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Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting, Wednesday, August 7, 2024

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

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[00:00:00] Good afternoon. I am Dr. Linda Deans, and I'm calling the C&I committee at this point because of our absent chair, Ms. Lauren Chernoff.

[00:00:18] I've been notified that Ms. Chernoff will be sharing with us remotely. Ms. Chernoff, please state your location and whether this is a medical or personal matter. Thank you, Dr. Deans. I am in Charlevoix, Michigan at the lake with my family on vacation, but I am alone in a separate room from my husband and my children.

[00:00:41] Thank you. I want to be with you. It's beautiful here. Love to have you. Okay. And if it's a personal matter, I appreciate it and appreciate you sharing. And thank you for sharing with us that you are also alone.

[00:01:02] I would like to, we would need to vote on Mrs. Chernoff joining us remotely. All in favor? Aye.

[00:01:19] Aye. Okay. We are now ready for public comment. Thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process.

[00:01:36] The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believe that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. At

this point, speakers must limit comments to the time allotted, and at this point, the time allotted is two minutes, and we will adhere to that.

[00:02:01] All audience members should maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times. Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium, or during a break. If we have violations of civility, decorum, and respect, we will pause the meeting.

[00:02:25] Speakers should remain from vulgarity, obscenities, defamation, profanity, or other like breaches of respect. Nor make speakers target, criticize or attack individual students and our individual division employees during public comment.

[00:02:41] At this point, I only have one person on the list for public comment, and I have Ms. Angela Learney. Learney, yes. Ms. Learney, will you come to the microphone at the desk, and we will have you to speak to us for 30 minutes.

[00:03:04] No, I'm sorry. Two minutes. Two minutes. And I'm setting the timer right now. If I could let you go for 30 minutes, then we could dismiss the meeting and go home.

[00:03:21] Yes. Okay. Good afternoon. Some of what I'm saying is from the content of the letter I sent Carrie LaBelle in June, as well as my reply and proposal I sent back to her, which has been shared with this committee via the online contact form.

[00:03:37] I have a rising junior who has been taking Latin since elementary school and took Latin 1 and 2 at Simpson Middle and took Latin 3 freshman year and Latin 4 honors this past school year at Loudoun County High School. Remarkably, at the end of the school year, we were informed that the county would no longer be offering Latin 5 and AP Latin in the classroom with a teacher, but rather offer Latin classes online only.

[00:04:04] This was extremely disconcerting from our perspective as parents who place top priority on achievement and rigorous education. We believe online learning is a degradation of instruction, lacking quality, and in no way can match in-person learning.

[00:04:20] The evidence should be clear from the COVID shutdowns. In-person instruction is unquestionably superior in numerous ways, including face-to-face interaction between and among instructors and students, providing structure, group work opportunities, accountability to the student, more focus and less distractions, and social interaction and development of interpersonal skills, among other benefits.

[00:04:47] In Ms. LaBelle's reply, she implied that there are not enough students taking Latin at the higher levels, and I was also told by our school counselor that there aren't enough Latin teachers. To achieve a workable outcome, I am suggesting two proposals for you to review and consider implementing as an immediate solution.

[00:05:08] Number one, one itinerant Latin teacher would float between two to three high schools within the same high school cluster to teach the high-level Latin courses. Or number two, make the high-level Latin courses readily available at one high school for any student in that same cluster who wants to take the high level Latin to be able to take it at that one high school.

[00:05:33] This would include consideration. Anyway, I could just finish this. I have like two, three short. Thank you. No, okay.

[00:05:48] Yes, I had communicated, yes, because Dr. Rasheed and Ms. Chernoff had replied to me, so they have seen it, but I kind of had a little bit more for this public speaking session.

[00:06:09] So I had a little bit more, but I can send that because I was working with our school counselor.

[00:06:39] - We are continuing. We do offer some of our higher level courses. The information that the public commenter made is accurate in terms of the rationale. We want to balance the availability of courses with the available FTEs and staffing. And so we don't wanna close doors for those students that wanna pursue higher level courses, but we wanna be creative in how those are offered.

[00:07:01] We are in our second year of implementing this change. We have seen a level of success with the program, but we continue to evaluate it. Based on the public comment and the feedback we received prior to the meeting, we are taking a look at what's happening at Lavin County High School.

[00:07:16] We're taking a look at the success of the students that have been in this model. But this is one of those tensions where we wanna provide as many opportunities for our students and we need to be open for different models. So I appreciate where the public commenter is coming from I empathize with the situation and we are looking at the individual case, but then we're also looking at long-term solutions when it comes to courses such as Latin, the higher level Latin courses.

[00:07:44] So I'll just submit this online.

[00:08:03] Thank you so much. We now need to take a look at the minutes from our last meeting.

[00:08:30] Do I hear a motion to approve the minutes from our June 6th meeting? I'd like to make a motion to approve. I second. Thank you. It has been moved and properly seconded that we accept the minutes that we've received from the June 6th meeting.

[00:08:47] All in favor? Aye. Aye. Okay. I saw your hand, Lauren. Is that an aye? Aye. Thank you. Thank you. Then the minutes have been received and approved as submitted to us from the June 6th meeting.

[00:09:09] Now, we will move to information items. Am I correct? And we will start with the Department of Academics Policy 50-30, Assessment and Grading. Thank you, Dr. Deans.

[00:09:30] I did want to ask Ms. Chernoff if she wanted to speak to this item first, or should I just dive into the presentation? I'm happy to give just a little bit of background about why we're bringing it up at this meeting and just the work that's kind of gone on behind the scenes since February, since I originally brought it up, I think as new business or even as an agenda item.

[00:09:52] But just for the public's information, and I know, Dr. Ellis, you're going to share this, but feedback was solicited from different staff members about whether or not we felt like we were in a place to revise this based off of the conversation in the CNI meeting in February.

[00:10:07] my fellow colleagues kind of wanting to ponder it and think about needing more information and needing to hear from the public. And based off of overwhelming feedback that there were some areas within this policy that needed to be looked at, we have gotten to this place of looking at adopting a timeline, a process and a timeline for how that might look. And that's what that presentation is today. It's

just information as we consider the next steps towards really digging into the revision process of policy 50-30, which I believe is not formally up for review until 2026. So this helps

[00:10:42] us kind of get ahead of that curve and make sure we really have it in a good place. Did that cover it? Thank you. Perfect. All right. So with that context, we can go ahead to the next slide. And I did want to start with grounding the discussion in the philosophy of assessment and grading that's described in section C of policy 50-30. In our discussions over the course of the last several months and in the feedback that we've received i do want to point out that the philosophy itself has not really been questioned or challenged most people say they agree with the philosophy

[00:11:20] and they struggle with the implementation in their classrooms so i think that's important to note as we move forward which really gets to the heart of the issue and that is three big ideas that we keep hearing as we have been gathering i would say informal feedback over the past several months that do keep coming up and those three topics are formative assessments reassessments or retakes and the 50 floor for a variety of reasons teachers frequently identify these as pain points in their classroom and in terms of assessment and grading in their work

[00:11:58] so as ms shernoff mentioned this policy while it's not officially up for revision until 2026 that does not prevent the school board from revising it earlier so this timeline has outlined steps that would revise the policy this year with implementation in the 25-26 school year and you are perfectly within your purview to do that we we would consider 2026 the deadline for the five-year revision but not a firm date that we have to follow so which is why given all the feedback that we've received over the past several

[00:12:37] months and what Dr. Spence has heard in his many listening sessions last year and has specifically called out in his post-entry plan as one of the action steps, we do plan on going through this process with you this year. So we have already started to gather and synthesize feedback on the implementation of policy 50-30. As I mentioned back in the spring when we talked about this, one of the biggest challenges was the timing of the implementation and the start of COVID.

[00:13:07] The policy was implemented right at the start of COVID, and so the training that we had planned, while robust, was not really implemented the way we had hoped. And I do think some of the challenges come with that, and inconsistencies across schools. So, that being said, while we are revising the policy, we are also planning to put supports in place and guidance for teachers to hopefully clarify parts of the policy as it's currently written, support them along the way while we while we also revise the policy for

[00:13:39] future so this next slide outlines the policy revision process it is a little more complex than a typical policy review and that just consists of committee feedback and public in a brief public feedback window so we are in the process of finalizing an analysis of the feedback that we received last year through our thought exchange that we did with teachers, through our educator cabinet focus groups that we had, and through our teacher advisory council. We plan to share that feedback with you

[00:14:16] all at the September CNI meeting for your review to give you an idea of the feedback that we've heard thus far. Then we would engage in a more formal feedback process and revision process through focus groups of teachers and focus groups of students to look at research, best practices, And speaking of research, we spent a considerable amount of time previously looking at research.

[00:14:45] And that research has shifted, as research does. It has evolved over time. So we want to be very intentional about looking at current research on assessment and grading practices. So we would take several months to do that process and then engage in the official policy revision process.

[00:15:03] We would present a draft to you with all of the feedback that we have gathered. the committee would review that feedback and then we would obviously go through the standard stakeholder review process so it would be open for public feedback ultimately with board approval and implementation by the start of the school year the next slide has the same information broken down over the course of the months in the school year so you can see the fall would really be devoted to those focus groups research and policy revision with the hope that the

[00:15:40] public would have a chance to provide input on a draft policy in January in the January timeframe in February the CNI committee would look at it with a tentative date of March where the full school board would review the draft policy this would give us time to have an approved policy we would and we've done this before have a start date of implementation of a policy so it would not go in into effect with two months remaining in the school year that would not make sense but that would give us time to develop a strong communication

[00:16:16] plan professional learning for teachers it would give CLT's a time to have conversations prior to the end of the school year and the start of the next school year I am I do not begin to guess what changes might be made to this policy I think we need to trust the process like I said I think the the philosophy is is solid and there are definitely a variety of ways it's interpreted and implemented in schools that I think we need to clear up there is I do want to mention there is an attachment in board docs that is meant

[00:16:55] to be guidance for teachers this has not been pushed out to schools yet but we do plan to provide this to our middle and high schools prior to students coming back it is served it's it's really a flowchart for clts to be thinking about in terms of using the policy as it's currently written while we go through the revision process so that's available for you on the screen and in board docs so the first page is a flowchart and then the second page has some frequently asked questions that that do typically come up in our

[00:17:33] conversations with teachers one thing that does come up quite regularly is the concept of retakes and is there ever a point where a student should not be given the opportunity to retake an assessment so that is addressed and there are certainly opportunities or times when students have clearly taken advantage of the process and should not be offered to retake and I will ask mr.

[00:18:00] roundsley if he wants to speak to any of this I would so I would I would add that those questions really do focus on the things that we're hearing from teachers one of the things we also wanted to clarify in here was that supporting assessment and grading really is a team process in schools that we the policy specifically calls out student support teams of counselors or school social workers deans administrators that all of those people are available to help support this process and to help teachers navigate some of the parts that are in that policy so that that's a key point that we wanted to bring up to that

[00:18:39] this really is a team effort within our schools to support student learning and student achievement thank you and that concludes the information that we had to share I'm happy to answer any questions I have a comment we haven't worked on the discipline side of schools for an extended time in my life we know that if a student has no hope of passing then that student does become a concern

[00:19:14] in terms of discipline in the classroom so given that floor of 50 and if that child has a an awakening during that semester it would give that child the opportunity to actually move forward and have success in that particular in that particular class concerning the retakes we also have students who are homeless. And if that night before the test was a night when they just drove around all night with

[00:19:51] their parents rather than having a place to sleep, then that child might not have reviewed his or her notes. So I see value in the policy as written. I think that what you said about the team approach is going to be the answer versus throwing the policy out and starting over that someone other than the classroom teacher can help with those students who have crises that they where they

[00:20:26] may not be able to prepare for an assessment so that's just my comment on it having having had to deal with kids who have no hope in a class does anyone else lauren do you have any further comments Yeah, I want to piggyback off of what you said. I've done a deep dive on 5030.

[00:20:56] It came up a lot when we were knocking doors. It came up a lot when I was working in the schools. And obviously, you know, there seems to be momentum around at least revisiting. And I'll be honest, at first, I was sort of like, man, we do need to just like scratch this and start again. But I'm with you, Dr. Deans. And, you know, Dr. Ellis and Mr. Slevin and even Dr. Spence and I had a conversation this week about that sort of shift in my thinking.

[00:21:19] As I look at the policy, the bones and the structures and the philosophy are really strong. And so I don't think we're really looking, at least from my perspective, I'm not looking at a total overhaul. But what I do think we need to do is look at where we have those situations where certainly we always want to have the student in mind first.

[00:21:38] right? Like if it's a vulnerable situation, we never want to write a kid off where they cannot get back in the game and prove themselves. Those are definitely things that I think this policy intended to address. I think the flip side of that is what Dr. Ellis mentioned, is that there are kids that work the system, that outsmart the system. And we might need to look, and I think we need to really press into the process and press into listening to our educators who have been living with this policy and executing the policy as is and start to really see where do we need some parameters around protecting teachers so they're not in the 11th hour always grading

[00:22:17] retakes or late submitted work? Where do we make sure that kids are prepared for the real world where there isn't a 50% grading floor necessarily or where you have to be on time or get your work done? So I just think it needs some balance. I think that right now it doesn't have a lot of those parameters. And again, I think the research has shifted a bit and the professional development plan that was supposed to be in place was never really implemented because of COVID. So we have a unique opportunity now to have lived through this policy a bit and we can really, through those focus groups, which I think are going to be key. And I've mentioned this before, but I'm, we're

[00:22:54] going to do, I'm hoping we're going to do those in-house. We don't need an outside third party to come in and tell us how to run those focus groups. These are teachers and students who have lived this policy and can give us great feedback. But I do think in light of the feedback that we have already received and really partnering with Dr. Spence through the post-entry plan, which I know we're committed to, he spent all that time meeting and talking with people. And this was one of the things he said came up at every single session. So really just kind of thinking about how we can move this forward and do our due diligence as a school board to respond to those,

[00:23:32] that feedback, but I, I'm not really in the headspace of having to revamp the whole entire thing. I think we have a good base. We just need to work on some definitions and some boundaries and parameters. So I'd be curious if that's kind of what Dr. Rasheed is thinking too, or what your guys' thoughts are for sure on the different areas. May I, Chair? Thank you. I am along the lines of both my colleagues. Again, first, when I heard about it, my kids started going to middle school and I saw what the challenges were, then I kind of revamped or

[00:24:09] say changed my mind instead of doing away with such a system. I felt that this does give second chances. And you also got to consider the situations that the students are coming from or how are they living and what are the challenges that they're facing. I do like the flowchart that Dr. Ellis referred to. I like their frequently asked questions. Can a teacher give less than 50%, for example, because we do know that there are students out there that, you know, that don't really give a concerted effort, and, you know, it's not really genuine. So it does address that matter. I think it should be more clarified,

[00:24:47] more brought to light, and I think there could be some, I guess, training for the teachers or kind of reinforcement on such situations, and that's how I feel along that situation. Thank you. And I think the part of the training that I heard today that's most valuable is the team part. The team, the in-house team working with it versus just each teacher having to deal

[00:25:18] with it alone. Okay. I agree. Yeah. Dr. Deans, I think that's a great point. And I think post COVID, we've really, especially in LCPS, I can speak personally, like we've come a long way in those different learning teams and teachers really rely on that for a lot of decision making. And so I think this, this falls perfectly into that format. And I'm excited that the work will be happening quickly with the focus groups, because it's right at the forefront of people's mind in that timeline. That's right towards where you're starting to think about grading towards the end of

[00:25:53] the first quarter. And so I think teachers will have a fresh perspective on, you know, what's working and what's not, and we can kind of go from there. But I agree with you. I think that the team lens is really important. I agree with the three lenses that you guys pulled out, Dr. Ellis, around formative assessment, reassessment, and the grading floor. I think there'll be some interesting conversations about that. But I'm ready to commit to moving forward with the timeline as is and, you know, begin the process of really revisiting this. So I'm hopeful that I'm kind of hearing I think that I'm hearing that from my colleagues as well but I'll let

[00:26:29] you clarify any objections Dr. Rishi in terms of moving forward with the timeline no I have no objections okay thank you then we'll look to hear that in the in the in the board meeting is that what I'm here is that what I'm hearing Dr. Ellis so the next step is we will come back in September with an analysis of the feedback that we received through the thought exchange and

[00:27:02] educator cabinet okay okay and we'll begin organizing focus groups okay very good very good thank you um our next information item is generative artificial intelligence and we Dr. Rasheed and I are not available to be put

[00:27:31] on the spot thank you Dr. Deans so I did give Dr. Deans a heads up that we're going to do a little workshop today, but it is just dipping your toes in, dipping your toes in, and we have two of our great educational technology leaders here, so Mike Hendrickson and Nick Rosita are going to be presenting this topic, but we do hope to have some dialogue and a little bit of interaction with the committee on this topic.

[00:28:01] As you recall, at the end of last year, the topic of artificial intelligence, specifically generative artificial intelligence, was risen, and there was some level of interest in looking at our existing policies and the potential of a new policy. So we wanted to have a little bit of a dialogue with this committee prior to diving into any work and also give you an update on the significant amount of work that we have done internally to start to prepare our system for what's coming when it comes to generative AI.

[00:28:29] So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Mike Hendrickson and Nick Rosita. And I would also like to acknowledge that our Chief Technology Officer, Aaron Smith, is here. And he can jump in at any point. Good afternoon. Thanks for having us here to continue the conversation about generative artificial intelligence. And as Mr. Slevin noted, we're going to share a little bit of updates on some of the work that we've been doing and then hopefully have you guys get a chance to explore a little bit about some of the resources we've built, we've been developing

[00:29:04] and maybe we'll use a little AI to help us do that. We'll see how that process goes. So really it's important to, when we're talking about generative AI, that we frame it in this larger context of artificial intelligence.

[00:29:22] Artificial intelligence is not new, it's been around for quite some time, and there's lots of subsets underneath of artificial intelligence and generative AI, meaning computer tools that can develop human-like outputs, whether that is text-based or audio or video or images, that's really what is the relatively new development in artificial intelligence is this idea of generative artificial intelligence.

[00:29:53] So we want to share a little bit about some updates to the work that we've been doing. So we shared a little bit last time, but we've added a few things to it as we've been continuing to do some work.

[00:30:09] So things that we have complete and available for staff in the community is a website that we've developed with high-level information and resources where staff can learn more and the community can learn more. We've developed a one-pager just to build some awareness among staff and help them consider some of the questions and opportunities and challenges related to generative AI.

[00:30:31] And we've been working -- we've developed a set of guiding principles aligned to the one LCPS strategic plan for excellence that help that will help to shape our approach to generative artificial intelligence as we are moving to continue to consider what the impact of this new technology is on not in kind public schools so things that we're actively working on right now we have a generative AI guide that is a little bit more of a comprehensive set of resources for teachers and schools and and students to just provide some some

[00:31:06] some guidance about you know what is generative ai what should we be considering about how we use it use ai in instruction and to support our processes and our work here as a school division we have developed and are offering some initial professional learning offerings both to school leaders division leaders and also beginning with our august professional learning day some sessions for teachers to learn more about generative AI and some of the resources we've been developing and we've started developing evaluation tools that can help us select and identify tools that are going to meet the needs

[00:31:45] of Loudoun County Public Schools and as more and more technology tools begin to have generative AI built into them allow us to use a use some some common tools to look at those technologies with a critical eye and then some upcoming work that we are looking forward to is developing some ongoing professional learning maybe standalone sessions that teachers can attend maybe resources that

we can provide to school level instructional facilitators or school level leaders that they can turn around to teachers in those buildings

[00:32:19] developing skill progressions for both staff and students that outline what people need to know when they need to know it what's a logical sequence that that that they can where they can learn those skills and then we're developing or really curating some resources for teachers to take and use with students and talking with students about learning learning about AI so I started to collect those resources for our teachers as well so we wanted to give you guys an opportunity to a explore the resources that we've been developing

[00:32:59] specifically this generative AI guide and it's a it's a big document and we don't really necessarily have time to dig deeply into it inside of a 20-minute section of a committee meeting so we thought that maybe we might be able to explore this document a little bit using a generative AI tool if you guys are up for it so in board docs you have a document they it's labeled 2024 generative AI guide it's the first attachment on this agenda item if you haven't already

[00:33:38] already you might consider downloading that to your computer turn off as i did my i cheated i

[00:34:02] did it ahead because i was worried about technology and i don't have any help here so all right so

[00:36:04] we've downloaded that document and uh now we want to uh explore the contents of the document but you know we're pressed for time and uh we don't have time to read through everything but we want to get a high little high level overview so perhaps generative ai can help us do that so we're going to use Microsoft Copilot today to ask Copilot to give us a little bit of a summary of some important points that school board members might consider or might need to be considering as we're thinking about how to provide direction to staff about generative AI. So if we go to copilot.microsoft.com you can see

[00:36:42] Neil's got it up on the the screen there and then the other resource that you might want to have up is the slide deck because we have a suggested prompt that you might want to copy and paste into co-pilot when we upload this document

[00:37:54] all right so I think Nick is helping helping the committee members take that document that we downloaded and uploaded into co-pilot and now that we've got that document uploaded now we just want to ask co-pilot a question to help us process that document so we've got a suggested prompt here in the slide deck that you might choose to to just copy and paste right in I think Neil grabbed it and copied it there but basically we're going to ask copilot you know we're going to we're going

[00:38:31] to give copilot a persona you're a school board member of a large suburban school division and your division just produced the attached document to help teachers understand more about generative ai using the document identify three important points that might help shape the school board's approach to generative ai so if you've got the attachment attached and we've got the prompt entered into the chat box you can go ahead and click submit and we'll see what kind of responses that we generate sure you share where you want us to do this yep you can paste that question in that we had it as an example in the in the slides sure it's probably easiest if we

[00:39:10] copy it out of the slides do you want to help help people do that nick it is long you can

[00:39:49] paraphrase if you if you'd like just a suggestion all right so hopefully you've got that question in

[00:40:58] and you've you've hit submit and now copilot is reading the document and then considering your question and producing a summary for you to consider about some things that the committee might be thinking about as we're considering how we move forward with our approach to generative AI. Now, you might ask a follow-up question. You'll notice that Gemini, or sorry, the co-pilot offered some suggested follow-up questions. You can simply click one of those and see if you can dig a little bit deeper, or you might generate your own follow-up question. So you can continue to have a conversation with the with the chat bot right so it kind of knows the

[00:41:35] context of the answer it provided and that can answer follow-up questions there so I think maybe we can just have a little bit of conversation about the experience and then the response that you received I'd be interested to know if committee members thought that the response was useful or a reasonable summary and also how might you see tools like this supporting your work as a board member and supporting teachers work in schools supporting leaders and

[00:42:13] administrators work I think we can open to some conversation my follow-up question was how can we address student concerns about the privacy and then it gave me six ways in which we could involve students so yes that was helpful without me having to do all the research and then type it myself is that what

[00:42:47] you're saying. Very good yeah thank you. I think it's very helpful for educators to use as a tool you know for day-to-day work for training or coming up with slide points for their students I think it's great for school board members as well staff everyone I didn't hear you say if it's useful for students did you did you also mention that for them to utilize? I didn't ask that specific question now but I think it's an important part of the conversation that's why I didn't go into I was going to say something that I was like you know what maybe I need to hold off on that

[00:43:25] topic but for educators and staff school board admin I think it's great it's it's very useful very resourceful it can pinpoint things very easily you can get to the point it can add on give you something to paraphrase or make it easier for students to understand and what they do on a day-to-day basis well thank you for engaging in that exercise and do we want to see if Ms. Chernoff has anything that you would like to add since you did the pre-work? I just wanted to thank you for making it interactive. I always think that that's fun. I'm pretty used to that in LCPS, but I love

[00:44:02] that. Yeah. I mean, obviously it's super useful. It's kind of scary to me how fast it can thumb through a document. I mean, I read through the entire guide and was thoroughly impressed with the work you put out and, you know, not to minimize your work, but then to have it summarized in those three points, it's kind of like, oh yeah, that's what it's saying. And it's, it is really, it is such an interesting lens when you think about how efficiency, I mean, we, how many documents do we read guys? I mean, so many. And so to have that like sort of high level pull out as a school board member is so useful, obviously. And then to have the follow-up questions is great. But then in

[00:44:42] terms of thinking about how this could alleviate stress on staff. And then of course, I think Dr. sheet is on to the right question is, and now how do we think about students? And of course, we can think about the benefits, but I also, it's concerning. This is very appealing for students to type in assignments and boom, it's done in two minutes. So that is a shift. And I think that you've done some really, really beautiful work on outlining those concerns and really highlighting where that might be something we really, as a school board, need to consider if we do a policy,

[00:45:15] When we do a policy, you know, to kind of support, give this sort of some teeth and so that staff really feel like, A, they have agency to use it educationally as they see fit within the parameters and then B, to be on the lookout for those concerns. So those are the two highlighted areas that, you know, I really was coming into this discussion thinking about and through that activity was highlighted even more.

[00:45:37] And I'd like to share that we had earlier with our school board, they talked about how many hours of training teachers have to have that are required, and now to add this as an additional training for them, my question is when, where, what time?

[00:46:07] So we have that in the presentation, and you can follow up if you have additional questions. so we'll go through the next couple slides and then we have a look some questions about policy before we wrap up this information item so like sure so leading into that or following on that question about professional learning and what that might look like some upcoming work that we are getting ready for is to prepare our school-based instructional facilitators for technology to be ready to provide that just-in-time support to our our teachers they really are that

[00:46:44] that that side-by-side resource that can help teachers explore help answer questions help help them think about what impact this technology might have on both their their just just their their instructional practice but also just you know the the way they engage in their work so that's a that really is gonna be an important tool for us in providing that just-in-time there is so much on teachers for this particular school year with with additional professional learning requirements and we know that there's not going to be necessarily time for every teacher to sit down and engage in dedicated

[00:47:23] professional learning about generative artificial intelligence we want to offer options for teachers who are interested and want to explore and then those school-based instructional facilitators for technology are going to be essential to our approach to provide just-in-time support for teachers so So we're looking at supporting our IFTs, we're looking at developing a cohort of teachers that can be generative AI innovators and really do some targeted work with those teachers to explore how generative AI supports their practice, how it supports instruction, create

[00:48:01] and find exemplars of what really works for these teachers. We're looking at planning some sessions for high school teachers to explore a little bit more deeply as potentially an option during those additional professional development days that have been added into the calendar.

[00:48:16] And we are working with DDI to identify some potential additional tools to make available to staff in addition to co-pilot, which is the one tool that our staff have access to at the moment, the one generative text tool.

[00:48:34] Additionally, we are beginning to think about how can we evaluate tools with a forward future-looking eye as to how do we allow our students to begin to gain some hands-on experience with these tools something we want to make sure we're being very cautious about and we're thinking about from an instructional perspective and from a privacy perspective and and making sure we're taking that that comprehensive look at how and when we might provide access to tools for students that they can begin to use to explore this world of generative

[00:49:10] artificial intelligence and then we are looking at connections between generative artificial intelligence and existing standards that we are already implementing in our schools like the 2024 computer science SOLs which are new for newly revised for this year and the digital learning integration

standards which outline you know how technology can support instruction and the way students should be using technology inside of classrooms Mr. Grizita is there anything you would add about those 2024 SOLs and any connections to regenerative AI you see there.

[00:49:39] Male Speaker: Sure. Thanks, Mr. Hendrickson. So we are looking at AI and machine learning, computer science, SOLs, starting in fourth grade. Those standards are going to be published on the VDOE website at the end of this month, and they go all the way through to twelfth grade.

[00:49:57] Male Speaker: So we will have time for additional questions, but one of the important things that we want to make sure we hear from board members is, based on the information shared today we know it's a lot and so this isn't your only chance to give us this feedback but what should staff be considering when proposing policy updates related to generator generative AI this was a topic of interest of the committee and I believe May so we wanted to ask this question at the end of this

[00:50:31] information item so your question is to us what are some considerations so there was a sense when we met in May that we needed a policy related to artificial intelligence staff knows that there are some existing policies that may need to be updated with some of the advances in generative AI such as our acceptable use policy potentially looking at our instructional resource selection process

[00:51:07] but looking at the work that we've done are there points are there aspects of the work that you see from a governance perspective that may make sense in a policy versus guidance documents or professional learning for teachers well I think the students are going to be ahead of the teachers in this because of

[00:51:34] their comfort level with using it so I recommend that a committee come up with what those policies would be that would also include students because because I I think the students are going to be ahead of the teachers in using it.

[00:51:59] So, Lauren, and I'm sorry, Ms. Chernow, and Dr. Rasheed, what do you think? It's kind of tied to what Dr. Ellis had in the previous slide deck where there was, I think it was a flow of how something is introduced.

[00:52:24] I don't remember. I would have to pull it up again. but it had something where getting feedback, stakeholders, something along that line. I would like to see not exactly that format. I mean, I'm sure we could kind of go skip some of those items, but I think this would be really helpful if it followed that format where we can get information from all the stakeholders, including especially teachers.

[00:52:46] I think you had mentioned the concern was toppling this training onto their current training is a big concern. We don't want to stress out the teachers maybe making it optional for them to do that because of the amount of work that they had. But following that format would be great to see if this would be very desirable for the public, beneficial students.

[00:53:08] I haven't tackled because that looks like it might be abused. We are focusing first on teachers. While we're keeping an eye of tools that are available for students and students will have access to it, we need to acknowledge that.

[00:53:23] we're not necessarily looking to roll out imminently any kind of student tool. We are evaluating some teacher tools. We do see the value in affording the efficiency that comes with generative AI for our teachers. But we're also going to be measured there to make sure that the teachers are ready.

[00:53:40] Knowing the tremendous amount of professional learning that is already on our teachers, we are taking a supportive posture with generative AI. That's why we're relying on job-embedded resources, such as our instructional facilitators of technology that are in each school, that we're able to push through resources as needed, you know, that just-in-time support, but we also wanna open up avenues for our innovative teachers.

[00:54:04] There are teachers that are ready to dive into the generative AI pool, so to speak, and so we wanna support them with that. And then we also, when you look at the trends happening nationally, high school teachers are the ones seeing the impact most dramatically, and also the ones that are grappling with some of the real sticky issues when it comes to generative AI.

[00:54:25] So we are planning on some more direct support during those additional county-wide professional development days because they don't necessarily have the same amount of training that the elementary and middle school teachers have. But even that's gonna be a soft touch.

[00:54:41] It's gonna be optional, we're gonna allow principals to make sure it fits into what's happening at the school. So we're trying to take different levels of approach this that is more supportive then you must do this right now this gives me reassurance of what you mentioned kind of easing into it rather than just kind of jumping into it thank you for that and I was also thinking of those students who are dually enrolled those college professors are going to be further ahead than even your high school student than your high school teachers and so that's

[00:55:21] going to be another differentiation in terms of which teachers are using it and which are not and is the kid going to be able to differentiate between I'm doing this in my dual enrolled class with the university but I can't do it here at high school because we haven't caught up yet we are in conversations with our partners such as Northern Virginia Community College having conversations with NVCC Loudon on they want to know what we're doing and we're asking them what they're doing so we do have a good partnership and that's something that we'll continue to navigate as we work with our connection between LCPS and

[00:56:00] Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason and yes yes we do have multiple partners thank you for reminding me but our most significant one is Northern Virginia Community College but similarly to Mason and James Madison and Shenandoah University and Richard Bland and all of our great partners yeah thanks guys I mean the work here is just phenomenal I mean what you guys generated from May. I know you are already in progress to what you have now in terms of this guide and some of the things you put out about citing and plagiarism and the different roles that it can play as a tool. I think there was one particular chart that talked about it,

[00:56:39] using it as partner work, using it as individual. I think the work of the policy is actually in the work that you've already done. I still feel strongly that we need a policy. I think policies provide clarity and consistency. I think we saw that with the personal device use policy that, you know, we wanted to make sure that we had it countywide so that everybody understood what the expectations were, even though there were individual schools who were kind of doing each their own thing. I have a feeling with the rapid growth of AI that that's what's going to

[00:57:12] happen in our schools. And so I really do think that we can get ahead of this and have just some basic baseline, sort of like what we did today, you know, those three little areas as a school board, the things that we really need to consider and just sort of outline those provisions. That's the kind of thing I

would be looking for, specifically how to use it as a tool and how not to use it as a tool, really defining those two things. And then I also, you know, I know we've been beating PD over the head and we've talked about it a lot, but I just, I did, I'm grateful for the clarification from you, Mr. Slevin, because IFTs are some of the most sought

[00:57:52] after individuals in schools in terms of that real-time professional development, trying out different robotics things, STEM activities, different programs, and teachers want this kind of professional development in their classrooms. I think they're looking for that. I'm hearing that.

[00:58:08] It's on the forefront of everyone's mind. It can be really, really cool, and it can be really, really, I think, scary. So I think that's where my mind is still on making sure we have a policy. And like I said, I think the work is here. So I don't know that we, I agree with Dr. Rasheed, I don't think it has to be as thorough as the grading policy. I think that's a sort of a different path, but I think we should follow, get the building blocks in place to start moving down that path so that we can engage stakeholders and get that feedback and start to get something in place since it is at our doorstep. Thank you, Chair. I'm a professor, a full-time professor

[00:58:48] at Northern Virginia Community College. I know that many of the professors there are using the AI tool when they're generating their lectures or coming up with any type of their lessons during the course of the academic year. I know that the good thing is that when it comes to seniors, for example, in high school, when they move on to go to college, be it whatever college, it's nice if they, and I say this cautiously, it would be nice if the seniors get a little bit of a touch of the AI because they will be utilizing the tool somehow, some way, once

[00:59:24] they go to college. But I say that cautiously only because I understand it's such a powerful tool that it could be abused. So thank you. My other thought is generally we do policies and we put them on a cycle for update.

[00:59:47] I think this policy cannot be put on a five-year update. It's going to grow as the AI content grows. And so the policy would have to grow almost yearly depending on what new is coming up.

[01:00:03] So if it's acceptable to the committee, what I would propose is that staff takes this feedback, and your point is well taken, and one approach is we have many existing policies that have to do with the world in which our students live, and there are components that could be updated to have stronger language when it comes to generative AI. So we could identify existing policies that could we could embed some of this information in and then they're in the five-year cycle existing policies or we could take an approach of looking at a

[01:00:39] standalone policy and there there are pros and cons of both approaches and staff will will meet and discuss that and then we'll we'll come back and have further discussion with the Chernoff as the chair just kind of see where where we want to go as an organization so Aaron do you have something just to piggyback on those comments so the acceptable use policy is already mandated to be reviewed every two years by state code so we do bring that in front of the board a lot more often than a standard policy so that it would be a good place I think to start to include some of these principles as they are going to be

[01:01:15] I mean when we had our AI work group the first hour was catching up from what happened the last three weeks because it's just changing so rapidly and the other point I wanted to touch on is getting tools in students hands is really going to be reliant is incumbent on our partners in their terms and

conditions and what that student data privacy looks like so when you're over 18 and you're in college you have a completely different terms and conditions set than when you're 15 and in high school so we're being very thoughtful with that which is one of the reasons that staff have access to tools now and that also we're very deliberate of choosing tools for staff because they are data protected environments versus just going

[01:01:53] to any open GPT that exists out there these are areas where we have contractual agreements there's data protections in place so again being thoughtful of we don't want FERPA violation because student PII is put into that so that's really why we're leaning on co-pilot and soon to be Google Gemini to have those tools available for staff but we definitely want to get them in students hands it's just when it's safe to get it into students hands and when those terms and conditions allow us to get them into students hands and I think one of the things you said like when they're 18 and over is different than the 15-year-old. I think teachers, that needs to be emphasized to teachers

[01:02:29] too, because teachers are, they have autonomy in terms of they have it, they sometimes will overshare with the student. So I think that should be emphasized with teachers, that the rules will be different for a 15-year-old and an 18-year-old. Yeah, and it's evolving so quickly that our vendor partners are making these changes. So I say something is 18 and over now, and by the next meeting it may be 13 and over so it's one of those things where it's getting in front of it is what we're I think it's using it ethically having a mindset supporting those who want to be innovators

[01:03:05] in it that's what we really want to be at this point and then really just reacting and evolving as the as that entire community evolves and and not that we're voting but I if I had to vote I would say have a standalone policy initially until they get ease into it so we're in that I agree. Yeah. And Neil, can I, Dr. Slevin, Mr. Slevin, can I ask a clarifying question?

[01:03:33] Of course. Is there, so in the governance process through policy, if we had a standalone policy, couldn't the regulation be something that is kept up with and updated alongside the standalone? So the standalone could more be like the grid of the rights and the wrongs of AI and how to use it and how not to use it. And then the regulation could include things like this guide and then the different provisions that are given through the privacy and the different tools that we actually have. Is that correct? Yes, we could, you know, we could rely on the policy for those philosophical pieces and the regulation really gets into the weeds of the day-to-day

[01:04:10] work. So I'm hearing the direction the board is leaning towards. This would be not, there's probably not any existing policy, like a VSBA model policy. As often is the case, Loudoun is on leading edge and so we will get together with staff um and we will spend some time looking at what is what are some potential options and as we plan future agendas we'll we'll we'll bring this back to the cni committee at a near future date if that's if that works for the committee thank you

[01:04:46] looking at the time we do have two more information items in a closing at six o'clock we should have time but if we're ready to move on to Watson Mountain we do have some school staff members here that I'd like to invite up to the table dr. Deans sure so is that the middle school okay the middle school schedule pilot so as we

[01:05:23] get situated I'm excited to invite the school leadership team of our 100th school Watson Mountain Middle School led by principal Lenny Compton who is here to give an update on some innovation in terms of scheduling at Watson Mountain.

[01:05:42] So I'm going to turn it over to Lenny, and he can introduce the team. Good evening, everyone. So happy to be with you today. I want to start with my direct supervisor, Gus Martinez, the director of middle school.

[01:05:58] Sorry, sorry. So I want to introduce myself, Lenny Compton, principal of Watson Mountain, along with our assistant principals, Trustee Oliver and Julia Russell, and Gus Martinez, our director of middle school education. Thank you. Thank you for inviting us today. I wanted to welcome this experienced team of principals and assistant principals in that we have a very unique situation at Watson Mountain with only sixth graders next year.

[01:06:23] Because of that, we've worked very closely with stakeholders to see how we can respond to students' needs differently. This is not something that we will be replicating in all middle schools. It's something that we want to look and explore to see how it will work at Watson, especially because of their unique situations so without saying too much I don't want to um be ahead of you I'll turn it over to you so given the time we'll push through with our agenda um if you can move to the next slide we have five things that we'd like to share with you today talking about

[01:06:59] our building blocks and foundations of our school we're going to move to some research that's uh grounds why we are doing this particular change and then we're going to share with you a schedule and calendar review of our change and talk about how we're going to communicate this change to our stakeholders our parents and our students and walk through how we're going to look for feedback and make sure that we're doing what's right by our kids so in terms of the strategic plan this really focuses on goal one empowering students specifically I just want to have you guys go towards 1.1 that core academic excellence we really thought a lot about intentionally looking at our

[01:07:36] schedule to ensure that really students can develop skills that help them further enhance their academic knowledge that help them expand their learning opportunities and really amplify their rich voices so you will see that through today's presentation and throughout our decision-making on a schedule we were very mindful of the mission of Loudoun County Public School knowing that we wanted every student well to reach their full potential and achieve their dreams we wanted to know about their dreams so our schedule is designed to support that as well as making sure that we empower our students to make meaningful

[01:08:09] contributions to the world our schedule definitely allows for that as well all - All right, so as Mr. Slemon talked about us being the 100th school and the 18th middle school that's gonna open this fall, we felt like this was a perfect opportunity to really think about new and what our schedule could look like.

[01:08:30] This year we will only be having sixth graders and 540 of them. And with that, they are all new. They're all new to middle school. They don't know anything else other than coming to our brand new beautiful building. And additionally, we are blessed to not have any itinerant teachers this year, so that allows us to be a little bit more flexible with our schedule.

[01:08:55] So in thinking about three questions that, again, led us to think about this, our first question was, as a new school, what could we inventively do to support students in meeting the mission and vision of Loudoun County Public Schools? The second question we talked about was knowing that middle school is different, and we know that middle schoolers are different and very, very unique.

[01:09:17] we wanted to think about what autonomy we could bring to this schedule and how we could think differently about the structures and the last question we looked at is really as Yeti legends how could our students really leave a print right leave their mark and become legendary and so this schedule looked at how could they be proactive how could they be resilient how could they be inquisitive noble and team-oriented and we felt like our schedule is going to definitely assist in that thinking through our goals of Loudoun County Public Schools we also wanted to look nationally and we wanted to recognize the Association of Middle Middle School Educators, AMLE. It is the dominant

[01:09:54] organization that informs us of how we should educate our middle school students. We also have a goal to work with AMLE to become a school of distinction in the next few years. We already have five schools in Loudoun County that are known as schools of distinction. Out of the 23 recognized schools in the country, Loudoun has five I believe we may have two again at the end of this year so we want to chart that path in order to do that we have to abide by their five essential attributes and for the schedule we looked at two dominant ones empowering

[01:10:29] and engaging in addition we wanted to make sure that our plan really aligned with the instructional framework and all the work that has been happening in this last year and so happily it does in particular we looked at how instruction could be designed with our schedule how students could remain engaged and really how assessments which you'll hear later on could really occur at that top of the the hour the beginning of the day as opposed to the end and our schedule allows for that and ultimately is very student-centered so you'll see that in our further conversation I want to briefly talk about the research behind

[01:11:05] this there's a concept called cognitive fatigue that has been written about in a lot of research periodicals and one of the elements that they shared on the third one there talked about with the map testing they did a national survey and they saw that students would rapidly guess towards when they took the test in the afternoon.

[01:11:24] But in the morning, they did not have as much rapid testing. So we looked at that as one element of if we were to change our schedule, how could we support the research as well? So we want to review with you two main modifications.

[01:11:40] And the first modification is going from an A-B schedule to an A-E schedule. And the second modification is the use of an anchor day. So we're going to spend the next two slides discussing them, but before we move there, we wanted to briefly discuss that we've been working with DDI to ensure that this can work with the current processes that we have in place and also that it can be seen on both student view, parent view, and can be used for our teachers for attendance purposes.

[01:12:10] um no matter a through e of our schedule advisory would maintain in the same place of the day so that there is that form of consistency throughout all five days that will be in the middle of our of our days um a and b days are very traditional schedules um what we have in middle schools and high schools c day is a flip of a day so it's just moving from four to one instead of one to four d is a flip of b day so it's going eight to five instead of five to eight and then our e days um

[01:12:48] every single class would have an equal time period they would see all of their teachers throughout that entire day and we're going to spend a little bit more time going into that so the first modification um is that a to e schedule and so the first thing that we did was was we started to talk to

different stakeholders to make sure that we were in alignment of the type of work that we were trying to do with the research that we had already done.

[01:13:16] Parent feedback, some parent feedback was really interesting about even from medical concerns of like diabetic fluctuations and thinking about how they might be more mentally able in each class if the classes are happening at different times during the week.

[01:13:32] A different parent also talked about appointments and missing the same classes repeatedly, and so how that might be of a preference as well. We also talked to many teachers and got feedback. These are five of our teachers' feedback listed here on the left.

[01:13:50] One of them really talking about capitalizing in students' natural rhythms and optimizing differentiation based on student needs. We especially love that they said that they were thrilled about the idea of a WMS schedule. And then the second modification is really moving to that E-Day, which we call an Anchor Day.

[01:14:10] And so what's exciting about the Anchor Day is that English happens twice within that particular schedule. So on the second English block, students would be engaging in their passion or community project, which is directly aligned with our sixth grade standards, which are connected to research.

[01:14:26] So we're excited for our students to really have a mentor lead them through their own personal interests and community efforts. In addition, this approach allows us to have a music intervention and/or enrichment block. Students would go to music as opposed to that resource.

[01:14:43] They'd be able to use resource if they weren't being pulled out of music for extension or intervention, but that allows groups of students who maybe aren't working together on a regular basis, for example, clarinets and oboes, for them to come together to be able to enrich that musical experience.

[01:15:00] The schedule also is aligned directly the LCPS program of graduate the program of a graduate specifically critical thinking and contributor skills and you'll see that through the schedule as well the anchor day what's exciting for me is that that also is modeled against schools such as Thomas Jefferson so we recognize that even schools at this high elite level are recognizing the need for a time to be able to reset with students and to be able to see them throughout the day and then lastly when students come back from a holiday or an instead extended instructional break we would be starting with an e-day so that they could reset and refocus to get that

[01:15:37] energy back for the great learning ahead of them on the next slide we wanted to share the amount of minutes because we knew that that might be a question that you had and if you look at the comparison here on the left on the left you see with our a and B schedule this year you'll have 88 a days and 87 B days and that's the number of minutes if we were to use an 82 minute class but if If you look at our schedule, we actually will have slightly more minutes, given that if you add what a student will experience on an A and C day and an anchor day, as well as a B and D day and an anchor day.

[01:16:12] I want to highlight as well that during the week, every class will be seen an equal amount of time. Why is that important? If you look at a two-week scenario in the AB, a student can have an A day twice in one week and then three times the following week, opposite for B days.

[01:16:30] In this schedule, they have the same amount of time in every class, every week. - The next slide reviews the different types of qualitative and quantitative observations and feedback that we would like to take throughout the entire school year.

[01:16:49] There are 10 on here, however, we're just gonna highlight a few of them. The first one, really thinking about how do formatives play a role in our assessment process, especially in thinking about anchor days that can be used for intervention and enrichment. Two, three, and four look at surveys.

[01:17:06] survey and feedback from students, from teachers, and then also from parents in the community. Six and eight are really focused on the work that we know that is really imperative to Loudon right now, especially with attendance data and tracking attendance to see if that might change.

[01:17:25] A student that might always be late because they don't like math because it's right in the beginning of the day, but if it's happening at different times, maybe that attendance might look a little bit different. And then also looking at our MTSS plans seeing if we're able to exit more students that may have that may be in the intervention process and then the ninth one which we have kind of talked about with english which is reviewing passion and community projects that could be involved in that second english class that would take place on e-days um thinking going back to our mission and our vision about making meaningful

[01:17:58] contributions to our world but also tying that in with passion and research and then our last slide before our question and answer time. We wanted to share how there is a creative cadence to our schedule. So as an example, during a five-day week you will always see A through E. If there was a four-day week, which we will have, you only will see A through D. And then if there is a three-day week, students will have A and B, and then they will go to an E day for an anchor day.

[01:18:28] So again, consistent time for every week. We mapped it out in the attachments as well so you can see how it outlines throughout the year and as I said Gila mentioned with some exceptions as when we come back from holidays we'll start with an e-day to anchor our students so that they are prepared for the remaining of the week the question often comes up of how would we share this with our community so parents and students actually have access to a couple of communication efforts that we have so every Friday our mountain messenger will come out that again highlights what the next week will bring so students will have that they will also receive the peak so the peak is where we document

[01:19:08] our formatives and summatives that will be occurring for the next week that will also highlight the days and also the additional ones that Terci is going to talk about which are fantastic all right and then the third way that we're going to communicate is really we have our obviously our morning and afternoon announcements we have really amazing school signage in a brand new building which includes our clocks which are completely editable so we can add in additional signage there throughout the building and then additionally because we've worked with DDI when they get on to student view it will tell them the

[01:19:45] day that it is and the schedule that they have now we would like to take any questions that you might have would you like to start with your questions sure I really just have you guys are moving forward with this correct that's my first question yes that's my understanding yeah I'm grateful for the meeting I had ahead with Ms. Mitchell to wrap my brain around all of this. I know that kids are a

[01:20:21] lot more flexible than we as adults are. So I have no concerns really with them adapting to it as long as the communication is there. And I know that you guys, I, you guys are wonderful. I know you're

going to do a great job with that. My biggest question is what has the response been from parents? I know with the trail side pilot, there was a lot of different feedback. They had information sessions um so is has it been fished out to the community already and and what is the response been from parents i know teachers are on board i think that's awesome kids will get there no matter what but i'm wondering about parents absolutely thank you for that question yes we

[01:20:58] want to report that 100 of our teachers enjoyed the fact that this will be piloted at watson mountain we did speak with our pto and unfortunately that's a small group but 100 of our pto members and that was about eight that came to the meeting did ask a lot of questions and after understanding how it works all of them were on board and said this is awesome they're really excited about the opportunity that their kids will have with the schedule we do we'll have a meeting with some parents tomorrow we're inviting some of our founding family parents to the school we're going to share this with them tomorrow and then on the 17th which is a saturday we're inviting

[01:21:34] all of our families where we will share this as well and we will definitely take feedback when they come there thank you so much i think it's i think it's great i i'm very open to the outside of the box thinking especially with middle school i think you hit the nail on the head middle school's a unique situation um i think with our numbers from mtss and the different growth percentages that we're seeing i think that that has to be a focus and so we do have to get creative because what what we're doing now traditionally is not we're not seeing the growth that we want so i'm supportive of the model. What I would love to see as a part of this committee is sort of like a mid-year

[01:22:13] check-in to see some of those data points and observation, and maybe even side-by-side with Trailside, who's doing a similar, different type of schedule. And I think we can kind of triangulate the data between the traditional model and these innovative approaches and see where we need to go moving forward for our kiddos. So I thank you for the work, and I'm anxious to get out and see it in action. Thank you, Chair. Dr. Deans and I had the pleasure of visiting Watson Mountain Middle School and, you know, the 99th and 100th schools that we definitely were able to visit on a hot

[01:22:51] day. And, you know, you guys were so wonderful in giving us a wonderful tour. We got our steps in for that awesome, awesome school, really beautiful. And thank you for the presentation. It was really helpful. I think it is a great model. I am cautious only because it's new and whenever If something's new, I get a little cautious, but I do, I love the whole, I think we touched base too last week.

[01:23:14] I think you guys told me what you were planning on doing, and I just wanted to hear what was, forgive me if you had already mentioned it, what is the teacher feedback on this type of schedule? So we, on page 12, we provided just some snapshots to teacher feedback there.

[01:23:38] We presented this to our teachers at a retreat early June as we were working through things, And we were hesitant to present this because we didn't think that they would go for it. But when we showed them the presentation, it was surprising that 100% said, we want to do this.

[01:23:55] They did have questions about what would happen during inclement weather. We kind of talked about that. But they were really happy about the opportunity to see their kids at different times during the day. The electives were probably the most vocal. A PE teacher came to me and said, you know, at the end of the day, my kids are just exhausted, And it's really, really difficult for them to be truly engaged.

[01:24:17] So if I get a chance to see them at the beginning of the day, I'm going to see a totally different child. And then we also heard from a lot of our SPED teachers that really were behind this, saying the similar things to our PE teachers. I don't know if you guys want to add anything there. I think that what teachers are really most excited about, and being a former middle school principal myself, 540 11-year-olds in the building is a lot.

[01:24:41] And the fatigue that occurs at the end of the day, just like anyone, I'm very curious and I predict that our map data, SOL data, et cetera, is going to be very different from other schools only because they will be taking advantage of the testing in the morning.

[01:24:56] So imagine being an 11-year-old and comes 2 o'clock and here you go and have to sit through another one. Most of us at the middle school level have already experience with kids just bubbling in or just they stop working. They just don't have the stamina and I think that that's why teachers are so excited and parents are so excited, because it's going to take away, hopefully, that variable.

[01:25:22] What do you think, I think you had already mentioned it, but do you see any other pushback or challenges once you incorporate the other grades, 7th grade and 8th grade? Once they come in, obviously it's going to be a bigger amount of students. Do you see any challenges or -- and my other question was, can you foresee any -- not really pushback but just general overall challenges the initial challenge that we see is if we have to share staff how that might work with them for itinerate teachers we're also in a unique position because we are working with Bramilton so more than likely those staff members will come from Bramilton

[01:25:59] which is literally right around a block from us so transportation would not be a problem and of course we would want to align with what Bramilton is doing with their schedule so that's a challenge having a conversation with Bramilton and see if there might be some alignment there otherwise we believe that this can work for 7th and 8th grade as well. I'm excited. Doing something different. You don't do the same thing and expect different results. So you're doing something different to see what

[01:26:33] the results are. So I'm excited about that. I have two children. One is 43 and one is 48. My 43-year-old would go crazy in the morning asking, which book should I put in my book back. Which notebook should I put in my 48 year old would be fine. But there are kids who have these ADHD tendencies, even after training by a mom educator. Have you thought about that or did

[01:27:09] you talk to these special education teachers about that? I was going to say what we've, you're right. One of those were our questions that we talked about, like how can we ensure that they're organized to be able to begin their day and the structures that are in place. Some students for example may be carrying one notebook that has it all there especially for that e-day so that they're prepared for whatever day is before them but also goes back to that communication of the day before especially in that first month you know fortunately mr. Compton will be calling and saying hey can't wait to see you tomorrow it's a C day remember you're gonna have these blocks just to get students into that pattern but part of that is that organizational tools that we give them

[01:27:48] making sure that they've got their binder set up that that is you know every day is there especially for those anchor days we can see that for our students for sure the other thing we were working earlier with our special education teachers was you know in many ways this is very similar to a traditional A day B day schedule so a lot of special education teachers work to have their students set up like an A day binder and a B day binder that same A day and B day binder is going to work for C days and D days so it's

really very similar to the middle school structure that already exists and then they would just need both of those items

[01:28:22] on an EE day and that is something that we're gonna monitor throughout the throughout our time throughout the year if we need to support those students and with our MTSS plans we will do that we're also really happy about advisory because advisory will be consistent our advisor our advisory teachers will be telling our students remember tomorrow is the B day this is what you need to be prepared for that as well so we believe that we have a structure in place to support our students but we will definitely be reviewing that throughout year and see if there are future modifications we need to make. You promise to come back and talk to

[01:28:58] us in mid-year? You got a date. Can we come visit? No, I'm really excited about, sure enough, I'm really excited about seeing something different to see what the results will be. We'll never know if we don't try. Agree. I think it's great. I trust these leaders at the table too. I know them well

[01:29:30] and I know they've got these kids in good hands okay any other questions okay well thank you thank you so Dr. Deans we are at six o'clock we do have the room and staff is available so you the next item it was related to support for fine arts is not time bound we let me sure enough what are your thoughts about it's six o'clock because I had too many questions so what do we do it's up

[01:30:07] to you. I was, um, Mr. Slevin said that it doesn't affect what I'm worried about with fine arts are some budget recommendations for the next cycle. And those will still be available to us if we talk about it in September. So I'm comfortable with moving it. Um, I was under the impression there might be some new business as well, and I didn't want to shortchange that either. So, um, I'm comfortable with moving it to September to give it its full breathing space. Um, if that's not too much of a disruption for staff, but I also can stay on if you want to complete it. So I'll

[01:30:42] leave it to you two to decide. I'm comfortable with rolling it over. I don't know what this is. Yeah, yeah, yeah, but definitely rolling it over to September. Not ignoring it. Is that acceptable? We are here at the will of the board. So I do want to recognize staff for being here, but we will be here in September. This is an important topic for us, and the information is there, and I'll give you some prep time, and we'll come back in September to present this.

[01:31:18] Okay. Yeah, I just don't want to shortchange it. I want to make sure they have their full time. Thank you. I'm sorry, staff. I apologize. Okay, so now we will move to new business.

[01:31:39] Yes, if I may. Yes. So we were given information back in 2022, our survey results of 2022 about languages, world languages. And I noticed that we saw the data about the results of that survey that was conducted at that time. And I was wondering if we can have some talks or additional information about expansion of languages, if there can be additional surveys that can be conducted about world languages. Because I heard from the communities, there's growing interest,

[01:32:14] really growing fast interest for for example the Indian community about Hindi being the very growing language to be offered in the schools so that's one of my some of the one of the items I wanted to say as new business so I can respond if you please so thank you for bringing this up Dr. Rashid and while we we you and I have had some conversations around this I'm glad to talk about this public meeting we continue as you know through the strategic plan and dr.

[01:32:50] Spence's entry plan we want to expand opportunities for students with world language being one of those we also of course need to balance competing priorities when it comes to staff and availability of courses and what schools are able to offer we have heard the feedback regarding Hindi and also Sanskrit from members of our community we do have we are in conversations around Sanskrit for credit for testing one of our neighboring jurisdictions has a partnerships where they're able to award credit for proficiency in Sanskrit but

[01:33:29] we need partners at the table to help us when it comes to building assessments and actually assessing whether or not a student has raised went to that level so it's not a guarantee that we're going to be able to do it but we're taking steps to see if we're able to do that. One of the conversations we're going to have at the August 13th work session is around course planner and decisions around courses.

[01:33:50] And the idea we're going to continue to float is this idea of regional centers or some level of centralized staffing. We have opportunities for innovation in offering new courses, such as Hindi, where we can offer it regionally.

[01:34:05] Well, maybe the goal wouldn't be to have it at all 17 of our schools, but maybe we have it in Della South and in the East and in Central Loudoun and maybe in the West. But there are staffing models that may be outside of the purview of, like, a high school principal trying to fit it into their schedule.

[01:34:24] We did do a survey in 2022, and if you look at the numbers, there was a similar interest in Hindi as there was to Arabic. Arabic was slightly higher, and staff at the time recommended that if we were to move forward with a new language, it would be Arabic.

[01:34:45] The student interest and family interest was one component of that, but it was also in terms of what would we be successful with. Arabic, we actually have a number of teachers already on staff who teach French that would have expressed interest and would be able to step right in and start teaching Arabic courses and helping us with curriculum not to say that that wouldn't be the case with with Hindi but it would offer its own unique sets of challenges that we would need to need to explore but regardless of whether or not we would expand Arabic or Hindi we would likely take a similar approach where we would

[01:35:22] start centrally we would identify schools where we would offer it we would start with a limited amount of cohorts seats perhaps there's some kind of process where students can express interest and have access to those courses but it is a it is a budget item that may be considered in the in the superintendent's estimate of the needs could we do an additional survey we could we've had this conversation before we may if we did that we may want to expand it to other topics outside of oral languages but if it was the will of the board to offer a course such as hindi there there is a model in which it

[01:36:01] It could be supported through budget action or direction from the board in terms of saying, hey, we want to add Hindi, what would that take? But we are definitely thinking about this. We're trying to be innovative in the ways we offer world languages with a variety of models.

[01:36:20] So I'm happy to answer questions. I know I kind of put a lot out there regarding this. And I think ASL is one that I've had a lot of inquiries related to the sign language. So ASL is a similar language with a different we have high level of student interest in it but the difficulty is finding the staff the qualified staff we have made some improvement in that respects but we're also looking at ASL there's interest from

the board in terms of there are parts of the county that students have difficulty accessing an ASL course and so how do we help our high

[01:36:57] school principals and offering sections of ASL so could we do some again centralized staffing with ASL go to a high school principal and saying look you know we're gonna we're gonna assign three sections of ASL to your school it doesn't come from your pot of staffing in terms of trying to balance all these competing needs at your school and so they can build a build a healthy ASL program that hopefully which which will be sustainable but that too such as expanding Arabic expanding Arabic would be a strategic move we'd make through the budget process going into the next fiscal year.

[01:37:36] I just wonder, especially the advanced levels, like the parent who was here earlier, the Latin four or five, and the ASL, yada, yada. Those students are generally juniors and seniors, and when they get in college, they're going to have some evening classes.

[01:37:59] They're going to have some Saturday classes. They're going to have some. So I'm just wondering if there could be some kind of partnership with government agencies to offer some of those courses at 5 o'clock, two days a week.

[01:38:20] I don't know. I'm just talking because the government agencies has all these interpreters. They have someone to speak all of these languages. And I know over in Sterling, at that high school, he has some government agents, some government employees who come to be mentors in his school because the government gives them eight hours per pay period to do outside work.

[01:38:54] And so they actually come during the day. And so I'm just wondering, is there some kind of unique experience? So many of the higher level courses are generally advanced placement courses. for dual enrollment courses. And as you can imagine, with dual enrollment courses, we struggle with finding qualified educators within our own system to offer those courses, and that's part of the reason why we've been combining.

[01:39:19] We have looked at different, we have worked with Northern Virginia Community College for doing a more creative way to offering DE courses during virtual Loudoun, to where it's not completely asynchronous, it's mostly asynchronous, and then the class meets like once a week in the evening, there's an expectation but it takes a certain type of student to have success in that and so we like you said we do target the higher level courses for that if you do have resources that you'd like to suggest that we could run down we're happy to explore other other avenues of course within the confines of the expectations of the Virginia DOE when it comes to licensure and things of that

[01:39:58] nature all right thank you chair what would be that the timeline then like for example I I know you gave an overview but for example for for this language for example to explore to see if there is a scope I know we can't just jump right in I know it could be regional so what would be the next step what what what can we see on a timeline basis I've already mentioned that this is a would be a conversation with budget to move into a planning and implementation phase

[01:40:36] my understanding is that at some time in October there is a school board work session related to the but to the budget so there will be opportunities during that budget work session to float ideas in terms of what priorities are for board members you know what we're really talking about here are teacher FTEs that can kind of support the the stand-up of these programs and so looking at the discussion in

October does this rise to the level of prioritization amongst the majority of board members and then that will inform the superintendent that

[01:41:13] spend the needs if the superintendent includes it in his budget the school board can adopt that or make modifications and that would give direction to staff but before that session like in October for example when we have to establish if there is a need like it when we have to justify to even thought of bringing a language or anything like that when we have to establish that is there a need in the community for that or rather is there a desire in the community for that before we think about it even floating the idea during a session it would it would depend on whether or not you would feel you have that so again going back to

[01:41:51] the survey from 2022 i would point out that if you look at um we've we've gone on the record to recommend arabic at a previous cni meeting not with this board but with the previous board um it that recommendation did not make it into a superintendent's budget or school board budget so it's still out there the numbers for Hindi aren't that different and so we could do another survey but I'm not sure if we'd have better information right now there's definitely interest in Hindi we could probably identify schools where it would make sense to start a pilot if that was the desire of the board but if

[01:42:27] the board feels like you all need additional information we have had conversations about surveying staff surveying students and families in terms of a timeline it's possible to make it prior to October but we do have some base level of interest in parent interest. I don't know if that's helpful Dr. Rasheed. I would like to put in that same cloud of possibilities the African American history course according to the teachers that

[01:43:03] I've talked to and I went and helped to judge some of their capstones and yada yada there aren't enough people at some schools, enough students at some schools to sign up for it, for them to continue it. So some of that coursework might be laid to the side because there aren't enough student interest, because there's not enough student interest. So, and you know, there's one that's a regular course, and then there's one that's AP. So could one or the other, or the one that has the least the smallest enrollment be considered at the same time

[01:43:43] like we're considering the language I think you illustrate our work you know there are there are competing priorities and needs it's really where does the board want to where does staff recommend and where does the board and support us putting those additional resources to stand up and make sure courses are available for our students there are similar I think there are similar conversations about fine arts programs and some fine arts programs that that we want to make sure are staffed and guaranteed at every school and so we will be talking about with the full that full board on the 13th related to I

[01:44:21] believe you're referencing the AP the College Board African American history course I believe we're doing that at two courses two high schools this year yes and we're happy to bring the data on those courses if it's of interest to the committee, or I could share it with you personally, in terms of where their enrollment is and the trends that we're seeing.

[01:44:44] Can you bring that information to the committee? Because I don't know where they are. I just had individual conversations, you know, so I don't have a feel for how many students, but after going to the social studies workshop, so much of that content has been removed from the social studies curriculum that some kids may be even more interested if they don't get it in, in, in, in the social studies grades four through 12,

[01:45:19] you know? So I'd like to numbers. Mr. Slevin, might I suggest that you connect with Dr. Deans and Dr. Rasheed about their wishes, and then you and I can have a conversation about logistics in terms of getting it on future agendas and what next steps we need with the budget parameters.

[01:45:40] Would that be a good way for us to kind of make sure we're checking all the boxes and getting these things aligned and heard? That works for me. That works for Dr. Rashid and Dr. Dean. Okay.

[01:45:59] Any more new business? Do I hear a motion to adjourn at 6.15 p.m.? I move to dismiss at 6.15 p.m. Ms. Chernoff?

[01:46:15] Second. Second. Okay. And all in favor say aye. Aye. Aye. Okay. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Enjoy the rest of your time at the lake. Thank you, guys. See you next week. So I'll feel the enjoyment back here in Laos.

[01:46:33] Sounds good. Bye, guys.



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