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Loudoun County School Board, Joint Loudoun County School Board & Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Committee Meeting, Monday, October 7, 2024

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Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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[00:00:07] Okay. Good afternoon. I called to order the October 7th, 2024 Joint Committee with Board Superviders Committee meeting. That was a mouthful. We will start with item two, public comments. I think we have three public comments today. I'll go ahead and read the script.

[00:00:30] thank you for engaging with the joint committee through the public comment process the committee welcomes comments from loudon county residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system in county there will be a total of 15 minutes allocated for public comment speakers must live limit comments to the time allotted based on the number of speakers in the agenda this evening all speakers have been allotted three minutes for each for public comment please be advised that speakers who missed their time slot will not be called at a later time.

[00:01:03] All audience members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and the dignity of the committee at all times. Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium, or during a break. Violations of civility, decorum, and respect include shouting, heckling, jeering, applause, or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting, obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and board of supervisors, and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak

when not called to do so by the co-chairs, and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate, disparage, or distract a speaker,

[00:01:41] staff member, or other meeting attendees. Speakers should refrain from vulgarity, obscenities, defamation, profanity, or other like breaches of respect, nor may speakers target, criticize, or attack individual students and/or individual county or LCBS employees during public comment.

[00:02:00] Speakers should communicate those concerns to an appropriate county or school official. The committee requests that comments on an individual student or employee related matter not be shared at public meetings or the disclosure could violate applicable confidentiality requirements.

[00:02:15] Speakers should face the committee and direct their comments to the committee. Members of the committee will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period. Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing the staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting. Seeing our speakers for the day, for the afternoon, our first one is Melissa Waugh. Good afternoon. My name is Melissa Waugh and I'm the parent of two children with

[00:02:54] disabilities who graduated from Broad Run High School. I am also a special education attorney representing many parents of students with disabilities in Loudoun County and across the Commonwealth. I am speaking today in support of funding for a new transition center and for inclusive playgrounds across Loudoun County Public Schools. And I did provide a written version of my comments that includes legal citations, which I will not be reading aloud in my comments. Regarding the transition center, the IDEA, or Individuals with Disabilities

[00:03:29] Education Act is a federal law enacted to, quote, "ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them," this is the important part, "for further education, employment, and independent living. The IDEA defines transition services to include quote "instruction, related services, community experiences, the

[00:04:08] development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluations." A statement of needed transition services is a required element of every individualized education program or IEP and must include, quote, appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills and transition services

[00:04:45] that include courses of study needed to assist the child in reaching those goals, end quote. The proposed transition center would provide for high-quality vocational evaluations and individualized support to help students with disabilities prepare for meaningful careers and independence, as required by the IDEA, and in a coordinated and cost-effective way.

[00:05:17] As stewards of our taxpayer dollars, leaders need to remember the old proverb, give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. We need to give all of our students the tools and the training to become productive members of our society, able to give back to the common good.

[00:05:43] And regarding inclusive playgrounds, quickly, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act require that... Ms. Waugh, thank you. I'm sorry, it's been three minutes. Ms. Crotty.

[00:06:03] Good afternoon. My name is Liz Crotty. I am the chair of our Special Education Advisory Committee. I've had the pleasure to speak with all of you about the topics of the Transition Center and inclusive playgrounds. They are both topics that are near and dear to my heart.

[00:06:19] I wanted today to just share, you know, I've spoken about it from more of a high level in the systemic need, but I wanted to share my personal thoughts on it as it affects my family. I have two daughters who have mild muscle disorders, and an inclusive playground is something that would have been really helpful to them as they went through, you know, their elementary school experience.

[00:06:43] Even though they are not in wheelchairs, they can step up and onto playgrounds. It's very hard for them to navigate a mulched surface that's very uneven and hard for them to run and chase after friends and that sort of thing and have that kind of social interaction.

[00:07:00] So, you know, a lot of times when we think about these inclusive playgrounds, we're thinking about just having a wheelchair get onto those playgrounds. But it really, it's so much more than that. It's giving different kinds of spaces that the kids can have access to, that they can play on different levels.

[00:07:16] It doesn't all have to be, you know, climbing a high wall. It can be on the ground. It can be, you know, doing different kinds of sensory activities that help them fill their needs and get them better regulated so that they can go into the classroom and learn to the fullest extent that they can and create those meaningful relationships.

[00:07:37] On the topic of transition centers, I have a daughter with an intellectual disability, and she wants to be a police officer when she grows up. Every time you ask her what she wants to be when she grows up, that's what she says.

[00:07:54] And, you know, probably a police officer is not necessarily in the cards for her, but what I hope for her as she gets older is that if we had a transition center somewhere where she could work on learning skills that might be adjacent to a career like that that could help her. She cares so much for other people and wanting to help out and give back and if she could get these skills so that she can meaningfully participate and have a job and contribute I think that would be so impactful but she's going to need that specialized instruction. She's going to need help finding out well how can she what kind of a job can she do what sort of skills does she needs

[00:08:33] to work on. And that to me is what this transition center could do for our students in a way that would be highly effective, create partnerships with our community, and then lead to outcomes where my daughter, Cora, will be able to give back just like everyone else. Thank you all.

[00:08:50] Thank you. Next one is Shanaz Khan. Good afternoon. My name is Shanaz Khan. I am a member of SEAC and a former SEAC board member. More importantly, I am a parent. I have three children.

[00:09:12] with my youngest having intellectual disabilities. I have personally experienced what Loudoun County can offer its students. My eldest participated in the MADA's Health and Medical Science Program. Back then it was Monroe.

[00:09:29] And my second child attended the Academies of Science. I have seen what they're capable of doing over there. I've seen the state-of-the-art technology, the research opportunities that they had. and they've really gained valuable skills and knowledge that they're using today to pursue their goals.

[00:09:50] I would really love to have the same opportunity available for my son as well. He is capable, and he loves to learn. I can see he's also developing a passion for science. He's continuously watching the science get, and he is asking questions.

[00:10:06] He's wanting to experiment. He's asking me magnifying glass. All these things where I can see he's developing the same passion my daughters had. However, he needs proper training and support to truly develop skills to pursue these goals. He needs a transition training center.

[00:10:25] We need a transition training center. A dedicated center would allow students with disabilities to have a place where they are working on workplace readiness skills, independent living skills, and where our kids are receiving the supports to develop the skills needed for life beyond high school.

[00:10:42] Most importantly, having a dedicated transition center would also allow for more consistent delivery of transition services for all students with disabilities. I believe many of our students with disabilities are fully capable. They simply need the right supports and tools to succeed.

[00:11:02] - Thank you. That will conclude our public comment for today. And we will move to agenda item three, the co-chairs report on Board of Supervisor and School Board activities. And I'll go ahead and start.

[00:11:17] Welcome everyone to the LCPS boardroom and we're happy to host the joint committee this afternoon. Starting off, I'd like to follow up on some items that I know are of some interest to the Board of Supervisors. The LCPS facility use regulation has been updated to allow residents to use the lighted tennis courts on a first-come, first-served basis as long as there's no school activities scheduled.

[00:11:41] Lights with timers on courts at Dominion, Heritage, and Potomac Falls are nearing completion. Timers will be added to Light Ridge and Independence over the next few months. In total, we will have five schools outfitted with lights and times for residents to use, and the remaining schools will receive timers when the CIP project for lights is completed.

[00:12:00] Parkview updates. The construction manager contract has been executed, and long lead times and contracts have been awarded, and the grading permit is in review with the county. In addition, there were some questions regarding the Parkview field hockey team during our last committee meeting.

[00:12:18] Overall, we need more officials for field hockey. Therefore, as a remedy for not having enough officials, multiple schools play games at one location several times a year. For example, on September 26, Briarwoods High School hosted two games planned back-to-back.

[00:12:34] Riverside played Stonebridge for Game 1, and then Briarwoods played Lightridge for Game 2. And yes, the Parkview does plan to practice twice at Independence this fall. On September 18th, LCPS joined with legislators Supervisor Chair Randall and Supervisor Vice Chair Briskman and other members of our community to discuss plans for a proposed recovery school program here in Loudoun County.

[00:13:00] There was a very positive discussion about what might be needed in the program and ways that we can partner together to provide opportunity for students who are actively in recovery to continue their academic and wellness journeys with us in a safe and supportive environment with peers and staff who

understand the unique needs of these students. Piggybacking on that new special program discussion, at the September 24th school board meeting, the board voted to support moving special education transition programs and services from policy positions to our legislative priorities. Moving this item to a legislative priority

[00:13:38] demonstrates the current board's commitment and advocacy for establishing and funding of transition centers for students with disabilities, emphasizing career and technical education skills to facilitate their workforce integration and enhance their independence and quality of life. These centers will address educational inclusivity by providing tailored support and resources, bridging the gap between secondary education and employment. They will enhance economic empowerment by equipping students with marketable CTE skills, thus fostering financial independence and reducing reliance on social welfare programs. Lastly, I want to bring

[00:14:17] the supervisor's attention to work happening at the state level around accountability and accreditation. The State Board of Education has approved significant changes to the current model. While LCPS is still working to understand the impact of this new model, staff presented the school board with an overview at its September 10th meeting, which can be viewed online. Generally, The state has created new categories for school accountability that include distinguished, on-track, off-track, and need significant improvement.

[00:14:50] The model for how they arrive at each label is different by grade level, but generally focuses on content mastery, readiness, including things like completion of performance assessments, access to rigorous coursework and chronic absenteeism, as well as graduation at the high school level and growth at the elementary and middle levels.

[00:15:11] Prior to voting on this new model, it was shared with the State Board of Education that approximately 60% of the state schools will be either off track or need significant improvement. So we do believe there will be some impact on LCPS accreditation. LCPS will share more information with our families and communities as this new model becomes clearer.

[00:15:32] None of these changes will take place until the fall of 2025, although the new model will be based on data from this school year, Which includes new assessments based on the new standards implemented this year for math and English and With that I end my co-chair report and ask Supervisor co-chair glass if you would like to present yours Thank you co-chair Mansfield, and I received a message that Supervisor to crony is running late, so she'll be here sure I guess within 15 to 20 minutes first I'd like to thank

[00:16:11] you community to come out and speak on different issues that you're concerned about the transition trans transition center as well as the inclusive playground since this is our first meeting since the beginning of the school year I want to wish want to wish a warm return to school to all Loudoun County students teachers staff administrators and parents I know we all had a happy we'll have a happy and successful school year filled with fun and learning. Over the summer, Dominion Energy announced and held a first round of community

[00:16:51] meetings on the proposed Golden to Mars Power Lines project, which proposes running power lines from the Mars substation on Old Ox Road to the Golden substation on Pacific Boulevard. There are several power line routes as options, including some that go through the Rockridge High School and

Rosalie Carter Elementary School campus and County Parkland, along with route options that could run underground near the airport. Information on the project can be found

[00:17:23] at [dominionenergy.com slash NOVA](https://dominionenergy.com/slash/NOVA). As Dominion progresses through this project, I know that our two boards can work together to identify the least invasive power lines path for our constituents. At our last meeting, we also changed our rules of order to allow for the committee vice co-chairs.

[00:17:46] I would like to state for the record that I have appointed Supervisor Crony as vice co-chair for the Board of Supervisors side. And that is my report, Co-Chair Mansfield. Thank you. Thank you. Does anybody have any questions before we move on?

[00:18:03] Yes. I do. Supervisor Richmond. Thank you. And I don't know if I said this before, but I really like the new logo. It came out a while ago, but I just noticed it again. And also, I appreciate the superintendent's, I can't remember what you're calling it, post-entry report.

[00:18:21] I thought that was very thorough, and I appreciated that. I did have a couple questions based on your comments, Chair Mansfield. The new model from the Department of Education is problematic in many ways, and I know that you're grappling with that.

[00:18:38] So, two questions. Can the school board just say no, number one? And secondly, if we have schools that are off track, quote-unquote off track or below that, what are the consequences, if there are any consequences?

[00:19:00] I think I'll allow our superintendent, Dr. Spence, to take that question. Yes, ma'am. No, we can't just say no, unfortunately. The state accountability model, it's part of the state accreditation model. So the labels are what the labels are.

[00:19:20] Where our concern lies at the moment is just understanding how they're going to calculate. And we're beginning to get a better picture of that. Our Region 4 superintendents group has taken some, had some conversations directly with the Department of Education and has provided some direct feedback around some of the weighting calculations to see if we can't get a better sense of what that will look like.

[00:19:42] We recently got some updates from VDOE based on what we think was our advocacy and ran some new numbers on a series of our schools that seemed to have improved the outcome for those schools. So we think that's a positive. And then the consequences.

[00:19:59] Essentially, what happens is if there's two things that happen. There's a federal monitoring that applies to our schools if they get into a certain status in terms of their performance, particularly with regards to reading and math.

[00:20:18] And in the new accountability model in Virginia, if you fall under this federal monitoring status, and there's a couple of categories, but if you fall into this category as a federal monitoring, you actually drop automatically one designation. So if you were, for example, off track, you'll automatically drop to needs intensive support.

[00:20:37] And then essentially what kicks in at the state level based on those labels, and so just again for clarity around the labels, it is distinguished, it is on track, it is off track, and then needs intensive support are the four labels that we anticipate. And what we believe, and I think Ashley could nod her head and verify this, is that if you are off track or needs intensive support, the State Office of School Improvement

will also come and develop a plan, a memorandum with the school division for those individual schools, or if you have a certain number of schools, you will develop a memorandum with the Department of Education for the entire school division.

[00:21:16] And that will simply be an agreement on how you intend to address some of the data that has led to those designations. At the moment, we're not clear exactly, again, how it's all being calculated, So until we have a better picture of that, we won't be able to tell you what those memoranda might look like.

[00:21:33] Okay, if I may, Madam Chair. So there's not a threat of pulling funding necessarily or controlling funding from the state? No. In fact, typically it would trigger additional supports.

[00:21:48] Not necessarily funding supports, but kind of resource supports from the state in terms of their Office of School Improvement working with us to target root causes and develop plans around that. Okay. And I'm sorry, Madam Chair, just one more question, if I may.

[00:22:05] Would they have the capability to change or adjust the curriculum that's being offered at certain schools? I think largely the monitoring would ensure compliance with offering the state's curriculum because, of course, all the assessments are based on the state standards of learning.

[00:22:28] And so a lot of times what you'll see is if the data is really out of whack, it may be that the standards aren't being taught. And so the state might look at that and say, are you actually adhering to the state curriculum? But I would say we're well positioned in LCPS. I do want to be clear about that.

[00:22:44] We are performing well above state averages and we are outperforming our comparables in the Commonwealth. And 100% room for improvement. There is always room for improvement, and we're not ever going to be satisfied until every kid is doing well.

[00:23:01] But we're well-positioned, and I think we're going to be okay when the new labels come out. I think we're just all in a state right now of a bit of flux because we're not entirely sure what that looks like, and the Board of Education has adopted this new model without being fully aware of what they were adopting in my estimation.

[00:23:22] We actually improved our on-time graduation rate last year, didn't we? We did, and we overall and across all content areas saw improvement. There were concerns with some of our reporting groups. We have a lot more work to do, we know, with regards to some of our student reporting groups.

[00:23:40] But again, we are aware of that, and as I've said often in other places, we don't need anybody from outside Loudoun County telling us where we need to improve. We're fully aware, and we know what we need to do to work on that. Completely agree. Thank you very much. Is, Dr. Spence, is there a possibility, when I think of a change in accreditation, I also think of increasing assessments, so do you, is there a possibility of an increase in assessments?

[00:24:14] So no, the trend in recent years with the Department of Education has been to reduce the number of assessments. So we have seen, for example, a reduction in a number of non-ELA and math assessments in favor of locally derived performance assessments.

[00:24:33] And we've recently had some opportunity through the conversation with the state to reduce the number of during-the-year assessments for growth. And so the trend has been to actually reduce the number of assessments in lieu of other measures of achievement by our students that we attend to and report to the state.

[00:24:55] Thank you. Yes, sure enough. Dr. Spence, it is my understanding, though, that they are planning as part of this plan to add two readiness assessments in fifth grade and eighth grade to add that measure into their calculation for accreditation.

[00:25:11] Is that still correct? Perhaps. Okay. I mean, there is a readiness measure, but we don't know what that is, and so we don't know if it's an assessment. We were told a performance assessment, but it hasn't been developed. Okay. Thank you. Seeing no more questions, we could move on to our first information item.

[00:25:34] The Advisory Commission on Youth Report, State of Youth in Loudoun County, 2024, county-wide, presented by Steve Torpy, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services. Mr. Torpy, the floor is yours.

[00:25:51] Well, thank you. Good afternoon, co-chair Mansfield, co-chair Glass, and committee members. I am Steve Torpy, director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services. and information item one on your agenda this afternoon is that presentation by the advisory commission on youth which was the state of youth in Loudoun County for 2024 this was presented to the board of supervisors back on April 16th as a part of that day's board meeting and as a part of youth in government day the Loudoun County advisory commission on youth or ACOY does serve as one of

[00:26:29] the board's conduit for Loudoun County youth and the community at large they try and assist with us with the assessment of youth needs they make recommendations to the board of supervisors on youth programs issues in the community opportunities that they hear of out in the community and also foster a collaboration with a lot of the various stakeholders that work with youth, both in Loudoun County government, Loudoun County Public Schools, and certain nonprofits.

[00:27:00] Each year, ACOI does provide this report to the Board of Supervisors after collaborating with those stakeholders and collectively put that report together. I want to recognize or bring up that this report every year is, we try to describe it as a snapshot in time.

[00:27:20] Obviously, there's a recognition that that data changes almost daily and trends are consistently changing. So the way that we've approached it in the past is if there is that recognition of that data, we try to get that into the next year's report to show those changes.

[00:27:42] So with us this afternoon is Dr. Jeff Goldman, who is the chair of ACOY, and Mr. Michael Rellis, who is a member at large, and the two of these gentlemen were the primary authors of the ACOI report, but as I said earlier, authors of the report after quite a bit of collaboration with all of those stakeholders to get to a final product.

[00:28:05] So, Chair Mansfield, if it's okay, I'd like to turn the floor over to them, and they can present that state of Loudoun youth for 2024. Of course. Welcome, gentlemen. Thank you, Steve, for the introduction and thank you to the board, co-chair Mansfield and co-chair Glass.

[00:28:24] I know she's seen this before because we presented from the Board of Supervisors. As Steve mentioned, you know, we're a volunteer group. I've been in ACOI for, I think, about 15 years, Mike, almost as long as myself and been a chair for you for the last 10 or so.

[00:28:45] We've taken it upon ourselves to put that report together every year using a data-driven approach to present to the board so we can make recommendations based on the data and trends that we're seeing, based on our interaction with youth.

[00:29:03] We pushed hard to have a youth advisory member. We have two members now, and they're both voting members in YAC. and then we've also taken an effort to highlight having youth speak in Government Day as well on their behalf because no one knows more about the problems of youth and issues that they have than the youth themselves.

[00:29:31] So that said, as Steve mentioned, ACOY's mission is to support all youth in the county, give them a voice, and doing that presentation at the Board of Supervisors every year, They had asked us to speak to this board because so many of the things that we touch on youth are having to do with where the schools are involved.

[00:29:54] And obviously they spent a third of their life there, so there's gonna be involvement. So we really appreciate Lauren helping, making that connection so that we have an opportunity to speak. So why we're here, we're presenting what we presented at the Board of Supervisors.

[00:30:12] I'm referring to the 2024 report that Steve mentioned. If you don't have it, you can find it online on the ACOI site. It's available for download. Also wanted to make note that we did receive and met with Natalie Allen, the Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer, to incorporate those comments.

[00:30:34] There's a wealth of information there that's really great. We love that a lot, and we were going to incorporate that in our next report, which we're working on now. As Steve mentioned, the data lacks a little bit. So if you back it up, we have to have the report finalized by March, which means the data that we're working on back in the fall of 2023 gives us only complete data of 2022.

[00:31:03] So we're a little bit behind. And so I appreciate that that's an issue here 'cause many of these things have, we've seen a positive trend. So that said, I wanna lead off with what we talked about with the board and how youth are incredibly accomplished.

[00:31:20] Looking in the first pages of our report, you have star athletes, stars in fine arts, academics, community engagement, and volunteer work. We did our best to highlight as many of those across the county as possible.

[00:31:37] In addition, all of our youth-led programming is thriving. We love seeing that, hope to keep those continuing, ongoing basis. Whether it's the Youth Advisory Council, Youth and Government Day, Youth Fest, or one of my favorites, the Step Up Competition, where you really see some things.

[00:31:57] That said, it's not all a perfect world out there. We have some concerns, and I just want to highlight some of the top three that we saw in our report. The drug, vaping, fentanyl, and overdoses in 12 to 19-year-olds, we have seen an upward trend.

[00:32:18] We see a lot of the overdose trending in Loudoun, but also across the state. The good news is the death rates are actually lower in Loudoun than the rest of the state because of our NARCAN training and the things that we do for potential to intervene in the event of an overdose. Moving backwards, though, and trying to prevent them from happening in the first place is still an issue that we want to make sure is addressed and a concern for us.

[00:32:58] The vape shops as well, and we've mentioned this before with the corridor of stores and a 50% increase in stores over the past few years. The good news there is, you know, with the Sheriff's Office

recently, and you've probably heard in the news, with the number of busts that have happened were illegally selling vape materials to minors and doing more of a crackdown on those things.

[00:33:27] Another concern we mentioned is the rise in absenteeism. It's actually something that we have seen as a trend going back as far as 2017, well before COVID. That was a reason of our concern there is because the absenteeism is often a leading indicator of graduation, low graduation weights or dropouts. And so the other piece of that data is having a disproportionate number of absentee students that are in the Hispanic population, as well as the pockets of students

[00:34:04] since COVID in the K-2 and the junior to senior in high school. Again, with some of the new data now, late 2023, 2024, we're seeing trends that are positive, reducing absenteeism, and we expect to see the indicator and the graduation rates to improve with that as well. Our final concern has to do with the post-COVID aftermath and you know in essence the board has been interested the board supervisors have been interested to know

[00:34:41] what is the impact what has COVID done to our youth there's been some good and some bad obviously the good maybe is often glossed over having access to online tools and online learning has been a huge improvement for for student lives. Some students actually thrive online partially because of their issues with in whether it's in-school bullying or an anxiety about being in person.

[00:35:12] They've been able to keep their academic growth by having online access. The the bad news you're more than familiar with online has replaced social contact and And that's been a disaster for youth.

[00:35:30] So as part of my job as Chair's AQI, we're not just here to complain about things and say how bad everything is, but rather to get together and decide, "Well, what are we gonna do about it?" And make some suggestions, some positive recommendations. So on the drug issues, it's all about education, not just students, but parents.

[00:35:50] It's never my kid that is into drugs. So the education needs to step up, and we've got a lot of support from the Sheriff's Office there, I mentioned the vape shops issue as well, where we've done intervention. There've been sting operations, increase in penalties, avoiding the normalization of vaping, that it's okay for youth to smoke, which is the advertising message of the day.

[00:36:17] For the absenteeism, obviously you know about the LCPS task force and the work that's been done there, it's been fantastic. Again, we're seeing a decrease as there, I won't dwell on that. Our point and things that we brought up is we really like sort of the alternative high school options like Robley.

[00:36:36] And we would also support the transition training center as well. That's right on brand with what we do, as well as the all-inclusive alternative playgrounds. There are a number of things that we still don't know. And our efforts have been using surveys from the youth and parents directly to try and get an understanding.

[00:36:58] COVID's kind of exposed these existing problems and exacerbated them. whether it's absenteeism, mental health issues, drug use, online bullying, the desire for human contact, that's all been an issue.

[00:37:16] We've also discovered in some of the surveying that we do is there is a significant disconnect between what kids say they need and what parents think they need. I've also mentioned about this social and learning development has been set back with COVID as well.

[00:37:33] We've seen that as a result of the survey. So some of the follow-up things that we've done, and I mentioned this, we had a meeting organized by Supervisor Glass for looking at concerns about the Hispanic school dropout rates.

[00:37:49] We had members there, also Chair Randall, LCPS staff, we had retired principals from out-of-state County, Maryland, other counties, as well as representatives from the National Association of Counties and the U.S. Department of Education, went extremely well.

[00:38:07] We have, there is work that is going on there about engagement with Hispanic students and things that we can do, whether it's personal visits. One of my favorite was the grandmother visits that one county implemented where they would have retired grandmothers, if you will, go and physically visit people's houses to say it's time to go to school today.

[00:38:32] I mean, that's the level of community interaction we're talking about. It was noted in some of the meetings that part of the issues that they believe to be the problem is the lack of trust between the community and the government groups.

[00:38:49] And that can only come with an understanding that we're all trying to do what's best. The other favorite I had, I just wanted, or I guess it's not a favorite, but an item that was unknown to us about why in the Hispanic community that there were large numbers of absenteeism, students would have to miss school to attend doctor's visits with their parent or guardian to act as a translator.

[00:39:26] And that was kind of a shock to me, to learn something like that. So that's the reason they're missing school. In addition, follow-ups, we met with Evan Braff. He's the Opioid Response Program Coordinator, and we've been reviewing what's been going on at the county and state levels.

[00:39:43] He looks at opiate across the entire population. We were focused on just the youth and things that we can do there. And again, we're just volunteers. We're a round-off error in Steve's budget, so we're just here trying to help do whatever we can.

[00:40:02] With that, I've got to turn it over to my vice-chair if you had any additional comments to make. - No, I think you provided a good summary of what we do. A couple things we try to make sure we do are use Loudon-specific data, so we're not coming in to you with, you know, some national study and then trying to imply it's a Loudon problem.

[00:40:27] So we're trying to use Loudon-specific data, and we try to craft recommendations that are actually recommendations you can implement, things that you could actually do. We look at the entire health and connectivity of youth in Loudoun County, not just Loudoun County schools.

[00:40:47] One of our favorite topics is the libraries. We want the libraries to stay open longer as a place for kids to gather. It's been one of our missions, I guess, is to get those libraries to stay open on Fridays and Saturdays for kids to gather.

[00:41:06] It's just a nice, safe place. It's a good protective factor. But just know that anything we present, we feel that it's based on data that we've gathered from either the Loudoun youth themselves or data that reflects Loudoun youth.

[00:41:26] And we are so appreciative of what the schools are doing. I mean, oh, my goodness. There are so many programs. These kids have rich opportunities. And we are very grateful that we have a school board and school staff that listen and correct us when we're wrong.

[00:41:47] And we could be wrong. I'll just add to that that Mike should get all the credit for putting all the data together. And I should get all of the blame when something's wrong. So with that as a backdrop, I guess any questions or ideas or thoughts on our work that we could do better or more fulsome?

[00:42:12] to support your work. First of all, thank you for all your volunteer time. It is a lot and we appreciate it. I am wondering where you got the protective factors and the at-risk factors. Where was that? You always bring what you come into the room with. I worked 11 years for under the Biden administration and Bush 2. I'm sorry, the Obama administration and Bush 2 at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, crafting the president's national drug control policy.

[00:42:50] And each year, the president puts one out. And a lot of the research that we used said, if you wrap kids with enough protective factors, if you give them enough safe places to attend and good role models, and you can push that age of onset off, you're much more likely to prevent a student or a youth from picking up in the first place.

[00:43:19] You're just trying to push that off and get rid of the risk factors, perception of availability. You know, if a kid thinks that a library or a corner or a school is a marketplace for finding drugs, that's a risk factor.

[00:43:34] So we put together, we had a lot of discussions amongst the experts that are resident on our group and experts we brought in. And we tried to come up with a model that looks at the very youngest youth, youth in the middle schools, youth graduating, and then young adults, and the risk and protective factors that we thought were most important to them.

[00:43:59] And they also dovetail with what we observed, what the data shows, and what our recommendations are. So it is self-created, but it's informed. I'll just add one item. Our ACOIS number one, at least what we've been about in my entire tenure here, has been youth need a safe space.

[00:44:24] All youth in the county need a safe space. And to recognize that that safe space may not be at home.

[00:44:47] I'm assuming we have some questions because I saw some mics on. Let's start with Ms. Chandler and then we'll go through the line. Thank you so much for this very informative presentation. I will say I enjoyed watching the recording of the meeting at the Board of Supervisors and was just delighted to be able to hear directly from the students and to have the ability to reflect on some of their feedback, which I found to be very interesting in terms of perceptions of availability of drugs, as you mentioned, and also about bullying and how some of the bullying initiatives that have been around historically in Loudoun County

[00:45:27] may not have led to upstander outcomes. That was definitely a perception that I saw expressed in that meeting. With that said, one of my favorite things about Loudoun County is how diverse it is. And we do serve, I mean, I think we just saw recently that we typically communicate with 125 languages.

[00:45:48] And I'm curious about how your data collection considers the different cultural issues that are present in our community and how you overcome some of those challenges um yeah diversity is an asset diversity is one of the greatest things and i've been in loudon county for 21 years originally from upstate new york um and by way of reference that's where i've seen libraries open late on fridays and saturdays

[00:46:20] so um but um you know diversity um can bring challenges for youth and one of the challenges is for the Hispanic population is understanding the value of completing and graduating and finding a way to help support the family while completing their education.

[00:46:53] So what we've seen happen with youth in the Hispanic population is they don't necessarily understand the full value of graduating and as they get closer to adulthood sometimes they're a little more disconnected than other students sometimes not totally I'm sorry I have a hard time with that right there saying that they don't know the value I'm wondering if they don't have the opportunity and the access that others have that's a great point that is a

[00:47:33] - That is a wonderful point. - So they're having to do other things, like taking their parents to the doctor's office to provide translation services or things like that, and then they're shut off from other access and opportunities.

[00:47:51] And in fact, we're also looking at things like Academies of Loudoun and things like that, where we have put in PSATs as requirements and written things as opposed to just allowing them in for MATA and technical CTEs.

[00:48:13] So I think that there are some other things in line as opposed to just saying it's because they don't find the value. That is a perfect observation. And think about what Loudoun County does. Loudoun County Schools, the CASA program, helps more diverse families.

[00:48:32] see the value of completing education you have the college visits help all that helps a family that maybe doesn't have other college graduates in their household to understand what can become of the family member through graduation so we're every I can't think of a report we've done where we didn't laud the the programs that Loudoun County Public Schools has to help students see the value but there is there is one of the realities is at age 16 and 17 there's a

[00:49:07] lot of there's a lot of work that people can do there's a lot of work that can that they have to make a choice to stay in school or or go to work um thank you supervisor brissman do you did you have a question or supervisor okay chair mansfield and I apologize that I was late mr. Goldman right and then what's your name Michael relis okay thank you thank you and thanks so much for the presentation so I'm kind of baffled about the 19 centers at the public

[00:49:45] libraries why we can't seem to get Friday night and and Saturday night activities going like the cascades which is in your district right supervisor brissman why we can't get it across the county you know I hear from Brambleton that they want that that the kids are kind of loitering at the gas station and they'd much rather prefer being in the library at Brambleton so I definitely think that's something we should work on together I actually am wondering the value of having a standalone teen center so that's in our capital needs assessment but I I don't know if that says meeting the needs and

[00:50:25] And I want to ask you to, you know, let us know if that's meeting the needs because then that's in one location versus having it in the community in the library. So I don't know. I know, Mr. Torpy, that you might have had some insight into that.

[00:50:43] So one of the things with the standalone, just to share the updated capital facility standards, The stand-alone teen center actually was Taken out as a standalone and put into Recreation centers and community centers and one of the the reasons behind that just happened here recently and one of the

Reasons behind that is we were hearing from the youth that when when they want to go to that safe place They want to safe place, but they also want to be amongst other people

[00:51:20] They don't want to be separated out into their own location similar similar to what you see at the after the after-hours libraries It's a section of the library. It's not a separate building for that And so that's the plan that we have moving forward is to incorporate that into other facilities Okay, and you're looking at the library to that that facility as well, or?

[00:51:45] Not me personally, but that is a conversation that we can have with For what it's worth, the libraries and ACOI are on the same page when it comes to keeping all libraries open late for all patrons.

[00:52:00] So we agree with that. I think where ACOI's concerns are focused on youth is dedicated center, you know, available programming for some of the younger youth, but really just the space as well.

[00:52:19] So, and that's currently not available in all libraries, like the space itself may not be able. So we have another project that we're working in Akhoi to identify all potential rec spaces in the county and their proximities to population centers within each district to see if that might be appropriate to have teen centers.

[00:52:47] And I also just want to make a real quick point that I think I noticed to develop more alternative high school education settings so I do think the transition center is what it's being termed now there might be a different name for it as we go on might be that opportunity just what I know what constituents are asking for that and I think that it could be a good match.

[00:53:12] So I think we should work together on that too. Thank you. Yes supervisor Brisbane. Thank you Madam Chair. Part of the challenge with the library space is that the libraries govern themselves.

[00:53:28] LBOT governs the libraries, so we can work on applying more pressure, but it is a challenge. As you were saying that, I was thinking, well, the makerspace at Brambleton, why couldn't that be just where the team? Well, guess what? We have adult women who have made stuff for me in the makerspace, so they want it open for everybody, but it's definitely something that we, and I'm glad to hear that we're working on figuring that out. I had a question. I had a couple comments and a question. I believe, and Administrator

[00:54:03] Hemstreet can correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe we had a motion out of your report in the Board of Supervisors that we fund the grants. We fund this idea of the grants. So there was not a – we had discussion about that, and you had asked the question of whether or not that needed to be in a motion.

[00:54:31] Supervisor or Administrator Hemstreet and I – I almost – sorry. He usually has such a good poker face. Mr. Hemstreet and I went back and forth on that, and that was something that was able to be absorbed this year in my budget.

[00:54:53] Okay. And so we have worked with ACOY and the Department of Finance and Procurement, and essentially the way that we are going to do that is it will be an outside entity that manages that grant program for us. Okay. And that RFQ, if I'm not mistaken, just went over to procurement to hit the street.

[00:55:13] So that is going to move forward this year. And we're putting a base budget request in our budget for next year. Okay, so it's going to become part of the base budget, which is excellent. So my question on that, I know you're going to have someone else managing the program.

[00:55:28] But my question is, can we have categories for grants? And the reason I ask that is because a category could be targeting Hispanic students that need support in order to complete their high school

education and whatever support that might need.

[00:55:49] But if you're talking to and hearing from your youth counterparts, that might be effective to identify the problems and the issues. So do you think that it's going to be like, does the RFP say it's categorized? There are various categories that we talked about, about what would qualify for things along those lines.

[00:56:11] And then there's a review process and a follow-up process, obviously, after funds are administered, the backup information for what actually happened with that. So that's something that we can talk through and put in the information that goes to prospective grant fundees.

[00:56:29] And then my other question, in looking at the makeup of ACOI, and I know they're appointed, and so you guys don't necessarily have control over this, but I'm wondering if anybody on ACOI or the student representatives on ACOI come from that population.

[00:56:47] And if not, what can we do to improve their representation on ACOI? I have a suggestion. Yeah, great question, absolutely. I know in the past we've had voting members from different districts, from the Hispanic population, representing the Hispanic population.

[00:57:07] I know that's been the case. Like you said, it is appointed. We have no control, really no control. But the only control we have is to invite liaisons. And so we do that as best we can.

[00:57:23] And that was going to be my suggestion, would be to perhaps, and I'm speaking off the cuff, Dr. Spence, perhaps inviting our EL staff or someone who actually works with the population, Roby staff, someone who actually works with the population to help you guys really identify what those kids are really going through because we really don't, we're not in that space, right?

[00:57:53] So that's what I would have a suggestion to do, Dr. Spence. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. So to that end, actually, along those lines, we're kind of working towards that anyway. So I actually serve on ACOY for Leesburg.

[00:58:09] I was appointed by Supervisor Umstad a little over a year ago and started listening to the different stakeholders at the table and the things that were happening with the report and started to be like, why? And Mr. Dolson from Student Services does serve also on that committee alongside to represent LCPS.

[00:58:28] And started to just sort of think, like, if 82,000 of our youth are sitting in our classrooms, we probably should be partnering with LCPS a little bit more. And then Dr. Spence presented his post-entry plan. And so many of the things that he was talking about, ACOI is already talking about because it's loud in youth.

[00:58:45] Imagine that. And the overlaps were really there. So on September 23rd, I invited Dr. Spence to come and present his post-entry plan highlights to ACOI, and now we are moving in a direction of true partnership with LCPS. Additionally, Ms. Allen from Communications has been involved in terms of also helping us understand how our survey data can reach more, be more culturally responsive, if you will, and we are starting to kind of tighten those bolts and really strengthen that partnership.

[00:59:18] So the ball, I feel like, is already moving in that direction. Dr. Spence, did you want to add anything? No, yeah, I agree. And as has been stated a number of different ways, I really appreciate the commitment and the conversation.

[00:59:34] And yes, absolutely, I think in all of these areas, not certainly just how we're working with our diverse population here in Loudoun, but how we're thinking about what's happening post-COVID with our students in the mental health space, what's happening with social media, what's going on with drugs and vaping in our communities and in our schools.

[00:59:54] I think all of those are opportunities for us to dig in together and certainly talk about what we're doing in LCPS to address some of these concerns and issues and then how we can partner to strengthen that out in the community. If I can say toward that end, we would love to be a permanent recurring yearly agenda item around Youth and Government Day when we do the Board of Supervisors we would do an immediate follow-on to this board if appropriate we're happy to do that so noted thank you yes and I just

[01:00:32] wanted to say thank you for being a part of that meeting and with LCPS staff with Human Services Education Committee which is part of NACO which I'm a part of and how that was brought about was we went to Tampa back in July and that That was a discussion that folks were having regarding the declining rate of graduation rates for our Hispanics in different communities of the Latino community.

[01:01:08] So I had just started asking questions and just thought, you know, to bring those voices together to see what we can do, and I really appreciate it. It's good to hear what you all are doing in LCPS as well regarding our students so thank you committee members we are normally supposed to be done at five and it is five so I don't know if we want to go for 15 20 more minutes or if we should stop it now the staff how do you feel about staying longer or no Yes, please.

[01:01:46] Okay. Madam Chair, I do need to step out. I've got to get to Fairfax for that panel, so thank you. Thank you, Dr. Spence. Okay, so thank you all for your presentation. We appreciate you, and looking forward to more collaboration spaces with you. Okay, let's see.

[01:02:06] The next one is Agenda Item 2, Review of Loudoun County Public Schools and County Offered Child Care Programs, County-wide presented by Steve Torpy, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services, and Kevin Lewis and Brian Stocks, LCPS Support Services. Gentlemen, the floor is yours. Well, thank you, and this comes from the June 10th meeting where the Joint Committee Work Plan was discussed, and there was a request that we bring back an information item on just the overview of child care programs or programs that we feel are sometimes used as child care, so we included

[01:02:42] those as well um in in the report that uh that you have in front of us both prcs programs and lcps programs uh so um my deputy director jeremy pain is going to walk you through the programs that we have within our department and then we're going to kick that over to mr stocks and he can walk you through the lcps and then we'll be here for questions and uh follow-up afterwards so mr pain good afternoon board members and school board members today i'd like to provide you with a

[01:03:17] brief overview of the child care program and other programs that could be considered child care that are currently offered by parks recreation and community services the first of these is what you traditionally think of as child care our licensed child care program this is a full day program for children ages three to five operating year-round in five of our community and recreation centers in addition to that we also have a licensed preschool program this is a half-day program for children ages 2 to 5 that runs roughly in line with the

[01:03:52] school calendar year generally September through May at both of our recreation centers and six of our community centers we do use a standardized curriculum model that prepares kids to enter the kindergarten classroom as part of that program. As you all are probably well aware, we also have the community after-school activities program, better known as CASA, and also the CASA Academies program, which is basically the CASA program only offered in our community centers and our recreation centers. Currently, we offer CASA

[01:04:28] in 50 of the elementary schools across the county. We're also working with Brian and his team to expand into schools that currently do not have a CASA program and expand the number of participants that we have in the CASA program itself at those sites that program operates from the end of school until 6 p.m. every day that school is in session and then lastly PRCS offers a variety of summer camp programs that start in late June and go through August those are used by parents as a method of childcare during the summer months when school is not in session and

[01:05:05] And there's additional details regarding each of those programs within the information item itself. At this point in time, I'd like to turn things over to Mr. Stocks, who can inform me about the programs offered through Loudoun County Public Schools. Thank you very much, Jeremy. Thank you, Board and Board of Supervisors and School Board members.

[01:05:23] Currently, LCPS has several specialized programs that provide services to pre-K and K-5 students and families beyond the standard offerings through LCPS. These programs are provided during the normal school day and at existing LCPS school sites, and LCPS provides transportation for these services.

[01:05:43] LCPS does not specifically recognize or categorize these programs as child care, as they offer specialized programs for students that qualify. These programs include HIDSTART, Starting Towards Excellence in Preschool, the STEP program, Early Child Special Education, the ECSE program, and Elementary School Special Education.

[01:06:07] We have with us today Dr. Ashley Ellis, Mrs. Tedra Richardson, and Mrs. Cherise Rosario if you have additional questions as they are the subject matter experts and can answer any specific questions you have about any of the programs. Thank you.

[01:06:25] Thank you, Mr. Stocks. Is that the end of the, yes. I do have one, if y'all will allow me. What I have noticed is we do not have an infant-toddler program anywhere.

[01:06:40] No county infant-toddler program. And so I had, full transparency, I had a conversation with Roby and part of, one of, part of the population is pregnant, pregnant teens and moms. And what we don't have is something to help them at that site or have a place to help them at all until their kids get two or three years old.

[01:07:08] And so I'm wondering if there's a space where we can look either county or a combined something to allow people that need that help for infant and toddler. And I know there's early Head Start, but I don't think there's anything here.

[01:07:26] I think the only one I saw was in Reston. Yeah, I mean, from our standpoint, with the CASA program, in all the years that we've been running CASA, there was a period of time where there was a before-school program at a handful of school sites, but that was not for that age, obviously.

[01:07:55] We have, as far as on the county side, we've never had a program at our community centers Or at any of the school sites that were of that age. So I do know that that is one of the questions that is being asked as a part of what we are looking at as a part of the board strategic initiative for child care is that age as well is one of the questions that were being asked.

[01:08:24] But at this point there was no program. Thank you. Any other questions? Yes. Supervisor Brissman. Thank you. I do have a number of questions, but to your question, find the space and put it in your budget.

[01:08:43] That's what I would say, to your question. And we need that funding. I know you need five votes for that, right? I had a number of questions about the CASA program. Why is there no CASA program at Sugar Land Elementary?

[01:09:03] So there was a program at Sugar Land years ago, and when the numbers reduced down to a level that was not sustainable, that's when that program was closed.

[01:09:19] That's fascinating to me. Okay, that might be something to dig in a little bit more. And then we've emailed about this, so it's no secret that I'm going to ask about the waiting list at the CASA program and what sort of progress we're making on, and thank you so much for the data that you sent us.

[01:09:41] We did send it around to the committee, but it is really concerning. I think it's about 576 kids, if I recall correctly, somewhere in the 570, which is not good. It's kind of untenable, if you ask me.

[01:09:59] So what kind of progress are we making on that? Currently, the wait list sits at 642 kids. 642, okay. As of October 1st, so incredibly high demand for the CASA program. Yeah. The main way that we're looking to address that is through expanding capacity at sites.

[01:10:16] Okay. And so you will see that the enrollment maximums are set at either 36, 54, 72. I saw that. And that is based on staffing ratios at that site. So what you will see is an ask coming forward to the board for additional funding for FTEs related to be able to expand those programs.

[01:10:34] The program is revenue offset, so there is no local tax funding required for that, but we do need board authority. Well, do we have to wait for the next budget cycle? Can you do an interim request? Well, we did a mid-year for a program down at the new elementary school in South Riding, so we don't need to necessarily wait for that.

[01:10:56] One of the things that we consistently are also looking at is the space needs because not all of the schools have the same square footage per se of the locations that we're doing. And there are some schools that have other programs going on as well, after school programs and things along those lines.

[01:11:19] So where we can expand, we're looking to do that. We did look at a couple of schools several years ago to even go above the 72 and go to 90, and we did that for one year, and it just was not able to be the quality of program that we wanted to put forth, and so we backed that down.

[01:11:43] Now 72 is the max that we would do. Okay. And I'm sure you're looking at things like, for example, if there were a program at Meadowland, it's not that far away from Sugar Land, so you could perhaps take kids to another school. Algonquian Elementary, fairly close to River Bend Middle. Do we look at those sorts of things?

[01:12:02] So we have looked at where we have proximity, and I'll let Mr. Payne speak a little bit to this as well. The issue is sometimes busing, but also the issue is for certain families, if you bus them to another

school, they don't have the ability because the kids get picked up from their school.

[01:12:29] So being in the community is important for certain families. And then, of course, in the middle school sites, we're running our YAS program, which would have the same space needs that the CASA program does. One more question, Madam Chair.

[01:12:45] We now have the Child Care Fee Reduction Program, which unfortunately we haven't used enough of it, and I know that we're working on that. Would CASA families be able to apply for the fee reduction at, for example, if there's Sugar Land families that just aren't doing it because they can't afford it, would they be able to apply?

[01:13:08] And are Parks and Rec folks aware of that fee reduction program? In answer to your question, yes. People are eligible to, the CASA program is eligible for the PRCS CARES program, which offers fee offset for the program. One of the things that staff is working on is trying to make sure that the community has awareness that that is available to them to help offset those fees.

[01:13:31] So we're working diligently on our marketing efforts within the community in multiple languages to make sure that that word gets out there. Please, because we only have until the end of 26 to spend the money. Thank you. To that point, I know that there was something this year about transportation from Lincoln, I think.

[01:13:52] another school who had a CASA program because I know that we have 62 we have two charter schools elementary schools so I guess that would be 60 and there's only 50 spots right here so we were not giving well actually mr. Lewis would you please talk to you about transportation to CASA thank you chair Mansfield so we manage the transportation just like we do any other requests that we consider to be alternate transportation requests.

[01:14:29] And by policy, we will take those students that ask for, or a parent that asks for a student to go to a daycare or to a CASA program or to a relative's house as an alternate site from what their original home is, as long as it's within that route or it's within that school boundary.

[01:14:48] So we don't want to, well, we can't take a bus from an attendance zone from one school, clear out of the attendance zone to another program. But we do regularly take to all kinds of programs, including CASA, as long as they're within that same program. Under the policy 6310, I think it is, 6210, it's the at no cost provision.

[01:15:08] So we will take those. The transportation folks will route them as long as there's not an appreciable addition of cost. So we can take them to an alternate stop within that boundary so we're not taking that bus out. because that bus down needs to be back in the, if it's an elementary school child, that needs to be back in the cluster to do the middle school run and the high school run, so we don't take that bus completely out of service.

[01:15:34] No, I was just going to add, and we've worked very well with LCPS, and that's what you see at our YAS programs as well, where we don't run a YAS program at every single middle school, but you do have some that come from multiple middle schools as long as they're within those zones, and we can make that happen.

[01:15:52] Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you all for this very informative conversation. And I did have the ability to be invited into this conversation by Vice Chair Brisman earlier

in the week and have really been thinking about what are the factors that are limiting or making CASA not accessible to parents.

[01:16:16] And I'm curious if you could remind me of what the monthly cost is. And based on the Sugar Land example, how long ago did we have that program? And given that it might not necessarily be the same families at the time when the program was dissolved, is there a process for assessing a need as things change over time?

[01:16:41] And then lastly, I'll say in the last legislative session, there were quite a number of bills that were passed and signed into law by the governor relating to early childhood education, including one that our former school board member, Delia Reaser, championed that would make it possible to have child care in office space because of waiving the permit process.

[01:17:05] I was just curious if there had been any exploration around that. I'll take the second part first, if that's okay, and then turn it over to Mr. Payne for the first part. The exploration of where we can provide child care on a variety of levels is one of the things that we are looking at when I was responding to Supervisor Brisbane or Vice Chair Brisbane earlier with that all-encompassing child care program that we're looking in.

[01:17:40] So I don't have an answer to you right now, but that is one of the things that is being explored. Supervisor Brisbane. Oh, I'm sorry. It was going to be you. Apologies. In answer to the first part of your question, the current fees for CASA are \$385 per month per child, and in terms of how we look at facilities that currently haven't had it or had it in the past, that's a process that we're going through to do some outreach, both with the community, LCPS, and the principals at those schools to see if we can get a program started again.

[01:18:16] We already transport some children to CASA Academy programs that are taking place in some of the recreation centers or community centers so there is at least some level of interest there it's just getting above that sort of minimum threshold point that we need to get to one of the things that we try to do is make sure that CASA staff are at the back-to-school nights and have a chance to interact with the with the parents just to make sure that they are knowledgeable of the program whether that's at one that's already existing or one that potentially could be opened at that school.

[01:18:57] Supervisor Breskman, it's \$385 a month. How would that fee reduction thing work? Is it to make it free or reduce how much? It's 50%, I believe. We have a fee reduction program that follows the free and reduced lunch program.

[01:19:28] So there's an option for 25% or 50% reduction for kids or participants in the CASA program currently. So that's currently, but in addition to what Supervisor Bristman was saying, is that another 50%?

[01:19:47] No, no. No, I can't do both. Yes, Supervisor Bristman. I forgot two of my questions. Sorry. So, and thank you so much. I know you guys are, I have visited the CASA program several times over the last couple years to present the child or the provider care week proclamation, and I've always been very impressed with the staff, but the wait list is really kind of blew my mind.

[01:20:18] But on a different topic, it also blew my mind that we only have 100 kids enrolled in Head Start, and we only have 320 enrolled in STEP. So it's my understanding that Head Start is for three-year-olds and STEP is for four-year-olds.

[01:20:35] So I just, I don't understand how we only have 100 out of a county of 436,000 people. Where's the, is there another program? So is there another program the schools are doing for three- and four-year-olds that I don't know about, Ms. Richardson? I want to ask Ms. Rosario to come to the microphone and answer that.

[01:20:55] Okay, perfect. Hi, I can clarify that. So Head Start is a federally funded program, and we are limited to the funding that is provided to us by the federal government. So we have funding for specifically 100 students, and we cannot expand that without the additional funding.

[01:21:13] Yes. Wait a minute. Do we know what the need is? And then, oh, yeah, the need is greater than that. Yes, absolutely. Yes. And then our STEP program is our state-funded low-income preschool program.

[01:21:31] and there's different income variances between the two so for the 100 students that are eligible for head start they have to meet several criteria that are risk factors to include income eligibility which is up to 100% of the poverty line and then the step program which is a state low-income preschool program we have those are for eligible students up to 300% of the poverty line so does that answer your question but we might need to talk offline because I know that we're trying to get through our items yet but thank you very much

[01:22:08] madam chair we might we might need to talk offline okay anybody other questions yes oh supervisor class co-chair glass yes okay so because I kind of had a similar question so you're saying that oh it's only up to a hundred students our Our grant supports 100 students, correct?

[01:22:30] That is correct. All right, so do we need to apply for more grants in order to? It doesn't work that way. It's how the federal government delineates the funding to each of the localities, yes. Oh, wow. Okay. Thank you.

[01:22:45] So does my next question is, does PRCS offer the licensed day care program in Sterling? It seems like most of them, most locations are out west. terms of the licensed daycare those programs I think like Bluemont Percival Levittsville Leesburg yeah we do we do have a limited number of locations that we have the licensed licensed daycare program because we also typically hold

[01:23:21] the licensed preschool program and the majority of our sites as well and the demand for that program typically outweighs the demand that we see for the precinct for the daycare program for instance we currently have in terms of enrollment in the programs we have 740 children enrolled in our preschool program versus 94 enrolled in the child care program yeah so they're the child care program is two and a half to five in preschool is three to five

[01:23:59] thank you mr. no thank you chairman field I think you can tell we're all pretty invested in this topic, and I'm glad to hear it. One of the things I wanted to ask about with CASA is a couple of constituents in my area are couples that are both teachers, and their kids remain on the wait list, and so my question is, and I know there's already been a lot of asks on you already tonight, but is there any consideration for teachers having priority for their kids to be

[01:24:34] in casa not at this time the we have a way that we register that if you have if you are a current enrollee you're able to re-enroll and then there also is a period of time where we open up folks that are eligible for free and reduced to get out in front of the general registration as well yeah that's important um after that it's a free-for-all uh it's open to everyone

[01:25:08] i've heard it's very competitive um that it is i'm just wondering about that um and i'm sorry mr lewis but i'm gonna mention start times um here in loudon our elementary kids are in very early and so they're out early and they need care and in this particular situation these two teachers are middle school and high school teachers so they're getting out late they need care for their kids and now you know as teachers I don't know if that's something that we could think about in partnering together as we think about recruiting and retaining our teachers which is an ongoing issue for us just as a way to support our educators you know we're really looking at

[01:25:45] different initiatives in terms of tuition reimbursement and other different programs that are incentivizing our teachers to come here and stay and I know child care is top of mind for for them as well until start times potentially change but i won't freak anybody out yet we can certainly take that back i know during the time when we were responding to the covid crisis and we did the stand-up centers that was something that we gave priority to students or

[01:26:18] excuse me to teachers as well as county staff so that operations could still continue forward so we can have that as a part of the conversation with the overall child care discussion yeah i appreciate the thought around it as a potential um way to incentivize them um switching topics now to our full day preschool step and head start i know it is shocking there is a lot of need and um i last week two weeks ago we went to go visit our new full day step program which um at the 11th hour in the budget cycle i was able to put forward an amendment that extended that program

[01:26:55] program to full day and we I just want to report to the board of supervisors thank you for supporting our budget because there was sort of misunderstanding around extending that program by the previous board thinking that because the half day slots weren't filled that there wasn't a need to extend the program to full day but it is if you know the families that this serves it's the full day option that is very appealing and helpful and so that being funded now is just it is really beautiful to see and it has been a real blessing for me to see that come to fruition so I think my colleagues for their support and I wanted to report back to you because you're a huge part of that as well

[01:27:34] and so if we can keep that in mind for the future it's a two for one right I mean our kids are in full-day preschool which helps them acclimate to our schools early there's early intervention we know about literacy I know there's a few people at this table that care about that but additionally you know we are also helping with the child care issue and keeping kids safe and learning and I I think that that's something that we all share across.

[01:27:55] So really appreciate that. Just wanted to report back. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other questions from committee members? You guys have an appetite for going to item three? Yeah. Okay. Our next, Tim will be quick.

[01:28:14] Next item is item three, county budget development calendar and process review presented by Mr. Tim Hemstreak, our county administrator. Thank you, Madam Co-Chairs and members of the committee I can do all of this from this slide so this this slide is in your packet or was distributed with the packet the question I was really asked to illustrate is how does the budget calendar work and then why does the budget calendar work the way that it does so the main issue is what's overlaid here is the blue bar is the fiscal year which is July 1 to

[01:28:51] june 30th and then the tax year is the is in green which is the calendar year and so it gets a little bit complicated when we go between the two uh particularly since we adopt the budget the board of

supervisors adopts this budget in April okay so but the fiscal year for the following fiscal year which starts July 1st when we talk about real property and personal property taxes though that encompasses about 72 percent of the county's revenue which also funds the school division so So that is by far, those two different types of property taxes are by far the largest source of

[01:29:26] revenue that we have for county and school operations. The issue for us is that the first collection in the fiscal year occurs in December. So if you look at the blue bar for the fiscal year, fiscal year starts July 1st, first collection occurs for that fiscal year in December, and then the second collection for that fiscal year occurs in June. So what we have to do is in order to make that June collection date and the board adopts in the latest we can adopt the budget in order to make that June collection date is in April and so everything kind of backs up from

[01:30:03] there. The reason for that is by statute the treasurer has to provide 15 days for from the time the bills are received for individuals to pay their taxes. In Loudoun County we provide 30 days So in order to have a collection date for real property taxes on June the 5th, those bills have to be mailed essentially by May 5th.

[01:30:30] And so that means that the board needs to adopt its budget, which includes its real property tax rate, in the month of April. We traditionally ask the board to adopt your budget and your tax rates. The first meeting in April, you could go as late as the second or the public hearing date because the treasurer does need a couple weeks to turn the tax bills around and be able to print them so that they can be placed in the mail by May 5th.

[01:31:01] So if that first meeting in April is the date, we back into the calendar from there. And so traditionally, we have wanted to give the Board of Supervisors about three or four weeks to go through the budget because the budget consists of both the request from the school division as well as any requests coming from county agencies, which includes county departments as well as constitutional officers.

[01:31:30] So everybody that the board funds, we want to give the Board of Supervisors about three or four weeks to go through the budget. So if we back up from that, we really need to start the budget process at the beginning of March, which is where the board traditionally starts their process.

[01:31:47] The Board of Supervisors has always taken or traditionally has taken the approach that they want to hear from the public prior to considering the budget and their budget deliberations. So that means their required public hearings occur typically the last week of February. And I'm just going backwards to back into to the budget.

[01:32:06] Those public hearings also need to consider the proposed tax rate. So that's why the proposed tax rate, which is the maximum tax rate the board could apply for real property, is also advertised at the same time that I propose the budget, which is the second week in February.

[01:32:22] So that's where the county's budget process starts. When we've talked with the school superintendent, the superintendent, in talking with the school board, my understanding is that the desire has been for the advertised tax rate to include whatever budget the school board has adopted.

[01:32:47] Okay, so that means you would need to finish your budget deliberations before I present the budget and before I present or prepare the budget tax rate ad. So if I'm going to make a budget proposal the second week of February, then I really need to know where the school division is in order to advertise the tax rate by the end of the first week of February.

[01:33:10] So that's kind of where we fall into the dates. Theoretically, if the school board was willing to have the maximum tax rate based off of the superintendent's proposed budget, the superintendent could propose as late as the first week of February.

[01:33:27] just know though that if you make any changes school board makes any changes to that budget that is above what the superintendent has proposed that could not be funded within the maximum tax rate so that's that's what then kind of pushes the school board into having to start your process in the beginning of January so that you're concluded really by that first week in February so that I can include your request and the funding for your request into the budget that I proposed to the Board of Supervisors and then also advertise a real property tax rate

[01:34:03] that allows the board to fund that budget should they desire to do so. I can't necessarily speak for the school division in terms of how long it takes them to put their budget together. I will tell you, however, that we start coordinating with things like the capital budget with the school division starting really in June and July of the previous year and then we work together to have hopefully a capital improvement budget that incorporates the critical needs for the school division as well as the needs for the county

[01:34:40] that gets included into the budget that I propose. The capital budget has a significant amount of cash in it. So there's 100 million or more cash that goes into capital budget. So I cannot really balance the operating budget until the capital budget stops moving. So that's why there's always a request to the school division for us to come to terms with the CIP really before the end of the calendar year in order for me to be able to finalize the operating budget and that recommendation

[01:35:17] to the board of supervisors so we take on the county side we take a lot of that information into consideration we we will go to the board of supervisors typically in the October to December time frame provide information around what's happening with the budget to the extent that we have anything from the school division in terms of what the school's likely request is going to be we also include that in the information we provide to the board of supervisors the board does give me formal budget guidance in either December or January of any year, which then really is kind

[01:35:55] of guidance as to what I'm going to place into the budget and then where I'm going to advertise the maximum tax rate. So that in a nutshell is how the budget calendar works. In order to move things later, because that question comes up quite a bit, we would have to take that June tax collection date and move it into the next fiscal year. So that creates a challenge because in order to do that, whatever that transition year is, we would have to have one tax collection

[01:36:31] that year, which would have to be the December tax collection. So right now, for both personal property and real property, the bills go out twice a year. So real property, first collection is in December, second collection is in June. For personal property, first collection is October, second collection is in March. So in order to provide more time, we'd have to move those collection dates and the real property date would need to move into the next fiscal year.

[01:36:57] I'm not, I don't know how to do that because that would push an entire year's tax collection into December. And that, from my perspective, would create a significant hardship and certainly not one that I can recommend to the board.

[01:37:13] So that's just, I can go into the mechanics of that if there's a desire for me to do that. However, that's the budget schedule in a nutshell. Committee members, are there any questions? Thank you, Mr. Hemstreet.

[01:37:30] I think the hardest part is that we don't know what we're getting from the state until sometimes July, August. Absolutely, I understand. And the board doesn't know often until it's in the middle of its budget deliberations, the board of supervisors.

[01:37:56] Any questions? No. Thank you, Mr. Hemstreet. Thank you. I might have to rewind and re-listen to this committee again for that, specifically. And then I'm going to have to talk to Mr. Lewis afterward.

[01:38:15] Okay, so before we adjourn, I forgot to mention that I have appointed Ms. Chandler as my co-vice chair. And I also wanted to let everyone know that October 17th is LCPS Celebration Day. with many fun events designed to celebrate our staff, students, families, and everyone who contributes to LCPS. And my understanding is there's lots of swag and fun things happening.

[01:38:41] So I also see we don't have new business on our agenda. Do we put new business on here or is it just add or drop to calendar? Do we know? We don't have new business, but I just want to make sure that you're not referring to your work plan items. I just didn't know if we do new business or we talk about add or dropping to work plans or anything like that we could do that but we would need to know that in advance for the item or you could make a motion to do so if you had changes

[01:39:15] for the work plan or additions to i don't have any i just we always i don't have any i just you know when we have our new there's always new business at the end okay i'm just checking okay um so with that our october 7th is there any other questions everybody good october 7th 2024 meeting of the Joint Committee with the Board of Supervisors is now adjourned. Thank you for everybody for your work and drive home safely.



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