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Loudoun County School Board, Performance Monitoring Committee, Wednesday, November 13, 2024

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[00:00:00] I'm the chair of this committee. I'm joined by Ms. Chernoff and Chair Mansfield. We'll get started with our first item, which is public comment. Is there any public comment for this evening? I'm seeing no public comment.

[00:00:18] Okay, so we'll move on to the approval of our meeting minutes. Board members, hopefully everyone has had a chance to review the meeting minutes from October 15th. Are there any comments or edits to the meeting minutes? Seeing none, we'll vote to approve the meeting minutes.

[00:00:38] Do I have a motion? Motion to approve the meeting minutes from last time. Motion has been made by Ms. Chernoff. Is there a second? Second. Second by Chair Mansfield. We'll go ahead and vote. All those in favor? Aye. That motion will pass unanimously, and the meeting minutes have been approved.

[00:00:58] Now we'll move on to our information items. We have two information items this evening. Our first information item is 4.01, roadmap for performance monitoring committee presented by Dr. Ellis. Thank you. Good evening performance monitoring committee. So this evening we have for you a draft roadmap for your next several meetings. Dr. Tyler and Dr. Singel and I tried to incorporate all of the feedback that

[00:01:33] we received from you all in your first meeting last month as well as the goals of the strategic plan and the projects in Dr. Spence's post-entry project plan as well as some of his goals with the school board we tried to incorporate all of those into a potential schedule for your consideration while also considering things that we heard were priorities for you all we did hear that you wanted to make sure we were incorporating the real work happening in schools

[00:02:07] listening to listening to teachers and principals and teams from schools and so we're going to try out that model this evening with chronic absenteeism we will be presenting you with the data we will be talking a little bit about strategies division-wide and then we have a wonderful school team from Woodgrove High School who made significant gains in reducing chronic absenteeism and they're going to share their specific story from their school and then we would love your feedback at the end of this meeting on how that structure

[00:02:45] went for these topics so I will I won't necessarily read this to you but I will say that we try to incorporate all of those things in this plan we are seeking your feedback on the flow on the volume of information in each meeting what might be missing and we have a couple of questions for your consideration we'll get to that last that first question last actually at the end of the meeting but some things for your consideration and then I'll turn it back to you chair Estreffe for discussion but where on the roadmap would you like to see any

[00:03:22] additional student achievement data discussions when and how is it most appropriate to talk about the continuous school improvement process and what What other priorities do you have that you don't see on this roadmap that you would like to incorporate? So again, we are open to any and all feedback.

[00:03:39] We were taking a first crack at mapping out what your priorities and the strategic actions might look like. Thank you very much, Dr. Ellis. So we'll open up for discussion based on some of the points that Dr. Ellis mentioned.

[00:03:58] I'll just throw out the first kind of idea to get the conversation going. I'm very curious as to how schools are utilizing flexible staffing and then perhaps looking at that, looking if there's a way to matrix that or align that to what's in their school improvement plans and then to look at some of the results.

[00:04:23] And I know that this is our first year in to some of these additional positions, but just would like to see how schools are utilizing those positions. Board members? Yes, Dr. Elst, did you want to say something else? No, just that that is, I think that's a really helpful conversation to have.

[00:04:42] And we can also incorporate, while we won't have historical data on flexible staffing, because this is the first year we've implemented it, we do have historical data on the use of differentiated staffing, which we've had for a few years now. So we could include that as part of the conversation.

[00:04:58] Wonderful. Board members, any other thoughts or discussion? You can also comment on some of the items that are already in here as well. So I don't know if this is a part of, this would be appropriate for here or not.

[00:05:14] But something that I have noticed overall is, I guess we don't call them subgroups anymore. What do we call it? Reporting groups. Reporting groups. Okay, I'm sorry. I'm trying to be better.

[00:05:30] Some reporting groups. I am wondering, something that I did, like I was telling Dr. Ellis, I can't even remember when I do things because I've been doing them for so long now, looking at data overall with LCPS. But one thing that I was looking at was tracking a subgroup and looking at the subgroup, the VALs, everything together, and also looking at eligibility. And if

[00:06:06] we are actually finding them, because what I found with a particular subgroup was that they might have SLI to begin with, or they might not have passed PALS early on, but they weren't even looked at for eligibility until later, like high school, middle school, high school. And so I'm just wondering how we connect those dots. And this is a Dr. Tyler question that maybe we can talk

[00:06:37] offline or something, but I'm looking, I want to look to get those kids earlier and to make sure that we're providing those interventions earlier before we're finding them eligible like and so let's look at the vows here and it was fall 2023 to spring 2024 and we can look at the reporting group for for black students and it looks like we still have 23 percent high risk and 23 percent

[00:07:12] high risk again that late you know later on what can what are we doing or what are we not doing so that we can decrease those numbers I you know and then students with disabilities they went up from 47 percent to 49 percent in the high risk category so that's the kind of that's something that I'm interested in is connecting those dots I hope I'm I'm hoping you're understanding me a

[00:07:37] Yes, I am understanding you, and I'm thinking through how we can dig into that in a way that's solutions-oriented, connecting it to the conversations that I know school teams have on a regular basis as they're working with individual students.

[00:07:58] And I think that we could certainly work with Dr. Tyler, Mr. Lodi's team, special education, and the school improvement office to gather the right data and have the right conversation to get at what you're asking.

[00:08:16] When I would talk to Mr. Lodi years ago, I don't even remember if he remembers me and Lorraine coming into his office talking about MTS when it was, like, at the very beginning. I guess it was RTI at that particular moment in time.

[00:08:35] And I remember asking him, well, do we look at our numbers and then do we look at the curriculum to see if it's really making a difference in the long run? and I don't so that's the other thing to connect those dots and these are pie in the sky kinds of things but I think it's important to be able to uh see if our interventions for vows is working see if our interventions for um other are and see if our tier one is working because we just got new

[00:09:10] that's my that's some of my thoughts right now um thank you for the question I appreciate it I feel like I'm trying to kind of philosophically think about where I want this committee to go and it's it's hard because there's so many things that I want to dig into and spend time on and again this kind of goes back to just that's just instilled in me as an educator and just knowing the value of that but I've kind of put it into like three buckets in my mind in terms of what I want to accomplish and then I'm going to kind of work backwards into to those buckets so

[00:09:49] the first one is what are like all the data that is attached today with the conversation that we're going to have a PMC our committee could take a deep dive on each one of these topics every single time and that originally was sort of what I envisioned is yeah one week we're going to look at you know one month we're going to look at MTSS and we're going to break it out by tiers and percentages for schools so

that we can be prepared in the budget conversation to talk about who needs of flexible staffing. And then in a year, you know, have that same conversation and reflect back on the data, did the flexible staffing that was applied actually mean something to that school's subgroup

[00:10:25] data. So those, that was originally kind of where I had thought this was going. As I've talked with Dr. Spence and kind of reflected with schools about where we could kind of pivot this, this committee to be a high leverage committee, two other things have come up. One is sort of what happened last night with the data I felt like that was and actually a couple board members actually said like that was nice to not sit there through 50 slides of data and instead we did our own homework and came to the table with those questions and so I sort of see PMC as a vehicle

[00:11:00] to do that to do the deep diving analyze some of this data really in isolation break it down talk about what it means the nuts and bolts have the schools come out talk about what this means for them in their curriculum and how it's affecting them and then give that information to the school board to then ask questions to continue to drive our conversation so I sort of see it as a reciprocal relationship with us and the full board and then the third piece is really coming out of another conversation that is going to start happening with our student success talks that's starting tomorrow night and that is how do we help the community how can we make

[00:11:38] this a space where we talk about what is MTSS why do we do that what are the state requirements in terms of reporting and how should parents tackle that and what does that mean for their students so I would like to see that lens as well sort of applied now that doesn't really address the roadmap but for me I think if some kind of higher level overarching data could be something that we could dig deeper into from goal one each time as sort of the thread that pulls through the other goals because ultimately this is about student outcomes. I think that that would be the most

[00:12:16] productive. Again, I'll use MTSS. I think vowels is a good example. I mean, right now our reading specialists are breaking things down by task. They're looking at the different tasks and they're talking about not only which tasks are difficult to administer, but also which tasks need the most attention in terms of instruction, and they're seeing some of those trends, so I would love to hear more about that kind of thing, and I think you understand the vein of that thought process. I also would like to tackle, you know, some of the sense of belonging survey data that

[00:12:51] we've looked at, start to look at equity in terms of how are we addressing some of our reporting groups and being equitable, as well as, you know, looking at some of the racial slurs and hate speech. So there's other things in goal one that I feel like, again, that could be a whole year's worth of meetings probably. But that would be my goal, I guess, and my priority. But I do love how you've staggered out the goals. And I especially appreciate your receptiveness to when the testing windows close and looking at those markers along the way. So that was a super a lot of things. And

[00:13:26] I hope you got it all. Thank you. Yes, agreed. I took furious notes, as did Dr. Single and Dr.

[00:13:42] Tyler. I do, I'm intrigued by the concept of using goal one as sort of, and the data from goal one as sort of the through line for all of the other goals. I think that actually makes a lot of sense and and it is really hard to because I know you all and we do too want to talk about it all and it's all important and so any help you could give us prioritizing that would be really beneficial so for example can I ask a specific question so let's take December's meeting

[00:14:14] is it is it important to you to talk about goal two specifically or is that something that for example the HRTD committee should tackle and you want to take a different approach and we'll just use that as an example. So I'll just share my thought on this and as you say Dr. Ellis it's it sounds as though and I really like where Ms. Chernoff was going with this focusing on goal one

[00:14:46] and keeping the focus of the pulse on student achievement data specifically I think would be a good compass for us, and so I would be okay with leaving hiring and staff retention to HRTD.

[00:15:05] There's going to be natural areas in this committee where we will overlap with other committees, for sure, like C&I, but I think hiring and staff retention perhaps could go back to HRTD, and we can keep the focus on student achievement data.

[00:15:22] I tend to agree with Chair Streffi at this point, and well, I haven't heard from Ms.

[00:15:38] but we kind of did um i do think that hiring and staff retention and stay survey i think i'm i don't know that we have except for transportation i i don't know that it's really it's it's a big deal but it's not it's it's not out of the bounds of what other people are experiencing i think or something but i think it should stay in hrted i think i'd like to focus more like on the achievement

[00:16:18] data because i think that's what we kind of had as a concept yeah i think i tend to agree the only thing is i don't want goal two three and four to get completely lost because i i think that that could be something but i also don't want to make our meetings like four hours long so i don't know i was sort of thinking like we would always do a goal one thing and then it would be like goal one goal two goal one goal three goal one goal four you know like those would be the parallel items but i agree i mean the thing that i was thinking we could leverage is that i would love i would love

[00:16:54] to hear from staff like i would love to hear from you know buildings that are retaining their teachers and the things that those people do and why they feel like they'd be you know belong in those buildings so i'm playing i know we i feel like i want my cake and want to eat it too um per the usual but i i don't want to necessarily push those things totally off the table but i do think in the beginning here there is enough meat for us to dive into especially as we lead up to the budget and then you know as we push towards the spring testing window I think that that might

[00:17:27] be another area so I don't that's not super helpful but um something to think about so was that a yes or a no circle back well it sounds like we're gonna lean more heavily into the student achievement yeah I mean there there is going to be a time when we're like okay so a student achievement affecting staff retention? Yeah, that's kind of where I'm at. I'm like, how does it impact? Does it make them excited to stay? You know, when you see your kids getting learning and doing better, does it make you more excited to stay and more energized? That's something that

[00:18:06] might be interesting to look into, but maybe that's a PhD study. Sounds like it, but I do think So Mr. Ostreff mentioned a perfect example at the very start of the conversation when you mentioned flexible staffing and student achievement results.

[00:18:24] I think that's a pretty direct connection between the student achievement data and staffing. So maybe we could start there. Yeah, because again, if you have flexible staffing and you have more resources and more staff to help out with things that are harder, Students are more challenging, it makes you want to stay, yeah.

[00:18:52] I really want to emphasize the note around hearing from school communities and staff because when it comes to flexible staffing, other topics might kind of come out of that, such as student behavior, bullying, it could be a school climate and how that really impacts student achievement and what's in each school's school improvement plan.

[00:19:19] And so just being able to kind of hear from those, all the anecdotes that would come out of that conversation, I think would be really helpful. I can't help but think about when we were doing the student assignment and Mr. Dolson brought in principals to talk to us.

[00:19:38] And that was so helpful to know how it affects them because we can't do, we can't be in a silo, right? Because we're not in the schools. And it was really eye-opening. And so I think if we could keep that.

[00:19:54] And, you know, to be quite honest, I'm thinking about, like, educational diagnosticians and what they're seeing, too. And a school psychologist, that might be an interesting thing to see, too. Can I have one more thing? I just sort of had, like, maybe an aha moment.

[00:20:09] I was looking at the original document of the strategic plan. Maybe instead of doing the four goals, not leaving them totally out of bounds if we wanted to pull something in, but maybe to focus on the 1.1 the 1.2 the 1.3 and the 1.4 and so to work through the strategic plan in a cyclical way because care for students in a safe and affirming environment is going to involve staff you know all of it is so I'm wondering student voice you know those are some things that I'm thinking like counseling could be even looped in so I'm wondering if maybe that's a better approach to keep it on student achievement but to work our way through those various

[00:20:44] categories and pull them where we see necessary so it would be core academic excellence multiple accessible pathways to success care for students and student voice and again we can tweak it along the way but maybe that could be a guide of something to think about so dr ellis i'm looking at all of the committee discussion questions what else in terms of feedback that you know you wanted

[00:21:16] to hear from us okay so this has been very helpful you all have a lot of a lot of ideas So I think we have plenty to go back and rework a map, a roadmap.

[00:21:40] I really appreciate the focus on the specific actions in Goal 1, 1.1, 1.2, et cetera. I keep hearing a lot about MTSS, about special education data, sense of belongings, student surveys.

[00:22:00] And so I think we can, we'll go back and rework that and really focus on goal one, bringing in other areas and those post-entry plan highlights when appropriate.

[00:22:16] Does that make sense? Yeah. I think something that we're always really interested in is the mental health right now. How do we capture that? Well, I think that can be incorporated as well pretty easily. And this can be a fluid plan.

[00:22:36] We can reevaluate as we go. right okay thank you all thank you very much so board members are we okay to move on to the next item or did we want to cover anything else all right wonderful so we'll move on to the next information item then chronic absenteeism data data actions and celebrations and we will pass it back to dr. Ellis all right

[00:23:14] Thank you Chair Streffy. So this presentation is definitely a group effort and I hope we are able to give you some insights into what a specific school is doing to support their students attendance. So I wanted to introduce a few people. Mr. Lodi and Mr. Madison are here from Student Services. Dr. Tyler and

Dr. Single you know and then from Woodgrove High School we have Dr. Shipp the principal, Shana Mackey, and Jeff Shute, who will also be presenting all of their hard

[00:23:50] work around student engagement and attendance. So we are going to start with the -- I just want to mention that there is a ton of other data in BoardDocs. We will bring that back over the next several months.

[00:24:07] I wanted you all to have that. We broke down into reporting groups wherever possible, and we can dig into those in future meetings, but that's all available. We are using chronic absenteeism as sort of a test case.

[00:24:23] We're trying out this structure of sharing the data, having a discussion, and then hearing from a school. We also will highlight Val's data, talk briefly about CCCRI, even though that's changing in the new system and MTSS again hopefully teeing up future conversations and then we'd love some feedback on the structure.

[00:24:46] So this is just a reminder of goal one and you will be seeing this more frequently and we will again really focus on those aligned actions like Ms. Chernoff mentioned. And this data is all available for you in board docs.

[00:25:01] And so I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Single who's going to talk a little bit about the chronic absenteeism data and tee up a conversation with our friends from Woodgrove. Thank you Dr. Ellis. So as Dr. Ellis mentioned one of the things that we are hoping to do this evening and test it out is provide you with some data engage in dialogue or have you engage in dialogue around practices and then have a school share out what they have found to be successful. We are very grateful for our guests this evening for sharing their practices so on the screen on the

[00:25:37] slide you can see a screenshot of the data that you have in board docs as well as two questions what trends in the data do you notice and what questions might you have on the data so this is our opportunity to engage in dialogue and then we have our friends from Student Services here who can assist answering the questions thank you very much Dr. Single board members any feedback well Well, the trend I'm seeing is that it's going down.

[00:26:09] That's the trend I'm seeing, so yay. There's been some work. There's been a lot of work being done.

[00:26:28] Okay, so that was a very quick conversation, so that's a good thing. And with that, we will turn it over to Woodgrove High School. They have done a tremendous job supporting their students, as you'll hear in their presentation. They've done a lot of things in terms of addressing and being focused on chronic absenteeism.

[00:26:49] So without further ado, Dr. Shipp and team, take it over. Good evening, and thank you very much for having us. We are excited and delighted to be here. I've heard the term having a school. I think when it comes to chronic absenteeism and improvement, I think you have the school that you should hear from with regards to what we have done this past year as a team.

[00:27:13] Sitting to my right, to your left, are two outstanding individuals. Shana Mackey, our student support advisor, and Jeff Shuddy, who is our student activities and engagement coordinator. They have taken the lead on this, but by no means are they the only two.

[00:27:31] This is my 20th year as a building principal. Attendance, the complexities that it brings, is overwhelming. and I think for many years schools have just kept their head above water with regards to trying to address this this is probably the first time that I've seen a school really get a handle on what's going on with regards to attendance tracking it having again triangulating with students parents and the school to make sure that we're seeing improvement with regards to state changes with regards to accreditation chronic absenteeism

[00:28:11] is a big deal so this is something that that every single one of us k-12 must address and that takes a lot of people spending a lot of time with that one from the principal standpoint you want to hear from principals thank you for these positions thank you i am going to also extend that these positions should probably also be extended if we're going to do this and really do this they They should probably be working over the summer because having them come in and then all of a sudden be thrust into working with attendants.

[00:28:48] And by the way, this is just one of the things that they do, along with so many other things to do this and to do this well and orchestrate this. We need time, time to process the data, data that you all could look at, that we could turn over to this team so that you could have that.

[00:29:06] That could be done if they have some additional time. Right now, they're doing a great job, but that's one of the things that we, again, would put forth for you all for further consideration. So, with that being said, we've taken great strides. Last year, we wanted to kind of improve from maybe 22% chronic absenteeism.

[00:29:26] We were hoping to go to about 18%, almost like a safe harbor. We reduced it down to 12%. If there's a school that had better improvement in the Commonwealth, I'd really like to see it. Now, right now, this team, and I'm going to turn it over to them, they have worked with, I believe, 16 schools that we know of.

[00:29:49] Others are taking what they've created. They are masters at what they do. They're devoted. They own it. And again, they have been strategic and creative in what we've come up with. And so I'm going to turn it over to Ms. Mackey and Mr. Shuddy and let them take you through what we have created at Woodgrove, which can be duplicated in other schools.

[00:30:12] And we're already seeing that, and that's the important thing so that everybody improves. Ms. Mackey, Mr. Shuddy. All right. Good evening, everyone. As Dr. Shipp said, I'm Jeff Shuddy. I'll start by quickly explaining this graph, and then I'm going to turn it over to Shana, and then we'll come back to this graph at the end of our presentation.

[00:30:31] So what you see here, the red line at the top, that is chronic absenteeism from two years ago, the 22-23 school year. The blue line below that is last year's chronic absenteeism marks for every day throughout the year. And then the green is just at the left side. That's so far this year through last Friday.

[00:30:54] And as Dr. Shipp said, the red line ended at 22% for two years ago, and the blue line ended last year at 12%. And as of right now, the green, as of last Friday, we're at 13%. A quick explanation as to why every 10 days the graph spikes down drastically is because chronic absenteeism measures 10% of the school year, right?

[00:31:21] A student is considered chronically absent if they've missed 10% or more of the school year. So every 10th day, that number changes, right? So yesterday was our 49th day of the year, and we still counted

four. A student had to be absent four or more to be chronically absent.

[00:31:37] today's our 50th day so that number changes to now five so every 10 days you see a rather drastic drop from the number of kids who are chronically absent because they only needed four yesterday but today they need five to be chronically absent so that's why every 10 days but then as the year goes on you can see it starts to level out because those drops aren't as significant so I just want to explain what that is there so we will come back to this graph for a little more deeper dive into it, but Shane is going to take us through the teams that we have and some of our meetings.

[00:32:12] I just want to say thank you for having us, and I would like Dr. Shipp to introduce me every time I walk in a room, because that is like a great introduction, right? I'm feeling really good, so thank you, Dr. Shipp. So like Dr. Shipp said, it does take a team. It's not just Jeff and I. If we could have everybody here, we would. It is Dr. Shipp, all of our APs, Our counseling director, counselors, social worker, attendance secretary comes, our attendance officer, Jessica Westlake, which she wanted to come tonight as well, but she couldn't.

[00:32:43] She's amazing. And Jeff and I, we meet quarterly as a team, and that is about 18 of us in a room, and we had a very honest conversation at the end of the first quarter. We do the same thing every quarter, and it's good group teamwork. We look at what we've done. We see what changes we need to make, because we all have a piece of this puzzle.

[00:33:01] We cannot do it alone. So that is our quarterly meeting. Every two weeks, we meet as a smaller group to go over the data to look at kids and hone in on actual students. That is with one of our APs, our social worker, Jessica Westlake, our attendance officer, and Jeff and I.

[00:33:20] That is more nitty-gritty in getting our hands dirty with the kids, where the quarterly meeting is more procedural. What are we going to do? What do the letters look like? Things like that. So it does take everybody to do that. I wish they were all standing behind us right now. okay thank you um communicating communication and messaging so in the summer we do send out newsletters we put information on our website um we when we created this on monday it was called blackboard has since changed right we know so um how do you say it apto g it's now apto g so um

[00:33:54] yeah so uh that is not correct any longer um we we talk about it our open house and back to school night everybody knows what chronic absenteeism is and what we're what woodgrove is going to do about it so we have been communicating uh throughout the summer and throughout the school year ongoing communication we send emails to students parents we have conferences we have attendance plans and we send quarterly apt to g messages moving forward the communication what that means

[00:34:29] is our messaging. So CA is chronic absenteeism and T is truant. We send three different CA letters. The first one is when you hit 10%. We start that at day 30 because obviously we don't want to at day 10, you've been absent one day, send you a letter. So we start at day 30. At day 30, if you are three days absent, you will get the, you are considered chronically absent letter from us.

[00:34:56] The CA plus one is that. You're 10% and now you've had another day after you've been considered chronically absent. The CAC is 15% threshold. You've hit that 15% and now you require a medical note.

[00:35:12] And if you do not provide a medical note, those absences become unexcused absences. I know this group is talking about the chronically absent, but we also work with truancy as well. So, you know,

this, they're all, they're one and the same for us because we go from chronically absent at 15% and then they start accruing the truant days.

[00:35:33] That chronically absent threshold is once you hit nine days absent, you are considered chronically absent. And that's what, 15% chronically absent, and that's when you require a medical doctor's note. And if you cannot provide one, then they become truant.

[00:35:50] that leads me down to the truant letter that we send. If you're a five days truant, meaning unexcused, you then have a five-day plan. So I communicate with families, we send the letter out, and then I send a five-day plan to students and parents, you know, what can we do to help you, basically. And that's what our attendance plan involves. And yes, with the truant, That has a lot more weight to it because that comes per state code.

[00:36:25] That's when we start at, you know, the 7 to 10 days. If you flip the page, oh, you're already there. I haven't flipped. I need to flip. No, no, it's me. It's me. No, no, go ahead. That's fine. Thank you. So the five-day, I contact the families, and between 7 and 10 days, we then have our MDT, our multidisciplinary team meeting, and it's a conference with the family.

[00:36:47] So the required components are the parents, the student, myself, and a social worker. That's who's required to be there, but we invite all the people you see up there. We were finding last year that we were trying to have everybody there and make it required, and we weren't having the meetings. We couldn't hold them.

[00:37:03] So we narrowed it down of who has to be there so that we can have the meetings. And we have them scheduled every Tuesday, Friday from 830 to 1030. Our schedules, those people's schedules, are blocked so that if we have to have an MDT, we can just roll it right into that time frame. And we invite everybody, and if everybody else can come, they're welcome to come.

[00:37:22] And we're doing them, and we're doing them in that 7- to 10-day window. And we're keeping up with it thus far. All right, so how does all of this work? This is one snip of a Google Sheet with all the student information blacked out there.

[00:37:42] But it's got columns that tell us, you know, every student in the building how many days absent they've been for chronic absenteeism truancy is in there is about two thirds of the way across the blue columns are how we keep track of which students have received the attendance letter which students have had the mdt conference the green column on the far right is for anyone on our team counselors APs can go in and edit that and put any kind of notes in there basically this is like the one-stop shop for everything attendance we all have access to it so that we can go and find.

[00:38:18] You can see all the blue. Those are all the linked letters. So as soon as we send out a letter on Friday, it automatically links in here. So when we unfortunately need to get to filling out court paperwork and we need to pull letters in which states did we have meetings, we don't have to go tracking down a ton of stuff.

[00:38:36] Like we figured out how to put this all in here. This is one of, believe it or not, 42 different tabs on this Google Sheet. And so I've had some side conversations with Dr. Tyler down there, and I'd love to continue the conversation of how his Razzie team can help us simplify this a little bit.

[00:38:55] 42 tabs sounds like a lot, but it literally contains every piece of everything that we need. And it started out with about three tabs, and over the last two years, it's grown into 42. We've shared this with, like Dr. Chip said, 16 other schools that we know of.

[00:39:13] Some have just adopted exactly what we have, just copied our Google sheet, made it their own. Others have changed it to fit their needs. As a parent, I have a daughter at Lovitzville Elementary, and I got an email from their principal saying, you know, go to our website and take a look at our attendance procedures for this year.

[00:39:31] I was curious what those were. I opened up the link, and it's exactly our Google Doc. So I didn't know that they were using it. So at least 16 other LCPS schools we've been in contact with.

[00:39:44] which, and that takes time too, I mean, just to catch anybody up to speed, you know, here's 42 tabs, here's how they all work, but this, this is what we do, Shane and I look at this every single day, we take a report out of Phoenix every day and dump it in, and it updates all the numbers, we send this to the counselors and the APs on Wednesday, so they have a chance to look at it and review it before letters go out, our letters go out every Friday, and those are all different tabs on, on that.

[00:40:18] We can go to the next, there we go. We also shared this with our other schools. This is our toolbox. This is all LinkedIn board docs, by the way. So the version you have is not clickable like the blue links, but for us it is. So this is every letter, every attachment.

[00:40:34] We've got outside resources, community resources there. Down at the bottom are all the pieces of paperwork Shannon needs to fill out. Again, if we get to the court referral part. And so everybody has access to this. Again, we shared this with other schools, and they've taken bits and pieces that work for them.

[00:40:54] In the board docs, as well as in this document, are the four letters that Shana talked about. So if you want to go back and look at the exact wording of the letters that go out to families, you can actually see the letters in there.

[00:41:10] And then the last thing I want to explain quickly is back to the graph, and then Shana's got some closing thoughts for you. All right. So back to the graph here, we took out the information for this year. So what you're looking now are still the red from two years ago and the blue from last year. And that purple vertical dashed line is on day 50. That's when our letters started last year. It took us a while to get up to speed, to create this Google sheet, to get a team of 18 people on board. So our letters went out on day 50. Prior to day 50, right, there was a difference between the two years. And so

[00:41:48] that's what effect size in this case is measuring is what's the difference between two years ago chronic absenteeism and last year and before day 50 we hadn't really done anything right zero letters had gone home so there was already a natural difference just we had a different set of seniors left with freshmen came in we had students transfer out transfer in so had we done nothing different last year had no letters at all we can probably safely say the effect size would have stayed about 51 point 51 on day 50 our letters went out and so the green represents from there

[00:42:22] on and so that effect size changed from point 51 to almost eight times as much and there's a dozen other reasons you know besides just the letters but sending out the letters we think had at least some you know piece of that so the effect size it's measuring the distance how far those red and blue lines

are getting away from each other. And our thought is, that's all we did last year, right? Chronic absenteeism kids, all we sent is the letters. We didn't have attendance meetings,

[00:42:57] there's no MDTs, almost no conversations with families, like it's literally just a letter. If we're able to accomplish that kind of effect size with just letters, I think our wonder is, what could we do if we had more time to use other interventions, right? If we actually could have meetings with kids with families who are just chronically absent legally we have to do it for the truancy and we are all we're doing for chronic absenteeism is just letters so if we had more time to to give to those kids you know could we decrease this even more that's probably what our

[00:43:33] wonder is so that's i just want to explain what the effect size is it's measuring um the letters there on that okay so we had just jotted down some desired supports um that we'd like to share with I know Dr. Shipp already expressed about us having a 12-month position or increasing our current position of 10 months this just simply can't be done in in 10 months and it's not getting done in 10 months I mean we are spending a lot of time in the summer doing it and we wanted we would like to have more time to spend with families working this summer the kids that are chronically

[00:44:12] absent last year work with them this year in the summer and make some headway before the school year even starts. That is a desire because we, as you can see, we're very passionate about this. And this is a very, this is only one part of our job. We don't have time today to go through everything that I do and everything that Jeff does.

[00:44:31] But this is a very small part of what we do. And I'm just going to back up for a minute and tell you a funny story. So last year about November, I said, Jeff, hey, let's do attendance. He's like, are you crazy? So that's why we started in November. And we did. And it was slow going. But I will tell you, it is nice to see that all of our hard work has paid off.

[00:44:49] And I think we could do even greater things if we had more time, like Jeff said. So that was my first desired support. The strategic calendar planning, I just want to share with you some feelings. I know we have these PD days. A suggestion is if we did PD days that Monday, Tuesday, before Thanksgiving, if you look at the data, those days kill absenteeism.

[00:45:11] They kill us. I mean, I'm going to take the data this year. I'm going to look at last year. We can look at the trend and see if, I mean, have our letters affected people not coming that Monday and Tuesday? I don't know. We'll see. But it is just teachers take off. I know this. But kids, they don't come.

[00:45:27] A lot of kids don't come. And we can provide the data for you if you'd like. But even if we can make those the PD days, I don't know how, I don't know who makes the decision on when the PD days are. I know teacher work days are in the calendars. But that would be something that I would definitely have you all consider. My other suggestion, desired support, would be clearly defining principal's discretion for absences.

[00:45:51] We have feeder schools, so our elementary to middle to high school might be the same family. We have a lot of families with a lot of kids. And so if doctor says no to a absence and the elementary school principal says yes, we got a problem.

[00:46:07] So it would be nice if it was, it's clearer than it was in the past, but it would be nice if it was even more clear. because I think that would help the doctor ship, it would help the APs, and when we spoke at ALT this summer, the principal, the elementary school principal at, oh, in Leesburg, been around

forever, that's, he came up to us afterwards, and that was what he said, he said, it'd be nice if we all were on the same board, so that was one piece of it, the other piece is doing what we do, and having Harmony and our feeder elementary schools doing this, so the parents are used to the letters, they're not surprised by it and the last thing is defining percentage for medical note required

[00:46:45] Woodgrove high school came up with the 15 percent we asked Darren if we thought you think that's good and he said yeah I think that's good so we're doing this just because we looked at the numbers and thought it was a good number everyone's not doing the same thing for the medical note required that's just what we did and other schools have followed so that is all I had thank you all right Thank you, Woodgrove team, and I will turn it back over to Mr. Estreffi for any questions you might have.

[00:47:15] Thank you very much. I really appreciate this presentation and all of the passion that you've brought out to this topic and all the resources that you have developed for other schools, so 16 other schools that have really kind of taken at least pieces of this process, so that's amazing.

[00:47:35] Also, thank you for all the recommendations and the desired supports. I mean, I think this is really the meat of what we were looking to kind of get out of this discussion. So we'll open it up for any other discussion from board members. When you're looking at, are you sending out letters, letters, e-mails?

[00:47:55] Are you increasing, I mean, are you calling, e-mailing, and sending a letter? Yes. All three. So the thresholds is a letter that's e-mailed to the families. The five-day plans is an e-mail or a conversation or a phone call.

[00:48:10] It just depends. But then when we get to our MDT meetings, that is in-person meetings. So those have to be in-person and not on the... Well, I'm sorry. That is a phone call in-person or virtual. Okay, virtual. But the letters are emailed. Okay. I know we kind of pilot studies around here, and that's an operational decision.

[00:48:38] It's not a school board decision. I'm just letting that out there. We could find that. But first of all, I mean, I have to say the attendant tracker Google sheet, I think you could make some money off of that.

[00:48:54] For sure. Especially if Tyler gets his mitts on it. Yeah, there's some coding that could be good, a really good app, something, software thing. It's pretty impressive.

[00:49:11] I mean, I like the fact that you can look at this graph and determine the effect sizes for just the letters, and then if you can do the same thing if there was a pilot or something for a 12-month person to do the kid meetings to see if that really did make a difference.

[00:49:32] If the face-to-face meetings could, I mean, we don't know, right? So I think that would be interesting to see. I mean, it's really well done. We have to say it's really well done.

[00:49:49] And how did you come up to define the percentage for the percentage of days for the medical note? Did you just look at the numbers and determine, well two summers ago we had an attendance um what was it called over the summer a chronic absenteeism work group yeah the work group and i think it just came up as a discussion there like we need something and someone threw out 15 i think we just looked at the numbers too so i at the 60th day of school that's nine right and just increases from there on

the 10th day of the 100th day of the school year it's now 15 and you're like okay if you've been absent 15 days

[00:50:25] like that's well beyond chronic absenteeism like we feel like there should be more than just you know mom or dad putting something into into parent view uh for that um and to the best of our knowledge like a number of other schools also use 15 but that's not written anywhere and so that's kind of what we're asking like you know so that we're not doing something harmony's doing something different and then waterford elementary is doing a third thing and then you again have the same family three siblings all taking off yet one's chronically absent one needs a doctor's note the other one won't need it for three more absences and that just puts potentially puts the schools

[00:51:02] you know and and we can work on that together too but sometimes if there is a standard like it comes a little easier to say like okay well we're all going to do this because you know that's the school policy or whatever and this team spent an extensive amount of time we had last year to go through and as mr shuddy said you know 50 days was the first day that the letters and one of the things that was discussed is that was probably a bit too long. And so it's finding that sweet spot where you don't want to send letters out too early because, heck, we've only been in school for two weeks. But so that's where we found 30 days, six, about six weeks of school. At that point in time,

[00:51:42] if you've missed enough to be, to have 10%, okay, that's probably a good point. And then with the medical note, that's the other thing is you don't want it to get, if they begin to exceed that 10%, You don't want to get it so all of a sudden they're already off the cliff. So that 15% is kind of that natural progression that, okay, you're past 10, now 15.

[00:52:04] So we've got to have, we see an issue here. So we've got the, again, the benefit of having a year of really kind of wrangle through and work through all of the little kinks that came up. This year it's much smoother, but there'll still be some things I'm sure that we'll have to resolve.

[00:52:23] As Ms. Mackey said, there was a great, if I could have videotaped a discussion about a very honest, Frank, what you want to have with a great team working together where there were disagreements, had to have some follow-up. It's a very powerful meeting, but that's how improvement occurs is when you have that, and that's what this team's been doing.

[00:52:44] I did want to, if I can interrupt one second, I did want to follow up with a question about the letters, right? And so we email them out on Friday, and they go to all the family emails that we have in Phoenix, as well as the counselor, the AP, and the students, too. The students get them.

[00:53:01] And Shane and I work in an area where we have, like, an outer classroom space, and we'll often have students in there, and they will come through on their Chromebook because they know around 1 o'clock on a Friday afternoon the letters are going out. It happened more a little last year, I think, than it has this year.

[00:53:17] But, like, they know because, like, the letter's popping up in their inbox, too. And so it's not – we don't want this to be a surprise to anyone. We don't want the kid to get home and then, you know, mom or dad get an email that they didn't get. So the students get it as well.

[00:53:32] But I think that helped, too, because we had students saying, like, well, I'm only coming today because I know I'm one away from chronically absent and I need to be here at school. And so, you know, the little side conversations, that stuff, like, the data doesn't reflect that. But, like, we know it happens.

[00:53:49] What would you change for elementary school and middle school? I mean, would you still send out the e-mails to them? The schools we've heard from do e-mail letters, probably not to, you know, I don't know that they'd send them to the students, probably just to the parents.

[00:54:11] And what trends are you kind of seeing as to the reasons why people are absent, chronically absent? That's a question we haven't been able to dig into. I mean, we have, like I said, we have students who are just naturally in our room and we'll just have conversations with them, but in terms of, like, actually going and finding students and parents and having, like, real, like, interview, you know, set of questions and how can we help and support and stuff, we do that on the truancy side, but there are far fewer truant students.

[00:54:44] As far as chronically absent, like, we, you know, like all we, like I said, all we did last year was just send the letters. I mean, you have that one tab, and so. So the counselors see this. We send it out on Wednesdays to the counselors. They see this tracker that we had up, and if you can see on there, so they see, so you see it says CTAS.

[00:55:06] The CT is the AP. The AS is the counselor, and AS is one of the 40 tabs that we have. That counselor goes to her tab and sees her 10 kids, and she can, we called it reading out, and we're trying to change the wording, but she can say, don't send this kid a letter. he was hospitalized right because we don't know so that's how we communicate like it's that's why it takes all of us it can't just be Jeff and I they see that or the AP might say that kid was suspended at the beginning of the year so we're not going to send him a letter because we suspended him you know we're working with him so so we are we have that's probably the biggest topic of our

[00:55:41] quarterly conversations is what how do we remove a kid and why because we have to be careful not to remove a kid because we don't feel like caring from the parent because they're a difficult parent It's got to be – we have to all do the same thing, and we've really honed in on, you know, death in a family, hospitalization, things like that.

[00:55:58] We're not going to send letters home. But we readdress that every four and a half weeks. We go back and say, okay, he's been back, and he's still been absent for 20 days. I think we need to send a letter. So those conversations happen every four and a half weeks about the kids that have been removed for a certain reason.

[00:56:15] Dr. Spence, do you want to – So that's probably how we communicate the most. I will say, Chairman, to answer your question, division-wide, in terms of, like, you're asking the question, what trends you're seeing, elementary school, kindergarten has the highest level of chronic absenteeism.

[00:56:33] I think some of that is just because of the parent myth that unexcused absences are not impactful or not harmful. Right. Yeah. Yeah, so, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

[00:56:50] Just a couple of quick things. So, one, I had the opportunity to observe this team in action at Woodgrove, and it's impressive. It is time-intensive work, and you do have to develop the expertise around it, and I was just, I left that meeting very inspired.

[00:57:09] I think I may have even asked you, Sam, if you were sharing this work with other people at that time, and I'm really pleased to know that that work is starting to spread, and I appreciate your leadership and your team's leadership, and I wanted to make sure I said that and contextualize that I know there's a lot of work involved.

[00:57:24] And so when I ask the question I'm about to ask, I don't mean to sort of suggest that this would like displace that work because I think they would go hand in hand. But the question I'm curious about, would if there were software that would automate some of these processes, that would automate the like we're tracking in the system and we're automating like some text nudges and sending out the emails and like, if there was defined times for that, would that be helpful?

[00:57:54] Would that, or is that something that is not the biggest part of the work? I think it could definitely be helpful. It's probably not the biggest part of the work, but any, anything that would shrink down that part is, you know, even if it's not the biggest, if you shrink it down, all that would do is free up more time to have conversations.

[00:58:15] I did some of our attendance plans last year, and it was honestly going to study halls and having a two-minute conversation with a child. Someone I didn't know, all I had was numbers. I could see, like, you've been absent, you know, five times in the last two weeks. Tell me why.

[00:58:32] But, you know, if we really want to drill down into, like, what's happening and what's really going on, that's got to be more than a two-minute conversation. And it's got to be with people that work with the student every day, right? It can't be me just coming from a random office and the student doesn't know me so um any kind of yeah software that would help speed other parts of it up would free up time to do the real work of all of this because i mean this just identifies the kids like shana said that's why we pull in the 10 the seven counselors and the three p's because they know the students and they know what's going on at home and who shouldn't get a letter in the

[00:59:08] moment and to us i hate to say it but like these are just numbers to us and we're just like okay hey, they're at the 10% threshold, should we send a letter? But for us to get to know the kids and what's going on, I think it could help in that regard. Okay, thank you.

[00:59:25] I'm curious as to what the interactions, you know, once a parent or guardian receives the letter, what interactions or what engagement that that kind of prompts. Because that's an opportunity, right, to engage the parent.

[00:59:45] I'm just thinking about my mother immediately call the school, receiving a letter, just being deathly afraid of what's going on, what's going to happen to my kid. So just wondering about that interaction. You want to take it? So the email goes out to, like Jeff said, to the parents, to the student, and the counselor, the AP are copied on that letter.

[01:00:07] So we have come up with in the toolbox, thank you, a verbiage that the counselors came up with and the APs came up with that every AP replies the same verbiage. I mean, a personal note, but then the same policy that they copy and paste so that everyone's getting the same message.

[01:00:25] Because the first year we did this, it was trying. I think people are used to it now, and so it's a little less, but there are still very honest conversations that APs are having. and it is with APs and we do say like we click the button and right it goes to them and so it's kind of their conversation they have and really we tell the counselors too we don't want them having that because we don't want that they're not disciplinarians so we want them to have that conversation with parents the APs to have the conversation we do bring in kids I have I'm going to give you an example I have a student right now she's been chronically absent since she was like in the fifth grade and now she's in my study hall they brought her in they put her in my room for

[01:01:04] study hall. So I have eyes on her every other day. So everybody knows who she is, right? But nothing's ever actually been done to help her. So now she's a connection somewhere. Things have gotten a little bit better, but I feel like we could spend more time doing things like that. The spreadsheet, once it's done, which it's done, isn't the biggest time spender for us. It's really a lot of the other stuff. And we would love more time to spend with families and kids. We identified chronically absent and truant families from last year and identified at the beginning this year and kind of sent letters sooner but we have talked about even having conversations with them over the summer all right last year look like this what can we do differently what can we do to support

[01:01:44] you next year so you're coming to school every day on day one so we have ideas of things like that that we want to do with families over the summer so I hope that answers that thank you any other questions or discussion okay so because this is student achievement right we're looking student achievement. Do we see, when we track it, that there's a difference in student achievement of any sort? Well, given that Woodgrove was just named an exemplary school by the Virginia Board

[01:02:21] of Education, I would have to say you could take a look at how the school performed last year, and so again, we'd have to really dig into it, but we know we're a high-performing school.

[01:02:36] What you're hearing with this is hopefully on a macro level you're understanding this is there's so many different things going on in the complexities of all of our schools but certainly a high school but hopefully what you're taking away is the time that it takes to drill down to each individual child and what do they need and that's where again hopefully you're hearing that when they pull in the counselors and APs every student is known we know what's going on.

[01:03:07] if there's a death in the family, if they've been away because there's been a marriage and it's overseas. We know in Loudoun County we have that. That's something that every school faces, but I would be concerned if my staff did not know that. And so that we know that, again, the relationship starts at we have a relationship with that student, with that family, finding out what they need.

[01:03:29] That then correlates into higher attendance, which then leads also higher success academically, which so again. So the rough answer is yes, and I'm sure we could extract and pull that data, but again, all of this leads to that student achievement improvement.

[01:03:47] I think it would be relatively easy, although also complex, to draw the causal analysis between those two things, but clearly in the research around this, right? There's no question whatsoever. I'm also thinking that it's the communication, too, that's happening.

[01:04:04] The increase in the communication and the relationship. I mean, that's what I'm thinking. Yeah, and that's why I said to say there was the direct causal relationship between the two things. But I think you're right. I think your instinct is right. It's not just that they're in school. It's that they're in school and building a relationship with adults who understand what their needs are and they're able to connect their needs to the expertise inside the building and that there's a willful intention around that with the adults in the building.

[01:04:28] I mean, to me, that's what – there's the secret sauce that you all have been talking about, and that's why it's actually kind of incredible to watch them work. And having done credit recovery for the last three summers, I will tell you, I don't have the data in front of me, but our numbers, I'm working myself out of a job because the first summer, I think I had 150 kids.

[01:04:45] Then it kept going down. I mean, this quarter with credit recovery, I'm down to 25 kids that are trying to recover a grade from first quarter. So that's huge. I mean, that's amazing. So, and I think that is because they're in school and they have connections more so. So we could definitely provide that data, but I think we probably know that trend.

[01:05:03] Dr. Tyler, did you want to weigh in? I know you had a comment. I guess quick context, giving Mr. Shutty his props, because three years ago, we had a conversation that led to the development of a click app called the student engagement click app, which is influenced by a lot of the factors that he and a colleague recommended, but you can't do data entry and click.

[01:05:24] And that's why eventually Mr. Shutty and others had to go back to the spreadsheets because you could enter data on interventions you're providing as well. So there's steps we've taken. It's actually influenced the practices of 100 schools. But the next steps as far, how can we have a platform that really facilitates the advanced work that they're doing?

[01:05:42] CLIC is amazing. I see Mr. Smith back there and maybe considering other ways. But it has influenced every school in the division with how we look at student engagement and how we support students. Absolutely. Well, my only other question, this is rhetorical, is, you know, what schools aren't using the letters?

[01:06:01] But anyway, thank you very much. I really appreciate you coming in. I feel, you know, what we were envisioning having the school communities come in here, I mean, I feel bad for the schools that will come after Woodgrove, because this has set the example of a wonderful presentation.

[01:06:20] Thank you. Dr. Ellis, did you have anything else for this information item from your side, or, you know? We did. If the committee is interested in continuing, we had a couple of slides related to other data points in goal one but given our conversation we can also incorporate these in future meetings I'm sorry oh okay so I guess my recommendation would be to save this conversation for future meetings okay and I just want to do

[01:06:55] another quick thank you to dr. ship and miss Mackey and mr. Shetty for being here it was really really helpful thank you all and with that I don't want to miss another school board meeting after this so yes we might get a letter of anyway with that we'll move on to item five new business is there any new

[01:07:31] business seeing no new business will now adjourn this November 13th meeting in the performance sorry oh do what we can do that yes thank you I missed that all right so really quickly we again we're just testing out this structure and we aimed high we started with a really stellar school group we will try to maintain that in the future but your feedback on

[01:08:07] the the structure of presenting the data having a dialogue about the data and then doing a deep dive into a school example would be really helpful for you um it's not going to be a surprise I think this is a great structure for us to follow I really love bringing you all in here and hearing about it what really struck me was something you said is like that's not in the numbers like that these things that that's schools to a tee right like we can look at data all day long but what you guys brought to the table was just how many other things you're doing how you know your kids

[01:08:45] how you know your community, the extra steps that you're taking, starting to get to maybe some root causes in the future and really start to analyze those trends. And so for me, I think that's the power of these conversations for us to hear is not just we can stare at data all day long, but we need to hear

this piece and unpack it with you all because it does paint the picture of all the work that you are doing in the trenches. And so I'm just really appreciative of you. I don't know if that was your intention but that's what educators do they start to unpack the whole story and there's just so many layers and and we really appreciate that so i think this was a great example um to to

[01:09:22] set the stage and i'm looking forward to the deeper dives in the data and then um having the you know the the sort of personal touch that kind of puts the hands and feet to it so i i'm i'm in i actually like the structure a lot and i'm going to be interested as we go further how many times we're going to hear relationship is important, communication is important, safer school, and that provides that safer schools and welcoming schools for people.

[01:09:51] I think that's going to be an interesting thing for me to go forward with. So thank you for all of your work. Just echoing the same sentiments, I love the structure, and I think these are the conversations, as others have mentioned, that are going to help us really move the needle on student achievement.

[01:10:14] So really appreciate it. Thank you. Now with that. No, absolutely. So yeah, so we'll now adjourn the November 13th meeting of the Performance Monitoring Committee.

[01:10:32] Thank you very much.



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