith, and LCPS staff. My name is Liz Crotty, and tonight I will be presenting our Special Education Advisory Committee quarterly report. Tonight, I will be updating you on the status of our committee, our recommendations based off of the 22-23

[00:08:49] parent survey, the 22-23 annual report, as well as our current subcommittee work, and areas where we need the school board's assistance. I would like to introduce you to our members of our SEAC leadership.

[00:09:05] I am the chair of SEAC. Our vice chair of planning is Jennifer DiDonato. Our vice chair of membership is Carla Sola. Our vice chair of communications is Shanaz Khan, and our SEAC secretary is Katie Rosenbrook, and our SEAC past chair is Sharon Trope.

[00:09:23] Our SEAC liaisons are the director of special education, Dr. Paige Carter, our school board liaison, Ms. Carrie LaBelle, and our school board alternate, Ms. Melinda Mansfield. Next slide, please. So the role of SEAC and Virginia regulations, The regulations governing special education programs for children with disabilities in Virginia reflect the state and federal requirements for the provision of special education and related services.

[00:09:55] The regulations mandate that an active SEAC exists, as well as specific functions of the SEAC, which are as follows: to advise the local school division of needs in the education of students with disabilities; to participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of students with disabilities, to submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of students with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board, which we are doing this evening, assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special

[00:10:32] needs of students with disabilities for educational services, review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board and to participate in the review of the local school division's annual plan.

[00:10:50] Next slide, please. So first, I would like to start off this evening with some commendations. We are so fortunate in SEAC to enjoy a very supportive and collaborative relationship with Ms. Tedra Richardson, Dr. Paige Carter, Ms. Nakia Purnell, and the entire Office of Special education staff. They are incredibly generous with their time and their guidance and their contributions have greatly enhanced our work both at the committee levels and all the subcommittee levels as well. And I also would just like to provide accommodation to the LCPS staff in general.

[00:11:30] We have had a lot of really great conversations and exchanges with a number of people within the administration and at the school level as well and that's greatly enhanced our work. We appreciate the support of our school board liaisons Miss Carrie LaBelle and our alternate Miss Melinda Mansfield. SEAC would like to acknowledge and thank the school board for their unprecedented interest and care for our students with disabilities this year. Shanaz and I have greatly enjoyed meeting every

[00:12:06] single one of you it's just it's been such a pleasure to get to know you and we are encouraged and appreciative of your genuine interest in our students and as well as in the work that we're doing your collaboration and hard work have already brought improvements for our students and we are excited look excitedly looking forward to working with you in the future next slide please Our current status, we actually, this slide is wrong, we now have 21 SEAC voting members because you guys just approved one in the consent agenda. We

[00:12:45] have 77, so that's our, we have a full committee, every position is now filled which is wonderful. We have 77 schools with PTA, PTO representatives. We strive to get a representative from every single school and so one thing I would ask from all of you is that if we if you could help us going into this next school year identify people within your districts if we are missing some school representation because we really do want to make sure that we are hearing from all the schools as well as that our message is getting out to all of the schools as

[00:13:22] well the SEAC Awards will take place on June 5th at 6:30 p.m. at Rockridge High school. We received 176 nominations which was absolutely incredible. We really enjoyed reading about all of these wonderful inspiring people within our county. The nominees have been notified that they were nominated but winners will be notified around the first week of May. We are hoping that all of you can join us for the SEAC awards. I know a number of you have RSVP'd, yes, but we would love to have

[00:14:01] as many of you there as possible. It really is an incredible night and a great time to see, like, all the incredible things that are going on in our school district. The 2024 SEAC survey is being revamped currently and will go out in the beginning of May. Also, another action item for you guys, if you can please encourage your constituents to fill out this survey.

[00:14:25] The results of the survey are going to be presented to you in the fall at our next school board presentation, and they help drive the focus of our subcommittee's work. The problem is if we don't get enough of your constituents to fill out the survey, then when it comes time to do the data analysis, we have to exclude certain districts.

[00:14:46] We don't, but the people who do the data analysis, There aren't enough valid results to properly interpret them. And so, for example, this year, Algonquian, Broad Run, and Catoctin had some low response rates on certain questions, and so they were excluded from certain analysis.

[00:15:03] And so we would really like to make sure that we have an abundance of data to work from. Next slide, please. Our ongoing concerns are similar to many groups.

[00:15:18] Hiring and retention of our special education teachers and related service providers. Vacancies in special education positions are a significant concern. Special education training for our substitutes and teacher assistants.

[00:15:35] Transition services is a consistent one. And as we go through our recommendations that I'm going to give you tonight, I would like you to just -- this to be the overall theme -- to please think about our students with disabilities at the beginning and don't retrofit things for them later on.

[00:15:53] So if you can kind of keep that in the back of your head as you do your committee work, you know, try to figure out, well, how would this work for our students with disabilities? Do we have the right people in the room to make this decision to represent their interests?

[00:16:08] So next slide, please. Our CEAC subcommittees, we have four main working ones: specialized literacy and math, meaningful inclusion, policy and compliance, which reviewed 47 policies so far in 2023-2024, and we provided recommendations on 17 policies.

[00:16:32] Our transition subcommittee, and then additionally, we have our executive nominations and SEAC awards subcommittees. Next slide, please. So, our first SEAC recommendations: build special education staffing proposals from identified student and teacher needs, rather than based upon administrative ratios applied to projections from the Department of Budget and Financial Services.

[00:16:58] This is a recommendation that should sound a little bit familiar. It came from our budget recommendations. We still strongly favor that as a better way to address staffing, to make sure that we have all of our special education teachers that are not being overwhelmed because of Perhaps it's not the number of students on their caseload, but it's the variety or the type of student that is on their caseload.

[00:17:24] We just want to make sure that we're really addressing the need and not just throwing out a number that doesn't address a need. We support the training for substitute teachers and teaching assistants and special education topics before they enter the classroom to work with students.

[00:17:42] A lot of our students have very specialized needs and even just some general training would go a long way in making sure their time in that classroom is more productive and effective and safe. Continue to fund the continuum of special education by offering a virtual option of schooling for our K through 12 students.

[00:18:02] And you guys already went ahead and expanded Virtual Loudon Elementary and so we thank you for that and we hope that that will continue into the future. Next slide please. with the Department of Instruction, Department of Student Services, and the Office of Special Education to support the efficacy of IEP services delivery for high school and middle school special education students.

[00:18:27] Particular focus on effective co-teaching models and incorporating Tier 1 accommodations, for example, pre-printed notes, study guides, accessibility software for math and reading, et cetera, those are all tier one accommodations that could be given to all of our students and would enhance all students' instruction, not just students with disabilities.

[00:18:52] The Department of Student Services to partner with the Department of Teaching and Learning to create procedures and training for ensuring accessible instruction on all materials are available across

all LCPS classrooms. The Department of Instruction to provide training all general education teachers on how to include all students in the planning process for lessons and utilizing inclusive design practices such as universal design for learning UDL in every class and at every grade level and I'd like to just take a moment to explain that one a little bit because if

[00:19:28] you're not familiar with UDL that probably sounded like a little bit of gibberish so universal design is actually a term that came from the world of architecture. It has, for example, something like a cutout on a curb, you know, that allows people with wheelchairs to go over it. Well, it doesn't just help people with wheelchairs, right?

[00:19:53] It helps the mom pushing a stroller. It helps someone with a suitcase or someone who's dragging something. It ends up helping so many more people than who it was initially thought of to help out with wheelchairs. So now if we take that concept and we apply it to the classroom, this universal design, if I were to assign all of you as your teacher a 20-page paper and you have to write 20 pages, some of you would do really well with it, right? And you'd be like, ah, I love this. I've got it. I'm going to pour my heart out into this. And then others of you might be like, this is really

[00:20:29] not fun for me. I don't like writing papers. It's not interesting. And so that's not very universally designed. Universal design would say okay well maybe some of you still do want to write that paper but maybe someone else would like to build a project that's very in-depth and shows the level of detail in their learning. Someone else might want to put together a multimedia presentation. All of them showing what they've learned from the material but done in a way that's engaging and more accessible for them. Now take the student with disabilities who they would need to

[00:21:06] do something other than write the paper, perhaps. They cannot write that paper. And so they would have needed something different all along. But with Universal Design for Learning, they are now a part of the design for that entire class, and they won't feel separate and different. They'll be doing something just like the other kids are doing. So it's a great practice. It's something that we in SEAC would like to see a lot more of as we start having these conversations about instructional framework. Next slide, please. We would like to work with DDI and the Department

[00:21:43] of Student Services to make sure our students are included in the general education roster for their grade in Phoenix and Parent View. This is something that SEAC has been hoping would get fixed for a couple of years now. Basically, what happens when our students who are in a self-contained program, if they are not on a general education teacher's roster, they often don't receive emails that the rest of the class is getting. So there could be emails that are going out about picture day or field trips or wear purple to shirt day, purple shirt day. Like it's

[00:22:22] those kinds of emails and because they are on a different class's roster for that self-contained classroom even though they then push into the general education class they're not getting those same emails and so to us it sounds like a very simple kind of fix like somehow there's got to be a way to first put those students on that general education roster but apparently it is complicated so I'm hoping that this can get fixed sooner rather than later we would encourage the Department instruction in the Department of Student Services to provide recovery services to

[00:23:00] students who experienced learning loss or persistent low scores on standardized testing but were not included in all-in Virginia tutoring and we received many reports of students who received specialized services in either math or reading not being found eligible for the all-in Virginia tutoring and

so we would just ask that we come up with something that's going to help these students raise their scores as well and mitigate that learning loss.

[00:23:30] At the secondary level, design a course curriculum that could be used to establish peer groups as a credit bearing elective. Students that participate in the peer groups course would partner with students with disabilities to enable them to participate in more general education environments.

[00:23:49] For example, after school activities, lunch, study halls, academic and elective courses to facilitate more meaningful inclusion in our schools. Currently, we do have peer programs in some of our schools, but they are not credit-bearing.

[00:24:05] Which means that a lot of students won't take them simply because they would not get any credits. So by making it have credits associated with them, we would hope that more students would actually, you know, be able to do that and add that into their schedule.

[00:24:22] Next slide. Provide notification to parents on school flyers about who to reach out to if there is a need for support for a student due to a disability to participate. And that's something that's actually we're in process of and hopefully we'll be able to get that out soon.

[00:24:43] Encourage the school board to allocate funds and direct the Department of Student Services to make our school playgrounds accessible and inclusive to all students by providing fencing around all first through fifth grade playground areas and structures.

[00:24:59] Create a standard build-out for preschool through kindergarten that includes accessible, durable, commercial grade equipment. See our forthcoming SEAC inclusive playground recommendations for more detail. But I just quickly want to speak to this.

[00:25:15] A number of our self-contained programs have students where there's a concern about elopement which for those of you who don't know is you know maybe running away and the teachers often cannot take them to the regular playground because they don't have the staff to be able to support that in a safe way so they end up having to stay in courtyards where there is no play equipment at all for those students we've received a number of reports from parents and teachers about that. So simply fencing in current existing

[00:25:52] playgrounds would make it so that those kids could actually access those playgrounds. So I know that inclusive playgrounds are very very expensive to build and we hope that over time we will get more and more of them but in the meantime we could put a bit of a band-aid on it at least for some of these students to be able to access the playgrounds simply by fencing them in.

[00:26:18] For our preschools, just to speak to that quickly, ECE, which is our early childhood education programs run out of our high schools, they currently have actual commercial grade equipment, playground equipment, for their students.

[00:26:36] Our ECSE preschool programs, many of them do not. Many of them are also in those same courtyards we talked about with you know just the little plastic slide where you sit at the top and your feet touch the bottom and it's not the we'll have more information for you and our recommendations but we did a survey of our teachers and about 50% of them said that those play spaces were not meeting their students physical needs or their social needs so I think we need to do a lot better for and make it a more equitable situation.

[00:27:14] Next slide. All right, now we're moving into transition. Create a blueprint of what equipment and materials should be in every independent living lab. Identify and prioritize building needs based on school programs.

[00:27:30] This will have a capital improvement budget impact. We are already currently starting in the beginning stages of working to identify what we currently have and then putting together a list of well what is it that we want to have in these spaces what do we need so we are doing visits to different sites to get ideas of what other neighboring jurisdictions are doing so hopefully we'll have some some good recommendations coming up on that create pathways for students with disabilities in all CTE offerings so we need CTE

[00:28:05] EPE pathways for students of varying abilities and for students pursuing standard and applied studies diploma tracks, not just our high flying students, not even just our standard diploma students, but the ones who are going for the applied diploma too, and not just our students with disabilities, all students who have varying abilities.

[00:28:28] We really need to make sure that we are offering these options for all of our kids. In that spirit, remove the Algebra 1 SOL and PSAT admission barriers to MATA unless it's applicable for the coursework.

[00:28:46] Consider creating transition training centers to support a variety of transition training at key locations across the county. Additional transportation teachers to support middle school to high school transition and all students at the high school and a full-time transition supervisor, which you all very generously gave us, and we appreciate that.

[00:29:09] We are hoping that we will get a transition supervisor with vocational and assessment experience who can create and execute on a vision for the program. Next slide, please.

[00:29:25] So for literacy and math, clearly define the implementation of policy 5350 parent notification for screening and assessment, and define remediation framework for students not meeting benchmarks.

[00:29:40] Parent notifications remain inconsistent, and all requirements of policy 5350 are not being followed. For example, providing the notification of the intervention plan, particularly at secondary levels is what we're hearing, as well as a clear explanation of scores, because if you You just get a sheet of numbers, that doesn't mean a whole lot to a parent without some more background information.

[00:30:08] SEAC recommends revisiting policy 5350 Reg. Ongoing concern that appropriate literacy services are not being provided to high school students who do not meet the literacy screening expectations during iReady or such as iReady.

[00:30:26] For the reading SOL, LCPS is using an outdated predetermined score that inhibits the IEP team and the Section 504 team from making decisions based on the need for the read-aloud accommodation based on the student's individual and unique needs.

[00:30:44] And this is also in process, and we're hoping that it can be sped up because each testing window that goes by affects a number of students. Next slide, please. For preschool, we recommend developing a comprehensive developmental monitoring tool that includes pre-academic standards and report progress at least three times a year to the parents.

[00:31:10] Increase specialized instructional facilitators to provide one per cluster. And I just want to explain this one briefly as well. We have gotten a lot of feedback from teachers that these specialized

instructional facilitators are incredibly valuable to them.

[00:31:27] I've heard from parents, I've experienced it as a parent, the value that they add to instruction and giving our teachers some more resources to work with, particularly when you have a challenging case. They are very knowledgeable and have a wealth of tricks that they can pull out, and they provide that support to our teachers so that they don't feel as overwhelmed and much needed coaching.

[00:31:54] think if there was one per cluster, then that would probably help these students advance more in their reading and math. Next slide, please. In closing, there are so many opportunities in Loudoun County Public Schools.

[00:32:12] If we continue to listen and include those from the special education community, make investment in some of the areas that were not prioritized in years past, then many of these recommendations will be resolved and our students will benefit greatly.

[00:32:28] Thank you all so much for your time and I am now happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you, Ms. Crotty. I'll have to say that I did download the 100-page report and I have been reading it and there's a lot to go through and there are a lot of like really good data points for us to make some policy from or to help assist in some of these actions that you have asked for.

[00:32:56] Any board members? Do you have any questions? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. I just wanted to take a minute. I know you thanked us, but you are a gift, Liz. You are a gift to this county and to the kids in this county and to us. And it is so refreshing to meet people who are selflessly willing to lead on behalf of children.

[00:33:16] And I thank you for that work. And I thank you more so for these specific line items that we can help manage. A lot of this job has been up here. And you guys have really found a great way to communicate with each of us individually and additionally now as a board to really target some specific needs, which is exactly what we ask of our educators for their special needs learners.

[00:33:40] So it's no surprise that that's the model that you follow. But I did want to just thank you for pointing out a couple of things that I think are really important and I hope as a board we can prioritize. I'm so glad that you're bringing up the needs-based staffing versus the numbers-based staffing.

[00:33:57] We're hearing that not just for special education students. We hear it for English language learners, general education, all of it. I think I speak for myself and I know of others that we are definitely thinking about school-based staff a lot. So we will definitely be tackling that.

[00:34:14] I also thought it was really interesting, the universal design. And could you talk a little bit, you tucked this in a little bit about those executive functioning skills fitting into that. Could you kind of outline that for the board members? Because I thought that was such a, we talked about my daughter's organizational skills in middle school.

[00:34:30] If you could highlight how that universal design could help all students with executive functioning skills. Absolutely. So, you know, one of the things, I have a middle schooler this year. We just started out there. And it's so important when you get to middle school.

[00:34:45] And before as well. But really when you get to middle school and you are juggling all these different classes, It's important that you are learning the skills to stay organized, to keep track of your assignments. And one of the things that I have seen, and I've heard from many others as well, is that we

have a need to really teach this specifically to all of our students universally, not just expect them to figure it out on their own.

[00:35:17] We can provide them with different ways of doing it, but it should be done in a structured way where we really are providing it to all of our students and kind of, and some schools may be doing this, but making sure that it is explicitly taught and modeled within the classroom regularly.

[00:35:36] I think I'm seeing some confusion, and I think that's what I felt as well because that's what happened for me when I was growing up. It was take out your binder and you open it up to this tab, and we are all going to put our worksheet in here. Obviously, things have changed a lot. We are living in a different world, but whatever that method of organization and executive functioning, keeping track of these things, we just need to make sure that we are preparing our students, because goodness knows, we all, like, it's a lifelong struggle to figure out the perfect executive functioning system to keep yourself organized, and these skills need to be

[00:36:10] taught starting at a very early age. Thank you. I just never really thought of it that way, so I was appreciative of that insight and then I just wanted to follow up on you mentioned specifically policy 5350 which would fall into curriculum and instruction so last week I brought up some questions about that in relation to our assessment calendar and making sure that all of our assessments are on there but I would appreciate a continued dialogue around that as we you know begin to get creative and tackle and Ms. Mansfield and I have talked about you know some ideas of how we can partner with the community, with you all, to really help parents understand these scores and

[00:36:50] to really understand what they're looking at and what kinds of supports their kids are receiving and how they can further support their kids. So again, thanks for bringing that to our attention because that was something we could move on right away. So appreciate you. Thank you. Thank you. Poor members, any other questions? Yes. Ms. Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have any questions for you, Ms. Crotty. I just wanted to second my expansive appreciation for and gratitude for the work that you do supporting our special needs students and the educators who support them.

[00:37:25] Thank you. Thank you so much. I echo Ms. Donahue and Ms. Chernoff in those, and I'm sure everybody else feels the same way. Thank you so much for your dedication and your passion and your thoroughness and organizational skills and all of the above.

[00:37:43] We appreciate you. Thank you. And looking forward to more conversations and working to collaboratively for transition and accessible materials and parent notification and everything else. So thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you all.

[00:37:59] All right. We will move on to our work session, starting with Agenda 5.01, Curriculum and Instruction. I think that's the one, right? Approval of the LCPS Gifted Plan with Wendy King, Supervisor of Gifted Instruction, and Mr. Slevin, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.

[00:38:25] Oh, yes. Actually, while y'all are coming up, I'm going to have Mrs. Griffiths do her disclosure. Yes, Mrs. Griffiths, thank you for reminding me. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:38:53] Specifically, a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected, of which I am included.

[00:39:10] I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public's interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffis. Okay, Ms. King, Mr. Slevin.

[00:39:31] Thank you, Chair Mansfield and board members. I'm joined tonight by Ms. Wendy King, our gifted program supervisor, who will do the bulk of the presentation this evening. I would like to note that the gifted plan in front of the board tonight as an information item has been in the process of being reviewed over the past number of months of this school year, starting with the gifted advisory committee, of which Ms. King is the staff liaison.

[00:39:59] It also was presented to the Curriculum Instruction Committee as both an information and an action item prior to being forwarded to the full board for consideration. So with that, I am going to turn it over to Ms. King, and we'll be happy to answer questions at the end of the presentation.

[00:40:14] Ms. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to talk with you today about the LCPS Gifted Plan. And this afternoon, I will offer some background about why we develop a gifted plan, provide an overview of the plan, highlight some of the key elements, and talk about the timeline for the plan.

[00:40:42] So, school divisions in Virginia are required by the Virginia Department of Education to identify gifted learners and provide instructional services to meet their needs. They are also required to develop a gifted plan that is really the blueprint for how they will do so.

[00:40:58] School divisions receive guidance for the development of the plan from the Virginia Department of education through the regulations governing educational services for gifted students. As outlined in these state regulations, the gifted plan must include the division's philosophy statement on gifted education, a definition of giftedness, goals for the program, how the division will identify students in need of services, how they will notify the school

[00:41:33] community about gifted services, and other components related to program operations. So now I would like to provide an overview of the plan, highlighting some of its key components.

[00:41:48] The first section of the plan lays out our division's philosophy of gifted education and our division's definition of giftedness. This section highlights that gifted services align with and support the LCPS commitment to rigorous instruction and deeper learning, that gifted services are essential for addressing the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners, Gifted services benefit the school community as a whole.

[00:42:21] For example, search is taught to all K-3 students. Each elementary school and middle school has a school-based gifted resource teacher who supports staff in differentiating instruction for gifted learners. And of course, the plan emphasizes rigor and differentiation.

[00:42:41] LCPS defines giftedness as having abilities and or potential for intellectual and academic accomplishment so outstanding that specialized services are required to meet a student's educational needs. Please notice that we are charged with identifying both students who are already showing us

giftedness in their performance and students who are demonstrating gifted or advanced academic potential. The gifted evaluation process is twofold. We know some students come to us with many experiences and others come to us with

[00:43:20] significantly different opportunities to learn. They come to us with gifted potential that needs to be nurtured. So as stated in the gifted regulations, we must identify both groups of students for services. So part two of the plan focuses on program goals and objectives. Some key highlights from our program goals are we strive to administer research-based gifted identification procedures and practices that are implemented in a consistent and efficient manner across the division.

[00:44:00] We strive to provide multiple programs in a continuum of services for grades K through 12 that are appropriately differentiated for gifted students. Continue to increase access to gifted services for students from populations historically underrepresented in gifted education programs, and enhanced communication and collaboration among gifted education staff, classroom teachers, and other staff members, administrators, parents,

[00:44:32] guardians, family members, and of course the community. Now section three focuses on screening, referrals, identification, and placement. So this is really the core of the plan. Some of the important topics addressed in this section include information about our universal evaluation process in third grade, when referrals are needed, information about our relatively new level of services in

[00:45:06] elementary school called differentiated classroom instruction for grades four and five, which is provided for students who demonstrate exemplary performance in a given domain, either math or language arts or both during the gifted evaluation process, and a description of advanced academic course options and specialized programs for high school gifted learners. Additional highlights from this section include how we use multiple indicators in the gifted evaluation process,

[00:45:42] including a portfolio of performance tasks, ability testing, and achievement testing, keeping in mind that no single criterion is used to determine a student's eligibility or exclude a student from services. We use local norms to determine supporting scores for ability and achievement testing.

[00:46:02] And we have both local and division identification placement committees that contribute to eligibility decisions. And finally, parent and guardian permission must be received through permission click before a student can begin receiving services.

[00:46:23] So moving along, parts four and five, Information about notification procedures and changes in services can be found in these sections. This is where stakeholders can go in the plan to find out where families can find information about gifted programs and the gifted evaluation process, how families are notified of eligibility decisions, how families can appeal eligibility decisions, and how families can withdraw a student from services or re-enter them back into the gifted program.

[00:47:03] Part six provides an overview of gifted services and special programs for which gifted learners may apply, identifies how gifted learners have opportunities to work with grade-level peers, intellectual peers, or other gifted learners, and work independently.

[00:47:19] It outlines instructional strategies used with gifted learners, such as PBL, curriculum compacting, and clustering, and shares how gifted learners are assessed within gifted programs. Section 7 includes strategies for providing an appropriately differentiated curriculum for gifted learners, and it addresses how the LCPS core curriculum can be differentiated through extensions, acceleration, and

enrichment to provide depth and complexity needed to support the continued academic growth and social-emotional growth of our gifted learners.

[00:48:00] And it also talks about how gifted learners engage in rigorous, challenging curriculum units that are designed for gifted learners to meet their academic and social-emotional needs. So part eight provides an overview of advanced opportunities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

[00:48:23] It also includes a listing of the variety of measures that are in place to increase access to program opportunities for all students. Current practices include universal ability testing, universal evaluations in third grade with an opt-out option, teacher, administrator, parent, and student referral options, the use of multiple indicators in the gifted evaluation process, the use of local norms, the implementation of the Empowering Diversity in Gifted Education or EDGE program, and other talent development opportunities.

[00:49:01] This section of the plan also includes information about acceleration evaluations to determine the need for whole grade acceleration, commonly known to most as grade skipping. And then section nine addresses personal and professional learning. This section outlines the certification requirements for gifted resource teachers, highlights the local courses that are being developed to provide classroom teachers with a foundation for working with gifted learners,

[00:49:29] And shares that gifted resource teachers are available as a resource for school staff to assist in meeting the needs of gifted learners and can provide professional learning opportunities at the school level. It also talks about how families can learn how to support gifted learners through attending gifted advisory committee meetings and EDGE family academy meetings.

[00:49:58] So, Sections 10 and 11 outline the process for the Gifted Advisory Committee to provide feedback to the school board and the guidelines for running a local Gifted Advisory Committee. And finally, next steps.

[00:50:16] So, school divisions are required to submit a copy of their approved plan at the time of the Virginia Department of Education's request for a technical review. And our plan, my best estimate, will be up for review in the fall of 2025.

[00:50:33] And please keep in mind that this is a living document, and it can be updated as needed through an addendum process. And I think that's it, and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have. Thank you, Ms. King. Yes, Ms. Griffith.

[00:50:50] Thank you, Madam Chair. In Part 1, gifted services are essential for addressing the academic and social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Can you help me to understand what this means and how social and emotional needs are being met for our gifted population?

[00:51:10] Sure. gifted learners need to know what giftedness is, why they're in these classes, how it's meant to help them, and what they can do to take advantage of their giftedness. And they also, and we build in lessons to help them do that. For example, in some classes, they might do a book study on the gifted student survival guide. Gifted learners also have, not all gifted learners might have challenges in the social emotional area but they're kids and they're going to have some challenges

[00:51:48] and there are some challenges that may be unique to gifted learners for example learning how to listen to others or having empathy for other students or developing friendships so those are some things

that we can build into the curriculum at the fusion and spectrum level thank you very much. In part two, continue to increase access to gifted services for students from populations that are historically underrepresented in gifted education programs. What populations are historically underrepresented and how do

[00:52:24] you identify these students? Of course we have to look at our numbers each year, but generally if we look back at our numbers over the years, our students, our English learners have been underrepresented students who might possibly be twice exceptional students who may have a disability but also may have some of those gifted characteristics as well as our black students and Hispanic students have been underrepresented as well and students who may come from economically vulnerable households because they may

[00:53:03] have a different opportunity to learn they may not have exposure to maybe summer programs or tutorials and things like that. So those are students that would be maybe identified for our EDGE program, which is a talent development program that is very common practice in the field of gifted education, and it's modeled after a nationally recognized program in Fairfax County called Young Scholars.

[00:53:31] Thank you, and please forgive me for all my questions. In part three, all third grade students are evaluated for gifted services as part of the universal evaluation process. No referrals are needed. Is the evaluation process consistent across the division?

[00:53:50] I have some other questions if you wanted to answer that first. Yes. So if we think about third grade, in the past, well, as part of the gifted evaluation process, one of the components is the development of a portfolio of performance tasks, and that's done alongside with or it's conducted alongside with the gifted resource teacher in the search classroom so therefore we have portfolios for all of our third grade students in the past we would

[00:54:23] look at students who had qualifying test scores and we would pull those portfolios and then we would pull portfolios for students who were referred for gifted evaluation and those are the only students that we would evaluate, but we realized we have all of this information for all of our third graders and we know we're missing some students. So we have the gifted team together. Let's look at all of the portfolios so that we're not missing some students who may not have been referred or their parents didn't know that they could refer them for

[00:54:58] services. So that's why we went to this idea of a universal screening and identification process at the third grade level. We had the ability, we had the resources, so it seemed like the right thing to do. I'm also interested in the process for testing. What does the testing look like? How long does it take? And how many third graders do we have across the division?

[00:55:24] How many third graders who maybe... That you test? Right now we test all second grade students who go through the process and that is the COGAT and it has three sections. It has a verbal, a nonverbal and a quantitative section and we usually try to break it up into three sessions for students so that they're not testing for too long and every second grade student unless the

[00:55:59] parent opts out would be tested. So you basically need to obtain permission from the parent or you could just test? We would just test them. And references on opt out, how is the community notified about the testing and how would they opt out?

[00:56:21] At every school, information is shared at the school level and it's also shared in the gifted plan as well and if a student needs to be tested, information goes out to all of the families of students who need to be tested and last question do you have a cap on each school um i know my son tested uh for it and he didn't get in right away so is there a cap we don't have a cap thank you sorry you're welcome um i was i have a question

[00:56:58] um well i have two one of them is i was looking again i downloaded your 50 page plan to check it out as well. I am wondering about this career and technical aptitude gifted. I thought that was really interesting. Could you tell me a little bit more about that? We don't have that here, but how would we start something like that? Yes, I mean, in part in the gifted guidelines at the state level said that you can identify students academically like we do. You can also identify that identifies students in the arts and you can identify in career and technical education.

[00:57:39] I would say we would just get together and talk about how we might want to do that. I think just getting key stakeholders together to talk about what that would look like is the best way to start. Yeah, I don't think that many school divisions around the state do that, but it is certainly something that could be considered.

[00:58:01] I mean, I would love visual and performance arts, but as of now, we don't have a magnet school for that, but stay tuned for that. So the other thing is, you're twice exceptional students, and I'm sure this is not going to become a surprise coming from me, but why aren't we looking at, during the IEP meeting, if we're looking at the WISC, the Woodcock-Johnson, Kaufman, the Wyatt, if we're looking at all those scores and we're looking at intelligence and things like that, And why aren't we identifying some of those children through there as well, looking at their strengths and weaknesses?

[00:58:39] You're talking about looking at the scores that are maybe done through the special education evaluation? Yes, through their evaluation. We have a lot of kids who are high, very high in strengths, like in verbal ability and things like that, that would indicate a giftedness. But then, of course, their learning disability hampers them.

[00:58:58] So, but I don't know of anybody who has been identified through the IEP process. You know, that's a very good question. And I know that many times a gifted resource teacher at the school level would be invited to an IEP meeting, but not always.

[00:59:18] So that is something that we can certainly look into. And we have reached out. Let me go back just a little bit. I think for our students who have IEPs, we need to make sure that the gifted resource teacher and the special education teacher at the school are working together.

[00:59:38] And that is something that we talk a lot about with our gifted team to make sure it's a partnership. So if the gifted educator might not have that information, but the special education would, so we have to make sure that we touch base about those things.

[00:59:56] And there are many times where I do reach out also to special education department as well to see is there any testing available that we can use to complement what we already have. So that is certainly something that we can talk more about, but it is something that we do do, you know, at the school and division level.

[01:00:15] Because it is interesting, sometimes you have kids with, like, two standard deviations between processing and, like, their verbal ability. And so those are the kids, I call them the old souls, that could

really benefit from more gifted and talented services.

[01:00:30] But then they get put into something like EDGE, which I feel like they should just go ahead and be put in. Was it Fusion, I guess, at that point? But that's definitely something we can talk about in more detail. And I know that we do have representatives from special ed to attend our gifted advisory committee meetings.

[01:00:53] But also, as part of the evaluation process, we have a committee that looks at, that takes another look at the profiles of students, and we do have several special education administrators who sit on that committee as well.

[01:01:11] So there are places where we are collaborating, so there's always room for expansion. - Thank you very much, Mrs. King. Any other questions? Oh, yes, Mrs. Chandler. - Thank you so much for this presentation.

[01:01:28] It's been very informative and I'm happy to see how things have expanded in a sense. My children are older, so it's been some time since we interfaced with this directly. I would commend you for changing the protocols so that you're analyzing every student.

[01:01:45] I think that is a great way to make sure that we're applying our abilities and our offerings consistently, so thank you for that. I hope that you'll offer just a little bit of clarification around the local norms.

[01:02:02] I just would like to understand exactly what you mean by that a little bit and how it maybe pertains to specific requirements that we have. So in the past, when we looked at ability testing, we had a cutoff, and it was 97th percentile and above.

[01:02:23] So if a student had a 97th percentile in two areas of the COGAT, that was a supporting score. But we realized that there were some schools where they had a large number of students who had two 97th percentiles and above, and there were some schools who never had any.

[01:02:41] And we do know that there are gifted learners at every school. So that's why we have started using local norms, so we can compare students with their peers at their school to determine qualifying or supporting scores rather than to this nebulous 97th percentile or national norm.

[01:03:05] Thank you. That's very helpful. Okay. Any more questions? And then we can have to move on. Yes, Ms. Griffiths. You're good? Okay. Thank you so much, Ms. King and Mr. Slevin. I appreciate you. Looking forward to more conversations and learning more.

[01:03:22] Excellent. Okay, we will continue with the agenda item 5.02 from the Department of Student Services, Special Education Cyclical Monitoring and Annual Plan with, I think, Dr. Carter and Ms. Richardson.

[01:03:40] Yes? Yes. Oh, and board members, just to be clear, I forgot to say this, but this will come back. The gifted plan will come back for action at the April 23rd meeting.

[01:03:59] Yeah. Good evening, Chair Mansfield, members of the board, Dr. Smith, and distinguished colleagues. I am joined this evening by Dr. Paige Carter, our director of special education.

[01:04:16] This evening, Dr. Carter will lead us through an overview of the special education annual plan application for federal funding, and then she will transition into the summary of findings from our

cyclical monitoring in special education, which has been recently conducted this school year in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Education.

[01:04:39] At this time, I turn it over to Dr. Carter. Thank you, Ms. Richardson. Good evening, Chair Mansfield, members of the board, and Dr. Smith. Tonight, I will present, as Tedra explained, the special education annual plan and then the results from our recent cyclical monitoring.

[01:04:56] To give a bit of background, the special education annual plan is the application for federal Title VIB funds that support students with disabilities. The annual plan also serves as an agreement to provide services according to regulations from special education and funding from Title VIB is contingent upon approval of this plan.

[01:05:16] One required component of the plan is to present this plan to SEAC for their review and feedback, which was completed at SEAC's April meeting last week. And in your packet, you'll find a draft of the annual plan, as it appears, for us to turn into VDOE, and that includes the components listed on the screen.

[01:05:41] We provide assurances and certifications that we will implement special education and related services according to regulation. That we acknowledge that we work with the local jail and have an agreement with them to provide services to students who are detained and eligible for special education.

[01:06:01] And we must also provide information regarding our maintenance of effort, which is a requirement for our regulations. Maintenance of effort basically requires that we spend at least the same amount of local or local plus state dollars from one current school year for delivery of special education to the next.

[01:06:21] So we cannot reduce our spending for students with disabilities. Proportionate set aside is a requirement that we set aside a proportionate share of our funds from Title VIB to support students who are homeschooled.

[01:06:40] schooled or are parentally placed in private schools. The annual plan application also requires that we outline planned spending for the funds received, and I'll go over that with you now.

[01:06:56] One important thing is that there are two parts to this grant. Part B 611 covers our school-age students, and Part B 619 supports our youngest learners in early childhood special education. On the slide before you is the amount allotted for Title 6B, 611, which is for school age, \$14,851,914.

[01:07:22] And our plan for that is to cover the positions you see on the screen, including 100 special education teachers, 5 teacher assistants, 2 coordinators, 2 supervisors, one audiologist, one program assistant, one specialist, one behavior specialist, and one financial analyst to handle all this money and the rest of our budget.

[01:07:43] And curriculum materials, and \$23,000, it was basically the balance of that for curriculum materials. And then that proportionate set-aside requirement that I talked about for school age is \$62,938.56. And then for our preschool 619 grant award, You'll see it is much smaller, and it will cover two early childhood special education teachers, curriculum materials in the amount of \$7,697, and the required proportionate set-aside calculation for this year is \$445.40.

[01:08:19] Okay, some other things just to consider, to summarize. Funds come from the federal government and are meant to support students eligible for special education under the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.

[01:08:39] At its inception in 1975, 45% of funding was promised to the states, but over the years it has not exceeded 25%. The point being that this is an excellent place to lobby, if that is something you like to do, but also important to know that the vast majority of special education is funded by state and local dollars, and that is something that is often misunderstood.

[01:09:04] In LCPS, this grant makes up 6% of the budget for my office. Also important to know is it makes up 4% of the entire Department of Student Services, of which I am a part. Some special education processes, such as eligibility, are part of the Office of Diagnostics and Prevention, which is also in the Department of Student Services.

[01:09:26] So the Office of Special Education budget does not completely explain all of the money spent on the special education process. Do you have any questions about the annual plan portion of my presentation?

[01:09:48] All right, and now on to the more, for me, the more exciting part of our presentation. The process for the cyclical monitoring through VDOE had three layers. The first one was self-assessment, and I'm just going to give you a few numbers.

[01:10:04] The special education supervisors and myself and my assistant director reviewed 534 individual student records, both for the questions that were asked on the audit and general compliance with special education regulation.

[01:10:20] We answered a total of 1,277 questions. That was the amount of dates we entered for the questions, and the total student questions answered was 2,321. I did not calculate that myself. That is a little statistic they give us, but I wanted to share it with you.

[01:10:38] Then the second step was a VDOE review, And that included everything that we turned in on the self-assessment in addition to a review of records in our online system.

[01:10:54] In addition, the third was an on-site review where six representatives from VDOE came, and they went to ten of our schools. It was extensive visits. They visited all of our special education classrooms. They did interviews with administrators, special education teachers, co-teaching teams, both the general ed side of that team and the special ed side, and also interviewed parents.

[01:11:20] And just, I neglected to say, the records that were selected were selected by VDOE, and if the criteria that they had for the question didn't match that student, we were allowed to select another student that would meet the criteria for the question.

[01:11:39] In your packet, you will find a copy of the VDOE Letter of Findings, which is divided into the four sections you see on the screen, and I'll take you through those findings now. We are very proud to report many strengths were identified.

[01:11:57] We were not surprised by this. We're really proud of what we do. The auditors noted strengths in inclusive practices, particularly our unified programs, such as Unified Sound and United Sporting Opportunities that include all students. The auditors noted solid instruction and rigor with differentiation for individual student need.

[01:12:16] Students were aware of their accommodations and can communicate the processes and procedures around the services that they received. Technology, including assistive technology, was

observed in all places that they visited. In addition, they noted creative credentialing for CTE in, that should be CTE, sorry, for career and technical education for our students with disabilities.

[01:12:44] We also noted an overall pass rates for students with disabilities is well above the state average. They noted well-managed schools in a positive climate. They noted scheduling of special education first in the instructional schedule, which really expands the opportunities for our students, which is really critical to make sure we get all of the IEP requirements in.

[01:13:08] They also noted principals actively moving about the buildings and interacting with students with disabilities and calling them by name. They noted that many of our special education students in those co-teaching pairs or the other special educators that they interviewed were dually endorsed, both in special education and in the subject matter that they were teaching, which is an amazing strength, especially given the teacher shortages today.

[01:13:38] They also noted speech-language pathologists leading instruction for a whole class around language rather than pulling out students to a special place to get that instruction. And VDOE was very excited about the creative use of professionals to support all students and not just one or two specific students in a pull-out room.

[01:13:57] Okay, so the next category, I feel like I need to explain a little bit because the title was confusing to me and I did inquire with VDOE. They described this area as where good things are happening, but there is a need to be intentional about improving it and moving it forward.

[01:14:17] Because I thought data collection is consistent. That is a wonderful thing. That is a strength. You should put it in the other column. But they went on to explain that data collection is something that you have to be intentional about doing on a continuous basis, of course. And also that at least one parent, they always said that, at least one place, at least one parent, and that is certainly enough to make the report.

[01:14:41] But a parent reported the challenging process of getting copies of data. And I do want to highlight on the presentation going forward, anything that you see highlighted is something that we have already implemented a correction on. In January, we streamlined that process, so if parents requested data, they would be able to get that data in a much easier format.

[01:15:05] They also noted our co-teaching pairs were prevalent in all schools visited. We are absolutely doing co-teaching, but during interviews, some of the teachers were a little ambiguous about their roles and responsibilities on that team. And for me, that says we need more training in that area, more options to be more specific with co-teaching teams.

[01:15:27] And for caseload standards, they noticed that our caseload standards are compliant, but teachers reported challenging supporting those caseloads. They also noted that our staffing standard well exceeds the maximums for the state.

[01:15:44] Not exceeds the maximums, but our standards are better than what the state requires. I will say it that way. All right, and the next area were areas that we really want to focus on for program improvement, but were not necessarily in the non-compliant range.

[01:16:00] So in co-teaching classes, students with disabilities were pulled out for some instruction. While that may be considered an evidence-based practice, in some situations, maybe not in others. So I feel like

our job is to investigate how often are students being pulled out and for what reason.

[01:16:16] And also, sometimes students without disabilities are pulled out with their peers because the co-teaching teams want to separate for a smaller group opportunity. So I felt the need to defend that one just a little bit. Instruction in self-contained settings.

[01:16:32] they did note in some places some instruction did not appear age or grade appropriate and they also noted that some activities noted appeared to have no connection to instructional goals. They also had a comment about access to manipulatives some specifically that some students were counting on their fingers and they wanted those students to have access to manipulatives instead but I will tell you in all my visits to many many schools manipulatives are plentiful, so I'm not sure in that observation what happened there, but our supervisors are

[01:17:07] going to be watching for that particular concern. And then the last one in this area was that visuals, timers, and communication devices were not used in all settings that may be warranted these supports. And the next is the areas of non-compliance. The first one is special ed staffing requirements. So the state requires, where they found us to be non-compliant was in our early childhood special education settings. And we have added 12 additional positions for fiscal year 25 to begin to address this concern. In the beginning of the year, we are very compliant

[01:17:45] with the state standards. And then as the year progresses, because it's rolling enrollment, and as more students become age eligible and are identified, the programs grow and grow. And so by about March, we hit the mark where we are no longer compliant. So we are just going to expand our early childhood offerings so that we have more spots in order to prevent that from happening.

[01:18:09] And then in Child Find, they noted some issues with documentation of our screenings. Not that we weren't doing them, but the documentation wasn't easy to find. And also timely processing of some referrals from screening to more evaluation. Specifically, they noted that with a fail on a hearing screening and then in the next section it talks about audiologicals and the documentation of those when they were referred and when they were completed that was noted on one of the files selected and we did some further investigation and decided that we do indeed

[01:18:47] need to tighten up our documentation there so that has already been corrected as well They also noted the documentation of eligibility reports that we do to determine if a student is eligible, say a psychological report.

[01:19:03] We have to prepare those by regulation two days in advance of the meeting and have them ready for parents if they want to have those before. We absolutely do that and even had documentation of the upload of those documents into our system. But we don't have documentation that the parents knew they were ready in a way that satisfied the state for that particular section.

[01:19:27] So we are going to tighten that up a little bit. And there are statements on our consent forms and a couple of other forms, but we're going to be more specific about how we document getting those reports out. And then evidence of VDOE eligibility criteria for all disability categories.

[01:19:43] and this is one there are 13 categories in Virginia that you can be eligible for and the way the letter is worded it sounds like we can should consider all 13 for all students and the way that we do it now is we talk about all 13 and narrow down to the ones that seem most appropriate to answer the eligibility questions that we posed when the concern was raised so I am going to ask for more clarification on that

particular item and then the the last one on this sheet, free and appropriate public education. This one we have already corrected. Our students

[01:20:19] who use hearing aids or other devices that support hearing or even vision, we need to document that we are checking to make sure all of those are functioning. We are doing those tests to make sure, but we didn't have a system of documentation. You might hear a little bit of theme there. So we have already instituted a way for folks to document so that if there is an issue with a device, that our audiologist or hearing specialists can get out and immediately address the need. And they also noted that we need to more strongly consider

[01:20:54] the use of assistive technology for our students on the considerations page, specifically in our IEPs. Not that we aren't using it, but we aren't documenting that consideration all the time and then documentation or follow-up of consideration for extended school year there were two documents noted where the IEP said we will follow up with that and then indeed we did not follow up on those two those two cases so we are going to reiterate all of those and do a

[01:21:30] corrective action for those. And then two more items. The next one is IEPs. And the main concern here was our documentation for who came to the meeting. There were a couple of documents that didn't have anyone listed, but clearly the IEP was completed and everyone came and there is documentation of the meeting, but there wasn't anything on the front page of the IEP.

[01:21:55] We also don't always document when people are excused from a meeting. That's a very important regulatory item. And the last one was written notice of IEP meetings. That corrective action has already been sent out, but the regulation is there because regulatory language is that we need to share with parents is on that written notice. But I think in the days of COVID perhaps, we got used to calling up and scheduling the meeting and everybody comes and then we don't finalize that meeting notice. So that's an easy fix for us and we have already shared out that corrective action

[01:22:30] plan and we'll be beginning to check for fidelity of that in this last nine weeks. This last item is probably the most important one to me on the results. They said that we need to ensure the integrity of the IEP process to make sure that IEP team decisions are made by the IEP team.

[01:22:52] And where this comes from is there were some staff members that reported being or feeling discouraged from increasing services or asking for a more restrictive placement, or maybe a less restrictive placement, I'm not sure, for students in some of our staffing meetings or brainstorming meetings or even other kinds of meetings that are not IEP meetings.

[01:23:16] So that correction is going to be absolutely, if we are talking about services, supports, goals, placement, anything that are components of the IEP, that that is where those decisions take place, and that is the only place those decisions take place.

[01:23:33] All right, so our next step, are to continue to celebrate our many strengths. We are going to create a corrective action plan, as noted by the state, and there are two components to that. We will need to, any individual student record that was found to be noncompliant, We make those corrections and do that through an IEP meeting.

[01:23:55] And then the overall division-wide corrective action plan for these items of noncompliance. And we're going to increase our focus on those areas noted for improvement, whether they're ones that are going well and may have problems or ones that are actually in need of focus right now.

[01:24:11] And we're also going to conduct regular fidelity checks on our corrective action plan for the next year or two as law until the state tells us that we are complete and that is my presentation do you have any questions thank you dr carter board members any questions yes miss sure enough thank you so much for that comprehensive review it's so important for us to understand the context and i really appreciate your transparency because sometimes it's not easy to say hey we have a few things we need to work on and own it and you totally did and i think that that's commendable

[01:24:49] so i appreciate that um one of the things you mentioned was about the issue of staffing and starting compliant and then as the year goes on not being compliant yes um would that be addressed through flexible staffing then is that what you're talking about in the budget or was that also being addressed through the additional positions that we approved i would say yes to you both and okay i have added 12 positions and those were given to us um for next year for early childhood we still have to fill those positions so we are actively recruiting in every way that we can to find folks

[01:25:24] for those positions but in looking at the data 12 positions should put us in a good place okay if our trends continue but if they are larger if the numbers turn out to be larger than those 12 programs would cover then we would look for alternative ways to either add a class or add staff to a class so that we could maybe go up one or two students to make sure that all those students who are receiving their services. Perfect, I appreciate that. And then is there, you mentioned the trend of documentation and reporting and those kinds of things. Is there, and forgive me, I don't know this, but is there some kind of program or is it Phoenix like that we could use that would

[01:26:04] help time these things better or get those things out? Do we have that in existence? We can utilize it better or do we need something? We have Virginia IEP, which is absolutely where we were able to document all of the, um, 30 some items that we were compliant with. Um, and, but I think this is more, um, systems, internal systems within our department that we just need to make sure we're documenting. Um, and most, most of the areas of noncompliance were not for documentation were very simple solutions. For example, the, um, checking of the hearing aids and those things.

[01:26:39] Um, we now have a barcode that the teacher scans, it goes to a Google doc and it comes immediately to the audiologist she gets an email there's an issue at you know potomac falls with a hearing aid and then she can head out to take care of it and then that list of incoming needs will then also serve as our documentation when there was a problem we addressed it and then there's another barcode for everything's good okay i just didn't know if there was some kind of like sped program out there that does all the notifying for you and you put it on a schedule but i know it is individualized And then the last question I had is you mentioned about in terms of goals being written by the IEP team or discussed by the IEP team.

[01:27:19] Can you speak to how that is involved with the MTSS process and Tier 3 and Tier 2 interventions? If those, I guess I'm specifically asking, if those were within the IEP, obviously that would be discussed with the team. But what if they're additional? I mean, we were talking earlier about different needs, right?

[01:27:36] You might have something with processing, but you might also fall below grade level in reading or math and need a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention. Would that also require the IEP team to discuss? Well, for me, if it is a student who has already been identified as a student with a disability, the IEP team is the go-to place for that.

[01:27:55] And so the IEP team could discuss what would be the best way for us to address this concern. And you used also maybe below grade level in math. And there may be specific skills that could be addressed by something already happening in the school that would happen through MTSS. And that's appropriate. But I think for students with disabilities, it is always the best practice to start with the IEP team.

[01:28:18] But we do have students who receive IEP services and then also have gone through MTSS for other concerns not related to their disability. so I think it really is I feel like I should just wear a t-shirt that says it depends we're individualized but it really does depend but I think having both of those processes available depending on the situation is so critical but the IEP team is the start so it's like the hub of all the different things that are involved with that student whether it falls in the IEP or not yes and then we stay in where we need to be and don't enter the gray you know that we are being regulatory and compliant love that approach thank you so much that's all I have short any other

[01:28:57] questions? No? Wow, we're on time. Thank you so much, Dr. Carter, Mrs. Richardson. Thank you for the opportunity. All right, so we'll continue with item 6.01 and recess for dinner. The board will

[01:29:14] reconvene at 6. 30 p. m. , and the board is now in recess. Okay, good evening. The board is coming

[01:58:45] out of recess at this time. We will be picking up with items 8.01 and 8.02, the Pledge of allegiance in the national anthem the woodgrove singers is led by music teacher jessica morgan and is the school's premier mixed choir there are 17 singers in 10th through 12th grades woodgrove singers is woodgrove's blue ribbon choir and performs regularly off campus throughout the community at this time i will ask everyone to rise for the pledge of allegiance and remain standing

[01:59:21] for the national anthem next item on the agenda is student staff recognitions we will start with

[02:01:15] item 9.01, one LCPS Spotlight, Cedar Lane Elementary School and Office of Mathematics. Math supports and interventions presented by Mr. Neal Slevin. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. At this time, it is my privilege to introduce the team from Cedar Lane Elementary School, who will be providing you this month's update on math interventions and school-based support under

[02:01:43] the leadership of Principal Bob Marple. Madam Chair, Vice Chair, members of the Loudoun County Public School Board, and of course, Superintendent Spence, Dr. Spence, and Dr. Smith.

[02:02:13] My name is Bob Marple, and I am blessed to serve as the principal at Cedar Lane Elementary School. This evening, it is with great honor that we present and celebrate our math intervention program, a shining example of our shared commitment to ensuring comprehensive and rigorous instruction for each and every student, along with the provision of resources, programs, and supports that pave the way for a prosperous and successful future.

[02:02:43] I wish to thank the Loudoun County Public Schools Math Department as well as the Special Education Department for providing Cedar Lane Elementary with the Bridges Intervention Resources. I appreciate the Loudoun County Public School Board for approving the purchases of these important materials and funding our math resource teacher position to support the successful implementation of this program.

[02:03:10] This evening, we will provide to you a brief overview of the Bridges program and how it aligns with the one LCPS strategic plan for excellence. And most importantly, provide you with the valuable perspectives of some incredible teachers and wonderful students, our Cedar Lane Lions.

[02:03:31] You will meet three of our talented and dedicated teachers. Ms. Toria Bruba, who is a third grade teacher for us at Cedar Lane. Mrs. Jen McNally, one of our amazing EL teachers. Ms. Alana Bragg, our math resource teacher who is doing an outstanding job for us implementing this program along with supporting our students and teachers in the area of mathematics.

[02:03:51] You will also have the opportunity to meet our dean, an absolutely outstanding instructional leader and educator, Ms. Nicolette Pisani. Perhaps what I am most excited to share with you this evening is the presence of three remarkable students from our Cedar Lane Lion nation.

[02:04:11] Andy, Samantha, and Adele. To talk about our core values in the Loudoun County Public School Strategic Plan alignment is our dean, that talented educator I referenced it earlier, Mrs. Nicolette Pisani. Good evening. It's so nice to see you all. My name is Nicolette and I am the dean at Cedar Lane Elementary School. Math intervention at Cedar Lane aligns with all six of LCPS core values and the strategic plan. Under goal one, the math intervention program

[02:04:47] is preparing students to be knowledgeable, critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, and contributors. Specifically, it enables core academic excellence by providing rigorous instruction for all students.

[02:05:04] To assess progress towards our goal of student growth, we analyzed our NWEA map fall and winter data. Our data shows that on average, all Cedar Lane students increased by 0.85 percentile points from fall to winter, while our students who were receiving the Bridges intervention increased at a higher rate with an average growth of 2.61 percentile points.

[02:05:32] The RIT score, which measures academic achievement and difficulty, also increased at a higher rate with an average growth of 8.21 percentile points. I'm now going to hand it over to our wonderful math resource teacher, Ms. Bragg. Hi, I'm Alana Bragg, and I am the math resource teacher at Cedar Lane Elementary School.

[02:05:56] Math intervention is direct, explicit instruction that's provided to students either in small group or one-to-one setting, completely dependent on the unique needs of each student. LCPS instructional minutes were updated this year to support math intervention for those students who are in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

[02:06:14] The LCPS math workshop model includes a 20-minute block of time for math intervention, but teachers still have the flexibility within their classroom to make intervention fit their needs and the needs of the students and their team and the school as a whole.

[02:06:30] To support implementation of math intervention, our school board prioritized the purchase of Bridges kits for all elementary schools and the hiring of five math resource teachers. Thanks, guys. Each kit includes all of the resources necessary to provide research-based intervention with fidelity.

[02:06:48] As we've been implementing Bridges, we've identified the need for additional kits in our schools, one per grade level. So thank you for prioritizing the purchase of additional Bridges kits to support our students in need of math intervention. So Mr. Marple arranged for each of our grade level

CLTs to have data days where teachers could take a deeper dive into student data to determine which of our students were in need of tier two or tier three support in math teachers analyzed many data points from the math maps assessment and the video e student growth assessment along with their grade level common assessments that they've all created this year

[02:07:26] and observational classroom data using these multiple data points in conjunction with the lcps math decision tree each team determined the appropriate level of support for our students considering the frequency intensity and duration needed for student success from here the teams worked together to create the mtss intervention plans and contacted each student's family to inform them of the additional support that they would be receiving as the math resource teacher i had the opportunity to train teachers on both the newly updated math workshop structure and the new bridges kits coaching them on how to understand the program and all of its

[02:08:02] moving parts and how to implement the program with their students and with support from the cedar Lane PTA and parent volunteers, I created a library of resources for our teachers to be able to use with their students. So as the math resource teacher working full-time at Cedar Lane, I support both students and teachers. I get to work with eight amazing groups of students from first grade through fifth grade. I use the Bridges intervention program to support students learning a bunch of different topics from your basic counting and identifying numbers to solving word problems with multiplication and division and it's so

[02:08:39] much fun working with them every day and really seeing their growth in real time. In addition to working directly with students I also provide ongoing coaching to classroom teachers, special education teachers, and English language teachers to co-plan, co-teach, model, and reflect on their mathematical practices.

[02:08:57] I work in their CLTs unpacking standards, identifying areas of needs, deciding on proper intervention materials, and developing plans for implementation. Here to give you a teacher's perspective of math intervention are Cedar Lane third grade teachers, Tori and Jen. Hi, good evening.

[02:09:23] I'm Jen McNally. I'm one of the third grade EL teachers at Cedar Lane and I'm happy to be here tonight. This year we have had the opportunity to implement bridges with our students and we appreciate how the program supports our intervention needs. We decided as a school to utilize this tool across all grade levels for consistency and continued progression throughout the students' time at Cedar Lane.

[02:09:48] Math power-up was a new concept for us, but the structure of Bridges has been easy to build into our daily routines. The Bridges lessons mirror the math workshop model with built-in number sense routines and mini lessons that use manipulatives for hands-on learning.

[02:10:05] Using progress monitoring assessments, students are able to show progress towards mastery of each concept. The number sense routine gives students the opportunity to practice articulating their math language in an environment they are comfortable in.

[02:10:21] In these small groups, we use manipulatives like card games, spinners, and number mats that the students find engaging. The ready-made modules are easy for teachers to follow and for students to learn as well. Thanks to Alana, Cedar Lane has an amazing filing system and all the resources are organized for teachers to access for their students.

[02:10:44] As our students are advancing to higher levels in the program, I am often finding that I need to share resources with other grade levels as the needs of the students overlap. Now that there are multiple groups in different grades working on the same module, it would be beneficial to have more kits to service the needs of all students.

[02:11:03] Hi, I'm Tori Obruba, third grade teacher. Utilizing bridges has increased not only my students' understanding of math concepts, but I've also seen their confidence in the subject greatly develop as well. Our current third grade students completed kindergarten and a lot of first grade virtually and as a result of this form of education compared to students in previous years I've taught, I have noticed a larger gap in many of their foundational skills.

[02:11:31] So their number sense is lacking and their automaticity within computation is also an area of weakness. Consequently, these deficits have contributed to a lack of participation within the classroom due to limited vocabulary and trouble explaining their reasoning or why behind solving a problem.

[02:11:49] However, since implementing Bridges, I have witnessed a considerable difference within these skill sets. During whole group discussions, students who receive math intervention are more confident in the classroom as they are now eager and willing to participate. Their abilities to clearly articulate their reasoning and thought process has also improved.

[02:12:07] From a teacher's perspective, I can truly see how these foundational skills are being built through Bridges, setting them up for continued academic success. - Cedar Lane has been incredibly lucky to have a math resource teacher who has supported us from the beginning.

[02:12:22] We have appreciated her presence, knowledge, coaching, and continual support. It has been very helpful to have a teacher in our building daily who is able to provide intervention directly to students while also building our capacity as teachers.

[02:12:37] - Like Mrs. McNally just said, Alana's contributions impact both students and teachers alike. The other day I actually had a conversation with one of my students and she told me that Ms. Bragg is one of her favorite teachers alongside myself and Ms. McNally. It hurt a bit, however, this statement really spoke volumes because she no longer works with Ms. Bragg anymore.

[02:12:58] She actually tested out of her tier three intervention and yet it showcases the lasting impression that Ms. Bragg has had on her. And I asked her why was that her response? She said, plain and simple, she makes learning fun. And so that's thanks to Bridges and thanks to her personality, but Alana is truly an asset to Cedar Lane and every school would benefit from having a math resource teacher.

[02:13:20] You just can't have ours. - Thank you. - All right, next we have up the stars of our whole spiel. We have three students to introduce and we're gonna ask them a few questions about their take. - We'll start with Samantha.

[02:13:39] You ready? All right, so the question I would like to ask you is what changes have you seen in yourself since you've started working with Bridges in a small group with me? By doing Bridges, I know more math. I've gotten better answers on my tests since I've started Bridges.

[02:13:59] And I am quicker at math problems than I was before. And I am impressed of how I have improved in my math. And what I like the most about the program is that it will help many kids as it helped me improve.

[02:14:36] And thank you, Ms. Hill and Mrs. McNally, for your hard work. And I promise I didn't help her write that. Thank you. Good job, sweetheart.

[02:14:51] Right? All right, next we have Andy. Andy, your question is, what has been your favorite memory when using bridges? I like playing with number and cards, playing games with partner.

[02:15:07] I like smaller groups because it is quieter. Why do you like the quieter setting? Because I can hear my thoughts. Thanks, buddy. Great. - And last but not least, I got to teach Adele last year, so it's full circle.

[02:15:26] Adele, how do you feel when you work on your Bridges lessons? - I feel good because I get to work with my friends and I get to learn about things I learned last year. So I can like work with like other teachers and it's like fun to work with other teachers and other people, so.

[02:15:51] - Thank you, buddy. - Last one. Well, thank you guys so much for listening to our presentation. I want to say thank you to this team of people behind me because they are amazing.

[02:16:08] And thank you to the math supervisor who is equally as fantastic. I'd like to open up to the floor to any questions that you guys might have. Adele was going to ask, but he got a little shy. Thank you so much for coming. And Andy and Samantha and Adele, thank you for coming and telling us about what's going on and how things are improving and how you like your instruction it's really exciting for you to come up and and speak to us thank you for doing that and shouting out your teachers that's pretty cool too board members

[02:16:45] are there any other questions or comments no thank you again for all your hard work thank you we're gonna go get some ice cream now we will move on to 9.02 department of teaching and learning virginia school board association business honor roll and nominees presented by mr slevin Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and Ms. Stacey Metcalf, Vice Chair,

[02:17:16] School Business Partnership Executive Council. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. I am excited to be here tonight representing the Department of Teaching and Learning. The Department of Teaching and Learning serves as the liaison to the Loudoun County Public Schools School Business Partnership Executive Council. Our primary liaison is Ms. Renee Dawson in the audience here, and our secondary liaison is Mr. Grant Schaefer. One of the opportunities we have every April is to

[02:17:55] celebrate our community partners that really enrich Loudoun County Public Schools and supports our staff and our families, but most importantly, our students. One of the primary roles of the council is to promote and celebrate our partnerships. And Ms. Metcalf will be talking a little bit about that opportunity later in April, but tonight we're here to honor our 2024 VSBA Business Honorable Nominees.

[02:18:22] Ms. Stacey Metcalf is the Executive Director and CEO of Morbin Park, but more importantly for us tonight, she is the Vice Chair of the School Business Partnership Executive Council, and she will be doing the honors this evening. So, Ms. Metcalf, thank you for being here, and thank you for your leadership of the council. Good evening, Chair Mansfield and the whole school board.

[02:18:46] It's a big pleasure to be here tonight. As Neil just indicated, I am the Executive Director and CEO of the Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation, which owns and operates Morven Park. And I am, most importantly, I think as Mr. Slevin said, I am the Vice Chair of the School Business Partnership Executive Council.

[02:19:08] Our chair, who is Sharon Wright, was unable to be here tonight, and she sends her regrets, but she's traveling on business, so you've got me. This year the Morven Park, just a little bit about Morven Park and how we work with LCPS. This year Morven Park Center for Civic Impact is celebrating 10 years of working with LCPS.

[02:19:26] We deliver free civics lessons to Loudoun County students K through 12. And these lessons really teach students about communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking to inspire the next generation of community leaders.

[02:19:43] This past year, the Morven Park Center for Civic Impact reached 7,168 students across 46 schools in the county, so that was pretty impressive and we're looking to have a further reach within the school system.

[02:20:00] I have been a Loudoun County resident since 1998, and I actually served on the School of Business Partnership Executive Council in my previous role at Iniva Loudoun Hospital, Another outstanding organization that works and supports LCPS students and educators.

[02:20:17] So, let me tell you a little bit about the Executive Council, which you see on the slides up here. The LCPS School Business Partnership Council was created by School Board Action in 1990. The School Board Chair is an ex-officio member, and the School Board Vice Chair, Mr. Estreffi, is a standing member.

[02:20:36] In fact, a month or so ago, both Chair Wright and myself, we sat down with him and we're really looking forward to forging a really great relationship and especially as I step into the role of chair next year. The council's main mission is career development and partner promotion and recognition.

[02:20:55] The honorees gathered here this evening are representative of the amazing work of over 900 businesses, community, and higher education partners. These partners collaborate with LCPS schools, departments, content offices, and division initiatives.

[02:21:12] These honorees and other selected partners and individuals will be recognized at the Partnership Breakfast, which is sponsored by the Executive Council, and that's going to be held on April 19th at the National Conference Center, and I'm looking forward to welcoming you all there.

[02:21:28] So let's move over to the Virginia School Board Association Business Honor Roll. So the VSBA helps divisions say thank you to businesses for their vital contributions. The VSBA business honor roll is a way for local students, or excuse me, local school divisions to recognize local businesses for their support, especially as schools are facing increased budget uncertainty.

[02:21:56] Businesses, large and small, corporate and family owned, play a key role in supporting our communities and our local schools. They contribute to our school divisions, donating to scholarship programs, supporting extracurricular activities, offering internship opportunities, and volunteering in schools and sponsoring field trips.

[02:22:17] This type of support, as you all know, is invaluable. For over 20 years, one of the main objectives of the Council has been to acknowledge and honor our business community and partners. Since the inception of the VSBA Business Honor Roll, the Executive Council has nominated businesses to be on the list of Commonwealth-recognized partners that go above and beyond to further our division's mission. This evening, I'll be sharing the nominees with their corresponding educational partners. Then at the end, what we will do is have them come up with their plaques

[02:22:51] and stand at the dais with you to take a picture. So I thank you in advance for doing that. All right, let us meet our honorees. First up, we have Climatic Heating and Cooling, Inc., along with their partnership in academies of loudon doctor excuse me principal dr chanel pretty detailed the partnership between climatic founder mr sonny swan and the academies of loudon heating ventilation and air conditioning hvac pathways as follows he serves on the hvac advisory committee he was instrumental to the academies of loudon being awarded accreditation in the fall of this year

[02:23:30] this recognition provides assurances that the program meets industry standards ensures the validity of the curricular program and provides a goal-setting path and program improvement. He is connected. He has connected the HVAC pathway to national sponsor for the HVAC lab, Carrier Mid-Atlantic, which includes a nine, they've donated a \$9,000, they've made a \$9,500 donation each year to help replace outdated equipment in the lab, which means that these students are working with state-of-the-art equipment. And as well, they provide three top

[02:24:08] performer student scholarships. Mr. Swan also assists students with opportunities for job placement with carrier and Bryant dealers across the Mid-Atlantic region, offers students career shadowing and paid internships at Climatic, and helps recruit for our skilled trades fairs and career and apprenticeship fairs. So Mr. Sonny Swan of Climatic Heating and Cooling is here with us tonight, as well as Principal Dr. Pretty and coordinator Kelly Robesley, and they all represent

[02:24:44] the Academies of Loudoun, so they will be up to take the pictures with you in just a bit. Our next honoree is the Loudoun Laurels Foundation, in partnership with Tuscarora High School AVID Program and the Office of School Counseling Campus Program. The Loudoun Laurels Foundation was established in 2008 to recognize individuals whose selfless creativity and energy have helped make Loudoun County a great place for all of us to live. The mission, excuse me, sorry, to date,

[02:25:20] the organization has inducted 32 distinguished individuals as Loudoun laureates. In 2013, under the leadership of the Honorable Joe May, chair of the Loudoun Laurels Foundation Board, and the 2010 Loudon Laureate, the organization expanded its mission to establish the Loudon Laurel Stewardship Trust.

[02:25:40] Dr. Edgar Hattrick III, former superintendent of LCPS and a 2013 Loudon Laureate, helped formalize the partnership with LCPS. The trust and LCPS partnership is reserved for graduating students from two programs in LCPS that give guidance and support to students in underserved populations.

[02:26:02] in order to be the first in their families to pursue higher education. These two programs are the AVID program at Tuscarora High School and the campus program through the Office of School Counseling. Through an application process, the foundation awards a \$40,000 scholarship to each deserving LCPS senior to help them defray the cost of going to a four-year Virginia college or university.

[02:26:30] To date, the Loudon Laurels Foundation has awarded \$1,080,000 in scholarships to 27 students. Take a pause there. That's amazing, right? In addition, the Loudon Laurels Foundation scholarship program provides mentorship and guidance opportunities for the recipients.

[02:26:50] There's network events. They have annual gala, one-on-one guidance, internship assistance, job placement, career counseling, are just some of the ways that the foundation ensures each student's success. To sustain access and to ensure availability, as for many of the students, is possible to apply for these scholarships, each year, past Loudon Laurels scholars and members of the Loudon Laurels

Foundation board host an evening mentoring panel aimed at current campus and avid students and their parents.

[02:27:23] Tonight, the Loudon Laurels Foundation is represented by their executive director, Nikki Doroa, and board chairman the honorable joe may and we also have board member stephen mother here with us tonight avid is represented by tuscarora high school principal pamela croft district director barry blair of tuscarora high school campus and in campus is represented by supervisor of school counseling heather ross and campus coordinator alex tate our final honoree is amazon aws aws

[02:28:00] in communities, and they are in partnership with the Loudon Education Foundation, known as LEF, and the Office of Computer Science. Highlights of the partnership include: Each and every week, Amazon leads an effort in delivering free-of-charge 1,200 LEF-fueled program meal bags to more than 35 LCPS sites.

[02:28:24] That is a half a day of deliveries for two of their drivers that they donate. The teams at AWS and Amazon hold regular volunteer events at fueled warehouses, sorting and packing meal bags. Volunteers also work alongside of our community and schools together, CAST, students, which became an unanticipated and very valuable experience for students and volunteers.

[02:28:50] CAST is a program that is offered through the Office of Special Education for students to gain work experience and independent living skills by completing internships with local businesses. Amazon AWS and CAS are an incredible match and both have stated that together, the days that they are together each month are their favorite days of the month.

[02:29:14] Amazon AWS has donated \$25,000 to LEF specifically to support grant requests for STEM education. Amazon AWS is passionate about providing exceptional learning opportunities, especially for students from populations underrepresented in STEM career fields.

[02:29:33] AWS in communities has played a pivotal role in fostering innovation and providing valuable resources for students through AWS Think Big Space at J. Lupton Simpson Middle School. This dedicated space has become a hub of creativity, collaboration, and technical exploration.

[02:29:52] Both teachers and students have been empowered to think beyond traditional boundaries, Engage in hands-on learning experiences and develop the skills necessary for integrating computer science into their daily instruction with fidelity.

[02:30:09] Amazon AWS partnered to introduce the new cloud computing course at Riverside High School. The forward-thinking initiative equips students with essential knowledge and practical skills in cloud technology, preparing them for future careers in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

[02:30:27] Students have been working towards receiving digital credentialing and cloud computing and will provide them with opportunities for possible internships and even possible employment opportunities at AWS. AWS is represented tonight by Sarah Georgidis, head of AWS in Communities Americas.

[02:30:49] Loudon Education Foundation is represented by their executive director, Danielle Nadler. And the Office of Computer Science is represented by Supervisor Nick Crescita. So I just want to say that these are our three recommended honorees, and we look forward to seeing them play out on the big, you know, Virginia Commonwealth Showcase.

[02:31:11] So thank you, school board, for taking time to hear about these amazing organizations and the work that's being done in our schools with them. And so now if I can just ask if each of them can come up and get a picture with you, that would be absolutely amazing.

[02:31:27] And I want to thank Grant for doing the slides here. Before we do the pictures, I just want to say thank you for all of your contributions and donations and everything to the schools. Thank you.

[02:36:10] At this time, we will move on to item 10, our student school board representatives. Comments. Our students this evening are Sophia Berg, Nyesha Patel, and Mary Hackman. This is Sophia's first school board meeting, and I'll read her bio before she gives her comments. Nyesha and Mary attended the last meeting, and their bios were read on March 12th.

[02:36:28] So, Sophia. Sophia Berg grew up in northern Virginia and has attended Loudoun County Public Schools since fifth grade. She is currently a senior at Dominion High School, where she serves as the secretary for the Student Council Association. Sophia is a three-year varsity soccer player and supports the Writing Center as a peer writing tutor.

[02:36:50] Outside of school, Sophia also works at the Bungalow Lake House as a hostess and babysits for local families. Since January 2023, Sophia has also dedicated over 90 hours of community service to adults affected by Alzheimer's disease in Bogota, Colombia.

[02:37:12] She is honored to have been given the opportunity to speak on behalf of her fellow Titans tonight. Mrs. Berg, you have the floor. Thank you, and good evening, fellow school board members. My name is Sophia Berg, and I am a senior at Dominion High School.

[02:37:27] I am deeply honored to address you all today, and I am even more honored to be granted the opportunity to represent Dominion High School here today. It is with great pride that I announce the remarkable accomplishments of both our students and faculty over the course of this year.

[02:37:43] Dominion High School's dance team competed in a large hip-hop category at nationals in Orlando, Florida, and worked to win fifth place in the nation and previously won second place in 2023 and 2022. Our boys' swim team was the Dulles District Champions along with Region 4C Champions, and for the first time since 2006, our gymnastics team brought home the Dulles District Champions title.

[02:38:05] The week of April 15th, Dominion will be holding the Loudoun International Summit with countries such as Lebanon, United Kingdom, Spain, South Africa, and France. This summit began at Dominion in 2012 and later expanded to the other Loudoun County schools.

[02:38:22] This summit has been virtual for the past two years, and this year will be the first in-person summit since 2019. The Virginia High School League recently held the State Speech Championship at Dominion for a second year in a row. Alessandro Alfaro, a student at Dominion High School, received a perfect score on the 2023 AP Spanish Language Exam, which has earned him a spot on our Titan wall of fame. For the first time ever the College Board has had a high school AP honor roll and Dominion was one of the five Loudoun County schools to earn gold. While I could go on and on about the great things Dominion has achieved this year, I'd like to take a moment to

[02:39:00] express my deep gratitude for the incredible four years I've had at this extraordinary school. I would like to thank Dr. Brewer for granting me this remarkable opportunity and for ensuring the senior

class had an enriching experienced at Dominion for these past four years. Thank you so much for your time and for this opportunity and have a great rest of your evening.

[02:39:20] - Thank you. Our second student speaker for tonight is Ms. Nyesha Patel from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

[02:39:39] - Good evening, honorable chair and board members. I'm Nyesha Patel, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, and on behalf of the school, I would like to bring attention to the many accomplishments, awards, and end of year events which are occurring within the school. Events which have just occurred include iNight, mentioned in the last meeting.

[02:39:57] This year, over 600 students performed, and over 5,000 was raised for charity. Upcoming events include Tech Month, which is this upcoming weekend, the Mali United Nations conference hosted by TJ with over 1,100 students in attendance, making it the largest high school-run Mali UN conference in the nation.

[02:40:13] The weekend after is BioCode, a hybrid hackathon to combine medical fields and computer science, an event open to the public and is intended to be more of an educative event over being a competition. As the year comes to an end, two flagship events for the school are underway.

[02:40:29] The most notable being TJ Starr, a research symposium highlighting the academic projects each student has been working towards the entire year. Over 600 students and over 400 projects will be presented at this symposium. The second flagship event is TJ's Texttravaganza, an open to the public science expo filled with educational boots ranging from rocket building to chemical experiments.

[02:40:52] This is the largest event hosted by the school, with over 2,000 students of all ages registered to attend and organized by an all-women team. Though many academically-oriented events are underway, the student body continues to host many social and cultural celebrations within the school.

[02:41:08] Recently, Holi, a Hindu New Year festival, was hosted by the PTSA, and this Friday, an Eid celebration will occur after school. Many events as such have transpired as students look forward to spring formals and prom. As the year end nears, students have had the chance to both look forward to social events, but are able to witness the culmination of their hard work and research in the form of the multitude of symposiums, competitions, and many more student-run events hosted at TJ.

[02:41:35] Students are able to express and communicate their unique interests with the world through these events, and individuals from all communities are able to thrive in this diverse environment through utilizing the many initiatives and resources presented by the administration and by fellow students. The school continues to strive to be a home for successful academic and social environments and continues to work to improve. Thank you so much. Thank you, Ms. Patel. Last, I would like to introduce our third student, Ms. Mary Hackman from Tuscarora High School. Ms. Hackman. Good evening. My name is Mary Hackman, and I'm happy

[02:42:13] to be here again representing Tuscarora High School. When I last spoke, I gave a brief overview of our motto, RISE, which stands for respect, integrity, service, and excellence. Today, I would like to share a more detailed perspective into service inside and outside of the Tuscarora community, as well as highlight upcoming events.

[02:42:30] U Night took place on March 21st. The Multicultural Night held performances from students, teachers, and faculty, representing country's flags, dances, skits, and food. Our theater department is performing the musical Anastasia this weekend on the 12th and the 13th, and next weekend on the 18th, 19th, and 20th.

[02:42:48] Key Club contains over 170 members and reaches out to non-profits and service projects to assist them in their works. We have organized multiple trail cleanups on the W&OD trail and have collected dozens of bags of trash. We also took part in the Head Start toy drive and donated over 80 toys and gift cards for families in need.

[02:43:10] Mu Alpha Theta contains 70 members that tutor peers in math as well as multiple times a week in our feeder elementary schools. Ro Kappa, our History National Honor Society, tutors peers every Tuesday morning and volunteers at a retirement home weekly. Tuscarora Varsity Football helped provide a hero's welcome in D.C. for an honor flight from Illinois full of war veterans to visit memorials.

[02:43:34] Tuscarora's PEER program has had many successful initiatives throughout the year. They completed their boo-bullying campaign in October by spreading awareness about bullying. Members are proud of their work with our feeding middle school, Smart Smell, and make trips to showcase our campaigns there as well.

[02:43:51] We look forward to see what PEER accomplishes while promoting service within Tuscarora High School. I'm proud to be a Husky because I know that Tuscarora teachers and staff are willing and ready to serve their students. I've been able to thrive in a school where I know that there will always be someone that I can turn to if I need help.

[02:44:09] Not only this, I know that they want to help, which means a lot to us students. I share these achievements not just to brag about my school's accomplishments, but instead to signify a connection between service and producing valuable members of our community. I would like to thank my principal, Mrs. Crawford, for providing me this opportunity.

[02:44:27] Thank you all and have a wonderful night. Thank you, and thank all of you for being with us here tonight and for your remarks. So now we'll move on to Agenda Item 11.01, the Superintendent Report, presented by Dr. Smith, our Chief of Staff.

[02:44:48] Dr. Smith. Good evening. I'm pleased to share with you some of the outstanding things happening across LCPS in tonight's Superintendent's Report. Last Tuesday, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted the Fiscal Year 2025 budget.

[02:45:04] LCPS' \$1.8 billion budget was adopted and is supported by county funding in the amount of \$1.3 billion. We greatly appreciate the Board of Supervisors' collaboration and support during this budget seizing. As we've shared previously, this budget reflects our priorities, holding our students at the center of our work, enhancing staff, recruitment, and retention, and focusing on new initiatives while strengthening existing ones.

[02:45:28] We look forward to sharing with you our progress and our achievements as we prepare for the next school year. Kevin Tyson has been named the executive principal for high school education. Mr. Tyson has been the principal of John Champ High School since 2018. Previously, he was an assistant principal at Stonebridge High School and a dean at Broad Run High School.

[02:45:49] He also served as the assistant principal of Midfield High School in Midfield, Alabama. Mr. Tyson began his teaching career in 2008, and he has a bachelor's degree in human performance from Howard University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Regent University. We welcome Mr. Tyson to his new role.

[02:46:07] We'd also like to welcome two of our new assistant council members, Janice Ewing and Cheryl Richardson. Both started working with LCPS on April 1st. Ms. Ewing was previously the assistant county attorney for Stafford County. She also previously served in the assistant city attorney for the city of Danville.

[02:46:26] Ms. Ewing has a bachelor's degree from Xavier University of Louisiana and received her jurist doctorate from Tulane Law School. Most recently, Ms. Richardson served as an attorney at law with Cardinal Law in Ashburn. She also previously served as the director of the Council of School Attorneys.

[02:46:43] Ms. Richardson earned her bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, and she received her Juris Doctorate from George Mason University. We welcome both Ms. Ewing and Ms. Richardson to LCPS. Carissa Stallworth has been named the payroll director.

[02:47:00] Ms. Stallworth has more than 23 years of experience in payroll management, including as the payroll director for Roanoke City Public Schools, where she'll be joining us from. Ms. Stallworth has a bachelor's degree cum laude in business from Mary Baldwin and a master's degree in science from Walden University.

[02:47:20] We welcome Ms. Stallworth to LCPS. We are proud to share that all 17 LCPS middle schools have been re-designated as Schools to Watch by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle School Grades Reform.

[02:47:36] The Schools to Watch program focuses on school improvement efforts characterized by a continuous trajectory towards success. The Schools to Watch designation must be renewed every three years to show continuous growth. This year, Blue Ridge Middle was re-designated for the fifth time, and Harmony Middle School was re-designated for the third time.

[02:47:56] Congratulations to these schools and these administrators, these educators, and these students. Lorraine Stewart, a sixth grade teacher at Riverbend Middle School, has been named the 2024 Virginia Middle School Association Teacher of the Year.

[02:48:12] Ms. Stewart was selected for her outstanding dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to her students and the teaching profession. Congratulations to Ms. Stewart on this outstanding achievement. Congratulations to Tracy Scannell Crow, an EL teacher with Virtual Loudon Online, for being selected as the March Shine winner.

[02:48:34] Ms. Crow was nominated by Virtual Loudon Online Supervisor Laura Hicks, who wrote, Tracy Scannell Crow is such an amazing EL teacher for Virtual Loudon. She is a tremendous collaborator and a support for all of our school programs. SHINE, which stands for Spotlighting Heroes in Education, is a joint LCPS and Loudon Education Foundation initiative to recognize LCPS staff members who go above and beyond in supporting LCPS students and the community.

[02:49:03] Members of LCPS, including other staff members, students, parents, and community members, are invited to nominate LCPS who shine. The Shine Award recipients receive a gift worth \$500,

coordinated by LEF. This month's prize was sponsored by the Retired Teachers Association.

[02:49:20] Ms. Crow received a gift certificate to Woodhouse Space and a gift card to a local restaurant. I hope that everyone who wished to see yesterday's eclipse had the chance to do so. Thanks to our science department and the Department of Teaching and Learning, With support from our Department of Communications, all LCPS students and staff received a pair of Eclipse glasses.

[02:49:42] Many schools made plans for students to safely witness this rare and exciting event. I appreciate all of those who made this event an excellent learning opportunity. More than 475 LCPS students, parents, and community members recently attended the Academies of Loudoun Career and Apprenticeship Fair held on Wednesday, April 3rd.

[02:50:04] 68 local businesses in a variety of career fields, including construction, hospitality, cosmetology, medical and veterinary sciences, and the armed forces, shared information about career pathways. With support from LCPS Office of Human Resources and Talent Development, students also had the opportunity to have their resumes reviewed and to receive feedback.

[02:50:27] Many thanks to the Academies of Loudoun team that coordinated this event and to the local businesses who shared information with our students. LCPS has earned the 2024 Energy Star Partner of the Year Award for Sustained Excellence from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy. This is the 13th year that LCPS has earned the Sustained Excellence Award, which is the highest honor in this competitive awards program. LCPS is the only school system with 13 years as a Sustained Excellence Partner.

[02:50:59] In addition, 30 LCPS schools also earned Energy Star Building certifications. These schools meet strict energy performance standards as set by the EPA. They also use less energy and are less expensive to operate, producing fewer greenhouse gas emissions than similar size and tight buildings.

[02:51:19] These recognitions reflect the commitment and hard work of our schools and our construction facilities, operations, and energy management teams. More than 300 LCPS high school students participated in the 42nd annual Loudoun County Public Schools Regional Science and Engineering Fair on March 20th at John Champ High School. Five student finalists were selected to participate in the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair, the world's largest pre-college STEM competition to be held in Los Angeles in May. In addition to the five finalists, a Woodgrove senior

[02:51:55] received the annual Willowcroft Science Scholarships. Congratulations to all of our Science Fair participants. Ovia Amolras, a seventh grade at J. Michael Lunsford Middle School, won the 42nd annual LCPS regional spelling bee on Thursday, March 21st. This is the second year in a row that Ovea has won the regional spelling bee. She won the spelling bee by correctly spelling Sufi, a noun that means an ascetic Muslim mystic. The spelling bee lasted 14 rounds. Arnav Barth Kumar,

[02:52:30] a sixth grader at Mercer Middle, was the runner-up. Ovea now moves on to the 97th annual Scripps National Spelling Bee, which will be held at the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in the National Harbor in late May. Spellers from across the country and the world will compete on national television. We wish Ovea the best of L-U-C-K. Freedom and Parkview High School Student Council Associations received the Achievement Awards from the Virginia Student Council Association in March. These two schools were among only 19 schools in the state to achieve this honor.

[02:53:08] To meet these requirements for the VSCA Achievement Award, the Student Council submitted documentation of completing a variety of activities throughout the calendar year. In addition to this recognition, Ainsley Wood of Freedom and Ashlyn Strayer of Parkview will serve as the VSCA president and vice president, respectively.

[02:53:29] As part of this election, Parkview will host the state convention in March of 2025. Thank you, and that concludes the superintendent's report. Thank you, Dr. Smith. At this time, we will move to item 12.01, public comment, starting with virtual.

[02:53:47] Thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process. The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted.

[02:54:04] Based on the number of speakers in the agenda this evening, all speakers have been allotted one minute each for public comment. Please be advised that the speakers who missed their time slot will not be called at a later time. All audience members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and the dignity of the school board at all times.

[02:54:24] Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium, or during a break. Violations of civility, decorum, and respect include shouting, heckling, jeering, applause, or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting, obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair, and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate, disparage, or distract a speaker, staff member, or other meeting attendees. Speakers should refrain from

[02:55:01] vulgarity, obscenities, defamation, profanity, or other like breaches of respect, nor may speakers target, criticize, or attack individual students and or individual division employees during public comment. Speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official.

[02:55:21] The school board requests that comments on an individual student or employee-related matter not be shared at public meetings where the disclosure could violate applicable confidentiality requirements. Speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board.

[02:55:37] Per LCPS Policy 2520, members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period. Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting.

[02:55:56] Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in, on the decision of the chair, public comment being tabled into a later point in the meeting's agenda, limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons, or the public comment period ending for the evening.

[02:56:17] Copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information officer in the media box at the back of the boardroom prior to the start of the meeting. Please provide 12 copies of the materials. Under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais. The public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through LCPS-TV on Comcast Channel 18 and Verizon Fios Channel 43.

[02:56:42] The live stream of the meeting may be viewed on the website. We look forward to hearing your comments, and we will start with virtual. The first two today are Meredith Ray and Emily Wallace. Too long we've endured the spectacle of individuals who have been using public comment time as their personal soapbox.

[02:57:06] From those whose children are long past their school days to those who want the public to supplement their private school tuition and aspiring politicians who are using school board public comment time to campaign for their own agendas despite living in a completely different county and having no relevant stake in the proceedings. Clearly, there are people who see every platform as an opportunity for self-promotion with very little information on what is going on in LCPS schools. Public comment has been a circus of political posturing and without much success, seeing as most of those

[02:57:40] using constituent time to campaign for office end up losing their races. The school board has taken a bold step towards restoring order in the chaos, and for that, I, a parent of two LCPS middle schoolers, say thank you. I would also like to ask that we go back to enforcing the rules and asking for proof of eligibility to address the board during public comment. Here's to hoping that one day...

[02:58:08] Thank you. Emily Wallace, followed by Omer Boat. Good evening. I'm speaking today on behalf of the 50% of elementary families who've been chosen as martyrs for the transportation problems in LCPS. I'm pretty sure the financial, social, and academic challenges associated with the extra early start and the early release times have been highlighted previously. So since time has

[02:58:47] gone by without any attention or resolution to the inequity of that situation, I can at least report to you that things have not gotten easier for those of us struggling with the consequences of this schedule. It's now becoming more publicly understood that half of elementary families have been asked to make a sacrifice to compensate for transportation challenges, while the other half enjoy a much more palatable daily schedule for their little ones. But what has not been answered is why there's no appetite from the board to seek a fair solution. I'm advocating that if this is your answer to the bus driver shortage, don't make the mistake of believing that those who've been asked to bend are okay with it or have adjusted. We have not adjusted still to going

[02:59:23] to school in the dark without breakfast, paying thousands more in child care, all while knowing that the other half is for some reason more favored. Thank you. Thank you. Omer Butt,

[02:59:34] followed by Brenda Bankson.

[03:00:03] Hello, can someone confirm you can hear me? Hello? Can someone hear me? Yes, we can hear you. Go ahead. Hello? Can someone can hear me? Yes, we can hear you. Hi,

[03:00:26] can someone hear me? Hi, I am asking. Okay, sorry. Seems like someone can hear me, but no one can confirm me. I'm hearing from other people. So please, I hope my time starts there. I'm calling for policy 8040. We have requested multiple times and over 300 emails have been sent out

[03:01:02] specific to this policy requesting to be changed. Hundreds of parents and students have spoken out. Please consider changing the policy. It's the protection of all students because all lives matter. And I want to emphasize this gives an opportunity for the trans children to be protected as well because what I have suggested in the past is to create separate space for the trans children so they have their own privacy and their own dignity of space using the bathrooms and the

[03:01:39] locker rooms so i request you guys please consider changing the policy where the trans kids have the separate space and the other two boys and girls have the separate space thank you very much for your consideration. Thank you. Brenda Bankston, followed by Noman Akhtar. In Virginia, 27 districts

[03:02:12] do not videotape school board meetings. 29 others do not film speakers, and 18 put limits on time or speakers. So is this camera craze to manufacture crisis, to doctor video, to demean our board?

[03:02:29] I feel seen and heard, even virtually. But a crisis crowd says it's dehumanizing to not have cameras on me, a speaker. Nope. When a teacher refuses to show respect to certain students, or when a speaker calls for cruelty and millstones, that's dehumanizing. Loudon does not want camera craze grandstanding, nor threats to our children and youth. We value DEIA and SEL. 8040 saves lives.

[03:03:11] Thank you. Noman Akhtar, followed by PJ Cunningham. Board members to implement this policy 8040 in their homes and allowing their daughters and sisters to use restrooms and bathrooms together. Did anyone have courage to apply? No, right? I will not hear and from any one of you because you are hiding behind virginia law that allows you not to speak or answer our questions very well good uh but on the same side on the other hand you are not

[03:03:48] respecting another virginia law and not adopting it governor young's policy to have separate bathrooms for boys and girls why are you not doing it you are only choosing the law which favors you, not the parents, not the children, only you and your political agenda. You are not following the other law, which is there in Virginia law. How are you sitting there with, do you like, just think about your dignity, what you are doing here. Thank you. Thank you. PJ

[03:04:28] Cunningham, followed by Ali Zanat. Good evening, Loudoun County community. I'm a concerned parent of three children under nine years old and reside in Western Loudoun County. Thank you for all that you do on a daily basis. I am taking very valuable time out of my day and responsibility as a wife and mother to voice my duty to address the gross violation of educational rights for children, the violation of federal and state laws enforced by the VDOE and the U.S. Department of Education involving civil rights, child abuse, and neglect, as well as special education and

[03:05:03] free appropriate public education regarding a Loudoun County charter school. We are indeed living in a different world where victims are not afforded the justice that they are entitled to. Rather, the bullying and the perpetrator here in Loudoun County is protected.

[03:05:19] Loudoun County Public Schools must hold all staff and children accountable when bullying behavior occurs. This charter school has submitted a charter renewal agreement to the Loudoun County Public School Board. Evan Good now has published an article in the Loudoun Times Mirror, and the school is denying anything.

[03:05:38] Thank you. Ali Zanat, followed by Carrie Michon. voice my about um what was said earlier in regard to the kids going uh to school early uh i have two kids at lowes island elementary school and um the adjustment has been very difficult and as someone said you know some of the schools got move up to 8 a.m and some of us are at 7 30 a.m and i hope it's an issue that's looked at again very closely with the hopes that in the fall we can either go

[03:06:15] back to 750 or it'd be greater if we could go go to eight i mean i know my friends that have kids at Fairfax County. They start at 9 o'clock, which doesn't have to be 9, but 7.30 makes it very difficult, especially for kids that have sports in the evening. By the time they come home, they eat dinner, take a

shower, wind down, and then go to bed. It could be very late, and we're constantly trying to rush them in the morning to get up, eat breakfast, if any, at all, and then get them to school, so they kind of start their day with anxiety. I think they'll do better in school and

[03:06:48] kind of have a calmer demeanor if we can get back to a later school time. Thank you. Carrie Michonne followed by Sandy Sullivan. Last April, Ms. Ogadebe brought forward a Sexual Awareness and Prevention Month proclamation as an action item. I find it interesting, in light of all that LCPS has been

[03:07:24] through, that this was not presented for 2024. Given that anyone can go in any bathroom and any locker room in LCPS is a setup for sexual assaults. Y'all inherited this problem from the last board, but you can't hide from it.

[03:07:41] LCPS could be the standard bearer in the protection of all children, but instead you refuse to have a real dialogue with the community about 80/40 and turn off cameras in hopes that it all mysteriously disappears.

[03:07:56] How about the Title IX investigation update that was promised in the grand jury report? where is that? LCPS is in the news again today for another sexual abuse case. Enough is enough. Thank you. Sandy Sullivan, followed by Jan Marker. Good evening. I'm Sandy Sullivan, an elementary school teacher who currently serves the members of the Loudoun Education Association as their president. I look forward to the transportation update later this evening.

[03:08:31] The association thanks Ms. Chernoff for requesting this presentation. The board, This board and pass boards have accepted public comment during school board meetings in order to hear from the public. With or without a camera, stakeholders are heard. The Loudoun Education Association does not have a position on whether cameras should be on the speakers during public input.

[03:08:52] But LEA does strongly believe that educators must be heard, students must be heard, parents must be heard, the community must be heard. LEA believes all stakeholders must be heard. my voice your voice all our voices if our voice if our faces are not seen our voices are not diminished thank you jan merker followed by michael rivera it's so funny to me to see the parade of

[03:09:31] failed right-wing candidates addressing this board as if they somehow speak for parents they don't let's take mike rivera who has failed to earn a spot on this school board twice in the last two years. He was rejected by Loudoun parents first in his own district and most recently countywide because his ideas stink. Then we have Mike Clancy who couldn't even earn his party's vote for the honor of losing to Congresswoman Wexton. There is a reason that you all are sitting on this

[03:10:05] dais and not them. Loudoun parents want this board to continue to focus on serving our kids instead of on grandstanding from right-wing culture warriors who we, the parents, have rejected again and again and again.

[03:10:23] Thank you. Michael Rivera, followed by Jennifer Siren. I want to express emotion, have people see my signs, and allow lip readers to know what I am saying.

[03:10:46] But the school board took the cameras away. I want to be heard through feedback and surveys on major issues being debated, But the school board suppressed my comments and created a liberal narrative. I want to explain to the board and the public why I have grievances and what they are.

[03:11:06] But the school board only allows us one minute to speak. I asked for cameras to be put back on public speakers. But instead, the school board decided to turn the cameras off completely. The election is over. The tyrants are still in control.

[03:11:24] And nothing has changed. Two things changed the behavior of this board. Media scrutiny and litigation. I guess this time, it'll be litigation. Thank you. Jennifer Siren, followed by Daryl Dawson.

[03:11:51] Daryl Dawson, followed by Carol Smoots. I'm a middle school teacher with over 20 years in LCPS, and when I learned the attention of the public comment visibility issue, I just had to step up.

[03:12:18] This past Saturday, we went to intramural middle school sports. Our basketball team won. And you'll see my toothy grin very visible on next month's forum when we have the scoring meeting, and I hope we're acknowledged here that's the purpose in my mind of the school board acknowledgments here the forum this forum is not for pandering to politicians or the press it is not for fomenting the froth of followers it is however for hearing the public hearing from the public civil discourse finding clear pathways forward congratulations on your collective first

[03:12:56] quarter accomplishments as a school board incredible incredible potential lies at your fingertips with a fully funded budget real effective change can launch us to new heights I for one believe you can and will thank you Carol Smoots followed by Kathy Ellen Davis thank you I'm a resident and I'm a mother and a grandmother of a little granddaughter who will

[03:13:30] someday be in in these schools I wanted to applaud this board for having a policy 8040 and strongly urge that you keep it. I think it provides important protections and helps us all live up to the wonderful sentiments I saw on the signs all along the sidewalk as I was coming in, including humankind, be both.

[03:13:54] Thank you very much. Thank you. Kathy Ellen Davis, followed by Heather McKissick. Good evening. I have a first grader, and I have to say I'm really happy with her time at LCPS.

[03:14:11] Her teacher updates us weekly about what she's learning in the classroom and how we can support that at home. And I love seeing how the SEL lessons are reinforcing our teachings at home and helping my kid become an even more kind, empathetic, and understanding human. And I love how the DEIA initiatives help everyone in our diverse learning community feel seen, heard, valued, and celebrated.

[03:14:32] I love that our libraries are filled with books that star all kinds of characters and families because it's important to read stories that expand our understanding of our community, that reflect our experiences, and help us learn about experiences that we haven't had. Thank you also for providing multiple ways for us to share our thoughts with you. As a parent with young kids, I love that I can email you when I can't come in person.

[03:14:51] And thank you for caring so much about the community's thoughts that you provide multiple ways for us to be heard. And finally, thank you for your continued support of Policy 8040. We all know that trans and non-binary students are not in bathrooms to harm others, and it saddens me that some in our community continue to spread this harmful misinformation.

[03:15:06] Keep up the good work. - Thank you. Heather McKissick followed by Willow Walkie. I am a parent of two kids at Lowe's Island Elementary School and I sent you all an email last Thursday April 4th. I attached research and data showing that the early elementary school start time of 7:30 a.m. is not in

alignment with LCPS's core value of equity and opportunity. The research shows elementary schools with the 7:30 start time have lower test scores and lower rates of attendance than elementary schools with the 8:00 a.m. start time. Test score data pulled from LCPS also shows this. This needs to be rectified. The staff and

[03:15:44] students at schools with early start times are being put at a disadvantage that is not equitable I looked at the transportation presentation you're gonna hear later tonight it seems to suggest moving to a 7:40 a.m. start time and the research does not support that change it's still too early LCPS's vision is that every student reach their full potential but how is it possible for our kids to do this if they're not getting the 9 to 12 hours of sleep recommended by the AAP a lot of the parents in our community are

[03:16:16] having a very hard time with this start time. Thank you. Willowocke, followed by Ken Lokulutu. My name is Willowocke, she, her, hers. President of the Transgender Education Association of Greater Washington. I'm a parent of four and grandparent of two future as LCPS students, most likely. A dear friend points out that we are all here because we love our kids and we want our kids to be safe and get a good education. The past several years, there has been an increasing

[03:16:53] rhetoric against trans people, particularly trans kids. People have weighed in with misconceptions and disinformation about trans people. It is hard to be trans. We fight against the first assumption that was made about us. Most people don't have their gender scream at them in the middle of the night or make them weep when they drive home from work or leave them wanting to just disappear. Because of the hateful and unfounded rhetoric against trans people, some students may feel justified in bullying. It is not justified. Bullying is never justified. Policy 8040 goes a long way to provide trans kids with a way to feel protected and safe at school, allowing

[03:17:29] them the ability to figure out where they fit in, what their gender identity is, and who they can trust. Thank you. Kin Lokulutu, followed by Lynn Davis. Good evening.

[03:17:46] I'm a father of five young kids, 12 and under. I have four boys and a girl who's turning four this year. She's going to be entering LCPS. Under no circumstances will I want her to be experiencing what some of the girls who, in previous meetings here, expressed to have an unsafe environment entering into the bathrooms.

[03:18:13] I see a lot of ladies over here, none of you ladies will want to be sharing bathrooms in this building with other men. I'm pretty sure that as you were young girls, you didn't have to deal with this. You have to put safety first.

[03:18:29] We have to have respect for everybody, but you also have to have perspective that is based on common sense policies. And that's what all parents here in Loudoun County want to endorse for this board to be working towards. Thank you. Thank you.

[03:18:45] Heather Davis, I mean, Lynn Davis, followed by Heather Gottlieb. The former speaker just said all parents in Loudoun County want this, and he doesn't speak for me, and he doesn't speak for most of the people in Loudoun County.

[03:19:04] This policy, 80-40, has been debated for two years. And during that time, it's only served to help students. It's protecting them. It's got safeguards for the privacy of individuals using bathrooms. An election has been held, and this policy was at the center of it.

[03:19:23] And we have all of you up here because we are pro-80-40, and we are the majority of Loudoun County Public School parents. Thank you.

[03:19:39] Thank you. Heather Gottlieb, followed by Corey Brunet. Well, we've already seen the circus tonight. Ever since Trump lost the presidency, the right-wingers have shown up here to complain about whatever the GOP playbook calls for at the time.

[03:19:59] It started with masks, then CRT, then trans kids, and bathrooms. These are all distractions. There are real issues in LCPS that the school board needs to be working on, like COVID learning loss, math and reading scores, and drug use. But instead, every two weeks, Republican losers, quitters, private school parents, homeschoolers, and people whose children no longer attend LCPS show up to express their outrage at whatever made-up issues they are told to complain about, and then people like me, who don't even have kids, have to show up here and waste more of the board's time to ensure that the media doesn't have only one side of the story to report on.

[03:20:37] There are plenty of ways to make our voices heard here in Loudoun, and none of them require cameras that have been essentially turned off since 2021 anyway. I'm glad the school board is choosing to concentrate on real issues instead of faux outrage. thank you thank you cory brunet followed by joe mobley good evening my name is cory brunet and i'm an english learner teacher at broad run high school tonight i would like to express my opinion on public speaking i believe that every member of our community deserves the right to be heard i understand that other districts may do it differently than we do here in loudon

[03:21:15] and while i have not appreciated being limited to one minute at the last several school board meetings, at least you are hearing me. You are hearing students. You are hearing parents. You are hearing employees. You are hearing other members of our community. You were elected to do a big, complicated, risky, high-stakes job to make decisions that impact the entire education community of Loudoun. I hope you have not given up so quickly on listening to community members for ideas, feedback, and differing opinions. LCPS will never outperform its educators.

[03:21:49] Thank you. Joe Mobley followed by Kaled Marswell. First, this body lied that there was no danger in allowing boys into the girls' sacred spaces.

[03:22:11] Then you lied when it proved to be dangerous to young girls. Now we have a new elected body, and you're saying no cameras promote transparency. You're saying banning speech increases public representation. I know you're all women, but I need you to try really hard to think critically.

[03:22:30] You're making the worst possible decision at every opportunity. They're left to choose between oppressive compliance and throwing off tyrannical government.

[03:22:46] We will not choose compliance. Thank you. Khaled Masarwa, followed by Carrie Kidwell. Carrie Kidwell, followed by Pete Learney.

[03:23:22] Good evening. I first want to note my appreciation for continuing to have the cameras off, speakers for public comment. To the best of my knowledge this has been the case for years and that allows me to be more comfortable showing up when I come here to speak I don't come to perform or go viral I just come to be heard by my school board and I think you can hear me just fine tonight I'd like to reiterate my support for policy 8040 a day or two after speaking at the student service committee meeting Next Benedict was brutally attacked in a school bathroom as we know next tragically died the following day

[03:24:01] Next looks a lot like several children I love. What happened to Next and what can happen to other children is unspeakable. None of us can be ambivalent about the humanity of our LGBTQ plus community. We must be clear and speak against the hateful narrative that allows for such cruel behavior.

[03:24:18] Fear, ignorance, and intolerance should not inform policy decisions. Please do not let hate, harmful, and inaccurate narratives guide your decisions during your term on the school board. Thank you. Thank you. Pete Lierney, followed by Megan McLaughlin.

[03:24:38] Our founders gave to us the First Amendment, the Constitution, which protects the right to freedom of expression from government interference. This school board is part of our local government. I'm a veteran. This country and countless countries around the world are free societies because of sacrifices of American veterans.

[03:25:01] Research shows that communication is 55% nonverbal, 38% vocal, and 7% written word. When we speak to you, it is our right to simultaneously express ourselves to the whole of Loudoun County community. Your actions to eliminate all parties at the school board from being video recorded limits free expression by and to the citizens of Loudoun County.

[03:25:21] Your actions are a slap in the face to our founders, veterans like myself, and tax-paying citizens of the county. Thank you. Megan McLaughlin, followed by Mike Clancy. Hi. I'm a single mom of two beautiful daughters at Lowes Island Elementary, and I'm here to join my voice to the chorus and advocate for our kids about the 7.30 a.m. start time. It's too early. Why? It's bad for their health. They're getting less sleep. An average morning for us looks like me physically dragging them out of bed and them staring blankly at the

[03:26:01] microwave while they shove Nutella in their mouths. It's also a safety risk. We've got kids walking to school in the cold darkness with reduced visibility through intersections where parents like me are speeding to get their kids to school on time but mostly it's just not fair kids who are tired and hungry aren't going to perform as well as kids who aren't the schedule also places an undue financial burden on working parents because i have to take care of aftercare from two to five so i'm not going to pretend to understand what kind of constraints you're under that cause this i'm just asking for help to push the start time back to 8 a.m thank you thank you

[03:26:40] Mike Clancy followed by Harris Mejelevi. Good evening. I'm Mike Clancy. I'm a lawyer and I appreciate Jan's shout out tonight. Policy 8040 must be rescinded or substantially amended. In its current form, it violates the law. It violates Title IX of the federal law. It violates the free speech rights and the free exercise of religion rights that are broadly protected by the Virginia Constitution. It violates the free exercise rights under the Virginia Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Now, I've heard from many, many parents, and you've heard from many parents, and they're

[03:27:18] concerned about the privacy and safety of their children and their constitutional rights. So I urge you to take action, amend 8040, and do it sooner rather than later. Thank you. Thank you. Harris Mahadevi, followed by Andrea Weiskopf. Andrea Weiskopf, followed by Leslie Katz.

[03:27:47] Some of you may think that you are protecting the rights of children who are transgender by Stalin Policy 8040. But your refusal to openly support and safeguard children who are transgender is not allyship. Your silence speaks to cowardliness. Your delaying tactics declare that

[03:28:21] children who are transgender are not worthy of your time. Each and every child belongs in LCPS, and that includes children who are transgender for every trans child is a child and all children belong here thank you black lives matter thank you leslie katz as a parent of an elementary

[03:28:58] student i'm here to address the disparity that has persisted in lcps for two years currently 50 of elementary school students start their school day at 7 30 a.m while the other 50 percent in the county enjoy extra sleep breakfast with their families and walk to the bus in daylight unfortunately my children belong to the group walking to the bus in the dark for most of the year every morning i'm asked why us we've heard various explanations from bus logistics i'm sorry

[03:29:27] can we stop the timer right now can we can we just wait and like can we just have some decorum and some respect for the school board right now and also the speaker has come out to speak where did we stop what could we give her about two more like three more seconds please and if you cannot contain yourself I will have to declare trespassing and ask you to leave please continue unfortunately my children belong to the group walking to the bus in the dark for most of the

[03:30:04] year every morning I'm asked why us we've heard various explanations from bus logistics to hiring constraints however what speaks loudest is LCPS is in action conveying that our concerns and our children don't matter. By maintaining the staggered schedule you're essentially prioritizing the needs of one group of students over another. It's time to address this inequity and ensure all students have a fair start to their day. And with that we will conclude public comment for today. Board

[03:30:38] members at this time we will take a five minute recess and reconvene at 8. 05. Thank you. Okay the

[03:40:06] board is back from recess we will now move on to our action items starting with 13.01 from human resources and talent development student calendar and staff calendar presented by miss lisa boland chief human resources officer and miss nicole davis from human resources and talent development before i entertain a motion miss boland would you give us a brief overview of this item with any

[03:40:34] relevant updates please. Okay good evening. As you will recall I presented to the school board on March 12th 2024 regarding a need to update the school calendars for the 24-25 and 25-26 school years to address two issues. The first was addressing election day for both the 24-25 and 25-26 school year and the second was a swap that allows for the observance of Rosh Hashanah in lieu

[03:41:12] of the observance of Yom Kippur for the 24-25 school year only. As a quick reminder, in March 2021, the governor signed Senate Bill 1148, which changed the date of the Virginia June primary election from the second Tuesday in June to the third Tuesday in June, which became effective July 1, 2021. As the June 2022 primary elections were canceled, the last day of school for the

[03:41:48] 22-23 school year was prior to primary elections and the last day of school for this school year is also prior to primary elections therefore no calendar adjustments have been needed. With the school board's adoption of the student calendars for the 24-25 and the 25-26 school year respectively the last day of school set for students would be Tuesday June 17th and Tuesday June 16th both of which will coincide with a potential primary election provided such an election is scheduled annually during the month of march the laden county elections registrar informs lcps staff

[03:42:27] whether a June primary election will be conducted or not to address the election day conflict HRTD drafted three calendar options which were presented to the board at the March 12, 2024 meeting in order to gain additional feedback to ensure the school board had critical information to make an informed decision, HRTD worked to gather stakeholder feedback in a variety of ways, with the results

[03:42:56] being presented to you this evening. As a reminder, all three options presented included the swap that allows for the observance of Rosh Hashanah in lieu of the observance of Yom Kippur for the 24-25 school year. The current designated holiday date for Yom Kippur is Saturday, October 12th, and being recognized on the Friday, October 11th, and for Rosh Hashanah is Thursday, October 3rd. Since Yom Kippur falls on a weekend, the JCRC has requested that instead of celebrating Yom Kippur as a school

[03:43:34] holiday on Friday, that LCPS recognize Rosh Hashanah and designate Thursday, October 3rd, as a school holiday in its place. This option was included in all options presented to stakeholders for feedback. And again, as a reminder, option one would seek to shorten the instructional school year for students by one day from 180 instructional days to 179. It would include an adjustment to the last day of school for students for both the 24-25 and 25-26 school year, moving the last day from a

[03:44:09] Tuesday to a Monday. In this option, there will be no change to the teacher calendar or any additional impact to any other staff calendar, but would provide teachers for three scheduled work days as opposed to the traditional two days after students complete the school year. Option two seeks to maintain the instructional school year for students at 180 instructional days. To do so, this option would adjust the first day of school and the last day of school for students by two days. In both years, this option still allows for an equal number of A and B days at the beginning

[03:44:48] of the year for our secondary schools. There would be a change to the start dates of the teacher calendar, but there would still be, or sorry, there would be no change to the start or end dates for a teacher calendar, but there would still be an impact. Maintaining the same return date for teachers would mean that instead of returning six days before students, they would only return three. This option would also require changes to other published staff calendars. And finally, option three also offers a 180 instructional day school year for students

[03:45:25] and like option two would adjust the first day of school and the last day of school for students by two days. Different from option two, however, is that option three would also adjust the first and last day for teachers by two days.

[03:45:40] This would allow us to maintain a calendar providing teachers with six full days prior to the return of students. This option also requires a change to other published staff calendars as identified in Option 2.

[03:45:58] As stakeholder engagement is paramount to our decision-making process, the Human Resources and Talent Development team collaborated closely with the Research Office to ensure comprehensive feedback gathering. Over the past few weeks, we've proactively reached out to our stakeholders through various channels.

[03:46:16] Conversely, we distributed an election day calendar survey to our stakeholders, aiming to capture a diverse range of perspectives and preferences. Additionally, we engaged directly with key stakeholders, including the student, principal, and teacher superintendent's advisory committees, presenting them with the proposed calendar options for their valuable insights and perspectives.

[03:46:41] This multi-pronged approach not only allowed us to gather quantitative data through the survey but also provided us with qualitative insights from these esteemed committees. In the upcoming slides, we will delve into some of the feedback received from both the survey and advisory committees, highlighting the key findings insights that will inform your decision.

[03:47:03] As mentioned on the previous slide, HRTD worked collaboratively with the Research Office to create and distribute the Election Day Calendar Survey to stakeholders, which includes families and staff.

[03:47:18] The survey asked participants to rank the three options in order of preference. HRTD received over 8,400 responses to the survey, which was open from March 19th to April 3rd. The survey asked participants to rank the calendar options in order of preference from first to third, with first being their most preferred and third being their least preferred option.

[03:47:46] The data showed on this side reflects the preferences identified by respondents. Out of 8,467 respondents, option one was the most preferred with 5,267 respondents, approximately 62% selecting option one as their highest preference.

[03:48:10] Option two was the second preferred choice and option three the least preferred choice. Along with the election day survey, HRTD presented these options at the teacher, student, and principal superintendent advisory committee meetings.

[03:48:27] At each meeting, HRTD reviewed the election day conflict with the groups, as well as provided each group a survey link to review and rank their preferred calendar options. As you can see, option one was the most preferred by each group, with option two being the second most preferred and option three the least preferred.

[03:48:51] So what's next? We're hoping that tonight the board will take action and vote to adopt a revised student school calendar for both the 24-25 and 25-26 school year.

[03:49:09] We recognize that these options will not please everyone, but have made great efforts to listen and respond appropriately to support our staff and students. Once adopted, HRTD will work collaboratively with the Department of Communications and Community Engagement on communication plans to staff and the community, as well as to update and publish the revised calendars.

[03:49:34] Additionally, HRTD will begin work on future calendar development. As we move forward with the development of future calendars, we will continue to reach out and involve staff, students, and our community. We will also begin the creation of a school calendar development committee where the goal is to have representation across the division as well as key stakeholders involved in the discussion.

[03:49:56] We intend to continue participation in principal and teacher advisory committee meetings and work with neighboring school divisions to provide calendars that best support the needs of students and families. Thank you again for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.

[03:50:12] Thank you, Ms. Boland. Board members, do you have any questions? Yes, Dr. Deans. While we're on the calendar topic, might it be possible to share with the calendar committee that the Christian holidays are not on the school calendar and possibly we could put Christmas and Easter on the school calendars, even though they are not days of attendance?

[03:50:40] Thank you, Dr. Deans, for that question. Actually, we did get that question quite often. And since the Christian holidays are linked to our breaks, we had not historically added them to the calendar.

[03:51:00] However, we did in recent years, I believe the first year was last year, we did in recent years begin to add Christmas or list Christmas as a holiday, even though it is within the designated winter break.

[03:51:17] So it is currently reflected on our school calendar list of dates. The reason why we don't list Easter is because it's a Sunday. It falls on a weekend, so it does not fall within our break or a designated holiday.

[03:51:38] I understand, but there are some holidays that are often celebrated on where the date falls on the weekend, and the schools will let the kids out on that Monday or that Friday, so I really would like for the calendar committee to consider it.

[03:51:59] Absolutely, we can add that. Right now, isn't our policy to have one religious holiday from each religion at this point as much as possible? Sorry. Yes, ma'am.

[03:52:15] It is currently, and some of the work we've started in regards to future calendars, is we've started to have discussions at committee to garner this board's philosophy. So that policy and regulation was put in place as we developed the previous board's philosophy so that we could build calendars representative of what that looked like.

[03:52:39] And so the goal is to have this committee to really take a look at that philosophy and if it's still working and what this board would like to see moving forward. Because I know that we were looking at, with the lunar calendar, I guess there's going to be like two EADs, I suppose, in the coming years.

[03:52:55] And so that's, I guess, if it's only one, then we, and it's in policy, we should probably re-look at it. But I guess people are, so thank you. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. I may have missed this but what is the status of the committee and the timeline there it hasn't I know Dr. Deans was saying could the committee the committee is it established it is not established yet so this is new work we are creating as we start to look at future calendars so 24 25 and 25 26 have already been adopted our work will now begin on 26 27 and that committee the work is being

[03:53:32] developed of that committee what the team is doing is looking at surrounding school divisions to see one what's working do they have a committee who sits on the committee how many people are on the committee what does it look like the goal is to start that work over the summer so that we can begin to bring that to the school board in the fall wonderful I would welcome a school board member being part of that too something that was really interesting about soliciting for this particular one-off issue with the primary was all the general calendar feedback that we received I did not anticipate that but I think maybe people were a little bit confused when they saw calendar survey and they just flooded

[03:54:11] our inboxes but it's good I want to hear from people and people do have a lot of feelings about the calendar and I'm sure we do as well I particularly get concerned about learning loss and you know consistency of five-day weeks and I know that's something that's been talked about and I know that's not the place tonight but would definitely like to make sure that the committee when formed that we have you know sort of have that however that relationship is established that it's just clearly defined between us and them any other questions yes miss donahue thank you madam chair

[03:54:47] um not a question but i would like to move that we adopt adoption option one for the 24 25 and 25 26 school years i have a motion to adopt option one for the 2020 oh goodness 2024 and 2025 and also it would be 2025 and 2026 student calendars making the necessary changes to account for the election day and the changing of a religious holiday okay i have a motion by um miss donahue

[03:55:24] do i have a second yes miss chandler i have a second um so a motion that the loudon county school board adopt option one for the sy 2024 and 2025 and sy 2025 and 2026 student calendars making the necessary changes to account for election day and the changing of a religious holiday has been properly moved and seconded. And now is there any discussion? I'm seeing none. Clerk,

[03:55:53] would you please open the vote? Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, would you please close and display the vote? The motion passes. Six with Dr. Rashid, Ms. LaBelle, and Vice Chair Struffy absent for the vote thank you we will move on to thank you mrs. Bolin we will now move on to 14.04 department of teaching and learning recommendations for primary print and digital

[03:56:31] resources for career and technical education and international baccalaureate presented by mr. Neil Slevin assistant superintendent for teaching and learning mr. Slevin thank you chair Mansfield Tonight, I am bringing to you an information item on an adoption for IB and the second phase of our career and technical education primary resource textbook adoption.

[03:56:56] Content offices and instructional staff have reviewed available resources and have made selections to recommend to the school board for adoption. Content and alignment with standards and the LCPS instructional philosophy are always at the forefront of consideration when recommending resources.

[03:57:15] Digital resources are carefully considered for technical integration by DDI in our instructional technology office and examined with a lens for universal design, which encompasses accessibility and interface usability for both teachers and students. Resources with links to additional information, review options, and accessibility information are available now, as of this afternoon, and will be provided to the public in LCPS for community review and a preview between April 11th and the 22nd at lcpso.org backslash textbooks via a blackboard announcement. We will collect comments and share them with the board prior to

[03:57:53] the next school board at the next school board meeting scheduled on April 23rd and at that time we will seek school board approval for the adoption to meet procurement deadlines. At this time I'm available to answer any questions about this particular recommendation. Well I just wanted to say um thank you for doing so a little bit of background is if we talk about cx think from the beginning and don't retrofit um i flagged this for mr slevin to look at access to instructional

[03:58:28] materials as far as ib and cte and knowing that we needed to do better on the front end so i asked him to research all their instructional materials and to investigate whether they were accessible in different formats and he worked together with student services to investigate on the front end and I want to say I appreciate that you listened and put together a database of whether these materials were accessible and how to access these core materials in the same vein I'd like to bring everyone's attention to the accessibility to digital text and beyond information that's on board docs there's a plethora of information related to accessible

[03:59:07] materials, software, and programs. So please check it out while you're looking at all the instructional materials. And by the way, if you're a math teacher and science teacher and don't know about EquatIO, I suggest you ask the assistive technology team. But thank you, Mr. Sullivan, for listening. Thank you for that feedback. And we appreciate and I echo the shout out to the teams in Department of Teaching and Learning and Student Services that have collaborated. And I believe the Feedback has set us up for more success in future adoptions.

[03:59:37] This particular adoption is pretty specialized when it comes to international baccalaureate resources and some of the more, I don't want to use the word obscure, but specialized CTE courses. But I think some of the suggestions have set us up well for future adoptions for our bigger ones in the future.

[03:59:55] So thank you, Chair Mansfield. Board members, any other questions? No? Okay, so, oh, Dr. Dean, sorry. Do you anticipate those that are print only will be more accessible at the time of adoption, at the time we have to vote?

[04:00:15] So the document that Chair Mansfield mentioned talks about internal steps that we can take with the staff that we have in LCPS to make those resources more accessible to our students. Some of the resources, for example, for international baccalaureate publishers are out of the country.

[04:00:37] they're international publishers and they're subject to different rules and regulations when it comes to accessibility. And those are the ones that we found to be a little bit more difficult in finding information. So that being said, we do have teams of folks that work together between teaching and learning and the Office of Special Education to help teachers use those materials based on the individual needs of students.

[04:00:59] But the resources are what they are at this point to answer your question directly. - Yes, Dr. Deans. The next question, you gave a very short timeline that the parents would be able to access the review online.

[04:01:18] That is a concern that I have overall-- I'm sorry, overall with us in that those busy working parents may not get to look at it in that 10-day period. So will there be blasts, communication blasts, to get the parents' attention to take a look, especially at those schools where the IB program will be taught.

[04:01:42] Yes, we are sending out Blackboard communication, and we've been working through a communication plan with the Office of Communications and Community Engagement. So we'll be sending out information. We do realize that it's a window of time that we want people to be paying attention to.

[04:02:02] This particular adoption is unique in that it is highly specialized. Part of the reason why we are doing the CTE adoption in two phases, it was difficult to find some resources for these particular subject areas that are being adopted at this time. And with IB, because of the, we only have two schools that are IB, it was very hands on with the staff and the community of Loudoun Valley High School and Heritage High School.

[04:02:26] We really engaged with those teachers and the staff of those schools. And so there has been a level of community engagement there, but your point is well taken to make sure that we're sending out communication to the whole community. Does that address your question?

[04:02:46] - Dr. Deans, does that address your question? Yeah, okay. Anybody else? - Okay, so thank you, Mr. Sevin. Board members, this will go out and be available for public review and comment from April 11th to the 22nd?

[04:03:01] - Yes, we will bring this back as action with any relevant public comment, and if it would change any recommendation, we would have information at that time. - Okay, so it'll come back to action probably our May 14th meeting. I think we were hoping for the April 23rd.

[04:03:17] This has been delayed from last meeting. We have some procurement deadlines. That's Daniel's fault. I will work with the superintendent and the current superintendent, the chief of staff. Teasing.

[04:03:33] Okay, thank you. We will move on to item 14.02 from the Human Resources and Talent Development, revisions to policy 7022 employee classifications presented by Mrs. Griffiths, chair of the HRTD committee. Mrs. Griffiths, thank you, Madam Chair. Um, we had met with the HRTD committee about the two policies 7022 and 7628 for 7022 a revision to the school board policy a 7022 employee classification is

[04:04:08] being presented tonight as an information item. The draft policy has gone through the review process and minimal community feedback has been received. This policy was initially presented as an information item during the October 26, 2023 HRTD committee meeting and was brought back as an information item to the February 22, 2024 HRTD committee. At that meeting, committee members voted to suspend the rules and have the policy moved to the full school board as an information item. The revisions to this policy do not change the intent of the policy, but rather focus on

[04:04:45] adding clarifying language and references to supporting resources at this time. I will turn it over to Ms. Bolin at this time to discuss 70-22, and then we will discuss 76-28. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. She pretty much covered most of it. What I would add is that language, again, was added in the opening paragraph to specify that exemption status will be included on contracts, memos, and administrative letters.

[04:05:23] The language on the introductory period was moved towards the end of the policy and clarified to include both exempt and non-exempt personnel, with the exception of those outlined in code.

[04:05:39] This policy also had cross-references added and included applicable Virginia code and LCPS policies. Thank you, Ms. Bolin. Can we continue on to 76-28 retirement benefits?

[04:06:00] So I have to ask if the board members have any questions. Board members, do you have any questions? No. And so if board members, do any of you want to put this on the consent agenda for the April 23rd meeting? A thumbs up for yes. If not, it'll go into action at the April 23rd.

[04:06:20] Okay. Looks, wait, can I see, is that everybody or no? thumbs up for consent agenda for next time okay yes that will go to consent for next time and now we'll move on to item 14.03 human resources and talent development revisions to policy 7628 retirement benefits presented by Mrs. Griffiths, chair of the HRTD committee. Mrs. Griffiths, thank you, Madam Chair. This evening a revision to the school board policy 7628 retirement benefits is being brought before the board as an information item. For awareness, this policy was reviewed by

[04:06:57] previous school board members and as an information item during the August and September 2023 HRD committee meetings and was brought back as an information item to the February 22nd, 2024 HRTD committee meetings for the members to review. At that meeting, the committee asked staff to rework the language regarding eligibility when charged with a crime and beneficiaries before ultimately voting to suspend the rules and to have the policy brought to the full school board as an information item. The changes made to this policy were done with the following goals in mind. The first was to clarify language

[04:07:35] based on current practices. The second was to correspond with Virginia code updates and changes related to VRS retirement benefits. The third was to align LCPS recognition of retirement eligible employee that an eligible employee that passed away prior to retirement with that of VRS. This means identifying that employee as a retiree and allowing access to benefits and payouts as applicable. At this

time, I'd like to turn it over to the Chief Human Resources Officer, Lisa Boland, to add any additional highlights or clarifications. Thank you. I don't really have anything additional to

[04:08:14] add at this time other than to say that we did work with the committee to add that language, And I'm happy to answer any questions board members. Do you have any questions? Yes, miss Chernoff in looking through the feedback I saw a lot of comments and I've received several emails as well about the sick leave payout Is that standard operating procedure to do 25%? Is that what the state suggests? Where does that come from?

[04:08:43] It's lines one fifth it will in the original policy. It was 152 to 158 and now it is oh shoot I just closed it hold on so Mrs. Chernoff, what I know is that 25% has been standard practice.

[04:09:11] If we were to change that practice, that would have a budget impact. I don't know how significant that would be. I know a lot of organizations don't pay out sick leave at all, and this was our way of mitigating some employee benefit with fiscal responsibility.

[04:09:33] I appreciate that. That's the clarification I needed, thank you. - Any other questions? - Thank you, Ms. Bolin, and thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Board members, do you wanna put this on consent agenda for the April 23rd, 2024 meeting?

[04:09:51] Thumbs up if yes. It looks like we'll go to consent for the April 23rd, 2024 meeting. So now we will go to item 14.04, Specialized Programs and Centers Committee, Approval of Charter School 2024-2025 Calendars Presented by Dr. Ellis from Specialized Programs and Centers.

[04:10:14] Dr. Ellis. Thank you, Madam Chair. So this evening you have in Board Docs draft calendars, both from Hillsboro Charter Academy and Middleburg Community Charter. And they have been reviewed by staff to make sure they meet the requirements outlined in each charter agreement.

[04:10:35] And they've also been presented to the Special Programs and Centers Committee. and they were approved by that committee to bring forward to you today. I do want to note that both charter schools use a slightly different calendar than the LCPS calendar, and that is allowable in each of their charter agreements.

[04:10:52] HCA utilizes fewer school days, which are longer than the 6.75 hours LCPS uses, and MCCS uses an adjusted start and end date. They begin in August and end in early June, almost replicating a year round schedule.

[04:11:10] As I mentioned, the proposed calendars do meet the requirements of their charter agreements, the required hours and days. And I will be happy to answer the questions that I can and bring any other questions back to the charter boards.

[04:11:26] - Thank you, Dr. Ellis. I have a question. Did the charter schools want to take into consideration the changes that we just made to our calendar? - I don't know the answer to that question And I'm happy to share what you all just voted on for their consideration and bring that information back to you if you'd like.

[04:11:49] Yes, please. That would be great. Board members, any other questions? No? Okay. Considering you're going to bring that back for next time, then we'll just vote on it then if that's all right, instead of going to consent. I just think we should give them a chance if they want to change something.

[04:12:07] I agree. All right. we will now move on to item 14.05 student services committee new policy 6650 personnel training viral infections presented by miss anne donahue chair of the student services

committee and miss tedra richardson assistant superintendent for student services mrs donahue thank you madam chair policy 6650 is a new policy that was drafted to bring lcps into accord with some revisions to the virginia

[04:12:44] code related to handling of viral infections. The draft policy was presented to the Student Services Committee for information on February 15th and then was presented to the Student Services Committee again on March 19th of this year as an action item. The committee voted 3 to 0 to move the policy to the full board as an information item. There was minimal feedback received which is available in board docs and i would like to turn it over to ms

[04:13:21] richardson thank you mrs donahue as mrs donahue has shared 6650 is a brand new policy to lcps it is based in the new virginia school board association model policy ebbb it was drafted in collaboration with human resources and talent development.

[04:13:43] The impact at this time is it provides guidance and training to staff and personnel that are working directly with students. It requires training in the causes, prevention, transmission, and effects of bloodborne pathogens and then expressly identifies hepatitis B and the human immunodeficiency viruses or any other infections that are subject to the regulations promulgated by the Safety and Health Codes Boards of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program within the Department of Labor and Industry.

[04:14:24] The only outstanding questions that the committee had was how often does this need to take place for personnel in the division, and the answer to that is on an annual basis. It will be integrated. already a part of our blood-borne back blood-borne pathogens training that we take on an annual basis board members do you have any other questions no thank you miss Donahue thank you miss Richardson board members do you want to put this on consent agenda for the April 23rd meeting thumbs up for yes all

[04:15:01] right that will go into consent for the April 23rd meeting we'll move on to item Item 14.06, Curriculum Instruction Committee, Revisions to Policy 8310, Theatrical Presentations, presented by Ms. Lauren Chernoff, the Chair of Curriculum Instruction Committee.

[04:15:25] Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. Policy 8310, Theatrical Presentations, is due for its five-year review. Revisions to Policy 8310 include changes in the language for clarity and alignment with applicable LCPS policies that had been adopted since its last revision.

[04:15:41] It was posted for public review and comment in 2023, and went to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee for the first time on December 4th, 2023. Since the new board was elected, we have had it in committee several times, January 25th, February 8th, and March 7th, 2024.

[04:15:58] Just some questions and clarifying language around how the new policy, particularly policy 5055, would be integrated, as well as an adjustment to the regulation in response to feedback that was pertaining to principal's approval. So when theatrical presentations are approved by a principal prior to this new regulation, there was no written documentation of that being approved.

[04:16:23] So theater teachers requested that we add that into the regulation, just sort of as their go-to to, like, have proof that it was approved and that they have that piece of paper. So that is now included in the regulation, which you have on board docs. And it was voted three to zero to be sent to us for information and hopefully on to action.

[04:16:42] Mr. Slevin, did you have anything you wanted to add? No, I have nothing to add. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Yes, Ms. Griffiths. I do have questions on this. Why is the following verbiage red line for removal?

[04:17:01] Lines seven through nine, all student theatrical presentations are of pedagogical concern to the Loudoun County Schools, LCPS, shall adhere to basic educational mission of imparting fundamental societal values. And then line 27 through 29, theatrical productions that are deemed harmful to minors.

[04:17:22] Why are we taking out involving obscenity or advocating the commission of illegal acts or the violation of school rules? This shall not be permitted. Disclaimers may not be used in place of observing this policy. Now, considering we have feedback from parents, we have some feedback against that verbiage.

[04:17:43] School theater productions are not the place for experimenting with societal norms or values or pushing the envelope. And families should not feel uncomfortable attending a middle school or high school play. There are other avenues of self-expression, including local playhouses. So if you can answer that for me, Mr. Slevin, I'd appreciate it.

[04:18:01] So in reference to lines seven through nine, I believe that is a broader definition of what an official school presentation is. There are theatrical presentations that are extracurricular and not necessarily co-curricular.

[04:18:18] And so that definition was more broadly applied to this particular policy. And then if you see the red lines, perhaps it's not showing up in the red lines, we have added a significant amount of policies that govern decisions around issues around sexually explicit materials, controversial and sensitive curriculum, role-playing simulations, guidance for racial slurs, hate speech, and sensitive content.

[04:18:46] And so I think that was removed just because of the significant amount of work the board has done over the past few years to provide more guidance to our teachers in our school communities based on the feedback from our community and teachers that they needed some help in making decisions and having guidance in that respect. Ms. Chernoff would you like to comment? Yeah just to piggyback off of that thank you Mr. Slevin we did ask very similar questions actually in committee due to the feedback but just to we had this conversation at a prior board meeting as a whole board about pulling out individual let you know

[04:19:24] different pieces of language from the policies and also including them and whether or not we wanted that. And in committee, we decided, since there was such a huge addition of all these policies that explicitly explain what is categorized by all those things, rather than just leaving the vague statement, we decided that that was more beneficial because it covered a wider range and more specific language around those things and left it less up for speculation.

[04:19:52] But, I mean, I'm open to, if you have, you know, suggestions or you want it to go back to committee, But we did ask those questions and that's part of the reason it went through three, four times through our meetings. Yes, Ms. Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:20:10] I wanted to add, I'm not part of that committee, but I had the same question when I read the red line of why particularly lines 27 through 29 were removed. And it was pointed out to me, as Ms. Chernoff stated, the reference to various policies, including 50-55, which is the LCPS definition of explicit material, as well as the reference to the Virginia code on line 54 on the red line version, section 18.2-390.

[04:20:44] And I found that to be very helpful, because that section of the code defines harmful to juveniles in relation to nudity, sexual conduct, and obscenity. So for me, that allayed my concerns.

[04:21:02] I did have a question for Ms. Chernoff or Mr. Slevin. If a principal or their designee declines a request for approval under this policy, is there any avenue of recourse or review?

[04:21:18] There are multiple ways an employee may escalate a concern or ask for additional feedback on a principal decision. It could be through primarily the Office of Fine Arts. We do have a performing arts specialist that has daily contact with our theater teachers and is able to respond to issues.

[04:21:38] That office also supports our theater teachers in providing a list of possible plays. There's many, many opportunities out there that exist in terms of guidance and there's a good working relationship there. It could be escalated to the fine arts supervisor up to the director of teaching on K-12.

[04:21:56] and then it could also go through the principal supervisor, but most likely the Division of Teaching and Learning would support the principal supervisor in helping them navigate that conversation between the teacher and the principal. That would be the role of the fine arts office.

[04:22:13] Thank you. But we do want to emphasize the principal as that instructional leader, and we also support them through these policies as well. Thank you, Mr. Slevin. Any more questions or comment?

[04:22:31] Okay. I would like to recommend it go back to committee. We need to vote on that. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. That's fine. Can you give us some guidance on what specifically you're looking for?

[04:22:48] Are you looking for us to pull out individual lines in terms of that language? I mean, you can write it to me later, but it would be helpful to know what specifically you're concerned about and what you would like to find more clearly that is not defined here. Well, with 27 through 29, I think that can be reworked or left alone, honestly.

[04:23:19] um okay so do you have a motion or i guess we'll just go back to committee it's not really an action huh no yes miss donahue thank you madam chair um i i certainly don't know what's required in the circumstance if a motion is required or not but um i i would respectfully to mrs griffith's concern suggest that it's not necessary to go back to committee that we can discuss this again when

[04:23:49] it's on for action okay um we can do a um thumbs down thumbs up or thumbs down um with majority to take it to uh committee or not so take it to committee as a thumbs up and just put it on for action next time is thumbs down okay yes and i can just clarify miss griffiths we'd be i'd be happy to work with mr slevin about that those particular lines and maybe talk to you about that some more before we bring it to action if that would be okay yeah actually that would be fantastic

[04:24:27] i'd love to do that thank you okay so thumbs up if you want to oh what did i say um thumbs up if you want to take it back to committee and a thumbs down if you want to take it for action okay it looks like we're going to have it for action um next board meeting all right sorry while i get

[04:25:04] organized here okay we will move on to item 14.07 human resources and talent development committee revisions to policy 7318 separation of staff members presented by mrs mrs mrs nina griffis chair human resources and talent development committee and nicole davis director of human resources mrs griffis a revision to the school board policy 7318 separation of staff members is being presented tonight as an information item.

[04:25:40] This draft policy has gone through policy review process and was approved by the HRTD committee on March 21st, 2024. Revisions to this policy were made to simplify and clarify the separation process. The policy focuses on three main types of separations for employees, retirement, resignation, and dismissal, defines each and outlines the procedures in which a staff member can separate from employment, the revised policy mirrors vsba guidelines and other surrounding districts i will now turn it

[04:26:12] over to chief human resources officers lisa bollin to add any additional information thank you thank you mrs griffiths so the only things i will add is um that throughout the revised policy links and references were incorporated to clearly guide staff to other applicable policies and regulations so the information is easily accessible.

[04:26:37] And additionally, I would like to also mention that a draft regulation has been created and is currently under review to accompany this policy. This regulation provides further procedural details and outlines the specific requirements and timelines for separations as well as what occurs in the event a resignation is denied.

[04:27:01] And I'm happy to answer any questions. School board members, do you have any questions? Yes, Ms. Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. Ms. Bullen, do you have any idea when the draft regulation would be available for us to look at?

[04:27:21] So we don't typically bring regulations to the board. They're typically the procedural information. The draft regulation is currently working its way to cabinet. It's through my team.

[04:27:37] It's working its way through cabinet. The goal is to have it prepared to be able to go live with this policy if and when it's approved by the school board. I understand that we don't receive the regulations for approval, but they're publicly available once they're implemented, correct?

[04:27:57] Yes, ma'am. We just won't have an opportunity to read what that additional procedure is if a resignation is denied prior to voting on this policy. we could plan to bring it back um we could plan to have it ready and try to bring it back when we bring the policy as an action item thank you yes dr. smith miss donahue one other thing that i might recommend um if we aren't able to have it when the have it together when the policy comes back

[04:28:37] um we'd be happy to share with you via email once the regulation is approved um just to share that with you in advance so you can see that before it goes goes live or at the same time it goes live I'm happy to do that because it really is we take what you approve as a policy then we write a regulation to support it so I don't want to get ahead of the head of the head of the horse here with this with us putting a regulation out before you've approved policy so the policy does guide the formation of that so we could also like I said just wanted we could share that with you too as it goes live or before it goes live. Thank you Dr. Smith and and Ms. Boland I don't have

[04:29:12] any concerns with the policy as it's written. But as an attorney, I'm a little reluctant to say, yes, I'll approve this thing. Not that we're approving it tonight, but that being told, if I ask the question, well, what happens if the superintendent denies a resignation? Being told, well, those procedures are outlined somewhere else. And not having access to that information before deciding on this policy.

[04:29:42] This makes me slightly uncomfortable. Thank you. I have to agree with Ms. Donahue on that. It kind of makes me feel uncomfortable not knowing what's going on, which is sometimes what I have a problem with regulations is because sometimes when they're operationalized, it's kind of different than

the intent of the policy, and that's kind of what people are talking about with 5350 for the parent notification.

[04:30:04] So, yes, Ms. Chernoff. Well, I'm just saying, I feel Ms. Donahue and it kind of makes me uncomfortable too, which is why sometimes I like to have these kinds of things spelled out actually in the policy.

[04:30:23] Yes, Ms. Chernoff. And I was just going to share, I don't know if I overstepped, but in curriculum and instruction, we denied the policy coming forward until we were comfortable with it and with the theatrical presentations and until we saw that the regulation was seen through because of that reason.

[04:30:40] Because we were hearing when the rubber meets the road, there were some times where teachers said, yeah, I had that approved and principals were like, I don't remember doing that. So we put that in action. And I also agree with Ms. Donahue. I think sometimes that's where the breakdown can happen, where there's good intentions, but sometimes when it shakes out in procedure, it can be a little bit dicey.

[04:31:02] So maybe we as a board need to talk about that at another time as well and just kind of address whether or not that's something that we value seeing and where the place is for that that would be appropriate so that we don't put the cart before the horse but that we still have purview into what those procedures are okay so that leaves us with what to do with this for next time um what would it's not going to be going to consent but is this something that we want to go yes dr smith so um we are happy to bring a kind of a draft regulation back next time with it just knowing it would be draft and you would be approving the policy and

[04:31:41] then we would work through the regulation if that would like if that's what you would like in order us to to move this this policy forward but that's obviously your call yes please I would like that anybody thumbs up would like that looks you think you got unanimous thank you okay I think we're going on to 14.08 legislative audit and policy committee new policy 2620 recognition of student

[04:32:15] and staff accomplishments presented by Ms. April Chandler, Chair, Legislative Audit and Policy Committee. Mrs. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm pleased to introduce to you a new policy, Policy 2620, that the Legislative Audit and Policy Committee unanimously voted to bring forward to the full board. The policy is aimed at formalizing the process for recognizing and celebrating the outstanding achievements and contributions of our students and staff within Loudoun County public schools at our board meetings. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for recognizing and honoring exceptional accomplishments, contributions,

[04:32:53] and milestones within our school division. There are three key principles included in this policy, equity and inclusivity, transparency, and promotion of positive behaviors. In terms of equity and inclusivity, we are dedicated to ensuring that recognition opportunities are accessible to all students and staff, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances. As for transparency, the recognition process will be transparent and well-communicated, providing clarity on how individuals can be recognized and how the selection process operates. And to promote positive

[04:33:33] behaviors, recognition will serve to encourage positive behaviors and achievements and contributions aligned with the values and goals of our division. We have outlined specific categories for

both student and staff recognition, ensuring that all forms of achievement and contributions are appropriately acknowledged. This policy will undergo regular review every five years to ensure it remains aligned with the evolving needs and goals of our educational community. The responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the superintendent and their designees, who will ensure consistent and equitable recognition opportunities are provided to all members of

[04:34:08] Loudoun County Public Schools. In adopting this policy, we would reaffirm our commitment to fostering a culture of appreciation and celebration within our schools where students and staff achievement are valued and recognized and with that I'll just ask Ms. Allen would you like to speak to the policy thank you Ms. Chandler as Ms. Chandler stated this is to formalize the board recognition process we know there is somewhat of a board recognition process but we want to make sure that all of our schools are aware of how we might recognize more students and staff at our

[04:34:44] board meetings we know how important it is to uplift the great work of students and staff and this is just one way we hope to accomplish that and happy to answer any questions or clarify anything for you all thank you thank you miss allen any uh board members you have any question looks like there are no questions um board members do you want to put this on the consent agenda

[04:35:12] thumbs up for yes she's indifferent okay it's majority we'll move it to consent all right we will now move on to item 4.09 to something I think we've been two or three meetings trying to put on uh Ms. Chernoff with transportation presentation and my understanding is that Ms. Chernoff requested this item along with two other board members and the this presentation was probably developed and

[04:35:49] shared with another board at one point uh Ms. Chernoff would you like to speak to this request before Mr. Lewis presents thank you Madam Chair yes I would um I'm really happy to bring this to the whole board, this feels like the bread and butter of what we should do as school board members. Listen to feedback, get more context and information from the staff, and then work to find solutions together that better our community, our families, and our schools. Throughout my campaign and over the last three months, many families have reached out to me for context and understanding around why early start times were implemented two years ago. Particularly in my district, Catoctin Elementary families have been impacted by this

[04:36:26] decision and vocal about the change. However, the feedback is now coming from other areas in the county given the spotlight in recent weeks through public comment, emails, and local news outlets covering the story. This impacts elementary students who have very early bus pickup and in winter months can be out in the dark waiting as well as getting home early and needing additional child care. When I solicited the community for feedback on this issue I received over 200 responses. This is impacting people's daily lives. I have been visiting bus stops to talk with families and explore the challenges.

[04:36:59] What has struck me most was that when I was able to go and see these kids, I saw them load the bus and I could drive from their home before even needing to wake my same age student up for elementary school. While some families don't mind the early start, overwhelmingly others in the community want to see if there might be a possible solution or if the burden could be shared with a rotation of which schools start each couple of years.

[04:37:26] I met with mr. Lewis in January to explore this issue and to understand more myself and it was my understanding that Normally when board members bring things to the board We would be the ones presenting but this presentation was already in the works For the whole board, but it never actually made

it to the full board meeting agenda as such I requested that it be presented and I think this I think dr. LaBelle and miss Donahue for supporting me I look forward to the public hearing this and the board and and learning more about the subject so we can understand why this decision was made, the implications, and what our next steps might be.

[04:38:02] Mr. Lewis, I will turn it over to you. - Thank you, Ms. Chernoff, members of the board, Chair Mansfield, we appreciate the opportunity to share the information that's been requested. We appreciate Ms. Chernoff bringing it to the board so that we can provide some feedback, some of the background on the decision to go to Staggered Bell Times a couple of years ago.

[04:38:26] And, you know, just as an introduction, you know, we recall the tours that we took when you all first came on to the board and how complicated the transportation process is. You know, we have 750 school bus, 8 million miles a year, so many programs, special needs students, programs for alternative education, and all sorts of things that go into some of these decisions and weigh in on the logistics of what we do.

[04:38:53] All that to say our core mission is bringing kids to and from school every day. And so you'll notice tonight that the slides that are here are a little bit different than the ones that were posted in the last board meeting. That was in response to the board asking for some consolidation of some of our presentations to make them quicker.

[04:39:11] So all the slides that were there are in the addendum, but we've provided that along with the script as well. I will say that I'm joined by Mr. Davies, our Director of Transportation, and Dr. Blakelock, who is our Supervisor of Research and Evaluation. who will go through some of the slides for us as well.

[04:39:27] So I did want to talk about why did we make the change, and that has been a conversation that's taken place over a number of years, and it wasn't something that was done quickly. We talked about it probably since well before Mr. Davies arrived here a few years ago.

[04:39:43] And essentially the reason for that is we had an unacceptable level of service. Our buses were late. Our buses were late getting to school. Our buses were late leaving the schools to go to their second runs. We had over 115 second loads at one time.

[04:39:59] And so I'll talk a little bit more about that. But essentially what that means is that some students are first in and they're the last out. So some of the students that are closest to the school, well, I'll take that back. If you're a student that's farther from the school, you have to get picked up first so you can get to the school. And then because we have to go back out into the community, get another load and come back.

[04:40:17] And all that has to fit into a 20-minute window for folks to get there. And so those were unacceptable levels of service. So we were searching for a solution to that. That also limited our support to be able to go to do extracurricular and athletic trips, so we were struggling to get those done as well.

[04:40:34] And all those reduced our availability for other resources for programs such as the Academies of Loudoun, North Star School, the ROTC, the IB, the HAMSAB programs. All those are additional challenges for our transportation folks. So that was why the change.

[04:40:53] We had an unacceptable level of service. What did we change? We went from one tier of elementary schools where most of the students started, but in that just a little bit before 8 o'clock period,

7.50 was probably the most common time. We changed half of the schools to 7.30 and half of the schools to 8 o'clock.

[04:41:11] I assure you there was no randomness to that at all. It was built out of computer models and routing software to pair up different routes from the elementary school route to the middle school route to the high school route. We also changed the middle schools from most of which started around 8.30 and some now start at 8.30 and 8.50.

[04:41:33] And then the high schools were some before and some just right at 9 o'clock to 9.30. So essentially what we did is we stretched the school days. We put more time between the elementary and the middle school runs so buses could get there. So I rode buses with the drivers and were not able to get their runs done and get back to their middle school from their elementary run.

[04:41:54] So that was where we were having struggles. And once you have a single late run, if a bus is late leaving a middle elementary school, then they're going to be late to the middle school, they're going to be late to the high school, and it's just a domino effect. So those are the things we were dealing with. And several years ago, we were inundated with complaints about our level of service.

[04:42:12] So those are, you know, the why we changed and then what we changed. And our goal was to increase our time percentage, but also our reliability to our parents and children and to make sure that we got there on time. So a little bit more context, athletic trips and other types of field trips, band, quarrel, drama, have increased significantly over the last couple of years.

[04:42:37] You can see there we've gone up an average of 50%, so that's an additional challenge. An elementary school wants to go to the White House or to some other, the Uvar-Hazy Center in the middle of the day, then that also takes away from a middle school run or something else.

[04:42:55] So those challenges continue to pile on to the challenges of logistics for our schools. So I said a minute ago, I want to talk a little bit more about the second loads. And so you can see here in this slide, from school year 21 to 22, our AM performance for getting our students to and from on time was 96% on time ratio.

[04:43:22] But we had 115 second loads. It was talked about a little bit ago. Moving to the right-hand column, you can see that has improved with the new changes to a 99% on-time ratio and also a 5% or only down to five-second loads.

[04:43:39] Moving to the afternoon, in 21, we were only 70% on-time, which is completely unacceptable, and we had 118-second loads in the afternoon. So we had students that were getting home pretty late after that. And so to addressing that also with the staggered times, we've increased that to 88%.

[04:43:55] And so, you know, one of the things, if a school is late getting students out, if we're late getting to there, then we leave that school late, which means we're getting to the next school even later. And to define on time for us, you can see there it's arriving at the school 20 minutes, between 20 minutes and five minutes before the bell.

[04:44:16] So that's what I mentioned a few minutes ago about for the second load. We had that 15-minute window to get one load of students dropped off back to the community and then back to the school before they could all be on time. And so those were the challenges with the staggered bells. And then so you can also see what a devastating effect it had on the PM arrivals.

[04:44:41] So over the last couple of years, we've done a number of things in addition to changing the start times. We've transitioned to a new routing software and a new bus monitoring app for parents. And so we have had some bugs to work out with that. We had, I would say, a rough rollout with that.

[04:44:58] But the company's been down here a number of times, and we've had some heart-to-hearts with those folks, and they have greatly improved and will continue to do that. We implemented live routing. So when you have a change to a route for a day, it can be done the next day rather than we used to have a three-day wait period.

[04:45:14] We have a terrific relationship with our friends in HRTD who've created what they call a one-stop shop that's helped our recruiting. You'll see some numbers in a minute that bore out how much that has made a difference for us. We've improved routing operations and support the schools with lead drivers.

[04:45:34] Those both thank you to the board for adding additional routing and lead driver positions over the last couple of years to be able to better support them. And then we actually reached out to consultants to help us evaluate multiple scenarios to see if they actually helped us with the current ones, but also what else could we do and what changes could we make to continue to address that.

[04:45:53] So it's not something we're letting sit, we're continuing to look at that and make sure. All that to say, we have heard, as you have heard, concerns about sleep and tardiness and academic performance for the test scores, those types of things.

[04:46:09] So with that in mind, we did not want to be the holders of that information or the deciders of that. So we reached out to our friends in Razzie, and Dr. Blakelock is here with us tonight, and he's going to go over the results of the findings and the data we collected related to all the details that we've talked about there.

[04:46:28] So, Dr. Blakelock. Good evening, everyone. So when we take a look at these data here, as far as the impact of the change in start time, we're going to be looking at absentee rates, tardy rates, and achievement in the way of SOL scores for reading and math.

[04:46:46] And the one thing we want to consider as we start thinking about this is what was the difference between the two different start times look like prior to the change? And so you'll see here that, you know, the 21-21-22 was a little bit higher. And so what you'll see over the next few slides is that for the schools that now have an early start time, the absentee and tardy rates were higher prior to the start change, and the achievement scores for math and reading were lower.

[04:47:15] The other thing you'll see is that they will actually move in the same pattern. So when one goes up, the other will go up. So when, you know, when absentee decreases for the 8 o'clock start time, it also decreases for the 7.30 start time.

[04:47:30] So they move in very similar patterns. And just to jump ahead, it does show that there's not an impact on it, but we're going to walk all the way through to show this. So we're looking at this chart here, and you can see that the 7.30 start time had a slightly...

[04:47:46] higher absentee rate than the 8 o'clock start time you move forward to the 2022-2023 school year and you see yes it still has a higher rate but had a higher rate before and just for context absence rate at the school level is calculated by dividing the total number of absences for all students by the total

number of enrollment dates for all students so for example a five-day school week for a school with 100 students has 500 enrollment days. So then, you know, kids, if there's 40 total absences, it would be 40 divided by 500, and that would give you your absentee rate

[04:48:25] for that. So in looking at this, we can see that, you know, yes, it went up, but it went up on both for both groups as well. If you'll go to the next slide, and you'll see in this slide, very similar to what we saw on the previous slide, that the tardy rates went up for the 7.30 a.m. start time as well as the 8.00 a.m. start time. And it is notable that it did go up a bit more with the 7.30 start time. But as we can see, looking at the 23-24 year-to-date data, which was through February 29th,

[04:48:59] it is normalized back down again to getting much closer to where it was prior to the change. Take a look at the next slide, please. We took a look at the year after the change, so the 22-23 school year, tardiness by month, just to take a look at it to see what the initial impact is.

[04:49:19] And you'll see early in the year you've got a little bit of a big jump as far as the gap, and then the difference between them stays pretty even throughout the course of the school year. So there does appear to have been a learning curve early in that school year, but it did seem to normalize as the school year went.

[04:49:35] As we can go to the next slide, please. Very similar to what we've spoken about before. This one's actually a little bit different. What you'll see here for the reading SOL, for the 7:30 start time actually went up a little bit from 21-22 after the change.

[04:49:51] And for the 8:00 a.m. start time, it actually went down a little bit. So a little bit difference in the pattern, but not a lot of change overall, as you can see from year to year, as far as the average achievement rate. And if you can go to the next slide, please. Similar to what we've seen before, it went up for both groups.

[04:50:08] So, again, going up slightly, going down slightly, moving in very similar patterns to each other. So, as we kind of said before, looking at how at the starting point and how these patterns have moved together, it does not look like there's an impact on attendance, tardiness, or achievement.

[04:50:26] And that, I'll turn it back to Mr. Lewis. I'm sorry. So, reading and math is for third grade and up. Do we have any data for kindergarten, first and second? We did not.

[04:50:46] Okay, so I want to talk a little bit about the actual driver shortage because that has exacerbated our issue over time. And I mentioned a little bit ago about the program we have with our training staff and our recruiting staff and with the partnership with HR.

[04:51:01] So you see here in May of 2023, this is a standard report that we provide the school board on a weekly basis. And you'll see going down through there that the total number of routes was our routes that the bus drivers take every day was 477 in 2023, 2022-23 school year. We added a number of programs. We added the IB, a number of special ed programs. So that number, you see the impacts. We added 17 routes for different programs that began that year. So that impacted the number of drivers that we needed. We also took an effort to dedicate 14 drivers specifically

[04:51:40] for special runs, field trips, those types of things. So that took them out of the mix for the regular routes. It gave us a total need of 508 drivers. One thing to keep in mind is we are like any other organization. We have folks that are out every day, and we have 600 people.

[04:51:56] That adds up to a number of folks. We had 18 folks out on long-term leave, which essentially those are FTEs that are not essentially filled for use. We have 54 daily absences. That's our average absence over time.

[04:52:13] We've been working on that number for quite a while, so that's a pretty good average. It goes up and down over the year, but essentially we have to plan for that many people to be out every day, so we have to have a number of substitutes to be able to fill those spots. If they are not there, then we have to have lead drivers and supervisors driving buses, which then affects our ability to support those drivers in need.

[04:52:33] So essentially that adds up to 583 drivers that we needed at that point in time, And we had 542 filled FTEs, which left us a shortage of 41 drivers and 13 attendants, the attendants in the right-hand column. So moving that from May of 2023 to today or the beginning of March in 2024, that 583 number is now 553 because one of the things we've been able to do is lessen the number of drivers and routes that we have with the staggered times, which also lessens our shortage, which in turn improves our reliability

[04:53:11] and the percentage of routes that we have filled on a daily basis. With that 553, we have 539 fill vacancies with a shortage of 14. Mr. Davies provides me a report almost on a daily basis, and as of today, I'm happy to present that that 14 number of shortage is down to 6, but I will say it fluctuates by the weeks.

[04:53:39] It goes up a little bit and back down a little bit. But the efforts to get drivers in the seats has really been improved. And I think the initial start of that, we were able to reduce by 40-some drivers. And so if we had not done the staggered times, that number would likely be in the 60-some shortage, which then puts lead drivers and everyone else back on the road again.

[04:54:01] And so that's essentially the information we wanted to provide. I'll reiterate that we've been doing our very best to address the levels of service that we have, eliminating our second loads, improve our on-time reliability overall.

[04:54:19] We do recognize the disadvantages of our longer school day, the earlier start times, and that's what we're hearing. We're anxious to hear thoughts from the school boards. And, you know, the data that Dr. Blayclack presented essentially show that we had the same conditions before we made the change.

[04:54:37] It's just the numbers have changed a little bit over time. So we are happy to take any comments, questions, thoughts you may have, and we'll turn the mic back to you all. Thank you for this presentation, Mr. Lewis. I do have a couple of questions. One is, can you tell me how many buses we send to TJ?

[04:54:57] And also, what about walkers? And how does that affect the amount of buses? So right now, we currently have eight buses that go to Thomas Jefferson High School. And we understand that that enrollment is going to go up next year.

[04:55:13] So that number will increase for next year as well. So if that number increases, how many buses do we need to decrease to have a normal, well, regular start time for those areas that would like it?

[04:55:30] Can you clarify? So like the 7.30 start time, how many more buses do we need and bus drivers for that? To go back to 8 o'clock? To go back to 8 o'clock. Well, I think it would probably be similar to the number that we reduced in the past, which was in that 40 to 50 range.

[04:55:54] But then that would also put us exactly right back to where we were with all the exorbitant second loads and go back to our reliability issues and our on-time issues. And so, you know, we'd have to

do a study to be able to give you that exact number. And, yeah, so it's a very complicated process, there have been a lot of changes since we did that initial change and but again it was 45 or so before and so it would be at least that much if not many more to be able to go back and to go back without creating the second load problems I can't tell you that number because it would be much much

[04:56:33] more than that so there'll be more buses going to TJ like eight to ten probably yes ma'am right now we have eight buses and we expect our understanding is the enrollment is going to be another 75 to 100 going to TJ so that would be another two buses so 10 buses likely yes miss miss Donahue thank you madam chair thank you mr. Lewis and gentlemen for this presentation I'm very happy to to be able to review this information and discuss it with you I have several questions if you'll

[04:57:08] bear with me my first question is when did LCPS move to this two-tiered elementary schedule with the 7 30 start and 8 o'clock start times yes just to make sure it's the 22 23 school year so this is our second year i thought it was in the fall of 2021 was 2022 2022 yes ma'am um okay and how

[04:57:39] many schools are on the 7 30 start time it's 29 it's approximately half of the schools 29 elementary schools okay do you have a rough idea of how many students um that affects sorry not off the our head but we can certainly get that. 29 okay um so on the on slides eight and nine you have information about um some statistics of start times uh this year compared to past years uh

[04:58:17] it includes um some numbers about the 2018-2019 school year. I didn't understand that comparison since I my understanding was that we didn't have 730 elementary school start times in 2018-2019. Can you please explain that? So that was something we included in there to give some context around pre-pandemic um to kind of show what it was there to show that there wasn't a huge swing since since the pit like before the pandemic pandemic hit and then a lot of change happened it was just to ground some context for it is why that was in there but i yeah but i was but we're

[04:58:50] i'm sorry wait your turn sorry sorry um right but but school was not starting at 7 30 in 2018 to 2019. Is that correct? That is correct. So if you look at 1819, and then you look at 2122. So you have basically pre pandemic, post pandemic, the idea was to show that there was not a huge change after that it compares there. And then the change happened in 2122 to 2223. So it's basically just kind of shows what that baseline was, you know, before there was a lot of change in the in the

[04:59:29] schools. Okay. Thank you. And then, so on slides 13 and 14 from May 2023, which was the spring after we started this new schedule, is that correct? Because we started in the fall of 2022. So yes, this was the end of last school year. And that was when we had 542 FTEs filled with a shortage

[05:00:03] of 41. Okay but we had you there were 477 drivers according to this slide and then as of the beginning of March of this year we had 499 drivers so we had more drivers even though you indicated that there are fewer routes but did the did the number of bus routes decrease since May of last year? Correct well every so at the beginning the routes generally decrease over the course of the year as ridership changes as especially with high school students driving so we we are constantly

[05:00:41] evaluating and taking student ridership counts to to consolidate routes where we can because we don't want a bunch of half empty buses rolling around the county just for context so in in october of 21 which was during the the three-tiered system we had 532 filled ftes and a shortage of 58. At the end of that school year, in May of 22, we had 573 filled FTEs, and we had a shortage of 20. In September of 22, which was the beginning of the five-tier system, we had 554 filled FTEs

[05:01:19] and a shortage of 49. And at the end of last year, which was May of 23, we had 542 filled FTEs and a shortage of 41 okay okay I realize you said yours your slides might be different than what was on board docs but in the slides that are on board docs and slide 26 you have a slide about concern submissions I had a question

[05:01:48] about that I'm sorry did you say slide 26 yes to six so we asked the our friends in DDI to to do a little data dive to see complaints that we had received this This obviously does not count the ones that have come directly to you.

[05:02:08] And so I will tell you that we had two from the transportation concern registry and nine from Let's Talk. And I think that's irrelevant based on the conversation that we've heard. So we just wanted to do that little data dive to say that that's what we had officially in our system.

[05:02:24] Okay. And I see this as July 1st, 2024. Should that read July 1st, 2023? I don't think so. No, this was strictly looking back for this current school year. There were obviously a number of concerns that were submitted last school year when this first began.

[05:02:44] And we believe that the number has decreased because it's become more accepted or normalized. Oh, I was looking.

[05:03:01] I'm sorry. Mrs. Griffiths, I'll yield now. Not necessarily, but I'm done with my pre, like already written out questions. Okay. Okay, Mrs. Griffiths.

[05:03:19] We had a great conversation in the F&O meeting that you guys were researching more sidewalks, maybe crossing guards. That would cut down on the buses, possibly. That's something I'd like to hear more about.

[05:03:36] But also, for TJ, it's in Fairfax. I mean, can parents drive their kids there? Do we need to have buses going to Fairfax? So that has been a decision by the school board in the past to provide transportation to there?

[05:03:55] Maybe that's something we can discuss, if it'll help you guys out. You know, you're short of drivers. But also the data as far as tardiness and absenteeism, I see a little bit of contradictions there where the kids getting there earlier maybe are not doing as well as they were.

[05:04:24] That's something, I mean, I think we should have further discussion on. So one of the things that Dr. Blakelock was sharing earlier is we did those charts to show the pre-change, when we had the three tiers, to show that that group of schools that were later moved to 730 already had, you know, a higher rate of tardiness.

[05:04:50] And so that the change was not that significant over time. And so that's one of the reasons we went back the year to be able to share that, you know, just, I guess it's easy to assume that all schools would have had the exact same tardiness rate, but they didn't.

[05:05:06] And so, you know, as we did that data, we wanted to be able to have that baseline, which that group of schools had before we made the change. And so that's what we're trying to exhibit, and hopefully that came through. I think at this point, maybe we should reevaluate the buses going to TJ and maybe you're able to have more buses for Loudoun County, possibly.

[05:05:29] That might be something we can discuss in the future. Thank you. Any other questions? Ms. Chandler? I will say on behalf of the many constituents that I've heard from, I'm grateful that we're having

this conversation.

[05:05:50] I know it's not easy, and I often find that I'm very drawn to outside-the-box solutions, and I can remember when this was announced as a private citizen thinking this is clever, and it's good that we're trying. My father, who is a public school teacher in eastern Kentucky, is a bus driver as well.

[05:06:16] It's hard to make this comparison because the place that I'm from is so small. It's not like Loudoun County at all, and yet their creative solution is to let other staff members drive buses. I want to honor the families that have come out tonight and shared with us their experience and the families that have reached out over the course of the last several weeks to share their experience. I definitely need some more information. I think it's important for us to

[05:06:50] take a look I want to acknowledge that I struggle a little bit with the data from 2019 what I will say is that my child was in fourth grade in 2019 and she's a freshman now and it's hard to I mean to make comparisons when we know the students are different and the families are different and this is something that's changing all the time so just to be perfectly honest that is a hard comparison for me

[05:07:23] I guess I would just like to know how many bus drivers it would take to correct the or not I shouldn't say correct but to put the elementary schools back on the same start time and I would like to know I noticed we are also alternating start times in middle school and from my experience working as a staff aide on the school board and now as a school board member I don't believe I've ever seen any feedback around middle school start times

[05:07:55] are people is the consensus generally that that's working has anybody if I may say something for I'll give you an example trailside they don't depending on where you live near trailside they don't have buses at all so my child has to walk so that's why I was you know discussing the sidewalks they put a sidewalk over there to make it more accessible but they cut the school buses for the side of Belmont station and all those kids walk to trail side so that's

[05:08:32] the only experience I have but I do want to ask you as far as salaries for the bus drivers can you explain why is unintended consequences to raise them I'm not sure what you're asking the unintended consequence to raise the bus driver is it an issue to raise their salaries well so we have raised their salaries a few times over the past several years and and right now we have

[05:09:05] a slide what is that 19 that shows that we are among the highest in the area when it comes to raising a particular staff member salary and I'm not sure if this is what you're getting at but if you just raise the let's say you had a hierarchy of the staff and you just raise the folks in the middle and then that has an unintended consequence of folks that are supervising them may not be making the same amount of money that they are and so if that's what you mean by an unintended consequences that's something that we have to look at we work closely with HR whenever and they have a whole process for reclassifying

[05:09:42] and evaluating staff staffing and levels every year and so if you were just to single those out and whether it's bus driver or any other maintenance worker teachers or anything else you do take that risk that you have to evaluate the whole system in the whole group before you just make one change okay yes go ahead you didn't finish so what a school visit recently a principal who's been within LCPS system for a long time shared with me that at some point in the

[05:10:17] past to get certain employees who are bus drivers to full-time status with benefits they also worked as hostess or hosts in the cafeteria during lunch that that had occurred in the past that was

something else that I was perhaps interested in and I would love to have some clarification what I remember as a parent and please excuse me because I'm I'm sure this is just my recollection and I haven't researched it but many years ago bus drivers were taken from

[05:10:52] full-time employees to part-time employees? Is that true? I would like to have more context and an explanation if we continue to explore this as to how the role of bus driver has changed and what the fiscal, I mean, what would our financial responsibility be if we explored expanding in these creative ways? Sure. We have had those programs for a while. We've had many opportunities where we offered folks the ability to be cafeteria workers or other things

[05:11:30] we've also opened the doors for and invited teachers that want to drive buses as well one thing to remember that driving a bus is a very very highly skilled position and I'm sure your dad knows that and so it takes quite a bit of training to get your CDL and to be able to do that so it doesn't work for everyone's schedule but we can go over some history of that and how we've done that um i'm sorry i think you asked about something else besides that and i'm trying to remember what it was full-time employees oh full-time employees thank you yes so we have over the past several years we have some drivers with six-hour contracts some with eight-hour contracts

[05:12:08] it is um not every driver wants an eight-hour contract but we have been able to increase that a few years ago the board made a decision we used to also have tiered benefits where if you worked four hours a day you only got 50 percent benefits or whatever there was there was a tier for that and the previous school board did away with that all together and so now if you're a bus driver with a six hour or eight hour contract you have full benefits so those are things we've done to try to help create the the the recruiting for drivers and has been I think very successful with our partnership with HR to be able to get our drivers shortage down to six drivers is

[05:12:47] it's pretty phenomenal when I took this job a while back it was over a hundred that we were short every day and it was a very difficult time so we are very competitive in that market and but I always happen to find a way to get that number to zero I think we all realize it's going to take a holistic approach for this but I think we're willing to to dig down deep into it especially like walkers all you know all the rest of that anybody okay Dr. Deans um just a thought um you

[05:13:21] know just as sometimes with our personal lives we do creative financing when I was in Hampton as a central office worker as a deputy superintendent I was asked to get my license to drive a bus and that's what we did from central administration went on a day that there were bus drivers that were not available so I don't know what we do in Loudoun but I'm just saying that are there not other creative ways that we can come up with bus drivers teachers are always looking for part-time

[05:13:58] jobs um coaches who might have first period planning at their high school um or their middle schools I don't know but but we're going to have to think out of the box outside the box in order to resolve it if it is to be resolved thank you yes miss Donahue thank you madam chair um the The other question that I had, which is not really for discussion right now, but as we're considering solutions, is we are, as far as I know, the only district in the area that

[05:14:36] has our elementary students going to school that early in the morning. Most districts have high school first, then middle, then elementary school. I don't know why LCPS made the decision to have our schedule staggered in the way that we do, but if part of the problem that you've described is having to do these second runs and having to do multiple runs for elementary schools and having to have them ready

for the middle schools, should we consider changing our entire schedule around so that the high school starts earlier?

[05:15:07] And that would possibly relieve some of the pressure on the elementary. And I wanted to, I just wanted to say, as I think all of us have, I have heard a lot of input from a lot of constituents about this issue.

[05:15:24] From before I even started my campaign, I had friends who are affected by this situation who go to some of these schools saying, I just, I started driving my kid to school every day. It's not what I want to do, but I can't, like, we can't as a family deal with this situation of having to get the kids up so early in the morning.

[05:15:44] And I understand the reasons why we did it when we had to do it in the moment to address the driver shortage. But I came into this role thinking, like, this is an issue that I want to tackle. And I'm really grateful for the information that you put together here, because I have been hoping to get more information about what led to this situation and how we can change it.

[05:16:12] But I will say, I do kind of feel like, I somewhat felt like the takeaway of the presentation that you wanted us to get is, it's not really a problem. Maybe that's not what you intended, but you have a lot of data here indicating we haven't had that many concerns reported. There's not that much increase in absenteeism or tardiness or change in test scores. And I feel like you're setting up a position to say, we don't need to do anything.

[05:16:44] This is fine. Everything's working fine. And maybe I'm wrong about that, but if that's where this is going, I'm not going to be okay with that. I didn't even realize that it's 29 elementary schools is affected by this that's half of our elementary schools and i don't think it's fair to the families of those students that are affected in those 30 schools that they've been carrying this burden for two years with no end in sight to them not having to do this anymore so thank you yes well i know mr mr lewis mr lewis did you want to respond yes just briefly so

[05:17:22] our intent was not at all to say we don't we don't have an issue we know that you're being reached out to you reached out being um communicated with with the um with from parents um i will say that um our goal was to make sure we everyone understood the problem we were trying to solve and we do believe that the service we're providing right now is better than what it was so going back to the old way i don't think i don't recommend because we're going to have more more issues than we have now i believe i do also think that we or i'm aware that we get a number of comments that folks are happy with that so i think if the board wants to to revisit

[05:17:59] the whole process it should be a very public process and not a quick one and we should make sure we get feedback from everyone i do want to give if i may dr blakelock want to make a clarification about some of the data so i'll give him the microphone for that if you don't mind thank you mr lewis um just a quick clarification to your question chair mansfield in terms of the uh the younger elementary grades for achievement no we looked at the sol scores if If you look further in the appendix, slides 23-24, there's some map conditional growth percentile data in there, which does get first and second grade for math and second grade for reading as well.

[05:18:35] So there was some younger child data included in the analysis as well. Thank you very much for that. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. And then we should probably table this for a little bit because we have closed.

[05:18:51] But go ahead. I really appreciate the conversation. And I do, the operation is massive. And I know that efficiency and timeliness are important. And if those things are off, you're going to hear about it, too, because you did. And I know you did. So I really echo what Ms. Chandler said.

[05:19:11] And I think we got to think outside the box. But I also echo what Ms. Donahue is saying. We got to figure this out. I don't know if it's, I think it is a bigger issue with bus transportation. And I just think there's a lot of layers that are coming into this. was you know interesting even like calendars came up throughout the feedback and you know I did open the can of worms I did go out and say like is this affecting more people than just my community and that kind of opened the floodgates and sometimes you don't know what you don't know and I think people felt like you know this is our lot let's deal with it but now that maybe it might not have to be their lot I have one really just overarching question a

[05:19:49] lot of people were like oh you must have a kid with the early start to bring this up at the board and I don't mine are on the later start but I would be willing as a parent to bear the burden and share the burden if that was possible so I don't think evergreen is on the earlier start either and I'm Tolbert but we had talked about just bounce it off each other like is that something that we would want to entertain now I know you mentioned that it was an extensive process to rotate and align schools is it possible to look at rotating it in the meantime while we

[05:20:25] spin our wheels about creative solutions about getting bus drivers in the door is that something that we can even explore or was that already explored and it's a no-go i'm a little scared to ask but i'm gonna ask so it is not an easily answered question we do believe that we we spend an extensive amount of time trying to figure out what the partnerships and the pairings were with the elementary school and the middle school to be able to get the efficiency we need to do to be able to get from one school to the next. So it's not something we can just do for like this fall.

[05:20:58] It would be an entirely different routing system. We would have to go through and re-route every school at each level to be able to see if there was another set of pairings. Just from my conversations with other folks, I'm not sure it would be a good idea actually I don't think it would be a good idea to switch from year to year because you have daycare issues and you have parents and families trying to change their schedules every single year that didn't I think that would be something but I think it's something we can maybe a cycle though you know we can ask the community that and I do think before we make any changes what we would ask from staff and I know it's going to be hard to do that now as we're

[05:21:37] going to need some guidance from the full board on exactly what you want to look at. Ms. Donoghue brought up the potential of switching high schools and elementary schools. That's a whole other conversation. And so that's something that we're going to need some guidance from the full board on what we do, because we'd have to engage consultants to help us with the computer modeling. And it won't be a quick thing. So to change something for this fall, i don't think that's really feasible and we would most likely end up with um not the best scenarios

[05:22:12] and cause us more problems okay i hear that um as i just sort of synthesize this as i know we're getting close to the 10 o'clock hour i'm i'm kind of thinking this is threefold with the board and kind of seeing where we are it sounds like we want more information about bus drivers and just the context and research about how to recruit more and looking at some solutions for that i think we also might want to explore what a rotation would look like i know i've certainly open to that and maybe other board members are and then thirdly um oh shoot i lost it

[05:22:46] switching switching all the way like high school elementary and opening that can of worms um is also something that maybe we are open to having a conversation about so those are just kind of my three takeaways i really appreciate you all and your questions i think there's more but i wanted the holistic like how much do the walkers really make a difference yeah with that as well and maybe we could submit like our additional questions and things to bring this back so i don't know how we do next steps but go for it we're done mrs donoghue thank you madam chair i would also love

[05:23:22] to hear suggestions from staff if we say we want to fix this solution so that we don't have this 7 30 start time and other schools starting at eight o'clock what are your suggestions for how to fix it so that we can talk about those too okay miss chandler i just want to reiterate i really love the idea of asking the entire community for feedback on this issue and finding out like exactly how big an issue it is how many people feel that it's a big issue and what the community believes the solution could be i really think that and that survey could have those options on

[05:23:58] there. Dr. Deans? I was just going to say, in Fairfax, my 13-year-old middle schooler gets on the bus at quarter of seven every morning. And I think what has held them grounded is they have hope that there's going to be change. So I wonder what hope can we give these parents that change is coming. They indicate in the emails that I've received and have forwarded to the transportation department that they've asked this repeatedly so if they've asked it repeatedly can you give

[05:24:37] them a little hope can you give them a little glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel that it's going to change at some point that's what i'm asking can you give them hope well i think that we can't give them hope for next fall but we can we can look at um surveying for you know three or four options and coming up with something um getting some yes yes dr dr smith so just wanted to kind of bring us back I do appreciate Ms. Chernoff bringing this up as an information item this was a presentation that was already developed and we were asked to share with the full board and with the public about the information that we had so we don't there is not an agenda or a slant we're

[05:25:17] trying to take we were just taking this information and it was shared with the board previously and we're just trying to share with you again just everyone has that I do think I think as mr. Lewis said and I think some other folks said this is a if there's a desire to change this I agree with you it's a much larger your community conversation. We need to be strategic about it. We need to be thoughtful about it. When you start changing the routes for for 83,000 students or I mean not all of them ride a bus but I mean it's a lot and so we need to be really careful about that and so I do think in thinking about a needs assessment and thinking about going through that process. So I would just recommend you've got a couple of options. It is an information tonight. It wasn't

[05:25:56] planned to come back for action. You could we could put it you could talk to the chair about working it into a retreat item to have a further conversation because you do need to take time to really talk through this you've got a couple board members not here tonight you also could send it to F&O so F&O can do a lot of the legwork and a lot of the sausage making in terms of the survey and working through what that looks like if you're going to do a needs assessment presenting options so there's a couple different directions you can go here and so just at least wanted to to lay that out for you staff is going to be looking for direction from the board in terms of next steps um as this is a board issue

[05:26:32] so i just wanted to summarize that would you like that feedback now as opposed to take it to committee or do you want us to think about it it's it's up to you it is getting late and so that we're happy to

wait or whatever works best i mean i don't want it to end here and it be like something we talked about once i think there's enough momentum from the six of us here to say that we want to continue you the dialogue while it is disappointing to think about the fall and I see some our friends

[05:27:08] are in the audience so I know that's hard but I think we've started it so I think that's something to see through so I would definitely support it going to committee to get like we can start a needs assessment in the committee we can yeah so we can give you that guidance and work through through the committee that way I think you know involving schools too is important with car rider lines and all of the things so yeah okay so that's the direction is we'll I guess take it

[05:27:39] cut to F&O and look at a needs assessment and get feedback that way yes okay yeah okay all right so that's what we'll do okay so thank you everybody for your patience we will now move thank you gentlemen I appreciate it um we will now move on to item 15.01 our closed session Ms. Chandler do you have a motion I move that the Loudoun County School Board recess this

[05:28:13] public meeting and enter into a closed meeting pursuant to 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia for the following consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body pertaining to probable litigation where such consultation or briefing and open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body regarding an appeal of an administrative hearing as authorized by Section 2.2-3711A7, pardon me for butchering that, of the Code of Virginia.

[05:28:53] I move that the closed meeting be adjourned, that the Loudoun County School Board reconvene and—oh, nope, I'm sorry. Did I—oh. i don't know of second okay do you have a motion thanks i have a motion by miss chandler do i have a second second yes thank you miss donahue i have a second by miss donahue clerk can you please open

[05:29:18] the vote um clerk please close and display the vote oh dr deans okay now clerk please close and

[05:29:50] display the vote the motion passes six um with uh vice chair astreffy dr rasheed and miss labelle

[05:29:59] absent uh the board is now uh going to be going to closed thank you no one two three four um the

[06:40:03] board is coming out of closed session miss chandler do you have a motion i move that the closed meeting be adjourned and that the loudon county school board reconvene its public meeting and that the

[06:40:21] minutes of the public meeting reflect that no or reflect that four more wait oh are we in okay that and that the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the

[06:41:01] closed meeting I move that the following resolution certify that the closed meeting I have a motion by by Ms. Chandler do I have a second I have a second I have a second I have a second by Ms. Donahue I don't think there's any is there any discussion no discussion okay we'll take an electronic vote clerk will you please open the vote board members will you please record your

[06:41:30] vote clerk please close and display the vote the motion passes six six to six and then we have three absent like a vice chair Streffy dr. received and miss LaBelle all right now the second motion I move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adapt adopted and reflected in the minutes of

[06:42:04] this public meeting resolution number 16-2324 whereas the Loudoun County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and whereas according to section 2.2-3712 D of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with virginia law now therefore be it resolved

[06:42:41] that the loudon county school board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge one only the public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification applies and two only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the loud and county school board i have a motion by ms chandler do i have a second yes second i have a second by ms shurnoff is there any discussion no discussion let's go ahead and take the electronic vote clerk please open the vote

[06:43:20] board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote that motion passes oh sorry the motion passes with um three uh three absent uh vice chair straffi dr rasheed and miss labelle absent for the vote okay now we will have another motion madam chair i move that the loudon county school

[06:43:56] board authorized legal counsel to take the actions discussed in a closed meeting to include filing a legal complaint according to the terms and conditions discussed in the closed meeting i have a motion by ms chandler do i have a second second i have a second by ms shirnoff is there any discussion no discussion uh we'll take the electronic vote please a clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote

[06:44:36] that motion passes six sorry I keep on like six and with three absent for the vote vice chair Streffy Dr. Rasheed and Dr. LaBelle I mean Mrs. LaBelle we will now move on to item 16 board member comments and committee reports would you guys like to forego that for tonight is a thumbs

[06:45:04] up please yes one two three oh that's three to two four to two okay we will bypass our board member comments and committee reports um and we will move on to item 17 uh new business is there any new business for tonight it appears there is no more new business seeing no more new business um the april 9th 2024 meeting of the lcps school board is now adjourned thank you for your work and drive home safely



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