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Loudoun County School Board, Loudoun Education Alliance of Families (LEAF) Meeting, Monday, November 18, 2024

Date Monday, November 18, 2024
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 1h 17m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1030961515?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 2026-10-20. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:02:31] this welcome everyone good evening thank you for attending this evening we realize it's very busy I am surprised this is our last meeting before the holiday break and the new year so hard to believe but it'll be a welcome break when it comes if you haven't done so already please sign in using the QR code at your table or on your note catcher I'm going to call to order for the November 18th LEAF meeting. This meeting will come to order. First, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new members. One of our leadership team members will reach out to you this week to help you get

[00:03:09] acclimated and share last month's highlights and answer any questions you may have. So we continue to get new members and we're very excited about that. The first item on the agenda is public comment. LEAF meetings are open to the public. Loudoun County residents are welcome to attend the meeting, but must refrain from interrupting the meeting's agenda. For the LEAF charter bylaws, Public comments should address an agenda item.

[00:03:32] Members of the public who wish to address items on the agenda may do so at this time. Do we have any public comments tonight? We do not. So we will go ahead and move on to the approval of the minutes. So this is our first action item.

[00:03:49] The October 21st, 2024 meeting minutes are on the LEAF website, and a few copies are at your table for those who would like an additional review. It is my hope members reviewed the minutes prior to the meeting as it was posted online. I will entertain a motion to accept the minutes from the October 21st, 2024 meeting as submitted.

[00:04:09] We have a motion by Karen Miller. Thank you. Is there a second? Thank you. All those in favor, say aye. All those opposed? All right. With no changes requested, the minutes stand approved and as submitted.

[00:04:25] We will now move on to our information items. At this time, I would like to welcome school board member representative for leave, Lauren Chernoff, to provide her school board update. Hello, everybody.

[00:04:40] It's good to see you. I'm coming in a little hot today from another meeting, so I'll try and pull out the important points. Last, most of these updates are going to come from the board meeting we just had. I felt like it was pretty jam-packed and some things to definitely highlight. I'm sure some of them you may have already heard about.

[00:04:58] One of the things that we began to talk about was the student data from last year. So all the SOL data, the MAP data was presented at the meeting. It's a long presentation. I think it was 59 slides, so a lot of information jam-packed in there, but some great visuals in terms of trends and things that we're seeing.

[00:05:20] Obviously, the good news is here in Loudoun, we continue to outperform the state averages in almost every single category, including our subgroup data, but our subgroups overall continue to lag. And so we're seeing about, on average, a third of our English language learners achieving in math and reading, and about 50% of our students with special needs, and 60%-ish for economically disadvantaged students.

[00:05:45] So there was some discussion on the board about what that means and is that the standard for Loudoun, that we are just better than the state and that's okay. And I think this board is definitely looking to put some supports in place, particularly through the budget with flexible staffing, to help really beef up those numbers and get all of our kiddos to achieve to their potential.

[00:06:06] So definitely take a look at that. Probably the most important and relevant thing to your daily life is the calendar conversation. So you probably saw in your inbox tonight, they're rolling out in phases. So if you haven't gotten the email yet, you'll probably get it by 9 p.m. tonight, I was told.

[00:06:23] But based off of a lot of feedback, a formation of a calendar committee, which is a first for us, and lots of different stakeholders coming together to look at, we are not looking at next year's calendar. that calendar is set and staying but the 26 27 and subsequent years are going to be entering the conversation and there was a survey to kind of gear towards what those options would be and there's four options for you to look at several of those options include a much earlier start date in august and ending at the memorial day holiday weekend so that would be a rather large shift

[00:07:01] and in fact one calendar option has teachers returning the last week of July so that would be a big big change so you want to pay close attention and make sure that your voice is heard so please fill that out another thing you'll see in the survey and I don't want to raise any alarms but year-round school has was something that came up multiple I know I like that too but it came up multiple times from the committee as well as the feedback that was came in the survey so they are putting a sample calendar of what year-round school could look like down the road and gauging

[00:07:37] your interests if that's something you would be interested in. To summarize, it's basically a longer fall break, a longer winter break, a longer spring break, and then you have July off only. And then there's, you know, some other different holidays in there. But basically, it would be a huge transition as well, but they're looking to gauge your feedback. But again, that's not really like on the direct horizon so just interesting conversation for sure we're going to talk about the special permission policy that is looking to be updated in the policy portion of tonight so I'm going to save that piece but that was another big conversation and then the last item which I will

[00:08:16] say personally was something that I brought to the board in January which was early start times of our elementary students and addressing that some of our elementary schools got a 15 minute boost uh this year from 7 30 to 7 45 but we put in the budget last year to have consultants come in and look at those times and look at some other options and as of right now staff is recommending that we stay where we are based off of the varied increased costs as well as the amount of bus drivers that we would need to pull off any of those things. The only viable option to even

[00:08:55] consider down the road would be to switch the high school and elementary school start times. But again, right now, the cost is too high and the drivers, it wouldn't be possible. But I do think there will be ongoing dialogue about that in the years to come. But that's where we are with that. I think the only other update, and I'll just piggyback off of what one of my friends over here said, is that the grading policy will be coming back to my committee in December, updated after all the focus groups. And so I imagine that will probably be our topic for policy revision, since

[00:09:31] we'll have the new and improved grading policy in our pause. So it's been an exciting month. We've been meeting with our legislators to get ready for the session coming up in January, partnering with them with some of our initiatives we are gearing up for budget season you're going to hear about that tonight too so it's been busy busy busy but I'm so glad that you're here and happy to take questions if you need at the end thank you oh or now go ahead yeah we have time okay or now it's a quick one yeah on the start times are they considering or is it part of the existing plan to swap like early schools to later times or just keep it as is for all the schools right now it's

[00:10:09] keep it as is um again this is a dialogue i think that it has been open and will be ongoing but right now it's status quo wish i had better news yes hi how are you doing good so two i think are fairly quick questions just to clarify when you mentioned the student subgroups were lagging were they lagging behind virginia as a state or just in the district just i'm just saying behind general education standards. For LCPS? For LCPS, yeah. We are still ahead of the state in almost every category. There's some economically disadvantaged categories where we do actually fall below the

[00:10:48] state, but yes. So thank you for clarifying that. Mostly though, we are far above the state in most categories, but in terms of the general ed population versus the subgroups, there's a huge gap there. Okay. And the other question, is there a way, okay, I don't know why anyone would want to do this, but I do know that it comes up sometimes with other issues in the county. Is there a way aside from when we do the surveys and you say, I have a student at this grade level to know that people filling out the surveys for like the school calendar, for example, are current LCPS parents?

[00:11:27] So they're only sent to those emails. Joan, do you want to chime in on that process? She's the expert because she sends the surveys but I think the short answer is yes yes that's correct so the surveys are sent to current families of LCPS students and it's a unique link for every family okay anything else all

right it's great to see you thanks for having me all right thanks Lauren before we get to the collaborative conversations I would like to give a sincere thanks to everyone

[00:12:06] who engaged in our working agreements conversation the last couple weeks they were they resulted in the agreements that you see on the screen. Your review during October's meeting has led to a few changes. We have included a focus on students in three of the four agreements. This will ground us as a reminder of who should be in the forefront of our minds as we move forward to support our communities. If there are any questions, comments, or changes you would like to share, please add them to the feedback form, which you can access using the link or the QR code on your handout.

[00:12:42] All right, next we're going to engage in our collaborative conversation activity discussion. As we've now established, we are sitting according to cluster groups. Before we continue, if you did just join us or come in late, please don't forget to use a QR code at your table to sign in so we know that we could record your attendance.

[00:13:02] This evening, we have three guests with whom you will discuss high-interest topics members shared, including the Capital Improvement Program, most often referred to as the SIP with Don Traynor, nutrition services with Beth Williams, and our monthly update corner that focuses on policy review with Lauren Chernoff. We will rotate our conversations every 15 minutes.

[00:13:24] Our guests will shift groups, but you do not, like we normally do. We will provide a three-minute wrap-up warning, one minute, and then a prompt for presenters to shift. Are there any questions? Oh, okay.

[00:13:43] We have two groups. Yeah, sure. Do we want to split up one of the tables, Christina, and make two groups?

[00:14:04] Yeah, that would be perfect. That'd be great. Thank you. Appreciate it. All right. Any other questions? All right. I will have to duck out early tonight because I only have a babysitter for so long and my husband's traveling.

[00:14:24] So, sorry. I apologize for that. But if you need anything, I'm not here, you have any questions, you know you can always email me. So, let's enjoy our collaborative discussions.

[00:15:17] You're getting your steps in on your Apple Watch. He's here. So if you moved, I'm very sorry. Can you move back?

[00:30:20] Excuse the interruption. This is your three-minute warning in this session. Three more minutes.

[00:32:51] We have one more minute in our groups until we switch. One minute.

[00:33:51] Thanks, everyone. It's time to wrap up our group. We're going to ask our presenters to shift. So Beth, we're going to ask you to move this way. Lauren, we're going to ask you to move to Western and Eastern Loudoun.

[00:34:07] And Dawn, you're going to come join this middle group. Thank you.

[00:46:29] excuse the interruption we have three more minutes in our groups three minutes we'll go wrap up in

[00:50:06] one minute one minute to wrap up your discussions thank you everyone time for one more rotation

[00:51:25] from your group Beth I'm going to ask you to wrap up and move to the final group whenever you can

[00:51:59] it's Don to go to his final group now Lauren one more stop for you thank you excuse the interruption

[01:07:18] we have three minutes remaining three minutes one minute remaining one minute to finish up your

[01:09:32] conversations okay we'd like to thank our guests for joining us this evening um we have uh last

[01:12:10] few information items before or closing items before we close up um we wanted to remind you that the superintendent's student success talks have begun the first one was last week um at the Dulles Election District at Lunsford Middle. Yep. Okay.

[01:12:35] Thank you. Okay. So we wanted to remind you about this, the superintendent's student success talks. There was one held last week at Lunsford and the next one is Tuesday, December 17th at Trailside Middle School. There's a flyer in the packet of materials if you're interested in coming by. As a reminder, per our bylaws, we do not

[01:13:10] have any meetings in December or January our next meeting will be February 10th here in this room even though we will have a break for meetings if there's any relevant information or things that you need to be aware of we will continue to communicate those to you additionally if you do need to get in contact with any of us in the leadership team or with the our staff support please feel free to reach out and um so then that concludes our agenda for today we welcome any

[01:13:46] thoughts and feedback using the links in your information packet with that we move on to new business so is there any new business that anyone would like to share all right seeing up yep

[01:14:04] absolutely um the one at at trailside is december 17th you're welcome um so i i was wondering if the school board has begun any conversations about what changes at the federal level might

[01:14:36] have, what impact they might have on LCPS in terms of budget, if, for example, Title I goes away or special ed funding or student lunches, et cetera.

[01:14:51] Have you guys begun those conversations? And I'm certainly hoping that as many of those conversations as possible will be entirely public? I certainly can only speak for myself in this, that the thoughts have definitely entered our minds, my mind. We are working closely with a new lobbying firm, COSEN, and you can look them up, and they have been bringing some topics to us in light of the results of the election last week, things to be thinking about. Our legislative agenda for

[01:15:30] this upcoming session has already been set and that is in the public but I will definitely pass on that feedback if a larger conversation needs to unfold as things unfold but I think right now since we're in a holding pattern we don't really know what that's going to look like I can only say that individually we might be thinking about it but it has not crossed across a board meeting so to speak. Any other questions or comments? All right with that being said this meeting is

[01:16:07] adjourned. Thank you. Happy New Year. Happy New Year. You don't like it.



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