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# Loudoun County School Board, Loudoun Education Alliance of Families (LEAF) Committee Meeting, Monday, April 15, 2024

Date Monday, April 15, 2024  
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)  
Length 1h 26m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/935343006?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-21. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] Good evening, everyone. Welcome, LEAF members. Thank you for attending this evening. I know it's a really beautiful day outside. We look a little smaller than usual. Maybe other people are enjoying the day. If you haven't done so, go ahead and please sign in on the computers. I'm going to call to order today's meeting on April 15th. This meeting will come to order. The first item on the agenda is public comment. LEAF meetings are open to the public. Loudoun County residents are welcome to attend the meeting, but must refrain from interrupting the meeting's agenda.

[00:00:34] Per the LEAF charter bylaws, public comments should address an agenda item. Members of the public who wish to address items on the agenda may do so at this time. Do we have any public comments? Okay. We will move on to the next agenda item, item number three, which is the approval of minutes.

[00:00:55] The March 18th, 2024 meeting minutes are on the LEAF website, and a few copies are at your table. For those of you who would like an additional review. I will entertain a motion to accept the minutes from the March 18th, 2024 meeting as submitted.

[00:01:22] Thank you. Do you have a motion to accept the minutes? We have a motion, is there a second?

[00:01:38] All right, we have a second, all in favor say aye. All those opposed? All right, with no changes requested, the minutes stand approved as submitted. All right, at this time I would like to invite John Clark, the Director of Safety and Security.

[00:01:54] Welcome back again, thank you so much. He is going to share a thought exchange about the Blue Ribbon Panel, a group reviewing current protocols with respect to physical, technical, and cybersecurity, and mental health, and identifying any potential gaps. Mr. Clark?

[00:03:03] I do.

[00:04:24] Sorry about that. Talked about training, crisis management, drills, talked about threat assessment, talked about the glazing on our glass. We talked about our anti-bullying campaigns, our anti-drug campaigns.

[00:04:41] We talked about counseling support, cybersecurity. So again, we gave them everything we do and allowed them to dive as deep as they wanted to into each topic. So we had a great group of external participants here.

[00:05:00] As you can imagine, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, the Leesburg, I'm sorry, Percival Police Department. We had the Middleburg Police Department. We had the Leesburg Police Department. We had the Loudoun County Office of Emergency Management.

[00:05:16] we had the Loudoun County Mental Health Department, we had Loudoun County Fire Rescue, we had the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, their Virginia Center for Campus Safety, we had the Town of Leesburg Office of Emergency Management, we had the Federal Bureau of Investigation, we had the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, we had K-12-6, which is a cyber organization focused on K-12 cybersecurity, and we had the Williams Center, which is a local

[00:05:56] Wellness and Recovery Center here in LCPS. So those were our external participants. As you can imagine, we had a host of internal subject matter experts that helped out throughout the process with briefings and Q&A. And as you can probably imagine, had a lot of representation from central office right here, all those good folks. We also had every educational level represented, with the principals from Hutchinson Farm Elementary, Riverbend Middle School, and

[00:06:29] Heritage High School. So the overwhelming sentiment from the panel was very positive. They clearly recognized the outstanding work we're doing here in terms of safety and security. We had a lot of great comments from the panel in that regard, but obviously we wanted some recommendations. We wanted them to try to identify some potential gaps. And they were able to come up with several recommendations that they believe could potentially enhance security here in LCPS. So these are in no particular order. I'm going to go through them here. So adding more security coverage to elementary

[00:07:08] schools, adding security coverage to after-school events, ensuring Wi-Fi coverage throughout every part of our schools, creating a full-time supervisory position for our security operations center, and also expanding the size of our security operations center, prioritizing security and threat assessment training, ensuring SRO and mental health support on every threat assessment, having the school board label us in safety and security as a law enforcement unit. Basically,

[00:07:47] what that would mean is we would own all of the security records here in LCPS. So all of our video footage, for example, those would become security records, and we could freely share those with

law enforcement without a subpoena or a search warrant, okay, versus an educational record, which has some restrictions in that area. Creating a formal alternative education site, assessing public safety radio coverage in every one of our schools, creating a basic social media and

[00:08:24] cybersecurity best practices course, and then adding a digital analysis piece to every one of our serious and very serious threat assessments. And that would take the form of a social media workup on the subject of the threat assessment, also a look into any open source data on that subject of the threat assessment okay so those were the recommendations tonight we are going to use a platform called thought exchange to get your feedback okay has anyone used thought exchange

[00:08:59] before oh yeah okay perfect so it's pretty cool uh it's really easy um so you're going to grab this qr code with your device so go ahead and aim your device up there grab that qr code and then we're going to take the first two minutes and you are going to provide your own thoughts on the recommendations that I just talked about. And I'm going to put the recommendations back up here for reference. You can see them. So for the first half of this, you're going to provide your thoughts on

[00:09:33] those recommendations. And then I'll set a timer. And when that's over, then you're going to go in there and start rating some of the other thoughts that you're seeing within the platform. Okay. So it's a pretty cool way to get some instant feedback here and kind of organize some of the feedback that we're getting okay so everyone have the code good to go all right there we go so there are the recommendations for your reference so I'm going to set the timer here so we're going to take a couple minutes go ahead and go in there and just provide your thoughts anything that jumps out to

[00:10:11] you in terms of those recommendations and I'll let you know when time's up and then we'll go in and start rating some of the other thoughts that you're seeing in there. There is one question you have to answer before you start, just identifying your role here in LCPS.

[00:11:47] Take about 30 more seconds to provide your own thoughts. And if you need some more time on that, we can certainly take some more time.

[00:12:18] Okay, if you are good with your thoughts, go ahead and start rating some of the other thoughts that are popping up.

[00:12:40] What we'll see is some of this stuff will kind of bubble to the top. We'll get a good idea of what's resonating with you all in particular.

[00:13:22] So you can see on the screens what is kind of bubbling to the surface there, at least at this point. And what we're going to do is we're going to use all of this data.

[00:13:39] And I'm going out to several key stakeholder groups like yourselves and getting this feedback. And then we are going to provide this feedback to Dr. Spence so he can have this to kind of chew on as he looks at all these recommendations.

[00:14:56] Items are changing as we speak and as you rate them. So maybe let's take another 30 seconds or so and wrap it up, or again, we can take as much time as you would like.

[00:15:39] All right, folks, we'll go ahead and wrap that up.

[00:16:00] Thank you so much for your comments there and your thoughts in that platform. Again, these are going to be provided to Dr. Spence so he can make some informed decisions on these recommendations from the panel. All right, okay.

[00:16:18] Well, thank you so much for your time, everyone. I really appreciate it. Have a good evening. Do I need to use it?

[00:16:34] Oh, here we go. Can you remind me again of the impetus for the Blue Ribbon Panel? Was that Dr. Spence's, he initiated that as he came in? Or is there like an update every couple of years? You guys do a look. How did that start? No, Dr. Spence brought that with him to LCPS.

[00:16:53] This is something he did down in Virginia Beach, and he really liked it. So he brought it here to LCPS. I'm just curious, the people that participated, the panels that participated, had any of them done an evaluation of this sort for another school system or any other schools?

[00:17:16] So obviously the federal partners there, they do a lot of work across the country in terms of school divisions and other organizations. But the local folks from Loudoun County had not, just us. Okay, thank you very much, folks.

[00:17:35] Thank you, Mr. Clark. We appreciate your time. All right, the next thing that we're going to do, before we head into our collaborative conversations tonight, we did want to communicate that we've been looking at the feedback and we're going to have a group tonight that Lauren and I will be facilitating that is going to get to where we can gather some more collaborative feedback around policy.

[00:18:01] We're listening to your feedback. How can we make more of an impact with the policy work? So we're going to try something new with that tonight, but I'm going to let her share that. So she's going to give you a school board update and let you know what that will look like tonight. Hello. Thank you, Sherry.

[00:18:19] I actually am going to use this as my school board update. So if you have other questions about what's going on on the board, you can ask in small group. But we wanted to make sure that you guys know that we really heard you last time. It was very clear, especially after the last meeting, that while we've made really good strides with the dialogue, and the rotating, and that seems to be a positive thing.

[00:18:44] There's still a definite want and need for a policy feedback component that would be appreciated, and in addition, sort of a closing of the loop, if you will, about where that feedback went, how it was received, what was included, discarded, and why, and bringing that back here.

[00:19:03] I think that that was something that I heard. I see nodding, so that's a good sign. So what we're going to talk about tonight is a little bit of that feedback, then I want to discuss just briefly, which we're going to dive deeper into in our rotation, but is the review of an LCPS policy document that we have seen before in LEAF, but sometimes there's just a lot going on, so we're going to bring that back, and then we're going to talk about our new format going forward for the next two meetings, and then finally, Sherry and I have sat down and planned what we're going to work on over the summer as we look ahead to

[00:19:41] kind of revamping LEAF to have this policy component. Go ahead, next slide. So again, this is in response to all of your guys' feedback, and we will continue to solicit that feedback because we want this to become a committee that is not just a sit and get, but is about engaging with the stakeholders, but also that your voice is being heard in policies that are upcoming.

[00:20:04] So this is the document that was presented to us, I believe, at the first LEAF meeting this year. Dr. Smith, chief of staff, put this together with the policy committee. It's all the policies that are up for revision in this school calendar year.

[00:20:22] And the reason that that's important is because policies get reviewed for multiple reasons. The main one being every five years a policy gets reviewed. The second reason would be that a board member feels like there's interest or they have something that they want to change that they could put that on an agenda of any committee of their choosing.

[00:20:41] And then the third is like with Policy 8040, there's new model policies or the Virginia Code changes or we adopt new policies. Like last year we adopted, we wrote Policy 5055 in response to some of the things that were going on internally, not only at the state level, but at LCPS.

[00:20:58] So there are multiple reasons why the policies rotate And this document was created as a way for you to be able to kind of track that. So go ahead and go forward for me. All right. So thinking about that, and we'll, like I said, we'll go into that a little bit more in depth.

[00:21:15] But for this meeting and next meeting, so our last two meetings, we're going to have three rotations instead of two. And the third rotation is going to be a policy-only part of the committee. So what we're going to talk about is we're going to unpack all of the policies that are sitting in committee or headed to the full board right now. So the things that need feedback right now. And I've gone through and we're going to highlight those together so that you are informed.

[00:21:42] And then we're going to review next month, we're going to ask you all to go and do your homework, to read those policies, to come to us with that feedback about what policies you want to talk about. And then we're going to actually have those policies here and be able to kind of dive deep into what that feedback might look like.

[00:22:01] And instead of sending it into the black hole, you're going to send it directly to me and I'm going to type it into the form. So we will have that loop and that way I can follow it through the committees, okay? Then, and just one thing I want to say, I've learned so much in the last four months, like way more than I ever knew possible.

[00:22:23] But one of the things I just wanted to let you know is we're a giant organization. I think everybody kind of knows that. I worked for this county for seven years before I came on the school board. I'm an active and involved community member and parent. The scope of LCPS is something that I still cannot wrap my arms around on this side of the job.

[00:22:43] So a lot of things are moving all the time. And policies, while there may be some that come up because they're scheduled to, there are also, like I said, board members that at any time can say, you know what, either I'm chairing that committee or I'm talking to another board member on another committee and say I want to bring this forward even though it's not within its cycle. An example of that is the grading policy. So as soon as I got into office in January, I'm the chair of the curriculum instruction committee. I had heard through my campaign and through the work that I had done that the grading policy needs a revisit. Maybe it doesn't need a complete overhaul but it warrants

[00:23:22] a discussion. So I asked for that to be put on the agenda. It's not in its five-year review and And the public did not know that until that curriculum and instruction meeting agenda is posted. And that's two days before the meeting happens. So there are some restrictions in terms of how we can and when we can get that to you in terms of our LEAF monthly cycle.

[00:23:45] Does that make sense? However, the good news is things usually sit in committee for a while. So grading policy is going through a feedback loop right now, then we're going to decide next steps. in

August we're probably looking at maybe some work groups like all of that is going on and there will be lots of opportunities for feedback before it ever goes to the full board and it most likely usually does go to the full board unless the committee decides to table it. So I just wanted to let you know there are some constraints within the process that I've learned that I have misconceptions that I had sitting on the other side of this and I want to make sure that you

[00:24:21] know that I'm going to do my best job as your board liaison to be the policy representative for you, to be the one that goes out and farms out what's happening in all of our committees and is listening to that feedback and then reporting back through this rotation what that feedback is and how it was included, and what policies might be on the horizon that aren't on this list.

[00:24:43] But it's a pretty comprehensive list. So, we have a lot to work through tonight, but I'm anxious and excited to get that going. One more slide. So, just looking ahead then, because we only have two meetings left, we're kind of considering this like a trial run, if you will, so bear with us and we'll definitely take your feedback.

[00:25:03] But one of the things we want to do is meet with the other advisory committee chairs. So, SEAC, GEAC, and MSAC are also advisory committees and kind of talk to them about how they look at policy and I'll be honest with you I mean I know what SEAC does and it's another meeting it's another subcommittee of a committee so this might involve work outside of this meeting so we're kind of just putting that on the table and then we are going to look at how we can then integrate a policy component into every meeting for those that want to do so because I don't know

[00:25:38] that everybody wants that but we want that to always be a choice so that's the goal and the good news word on the street is that Miss Sherry Colby is game for another year unless you all want to duke it out for for the chair but um so don't tell her I told you but I've heard that so she and I are going to partner together this summer with staff also and just kind of work through some of those kinks so I will actually going to hold on questions till we're in small group because we need to get started because I always talk too much um so just hold your questions for us in policy

[00:26:11] but bear with us we're going to try and pivot our committee a little bit okay all right so we're sitting according to cluster groups tonight we do have three groups again Lauren and I will be one of those groups we also have Wendy King who is the gifted program supervisor with us tonight of and from teaching and learning and then Derek Ferry he is the assistant athletic director in the school leadership office who's going to be speaking about our intramural program so those

[00:26:44] will be the other groups. Just like we ran it before in the last meeting, we're sitting so that we can facilitate conversation and get your input and so that you can ask questions. So then rather than a presentation, the groups will have conversation and offer feedback so that they can connect. Staff will start the conversations with one group and then they will rotate. We're going to try to do about 15 minutes per group so you will not need to move you can stay where you're at I just ask please be aware of the time that everybody in the group has the opportunity to ask their questions or share so just kind of be aware of

[00:27:23] that we'll give you a three minute wrap-up warning and then a one minute warning and then we'll go ahead and we'll shift through the groups are there any questions before we get started awesome well

[00:27:35] let's go off to the races sorry for the interruption we have about five more minutes in these groups

[00:38:46] five minutes until we rotate. A minute remaining, one minute remaining in these groups. All right

[00:44:21] everyone we'll wrap up our table discussions and ask our presenters to move.

[00:45:45] All right we're going to ask our presenters to rotate now. Wendy you'll come to this group here. Derek we're going to move you. All right next. Wendy you're going to come down here. Yeah you're going this way.

[00:46:15] Derek come on you're going all the way to the end down here. Lauren and Sherry. Everybody's enjoying their conversation you're here lauren and sherry y'all are coming right here you're right here in the

[00:46:41] middle just letting you know we have five more minutes in this rotation five more minutes we

[01:01:33] have one minute left to wrap up in these groups one minute remaining we'll ask that you wrap up

[01:02:35] in your group now and rotate one last time all right sherry and lauren we're going to ask you

[01:04:31] to step here we're thank you wendy no you're good you're good wendy you're going to rotate

[01:05:03] come on Wendy yeah we're gonna all right Derek you're coming here to the middle and Wendy you're

[01:05:36] joining this group thank you all sorry for the interruption this is your five minute warning

[01:15:34] five minutes we have about one minute remaining in our groups about one minute everyone we have

[01:22:49] one more minute to wrap up we're getting close to ending time all right if we can wrap up and

[01:24:51] come back together sorry got really close to the microphone there um I hope everyone found this to be, that you had good conversations. Please make sure just that something came up in one of our groups, which was a good point, is if you have feedback on anything, not just like kind of what happened in this meeting, but any other ideas, please fill out the feedback form for this meeting because we look at that feedback and then we can discuss how to address all of that.

[01:25:19] Before we wrap up for tonight, we're going to move on to new business. Is there any new business before we adjourn tonight so our next meeting is set for May 20th our last and final meeting of the year it's here in this room and it will be our last meeting of 23-24 school year so thank you so much for coming out tonight and participating in all the conversations have a safe trip home and we look forward to seeing you at our last meeting of May thank you we're adjourned



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