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Loudoun County School Board, Finance and Operations Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 29, 2024

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Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1024843981?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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

[00:00:00] - Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to call to order this Tuesday, October 29th meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee. My name is Arben Estreffi, and I'm the chair of this committee. I'm joined by Chair Mansfield and Mrs. Griffiths. I'd like to start us off with any public comment.

[00:00:17] Is there any public comment for today? Seeing no public comment. We'll move on to the minutes from October 15th. Board members, has everyone had a chance to review the meeting minutes? And if so, are there any revisions?

[00:00:36] Seeing none, I will make a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes from October 15th of the Finance and Operations Committee. Do I have a second? - Second. - Seconded by Chair Mansfield.

[00:00:53] And we will now vote to approve the meeting minutes. All those in favor? - Aye. - Aye. That motion will pass unanimously. The meeting minutes have been approved. We'll move on to the approval of the consent agenda.

[00:01:09] Board members, are there any comments or revisions regarding the consent agenda? Seeing none, I'll make a motion to approve the consent agenda. Do I have a second? - Second. - Seconded by Chair Mansfield.

[00:01:27] We'll go ahead and take a vote to approve the consent agenda. All those in favor, aye? - Aye. - Aye.

[00:01:43] Abstaining, all right. So that vote will pass with myself and Chair Mansfield in favor of approving the consent agenda and Mrs. Griffith's abstaining.

[00:01:58] That brings us to our action item for today, and that is 5.01, Business and Financial Services, Revision of Policy 6120. And I will pass it on to Ms. Mills, Director of School Nutrition, to see if there's anything else to add regarding this item.

[00:02:19] - Good afternoon. Unfortunately, Ms. Mills is not here this evening, this afternoon. We have redlined a couple of the feedback. - And I'm so sorry. Let's go ahead and start with a motion first. My apologies. - Okay. - So I will motion and get us to that discussion.

[00:02:39] So I move that the Finance and Operations Committee recommends the Loudoun County School Board approve the revision of policy 6120 wellness. Do I have a second? - A second. by Chair Mansfield and we'll move it on to discussion.

[00:02:58] Thank you. - Thank you. Ms. Mills is not available this afternoon, but we have redlined some of the items that we received from the feedback from the last finance and operations.

[00:03:15] - Thank you. Board members, are there any questions or discussion? Yes, Chair Mansfield. - So I just want to be perfectly clear that this does not, So, like, I would say from line 61 on the red line on to, I guess it's 89, line 89.

[00:03:40] I just want to be super clear that this is not going to hamper any of the special education fundraisers that they use for their community independence instruction. So they have coffee carts and things like that in high schools, and then they also have school stores.

[00:04:07] Some of the things in elementary and middle school are only sold to teachers, which wouldn't be contemplated in this, but I have a concern that maybe the coffee carts at, like, say, Independence High School might be affected by something like this.

[00:04:26] Do we have any knowledge or anything about that? I apologize. I don't know the specifics of that, so I'd have to get back to you. Seeing that no one is, that was just one of my one things.

[00:04:46] The other thing was on line 70. Is there a way that we could have a link there as to what smart snacks are? Is there like a link on the USDA page or something? - We can add that link, yeah. - Yeah, just so that we know what those are. Those are my only two items.

[00:05:06] - Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. - Thank you, Chair Streffy. I was hoping Ms. Willoughby would be here today. Is this her, she put this policy forward? 'Cause I have a lot of changes to it. - Okay, we can take the feedback. and come back with some red lines, so we can take your comments and feedback.

[00:05:23] Okay, all right. Well, starting with line 26, cultural diversity of student body in meal planning. Can you explain that a little bit or explain it in this document, what that means? Which line was that?

[00:05:42] I'm sorry. That's line 26. Sorry. Sorry about that. I have a lot of changes, so. Clarify, Mrs. Griffin.

[00:06:03] It's in the clean. It's in the clean. Okay. I just realized it was the clean copy. So, I'm sorry, can you repeat the question, Ms. Griffiths? Okay, so for line 26 into 27, on the clean copy, the cultural diversity of student body and meal planning, more of an explanation there.

[00:06:26] We have on line 33 to 34, grade-level appropriate and culturally responsive education materials to be provided.

[00:06:43] I'd like an explanation on that. On lines 35 to 36, schools will support the development of emotional and social wellness in students to help improve overall resiliency and self-esteem. I guess my question is, this is a wellness policy.

[00:07:04] Why don't we have a separate policy for nutrition? Wellness, I mean, you're combining nutrition with mental health and wellness. Ms. Griffith-Ill was part of developing this policy when it first came out, but that is now switched to Mrs. Willoughby's department.

[00:07:27] But I can say that there was a requirement that all those things be included in that, but we can come back with a more detailed explanation. But it is a requirement to do that and have all those things combined. Well, requirement by who? I'm sorry?

[00:07:43] It may even be the USDA, but that's what we'll get you the information for. Okay, yeah, I'd like that information because when I get to the second page, social wellness program goals. There's a whole list here, and I feel like the parents should know about it, and there should be an opt-out maybe in the policy for parents, and it goes on for a while. I just don't understand why we're combining, and you'll get me that information, of course, but there were a couple errors as well. Let's see. I'm on the clean copy. On line

[00:08:23] In 193, you have, let's see, well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies. How about implement activities and promote support instead of policies?

[00:08:39] Promote support. Like, throughout the policy, we talk about encouraging. You know, just setting a policy makes it final. Promoting, implementing activities and promoting is much better. On line 203, I don't understand here, permit parents, I'm not sure, permit parents, students, representatives of school, I don't know, I don't know what is that supposed to mean.

[00:09:10] And I saw on the red line, it said something else and then you put just permit parents. On line 209, offer professional learning opportunities and information. you have here workshops I would just say and information let's see line 214 I would I don't know this one too maybe you guys can explain it to me physical activities and mental and emotional

[00:09:44] hygiene that will need to be explained as well and then line 222 it says here well 221 says to walk or bike to school and to enter the school building when parent, guardian, or caregiver transportation is provided, should be, is not provided. Is that correct? We're allowing kids to ride their bike if the caregiver is not providing transportation, correct? It's just a typo.

[00:10:23] We will make that correction. Okay. And then let's see. Okay. So then line 232 into 233, The division will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy.

[00:10:44] I'm not quite sure what that means. How are you documenting? What are you documenting exactly? So those are all my questions, and I don't feel this policy is ready yet for approval, but there seems to be a lot of changes and a lot of questions as of right now.

[00:11:01] Thank you. And I was hoping for Ms. Willoughby to be here to clarify. Thank you. Thank you. I would like to make a motion that this moves back to information so that we can get some more information about these questions, because I don't know that it's so that we can answer Mrs. Griffith's questions and give her some, provide us some more information.

[00:11:28] And that's my motion on the floor. Thank you. A motion has been made. I'll go ahead and second that motion. Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing no discussions, we'll take a vote.

[00:11:45] the motion has been made to send this back as an information item to the committee to have a bunch of these questions and comments addressed. All those in favor, aye. That motion will pass unanimously and this will be addressed in the future as an information item and taken out of action.

[00:12:11] So we'll move on to our information item for this afternoon. 6.01, business and financial services, FY25 budget transfer request, school-based copy paper initiative.

[00:12:30] - Good afternoon. We are here this afternoon to highlight the FY25 copy paper initiative and request the F&O committee review and school board approval of internal budget transfer to fully fund this exciting new school-based enhancement. As LCPS continues to identify new ways to provide support directly to schools, the Departments of School Support Services and Business and Financial Services identified an opportunity at the beginning of the year to centrally fund copy paper instead of having schools purchase it using their instructional allotment.

[00:13:02] This approach not only reduces schools administrative load by reducing the need for funds transfers, but it also frees up an additional 1 million that schools can reallocate toward other instructional priorities. As Ms. Willoughby presented in the first quarter financial report last Tuesday at the school board, staff has identified sufficient projected personnel savings to cover the cost of this initiative and request the FNO committee review and school board approval to transfer the existing budget authority from personnel accounts to the Department of Support Services.

[00:13:33] Following discussions with this committee, we began working on this initiative in the spring and early summer of last year and announced it to the schools and the school board at the beginning of this year. For additional context, schools spent roughly one million in FY23 and 1.2 million in FY24 on copy paper.

[00:13:51] We are anticipating that FY25 will be similar. In addition to the one million being requested here, We have also identified about 200,000 in the support services budget that will be used for this initiative. Unless otherwise directed, staff will bring this back on the consent item at the next FNO meeting.

[00:14:10] - Thank you very much, board members. Any questions or discussion? Chair Mansfield. - So we always, and I know you guys too, on Facebook or all the rest of them, they're like, we need more copy paper. We need more copy paper, right?

[00:14:26] Is the reason why, because they were given in the instructional, was it instructional allotment? Is that pretty much what we're thinking? And that maybe this would be helpful and then like principals are like, well, I'd rather spend it on something else than copy paper.

[00:14:43] And so this would be a nice way to alleviate that. Is that the thinking? - That's correct. - Okay, and then so this is taken out of projected personnel savings.

[00:14:58] Is this something that kind of could always happen? Like a fund for every year? This is this year because it was an early initiative and it wasn't built into last year's budget.

[00:15:16] These funds will support this ongoing in our base budget moving forward through support services. Thank you. Yes, Ms. Griffith. In case I missed it, what operating fund exactly?

[00:15:33] The general fund, the operating fund. And this will cut down. Copy, paper, and money will go to the schools, and they'll make a decision as far as what they need the money for.

[00:15:49] Is that what you're saying? I don't think it's going to cut down on the copy paper because they're still going to need the copy paper. Yeah, exactly. It's just reallocating it. Instead of them having to use the instructional allotment, we are now putting the budget in support services. Okay, thank you.

[00:16:07] Thank you for the feedback. And just to be clear, the total amount allotted for copy paper hasn't changed. It's just the discretion. And so it's just not coming out of the school funds. And that is now in the hands of the school communities to utilize.

[00:16:30] So it basically puts it into the operating fund. So the total amount hasn't changed, and schools now have more funds at the school level, and they don't have to use their funds for the copy paper. That is correct.

[00:16:48] And to give a little context, what previously occurred was the schools used their school-based funds to order paper on an as-need and discretionary basis. We ran some reports for historical use over the years and took COVID into consideration.

[00:17:06] So we looked before and after, and then we stacked the schools based on enrollment, which is how we do allotments in other areas, and looked at their historical usage against the enrollment, and we set bans and then gave the schools the allotments relative to their bans.

[00:17:24] So they have allotments based on the enrollment of the school. And what we used the historical information for was to make sure we didn't harm a school by giving them less funds than they had historically used. And fortunate for us, it stacked pretty consistently based on the enrollment.

[00:17:40] So that was a good factor to utilize. And then we will track that and monitor that. And at which point they receive a low balance, we will work with the school, notify the school, let them know. And then if they wanted to exceed their allotment and continue to purchase paper, or if we feel they're getting low at an early time, we can have that conversation with the school.

[00:17:59] They could obviously still purchase paper out of other funding. And in the case that it's used for outside support organizations like PTOs, PTAs, and boosters, they can still purchase paper from us, and it doesn't impact the allotment for the school.

[00:18:15] Thank you for the clarification. Just so there is going to be a process if they go over their allotment, there will be a process and no harm kind of a thing. Well, at that point, what we've said leading into this initiative is this is this is extra and on top of their instructional funds.

[00:18:35] So for lack of a better term, this is free paper for that until they reach that allotment threshold. And then at that point, if they exhaust that, they may purchase out of school funds or booster funds. But we tried to set the allotments based on the enrollments so that that would not occur, that we still need a little bit of accountability at the school site for ordering paper.

[00:18:57] We don't want them to order in excess if it's not unnecessary. It's not an unlimited amount of paper. It's based on the historical utilization and the enrollment. So we feel comfortable. We're monitoring it. We're going to update the schools as their balance draws down, hopefully at the very end of the year.

[00:19:15] But if we have any anomalies, we will address those. But the plan is that these are the funds historically that we have spent, LCPS has spent, whether school funded or operating on paper. So

therefore, we felt that was a good number. And incrementally, that will grow over the years as we grow and as inflation occurs.

[00:19:36] But we don't anticipate tipping that number this year. Any other comments or discussion? Yes. Thank you, Chair Streffi. So every school is different, so you don't really have the actual cost per school.

[00:19:56] um for the for the paper and also um question number two did boosters always have to buy the paper that they use when they make copies is that right um it depends on their activity if it's something the boosters do not per se buy the paper that's used in the classroom um or they may have bought the paper that you they use in the classroom to save the school's instructional funds if they had those funds, but that's not what that was intended for.

[00:20:29] The boosters may buy paper for things that are outside activities in their support function. And we do track the historical data we have is exactly the number of cases or reams of paper that each school ordered because previously when they ordered them through the distribution center, we would invoice back to the instructional fund for them to pay for.

[00:20:54] So we do, our historical data is actual utilization of paper by each school. Okay, thank you. Any other comments or discussion? Seeing none.

[00:21:10] Is there, we'll move on to new business. Is there any new business? Oh, that's a good question. Apologies, Chair Mansfield is just asking, or reminding me, rather, board members, do we want to put this on consent for the next F&O meeting? Are we okay with this policy?

[00:21:31] Okay, so Ms. Griffiths has asked for this not to be on consent, so that's fine. We'll move this to action in the next F&O committee meeting. So moving on to new business. Is there any new business? Yes.

[00:21:49] Oh, yeah, absolutely. Mr. Lewis, as you know, everybody's voting right now, and I believe you might have brought this up in the past, but if you could just explain the bond that's on the ballot right now.

[00:22:06] On the referendum this year, there are costs to design, construct, and equipped LCPS facility renewals and alterations and the costs of other public school facilities as requested by the Loudoun County School Board. The maximum amount is capital improvement bonds.

[00:22:22] This referendum would authorize \$10 million. Can you just explain that a little bit? You might have explained it previously, but if you could just refresh my memory, I'd appreciate it. Sure. So the bond language is developed by the county, and it's based on their model for providing the debt service or managing the debt service.

[00:22:43] So they will decide how much of our capital budget. So the school board approves a capital budget for certain numbers of projects, certain values, and then the county decides how they're going to fund that. So some of the funding could come from the tax, what do you call that, local taxes, and some could come from general obligation bonds.

[00:23:05] And what's on the bond question is only those that they're going to sell bonds for. So they've decided how much that is, and we work with our folks, Ms. Willoughby's team, to check and verify that based on what the CIP is.

[00:23:21] So, essentially, that applies for all the projects that are showing up for this fiscal year that they need to get permission from the taxpayers to sell bonds for. Can this involve any construction projects? Anything can be part of this, correct?

[00:23:38] Well, and I don't have the language in front of me, but if you notice, I think it's the capital renewals and alterations, and that's a section of the CIP where we have a number of those projects. And you saw from our presentations where we have some improvements and we have some sustainment projects. And so those are divvied up in whichever ones fall, and I think that's probably for the fiscal year 27, because fiscal year 26 was on last year's bond, so in November.

[00:24:03] And so it'll be those projects that we're showing in that from last year's adopted CIP for FY25. I know there's a lot of numbers in there, but so it's a complicated process of how they go through and manage their debt service. Thank you for explaining that.

[00:24:19] Sure. Appreciate it. Board members, any new business? Seeing no new business, we'll now adjourn this October 29th meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee. Thank you very much.



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