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Loudoun County School Board, Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC) Meeting, Wednesday, November 20, 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/1031767460?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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[00:00:00] good evening everyone we are going to get started thank you for joining us tonight this is our last general body meeting of the calendar year so we're very excited to welcome you all tonight and to see everyone here and we're going to get started we have a lot of information to share with you all this is going to be a big informational meeting but we're going to have an opportunity to take breaks for you to ask some questions and get some information

[00:00:38] from our presenters. And then we're going to come back together to close out the remainder of the evening. And that'll be kind of it. So to get us started, I would just like to say a few quick words. Again, thank you for being here tonight. As we gather, I want us to take a moment to reflect on the importance of this space that we share. In times of uncertainty, it is natural to feel the weight of the unknown. But I want to assure you of the following things. MSAC's mission remains steadfast. Our commitment to advocacy, collaboration, and equity in education has

[00:01:16] not and it will not waver. Our community that we've built here is going to continue to be a safe space. And I want to assure you all of that, that MSAC remains a safe space. This community that we've built and we continue to build is a safe space for everyone, a space where everyone is seen heard and valued a space where we uplift one another and work toward a future that reflects the values that we hold

dear so tonight let's lean into the sense of unity focusing on the work that brings us together and the joy that inspires us to keep moving forward

[00:01:51] and I want you all to remember that together we are stronger and together we will continue to make a difference so we're going to get underway please take a moment to sign in triple check the qr code

[00:02:04] it is working.

[00:03:09] If you, as people continue to join us this evening, I will remember to put up the QR code, um, later on. Um, so you have another opportunity to sign in. So tonight's team is the joy of community. And our goal tonight, this evening, this evening is to just remember that there is joy in community. There is joy in your family, your friends, your found family, your found community, and we just want to highlight that. I would like for everybody to just enjoy the space

[00:03:46] that we've created and know that we're all here together. We're all working towards the same goal and the same vision. Again, we are so glad you're here. I am always excited to see the room fill up as the evening goes, and so I'm very thrilled to see the number of people that are just joining us for the first time and the number of people that are returning. Please continue to come and join these conversations and just come alongside us and work with us. Um, now if you did not get the email, um, if you please scan this QR code, these are the October meeting minutes. Um, we are going

[00:04:24] to vote on and approve those meeting minutes from last month. I would also like to take a moment to thank our wonderful MSAC secretary, Akita Pate, because she takes the most glorious notes. It feeds my, ooh, that is a bad typo. I missed that. Sorry. She feeds my desire to have all the information and be able to, you know, go back and reflect and feel like I am just back in the meeting. This is something I missed or something that I want to highlight in my

[00:05:01] own personal notes. So we do appreciate all the work you do. And I am very grateful and very thankful for you. So with that, we are going to open a motion on the floor to approve the meeting minutes. Second. Okay. Those who approve, say aye. Those against, say nay. Okay.

[00:05:27] The meeting minutes have been approved for October. We will get those published on our website as soon as possible. So this evening, like I said, we have quite a few presentations and we are going get right to them these are just informational things that we want you to know resources that are available opportunities that are available for your students going forward we are going to try to highlight programs that are opportunities for your students get that information to you but if you have other questions specific to the program or specific to that presenter

[00:06:05] we'll try to give an opportunity in the meeting for you to be able to approach and ask those questions but our goal is to let you know what's available what's out there what the deadlines are to apply what requirements there are anything like that so to get us started I'm going to turn the floor over to Miss Carrie

[00:06:23] Williams the ombuds for Loudoun County Public Schools all right well thank you and I am so happy to be here with all of you this evening my name is Carrie Williams I am the ombuds for Loudoun County Public Schools and this is the beginning of my third year in this role. I opened the office in August of 2022, and so I'm going to

[00:07:01] share more about my role. I'm going to share some of my data with you from last year, a little bit of comparison from the year prior to last year, and talk about my role, what I do, what I'm not able to do, how to reach out to me, and then I believe we have an opportunity for questions later on after all of the presentations have concluded.

[00:07:23] So I always like to ground my presentation in where I support, where I feel like my role fits in with our strategic plan and our core values for LCPS. And while I believe that my role can and does support all four of the strategic goals and all of our core values, I really find my role rooted in trust through listening, providing a confidential space for visitors to reach out to talk through their issues or concerns within LCPS and then I utilize that high-level data I share that and elevate that through the

[00:08:00] superintendent's office to work towards continual improvement for the school division and my data is actually captured in the engaged community metrics and data to support goal four of the strategic plan. So oftentimes people have never worked with an ombuds before. They don't, they're not aware of what the word means or where it originated, where did it come from. And so the role of the ombuds was developed in the early 1800s in Scandinavia, where there were new governmental systems being formed and they wanted there to be a check and balance in place so that if the people

[00:08:37] felt that the, that the constitution was not being enacted properly, that concerns or complaints could be heard, and in that particular instance, they would be investigated, and then the ombuds was actually a decision-maker. That came over to the United States in, I believe, the 1960s, and the first ombuds role in the U.S. was at a college, and now you will commonly find organizational ombudsmen in colleges, universities, government sector, our military, corporations,

[00:09:12] and throughout the K-12 settings, but there's only about 40 of us across the United States in school divisions. Sometimes there'll be an ombudsman at the state level tied to the education department. We do have a state ombudsman for special education with the VDOE, and then one of the required ombudsman positions across the country is for elder care, so you will find an elder care ombudsperson in each state across the United States. But we all, under organizational ombuds operate under these four core values. And that is clearly aligned and

[00:09:45] defined in my policy, which is 3210. And I think the one thing that separates me from most other entities and offices that you might reach out to when you have an issue or concern is that I am bound by the core value of confidentiality. And it is a standard of practice that I must adhere to.

[00:10:03] The three areas where I would reach that confidentiality would be if there is a mandatory Title IX or CPS report, I am also a mandated reporter, or if I felt that there was imminent risk of harm to self or others. Otherwise, the conversation that starts with me remains with me between you and I, unless I have your express permission to share any particular part of that conversation beyond when we are speaking. Second, I'm independent, and sometimes people raise their eyebrow and they're like, well, you work for LCPS, so how can you be independent? I'm independent in

[00:10:38] the sense that my role, being an ombuds is my only role, and I do not have any other roles or responsibilities that would keep me from being impartial or neutral when working with individuals. So oftentimes, constituent services or other roles in school divisions do ombuds-like work, but they might have multiple hats that they wear. For example, my colleague in Roanoke City, he's also the FOIA officer. So if somebody came to him about a FOIA complaint or concern, and he couldn't be impartial when trying to work through that concern because he's responsible for

[00:11:11] that other topic. And informality is another important piece because I'm not an on-the-record office. It does not start any process or procedure or policy or pathway by speaking with me. We can talk about all options. You share your concern. What's going on? What have you considered? What might I know that is a possible pathway that you're not even aware of? And we can talk about all options from informal to formal, and then I may or may not have information to share, resources, I might connect you directly with the correct office or individual within that office, or I

[00:11:47] might raise that concern on your behalf, whether I do so attached to your name, if you're okay with it, or I might do so confidentially, and I might do so without mentioning where even the concern is coming from, or to find information and share that back with you. So I really do a lot of listening, And I have the time and space to work with individuals for a period of time.

[00:12:12] I usually carve out 90 minutes to two hours when talking with somebody for the first time so they can truly hear and listen to all areas of concern. And we can identify what some of those underlying topics or issues might be. And then, you know, oftentimes it's not a singular concern.

[00:12:28] It's multifaceted, and there's many layers. I do not act as an advocate for a particular person or concern, but I advocate for fair and equitable processes. So if I believe that maybe there was a step that was missed or maybe due process was not followed, we talk through that and then how can we have that addressed by the appropriate office.

[00:12:49] I facilitate conversation. So for those of you who are employees in the room, I am the designated staff member who supports employees who are in conflict. The restorative practices team works through a lot of that with students who are in conflict or students and staff who have conflict, but I am the designated role for staff.

[00:13:08] And so I do a lot of facilitated discussions, dialogues, or informal mediations. And then I take a lot of, I take my high-level data, and then I'm able to look for trends and themes within that data, and I might raise something up to a level office, to a principal, if it's within the school building, or I might share that information with the chief of staff or with the superintendent, depending on what type of trends that I might be seeing.

[00:13:37] As I said, I don't act as an advocate for an individual, but I help to empower them to advocate for themselves. I'm not a recipient of legal notice for the division, but if somebody says, I want to put the division on notice, we talk about how you might be able to do that. I do not conduct formal investigations, and I cannot overturn decisions or reverse a decision that might have been made, but I do help inform, even though I don't make set or change policy directly, I have a lot of people ask me for my observations, Like if there is a policy that's not clear or if people are struggling with a process,

[00:14:14] they'll ask me for my input based upon the people that I've engaged with. And then I do not maintain records beyond when they are administratively useful to me. So under the Virginia Library records destruction process, I'm able to shred my documentation at the end of each month when it's no longer administratively useful.

[00:14:34] That helps maintain that confidentiality that I shared about. So I want to share a bit of data so you can see how my numbers have grown over the last couple of years. So my first year, I had 207 contacts during the 22-23 year. I was really just informing people, what is the office? Who am I? What do I do? And really working on my marketing and outreach.

[00:14:59] Last year, I had 369 contacts, which was a 78% increase. And one big trend that you can see pretty glaringly on the right is that my employee cases doubled last year over my family and community cases. And I did work with a few more students last year as well. And I do believe that's because of word of mouth, repeat visitors, and staff referrals, principals or other central staff members directly referring individuals to me. So that's why I love to come to events like this to connect with family members and community members as well to make sure that you are aware

[00:15:39] of my information so that if you're listening to a colleague or a friend or a neighbor who has some concerns that they would like to discuss, then you have my information to share with them as well. I broke it down by voting district as well. That's more for our board members so that they can see which of their constituents are reaching out to me more frequently. Middle elementary and high, that was not necessarily shocking to me based upon the number of schools that we have and then some people come to me anonymously and I never know who they are or where they are reaching out to me from so I either lump them into maybe it's not applicable it's a central office employee who

[00:16:17] supports everyone I might not know or they might be attached like it might be a parent who has a concern but it's elementary middle and or high school so as far as our parent family student cases and community cases. I do separate out special education concerns and that's so if I do expand my office currently I do have an hourly support colleague who if I hit a period of time where my case numbers elevate and I can't respond to somebody within 24 hours that's my standard

[00:16:52] then I can reach out to him and he can assist me with some of those cases but I wanted to track special education separately so that if I do ever hire somebody part-time or full-time to see what area of expertise might be more beneficial. So 24 percent of my family cases from last year, parent-family-student cases, were from special education related. And then beyond that, general staff issues with a particular school staff member, behavior and discipline, Maybe issues with policy or regulation, like special permission, might fall within that bucket if they're just not sure how to navigate that process.

[00:17:32] Safety and environment, discrimination and harassment, attendance, boundaries, enrollment. Sometimes that's attached to special permission as well. And then, you know, it kind of trickles down from there. So I just wanted to highlight some of those areas of concern. And oftentimes I listen to the concern.

[00:17:49] We talk about options. I provide information, and I might do a direct referral or a handoff directly to the staff member who's responsible for that area. Breaking down special education concerns a bit further, IEP matters, procedural compliance pieces, staff issues similar to our general issues.

[00:18:13] And then sometimes it's just general information. They're not sure where to start, even where to navigate on the website. And so I can talk them through that and email that information directly to them so they don't have to spend a lot of time looking for it. As far as employee cases are concerned, most of my employee concerns are coming from schools.

[00:18:33] Some of them are coming centrally. And a lot of it, I say relationships, relationships, relationships. So it has to do, and that's for families and students as well. So direct relationships with evaluators or peer and colleague relationships. And then services or administrative issues, maybe decisions that have been made, and then compensation and benefits are the larger buckets for my employee cases.

[00:18:58] So just summarizing some of the actions that I take and how long it takes for me to work through conversations or cases with visitors, like I said, a lot of listening, talking about what options might exist, providing information, connecting them with appropriate staff members, Making sure that if needed I raise or elevate that concern on their behalf with their permission or if I see a trend or theme arise I might elevate that confidentially without mentioning where the concern came from.

[00:19:32] And informal mediations and I anticipate those numbers because I am getting a lot of direct referrals to do informal mediations to hopefully alleviate the need to go through more formal HR processes.

[00:19:52] When you close a case, is there like a feedback loop from like, because you talk about referrals, but is it like checking back in to make sure things were completed or? I don't because it is really up to how the visitor chooses to move forward.

[00:20:08] So sometimes we talk about options and then I don't know how they choose to move forward. Oftentimes people sit on that for a while and then they might see how things are going and then a month or two later they decide what next step to take. So not always. Sometimes yes, sometimes I get weekly check-ins on how things are going, and then other times it might be, you know, the following year.

[00:20:30] So it could be like, you know, a parent reached out to me because they had this concern, and then things were good for the rest of the year, but then maybe a transition from elementary to middle, they might reach back out to me. So sometimes yes, but not always. And then typically, especially if it's just a quick question or concern, and we can talk through it, I provide the information, I might close that out in one to two days, but depending on the complexity. I've had cases where I've had like 17 follow-up meetings based upon the initial concern that was brought to my attention. So that might be a little bit more protracted and take

[00:21:03] longer to close out. So I do have an annual report. I'll peek into that real quick to show you where it is after I finish here. But my main observations that I share with the board, I do report out each fall to the board in an annual report, are that relationships are essential, whether it's at the school level between our parents and our school communities or within our our employee community that once those relationships start to break down I am happy to provide support and and helping those be repaired and then potentially moving forward observation two is that clearly defined

[00:21:42] processes are appreciated while I don't recommend that every single thing that we do has a policy or regulation attached to it it is helpful when we have complex processes to have a step-by-step what is the appeal process and what to expect moving through those processes and then that confidential spaces are are valued and that is for our our community as well as our employee groups that being able to talk through somebody your concerns with somebody who has no stake in the game and can just listen in a neutral space and then most of the time even just after that

[00:22:16] conversation even if we don't have a set path forward people's shoulders come down and they say wow that was really good to just process that with somebody who doesn't have a reaction or interjection because they're already involved in in the situation so people can reach out to me really at any time I think initially the thought was you only reach out to the ombudsman if you have taken step a b or c that is not the case people can reach out to me at the beginning middle or the end, to talk about options before they even start down a pathway.

[00:22:56] If you just need information, you need to understand a process, an impartial resource. I've had people say, I need to present something to my boss. I don't know if it makes any sense. You don't know anything about this. Can I present it to you? And I will literally be like the audience or the sounding board for that individual.

[00:23:14] Easy to contact me. All of my information is on my website. I'll show you that briefly. you can fill out. I have a Let's Talk form available there. That's my email address comes directly to me. I am an office of one except for my hourly support, but I monitor the email as well as that's my direct line. I'm the only person who checks the messages. And then if you're in a school, your family liaison, if anybody needs my assistance in another language, I just need their name and their phone number and what language, and then I will call them back with

[00:23:46] the language line. All right, so before I turn it over to our next presenter, I just wanted to show you my website. So on here, details, what I just shared with you, my responsibilities, information about myself and Dr. Bowers. This is my form for reaching out. If you prefer the Let's Talk platform, you may do so there. I'm the only person that can see that in the division. Anybody else, they can see how many people have reached out to me, but all of the information is grayed out. Nobody else

[00:24:19] can see the content and then also um just my outreach materials posters if they need to be printed at the school level and then I have my annual reports here and that I those will be up there every year as they come out and then if you want to just dig into the data that I just shared a little bit um a little bit deeper all of that is here with some summary information all right so I think I'm right on time aren't I all right so I'm going to turn it over to the next presenter I will be here at the end for the break time.

[00:24:55] And so if you have any additional questions, please feel free to come up and chat with me. And then also in the back by Dr. Tyler back there, not to put him on the spot, there's some of my cards and my bookmarks in the corner if you want to grab a couple. And if you take them all, that's fine. I will replenish them.

[00:25:10] So you have that to take along with you. Take a couple if you feel like you have somebody that you might want to share that information with. All right. Thank you.

[00:25:44] Next up, I would like to welcome Loudon Mentors to come and share with us about their program. Everyone, I'm so glad to be here.

[00:26:05] Real quick, my name is Cameron Hunter, and I attended Penn State University. I graduated from Briarwoods in 2016. I'm the director and founder of Loudon Mentors, and I'm here with... Hi, everyone. My name is Vulda Piacusi. I attended Syracuse University, and I also graduated with Cameron from Briarwoods High School, and I am the outreach chair for Loudon Mentors.

[00:26:25] - So this is my second time speaking to MSAC. I'm always so excited to be here just because, you know, the landscape for Loudoun County is always changing. And in the same vein, we kind of want to be that space where we're always letting people know about this resource that we have for students and the community, especially as graduates who would have loved to have this for ourselves.

[00:26:45] So this is just a little bit of backstory into how Loudoun Mentors was started. In 2020, I was home from school, it was my senior year. I was doing it virtually, as a lot of students were, and, you know, there was a lot that was happening in the community. We're talking about equity in ways that I think, sure, it's, you know, it's always a conversation, but it was really at the forefront, especially in Loudoun County,

and so I was just realizing there was all of these equity conversations. We're talking about police brutality. We're talking about, you know, medicine. We both are from health backgrounds, so equity is at the core of that as well, and I'm realizing that I don't really have the same

[00:27:24] community to talk about it with young people as I did when I was in college. And so, you know, whenever these kind of things happen, we would organize, we would have these conversations. And then I kept wondering while I was home, where is the youth voice? Where is the space for us to talk about these kind of things? And then also, why when I was a student did I feel so disconnected from Loudoun? Why did I feel like we would have these kind of conversations while we were in school about not feeling seen, not having the visibility, not being able to talk about this with our teachers. And, you know, that is an issue. When you have a research background, usually when there's

[00:27:59] an issue, you know, you identify that issue and you start to try to form a thesis around it. But the issue was that we were disconnected. And so I just, you know, one of the first ideas that came to mind, I started putting these Zoom calls out, first to be called to be young and black and loud in, and just seeing who wanted to talk about some of the things that were happening. And, you know, it started with, you know, 40, 50, and then it just kept growing, the number of people who were joining. A lot of alumni like ourselves, who all just kind of wanted to break down a lot of the things that we had been experiencing when we're students, and never gotten the chance to talk

[00:28:36] about. But then also, there were some educators and some parents joining with their younger children. And I remember even a middle schooler who had joined with his parents, and was saying, I don't really, you know, know what a microaggression is. I don't, you know, know all of the language, but I have these experiences and my teacher makes me uncomfortable sometimes and I would love to be able to have these spaces where I could talk about it.

[00:29:01] And, you know, all of us as alumni who aren't even with Loudoun anymore, we're like, we're here, we can be that for you, we can be that space, we can be that community. And so it was kind of, you know, bringing this conversation to fruition that we never had before.

[00:29:17] And so with that being said, we made this group chat with all of these alumni, specifically alumni of color, where we were just kind of talking and ideating about how we could support current students. And we wanted to start off with a basis of data, so there had been this 2019 equity report that had just been created, and we saw, you know, largely Loudoun County, as we know, there's very high graduation rates in comparison to a lot of other counties.

[00:29:42] However, there's a very clear achievement gap as we discuss, achievement gaps with ESL students, achievement gaps in who's graduating with a certain type of degree. And we realized also that a lot of the emergent themes were all of these kids were having these experiences still that we had experienced, the not seeing yourself in a teacher, the maybe some racial things that are said, these things that we had really learned to tolerate.

[00:30:11] we realized, you know, students in Loudoun had a very high tolerance for things that should not be tolerable, and we wanted to make sure that we were having a conversation about it. So we started off of that, and Loudoun mentors came to fruition, and it really was this beautiful amalgamation of all of these graduates who truly, no cost, just wanted to support in any way that we could, give back in any way that we could. And so we made it virtual mentorship because it came during the pandemic, when

everything was virtual, but also which has given us longevity because now we have access to graduates who are all over the country. One of our board members literally lives in Peru

[00:30:48] but still wanted to stay connected to students. So basically the foundation of our program, we do mentorship groups. We also do one-on-one mentorship now as well, but the format of mentorship groups came because we wanted to have students not just connecting with one mentor, but also this idea that, you know, maybe you connect with this mentor because they went to your high school, but maybe you connect with this mentor because they're in a field that you're really interested in, and you're interested in pre-law, so you would love to be with someone who's currently in law school.

[00:31:22] You know, students are multifaceted. We wanted to make sure that we were representing all of that. So we pair up groups based off of a collection of interests, but our main values are, one, community, two, visibility. So when students apply, they're able to let us know if they would like to see someone who's very similar to them, say that they're first generation, they want to talk with the first generation mentor about having that conversation with their parents, the applying to colleges, all of those things.

[00:31:49] Achievement, if a student's really passionate about maybe an Ivy League or, you know, all of these excess things, they'll pair them with someone who can help them at that level of success and professional development. So maybe they're just looking for an internship. Maybe they're really concerned about paying for college.

[00:32:05] We're currently in the workforce as well. We also work for companies that are looking to hire and looking to have all of these spaces. Mentorship as well. We also have firsts and sophomores who don't even really know what the term mentorship is, and they really are just looking for guidance.

[00:32:21] They're, how do I do well in my classes? How do I know when I'm supposed to start thinking about college? We adapt based off of where the students are at and what they're looking for. We have students who will reach out to us and say, My mom is a single mother, and she's a lot on her plate.

[00:32:37] I just think that I could benefit from mentorship. And so those are the kind of things that we'll adapt to. Or we had a mentee who reached out and said, I don't know about mentorship, but I'm a senior, and I really want to start an app. I don't know where to start. And so we connected him with someone, another young man who had created an app while he was in college and sold it to the university.

[00:32:58] And, you know, these are lifelong partnerships that are being formed. So there's minimums, we train our mentors, we train our mentees, but the primary aspect is that we want to make sure that students are having these groups and we're working in a format that's currently evolving with the school system.

[00:33:18] So one of the things that we do for that as a program is we try at least once a month to do college panels where we go out to affinity groups at the different high schools and basically we'll have mentors or just LCPS alumni come who are either attending or have attended It's schools that students at the high schools are interested in or are currently working in slash majored in fields that students are interested in.

[00:33:43] And these are just some pictures from some of the visits that we have done at schools. Special shout out to the bottom picture because that one is when we went to Briarwoods. And then as part of collaboration with a lot of mentors, some of the things that we kind of ask for as collaborations when we work with the community is just assistance with student and mentor recruitment.

[00:34:05] We also try to be a resource to students, so we try and get them to learn about resources in the community, things like scholarships, college app waivers. We also try and help support the affinity groups at the high schools and also the teachers that help sponsor and run those groups.

[00:34:21] And then, of course, just general community building. We want students that are currently in LCPS to realize that they have a really wide network besides just academic. There are alumni who know what they're going through and have been in their shoes, So we kind of just work not only as a mentoring organization, but also just to kind of help connect LCPS students in general to larger community things that they might not already know about.

[00:34:45] And then these are some of our community partners that we've worked with in the past and are currently working with. So the local NAACP chapter, Kappa League, of course, MSAC, and we also have worked with the student initiative, which is the BSUs that are a lot of the high schools that we have right now.

[00:35:02] And then these are some events that we have hosted as part of our mentoring program. So on the, I guess you're right, would be the game night. So that's something that we did as a program to kind of help all the mentees from all the different high schools get to know each other, get to know the other mentors. And then on the left would be the college, the black college student experience.

[00:35:23] So that was an event we hosted where we had LCPS alumni who had gone to HBCUs and PWIs kind of speak to the students so that they can kind of get a better feel for what it's like to attend those different types of universities and sort of the challenges or just differences between an HBCU and a PWI. Okay, and I'm going to skip through this, but another event up from the bottom picture of the last slide, we also do community workshops, so also middle schoolers, even though we primarily mentor high schoolers. We do community workshops with middle school, elementary schools, So also feel free to connect with us on that.

[00:35:59] We did a hair workshop where kids can learn about science and STEM through just learning about porosity and how to make shampoo, conditioner, trying to make the conversations a little bit easier to do. So with all that being said, these are our upcoming events. We'll be at Briarwoods December 17th, and we're doing a Christmas event with the Washington Commanders where we're bringing a bunch of students out to come and volunteer, give Christmas gifts out.

[00:36:26] but yes I say all this to say check us out on Instagram if you have students let them know that this is a free resource for them that's all we want to make sure people know you don't have to join but there's always at least one student who could benefit and we just want to let them know that it's a resource yes and this is on our Instagram as well and via our Instagram subscribe to our newsletter it has our link tree with our website and everything but oh you did okay all All right. Sounds good. Thank you so much for having us. I hope everyone has a great evening.

[00:37:04] Thank you. Sorry to interrupt. Wonderful presentation. If we are a school that's interested in connecting with you guys, what is the best way to do that? I would say connect with Vulda. She's our outreach chair. But you can also send us an email at loudinstudentmentorsinfo. It's at the bottom, but also if you go to our Instagram, our email is on our Instagram.

[00:37:27] Okay. Okay.

[00:37:49] Thank you. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. And we'll be right over here. Oh, sorry, back there? Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Okay, now we're moving at a steady clip, but now we're going to turn it over to Ms. Clark and the team from the Academies of Loudoun.

[00:38:15] Great, good evening.

[00:38:32] Hard to follow these young ladies. Thank you for coming back and giving back to our community. I love our focus tonight around community. I think it's fitting that we're here to share some of the opportunities that we have for our students in LCPS. So I'm Katie Clark, Director of Academic Programs.

[00:38:49] And with me this evening, I have coordinators or specialists from these opportunities that we have available. So tonight you're going to hear from Academies of Loudoun that houses our AET, our AOS, and our MATA programs. You're going to hear from our Health and Medical Science Academy.

[00:39:06] That is our newest program that started this school year. You're going to hear from our International Baccalaureate program that we have at two high schools. Our Navy Junior ROTC program that has been around for some years. And then lastly, our Elementary Dual Language Immersion Program.

[00:39:24] So I'm going to go ahead and kick it off, and we're going to start with Mr. Livesay from Academies of Loudoun. Thank you, Ms. Clark. It's a pleasure to be here this evening on behalf of the Academies of Loudoun Admissions and Outreach Office. The Academies of Loudoun is Loudoun County Public Schools Magnet STEM High School.

[00:39:45] We're just one of the many opportunities and special programs that the students in Loudoun County can take advantage of. while they're in high school at the academies of loudon when we go out and do our outreach and recruiting we we ask students uh are you curious do you like to solve problems are you interested in stem do you like to collaborate with others are you interested in conducting research if that's the case then the academies of loudon is a is a is an educational center that a stem academy that your students and your children may be interested in i would be remiss if i didn't start with the

[00:40:25] mission of our school these words are on the walls inside our school they're not just words they're actionable if you enter the building you'll see you will see students exploring researching collaborating and innovating and making meaningful contributions to the world in the fields of science technology engineering and mathematics we take a great deal of pride at the academies and making sure students are immersed in that mission on a daily basis the The Academies of Loudoun is one school with three unique academic programs.

[00:40:58] They are the Academy of Engineering and Technology, AET. Students can apply for that in 8th grade for 9th grade entry. It's a four-year program. Another program is the Academy of Science. 8th graders can apply to that as well. It's a four-year program with 9th grade entry.

[00:41:16] And then we have another program that's offered to high school students called the Monroe Advanced Technical Academy, which is MATA, the Admissions and Outreach Office. We manage two admission cycles, one in the fall for 8th graders applying to AOS and AET, and then we do one in the winter, which opens next week, Monday, for the Monroe Advanced Technical Academy or the Advanced AET program, which is the second point of entry for students who may not have gotten in as 9th graders.

[00:41:46] So the Academy of Engineering, let's look at these programs. AET is our engineering program. the engineering program curriculum strives to provide advanced academic stem programming pathways for students to engage in the study of engineering entrepreneurship or information technology students who apply to aet it's kind of like choosing a major when you go to college they get to choose their pathway in in one of those areas these are aet is a four-year program it's an advanced academic program courses are weighted by adding 0.5 to the point value for

[00:42:24] the grade. AET, AP, dual enrollment, multi-variable calculus courses are all weighted at 1.0. AOS is our other four-year program that students can begin applying for in eighth grade. AOS curriculum strives to provide students the opportunity to deeply engage in math, science, and research, and to promote creativity and innovation through problem solving and collaboration. Again, it is a four-year program that you apply in eighth grade for ninth grade

[00:42:56] entry. MATA is a little different. The Monroe Advanced Technical Academy program strives to provide significant and relevant learning and career and technical education, which is CTE, which allows students to explore and innovate while preparing for 21st century college and careers. MATA offers 25 different pathways, either one-year pathways or two-year pathways.

[00:43:22] If you look at the screen, you see those that are highlighted in yellow. Those are dual-enrolled pathways where students get high school elective credits and college credits through Northern Virginia Community College. So with that said, I do want to, it is a pleasure to be with MSAC again this evening. The Academies of Loudoun Admissions and Outreach Office, we have a table set up over here. We want you to come and visit us before you leave. We want to showcase our elementary outreach we've discovered that our recruiting now is a k-12 endeavor and that

[00:44:00] we are our elementary outreach is anchored in the national society of black engineers we are the we the academy's admissions and outreach office chartered the first ever nesby junior chapter in loudoun county public schools we're in our third year of of advising that club very exciting It's for all 4th and 5th graders in Loudoun County.

[00:44:28] We're up over 50 members in that program, and it's very exciting. It really does anchor us in our outreach at the elementary level. Again, thank you all for your time this evening. Please visit us at our table. Folks, hi, I'm George Bishop.

[00:44:58] I'm the specialist to be named later. I didn't get to be a coordinator yet. I'm going to talk to you about the Naval Junior ROTC program out at Loudoun County High School, and hopefully I can make this little video play. Guess not. There we go.

[00:45:14] Ms. Clark, Katie, what's the magic number up here? It doesn't. Oh, I don't know.

[00:45:32] We have to do all that? Yep, do that. Goodness gracious. This is why I have help because it's not my gate. All right. Now you've got to make a big one. Let's try that one more time, okay?

[00:45:49] That's all we have to do. Come on. I'm not in charge. One of my favorite things about being ROTC is probably the camaraderie that we have. Everyone is super tightly knit together and we're all really good friends. It's like one big family here.

[00:46:07] - The unique thing about the Loudoun County High School NJROTC is it is the only NJROTC in the county. It is designed to promote patriotism for our cadets, as well as provide them leadership

opportunities. Our main goal and focus is to develop better citizens for the United States.

[00:46:24] They're heavily involved in community service so that they give back to the community. We not only teach them about the military, But we focus on national security and teamwork and other leadership traits in class. We have a big community presence. Whenever a program, they need volunteers, I know they can always call us and we'll have some cadets that want to come and participate.

[00:46:49] Hi. So just a little bit of a program overview for us. We have four pillars that we build upon, service, leadership, honor, and character. And when we talk about character, it's what we want to help you have and instilled in you, not what we want to see from you is someone being a character, right?

[00:47:10] So we have a real tradition of order and discipline. And this is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a military recruitment program. This is a leadership development program. It started back in 1964, several years after I arrived.

[00:47:29] And it's been a grand program ever since. It's been here since 2009. We have roughly 170 students enrolled in the program in the past several years. That's where we are right now. We deal with community service.

[00:47:48] So all of our recruits, our cadets, I say recruits, but cadets are heavily involved in community service, whether it's working with nursing homes or libraries in their community in churches or they're doing tutoring for other students.

[00:48:04] it's an excellent leadership program. They do wear their Navy uniform. They're a member of Loudoun County High School for four years, so they become a captain. That means that when they go to school, they can play sports, they can be in clubs, you can be in the band, do everything that you would normally do because that is now your school. Again, it's in Loudoun County High School. It is, as Captain John said, is the only junior ROTC program. It's not just the only Navy program. It's the only one we have in the county. So our objective, of course, is to prepare students

[00:48:44] for life regardless of whatever path they choose. Open to all Loudoun County 8th graders, whether you're homeschooled, private schooled, or in public school. You would become, now what this does do though, is it excludes those zoned for Loudoun County High School. So you don't have to go through the application process. If you're zoned for Loudoun County High School, you simply go and say, want to take the class and you can otherwise you have to if you're not in that attendance zone you have to apply and presently we we're able to take 25 students from the rest of the county

[00:49:21] transportation is hub stops so the the thing about our program is you do have to get up early all right because we're going to start about 7 15 with our one of our multiple programs so we have underwater robotics right we call us a sea perch you may have heard of that We have several close-order drill teams, academic teams, drone teams, and orienteering, as well as physical fitness teams.

[00:49:54] Here's what we look at as far as criteria. A young person will go into the student opportunities portal. You're going to fill out a little application, and really what you're going to do is answer a couple of questions about why do you want to be an ROTC.

[00:50:11] Then you're going to find two teachers who think you're the greatest thing since bread. We hope that one of them is a social studies teacher. You're going to tell us who you want to make that recommendation. They're going to get an email.

[00:50:26] They're going to send their, upload their recommendation to the portal. And then the trickiest part probably is convincing your parents that you want to be part of this program because it is a time commitment. As the cadet said, though, it's family.

[00:50:43] So it's a small group. You're going to have a good time. You're going to go places. we travel all over the state doing different programs kids have a blast but the thing that they do is they they embrace that sense of community and they really care about each other so it's a it's a super program for that once we get all the applications in january 31st that that window closes we convene a committee to look at all of the applicants then we send that list over to loudon county high school they set up interviews and in our interview it's not just the

[00:51:19] young person that needs to go, it's the parents or the guardians, because they want you to understand the time commitment that's required, what you're going to be doing, when you're going to do it, and that thing about transportation, because sometimes that can be tough. Even though we have hub stops, transportation can still be daunting for people. After all of the interviews are concluded, then the students will either, they'll get a call, and they'll either be offered a seat for that coming year, or they'll be put on a wait list. The reason we do the wait list, I'm sure you know this already, is that some students in, let's say, that top 25 or the first

[00:51:58] 25 decide, I just can't do it. Well, the next person up gets a chance, right? So, we'll go as deep as we have to go in order to fill those 25 seats. It's a four-year program. Did I tell you that? So, we're really looking for that commitment, okay? Thank you so much for your time. I appreciate being here with you. And seriously, if you have any questions, please, we'll be over in the back. Thank you so much. All right, folks. Good evening. I'm going to talk

[00:52:36] to you about the IB program, which stands for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, which is what we offer here in Loudoun County. The IB program is a rigorous, holistic, global leadership college preparatory program is, in a nutshell, what it essentially is. And what it holds at its mantra sort of in terms of education, in terms of the power that it unlocks in students is a real emphasis on the fact that it is education for a better world is what the IBO would say and

[00:53:12] what we pride ourselves on delivering. So to that extent, you know, how do you prepare kids to basically design a better world? What is a learning environment in terms of an IB classroom look like? And what you find is a heavy emphasis on relevance, on making sure that students are developing skills that will prepare them to basically solve the problems of the future, to solve the problems of tomorrow, problems that we don't even know are problems yet, right?

[00:53:43] So the way that we prepare students to do that is to think critically, to be able to communicate with various different perspectives, different groups, different people. We develop their social skills through collaborative learning.

[00:54:00] And we put, it is a holistic program because we put an emphasis on the whole child. While there is a rigorous academic focus, there's also a development of character in terms of being, in terms of things that can be found in the Ivy Learner profile, things, attributes like being caring, being open-minded, being a risk taker, being a balanced student.

[00:54:26] These are some of the things that we try to develop, some of the attributes that we try to develop in students in the IB program. And there is a heavy emphasis on research in every single one of

the disciplines, as well as through some of the extra requirements like the extended essay that students have to write.

[00:54:45] In all facets, they will be well prepared for writing in college, for research in college, and for communicating what they find through their research. So in terms of teaching, what you would find in an IB classroom is a big emphasis on putting material and content into a global and local focus, right?

[00:55:12] So you might have a problem like pollution, which is global, but it is focused in on the Chesapeake, for example, right? and then students go off and they might do their internal assessment which is a big component of every IB class on an area or some focus that that they are passionate about in terms of that science class there is a big emphasis on inquiry on being student driven the the passions of the student the interests of the students that what is what drives for things like the internal assessment but also other subjects in class.

[00:55:51] Last but not least, there's this emphasis in an IB classroom on conceptual understanding. Conceptual understanding, in a nutshell, is basically patterns, right? We're trying to teach students to identify these patterns, to speak about these patterns. So if you take something in history like civil rights, right, we're going to also compare it to apartheid in South Africa.

[00:56:13] So they're always getting this global perspective and trying to make sense of the world that they live in and what connection and patterns you might find with, you know, that example in history in particular. So I like to point out, because we have been in AP district for so long, that IB classes all carry a 1.0 bump, just like AP classes.

[00:56:37] And if you go to, you know, how a college recognizes these credits, you know, varies depending on the institution. But if you were to go to a place like William & Mary or Virginia Tech, you will see that it's pretty equivalent between AP and IB.

[00:56:55] And like I said, every IB class carries that 1.0 bump in terms of GPA, much like AP does. But because we're not that familiar with IB in the county, I always like to note that and tell parents that this is what it's like.

[00:57:11] Because we are surrounded by other districts that offer IB. It's not something completely new to us or to our district. It has been in existence here in the Commonwealth of Virginia since about the 1980s.

[00:57:28] I believe Falls Church City Public Schools was the first to offer. So there are two sort of ways to access the IB program. You can decide to come and you can do classes a la carte, much like what exists in every single high school with AP.

[00:57:46] You pick and choose some AP classes to take. You can do that with IB, pick and choose some IB classes. But the real, what makes you stand out is if you do the full international baccalaureate diploma and if you do all of those requirements.

[00:58:02] So it is not for the faint of heart. It is seven advanced academic classes, six in different content areas. There is a theory of knowledge course that students take who want to do the full diploma. But these are sort of the two pathways that you can take.

[00:58:20] You can also decide to emphasize STEM classes through stressing of IB classes through what's known as higher level. You have to do three of your six classes in the higher level. So you can choose to

stress STEM classes through there, or you can choose to stress humanities or a blend of those classes.

[00:58:42] Students are really encouraged to play to their strengths, to play to the areas that they feel comfortable in reaching and trying to challenge themselves academically. So the IB program is offered in two different schools right now in Loudoun County. It's offered at Valley and it's offered at Heritage High School where I am located. The schools underneath each one of the schools listed above feed into heritage right so for example independence high school

[00:59:18] if you would go there you would come to heritage high school right or if you were at riverside you would go to loudon valley so i will be set up over here if you want some more information i'd be happy to talk to you stop on by and learn more about ib thank you guys again i'm now going to pass it over to hampshire oh the shorty has to fix the mic a little bit how's everybody doing i'm seeing some eyes glazing over. We're almost done. This is one of the last programs. We saved the best for the

[00:59:56] last. So here I am. My name is Vandana Sharma, and I'm the coordinator for Health and Medical Sciences Academy. And I am so excited to talk to you about HAMSci. It is the newest program that LCPS has started. We started this year. So our first cohort just finished their first quarter.

[01:00:14] So it is exciting times indeed. Here's a brief overview for you. So the purpose of Health and Medical Science Academy is to prepare our students for careers in health and medical sciences. We want to ensure that our students, as they graduate, have multiple pathways for success, whether they want to go into a higher education to a four-year program, two-year program, or go straight into workforce.

[01:00:39] And the way we do that is our programming is designed in such a way that it promotes critical thinking skills. It provides our students with medical health science literacy. And we ensure that our students will have work-based learning experiences, which will lead to industry-recognized credentials.

[01:01:02] So when they graduate, they are work-ready, if that is the path they want to choose. And how do we ensure that our focus, which is to prepare our students for successful careers in health care, how do we ensure we stay focused on that path is by ensuring that we are providing our students with rigorous academics infused with practical experiences and providing them with high-quality work-based learning experiences and real-world experiences.

[01:01:31] All this will lead for them to be career ready and with their resume ready to be employed if that's the path they want to choose. A little bit about our programming. So Health and Medical Science Academy, just like IB and Navy Junior ROTC, is a four-year commitment.

[01:01:52] Students will, in their 9th, 10th, and 11th grade, all students will take common classes. All students enrolled in HamSci Academy will take the same classes. In the 9th grade, they will take principles of biomedical sciences where they will explore forensic science, DNA, medical interventions, patient care.

[01:02:12] In their 10th grade, they will take human body systems, so they'll delve deeper into anatomy and physiology. In their 11th grade, our students will take two semester-long courses. They will take medical terminology, so they will learn a little bit more about medical terminology.

[01:02:30] And they will take Introduction to Health and Medical Sciences, which is where they will explore all the different careers in Health and Medical Sciences. Now in their junior year, our students will have an opportunity to pick one of the two pathways. So we have two pathways, Biomedical Sciences and Leadership or Biomedical Science and Diagnostics.

[01:02:51] If the students choose Biomedical Sciences and Leadership, they will take Medical Administration, which will prepare them for leadership, administration, could lead into the positions like health office manager or administrative assistant. This will also lead into a certification of a medical administrative assistant.

[01:03:12] If they choose the biomedical science and diagnostic path, the students will take medical lab tech one course, which will expose them to clinical procedure, therapeutic services, services and could lead into them being employed as a clinical lab tech or a phlebotomist.

[01:03:30] Now I want to reiterate, regardless of the pathway your student picks, both of these pathways will ensure that the students are receiving high-quality work-based learning experiences, that they have real-world applications and have academic excellence embedded in all the programming that we are doing.

[01:03:52] Just like IB, we have two high school sites for Health and Medical Sciences Academy: Briarwoods High School and Tuscarora High School. So as Mr. Urubari just explained, if you are, let's say you are a student at Independence High School, so you're zoned for Independence High School, instead of going to Independence High School, you would be going to Briarwoods High School full-time.

[01:04:14] So you will be reporting, so you will no longer be an Indy student, you will be a Briarwood student, both on A days and B days, you will participate in their prom, in their sports, in their clubs, activities. You'll take all your core classes there. So that's how HAMSci programming works. And it's a big decision for our eighth graders to kind of think of leaving their friends and going to a different high school. It's a huge decision. But we also understand that it's kind of preparing them for the life ahead, where you are navigating to so many different scenarios, you do make new friends and you do have new experiences

[01:04:54] that enrich your experiences. So before I end, I want to really mention one more thing. We have some of our students from LCPS sitting here who presented earlier. And I can say that you were 2016, you said, I don't think you had these opportunities at that time.

[01:05:15] What a fantastic time to be an eighth grader in LCPS. Look at all these opportunities our students have to just explore and see what clicks for them. It is a great time to take that risk and see, oh, let me try this and see if this works for me.

[01:05:33] It's a great time to know that. So LCPS is doing a great job of providing all these opportunities for our students. And I think it's a great time to avail these opportunities and apply for them. I'm going to talk also about our program logistics, both for IB and HAMSA, and also Navy Junior ROTC to some extent.

[01:05:56] I think George already talked about it. So here is our enrollment timeline. The Student Opportunities Portal, which is in LCPS Go, that's how you apply for both of these programs. It opens on December 1st. Can I make that change?

[01:06:12] Not yet. It opens on December 1st. Okay, so all of you will be receiving an email that that timeline is actually changing because December 1st is a Sunday. It's actually opening on Monday, coming Monday, 25th. So the window to apply to both of these programs starts on December 25th, and it will end January 31st.

[01:06:34] And then a lottery will take place in February, and in March we will have our first round of notifications. Now, all these programs, the lottery will come out at the same time. So if you are that student who gets into multiple programs, well, then you have a tough decision to make.

[01:06:52] So you have got to pick one. You can't be in all the programs. So you've got to make an informed decision at that point, which program speaks to you the most. And if for some reason you're not able to apply during that enrollment time frame, it doesn't mean that you can't apply.

[01:07:09] You can still apply after the window closes on January 31st. You will just not be entered in the lottery. You will be added to the existing wait list of the students. Transportation is through hub stops, which is, I want to reiterate and make sure everybody understands, it is not picked by the students.

[01:07:30] It's the transportation department that decides what is going to be the hub stop. and that is purely based out of where they're seeing the students populate for that specific program. This list comes out somewhere just before the school year starts as to what your hub stop is going to be. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that you are able to drop your child off to that hub stop so they can take the bus and go to the school and then be there to receive them at the end of the school day those are the transportation

[01:08:06] details and lottery and I think I can pass it on to dual language thank you so much for your time have a great evening good evening everybody my name is Louisa Quintero and I am the world languages specialist and I'm going to talk to you today about dual language immersion this is a program unlike my colleagues were talking about high school I'm going to be talking about elementary it's the only program special program in an elementary schools the dual language immersion program focuses on developing children in two languages in this case

[01:08:42] is going to be Spanish and English our dual language immersion program aims to develop bilingual by literate and culturally competent students preparing them for globally connected world their students not only achieve proficiency in English but also gain fluency in a partner language such as Spanish enhancing their cognitive skills and cultural understandings.

[01:09:03] The research shows that students in the dual language immersion program often demonstrates higher academic performance, problem-solving skills, and improved cognitive flexibility. The program serves both English-speaking and partner language speaking students, fostering a balanced learning environment.

[01:09:21] The goals of this program is academic achievement, designed to support high academic achievement across all subjects, with students achieving core standards while also building language skills. The other goal is bilingualism and biliteracy, which is a primary goal of the program, for students to become fully bilingual and biliterate, which means that they can read and write in both languages.

[01:09:44] It also focuses on cultural competence students, teaching students to understand and appreciate different cultures, preparing our students to become respectful, knowledgeable, and engage global citizens who appreciate the value of diversity in their communities and beyond. The DLI program gives the students a unique advantage with skills that support future career opportunities and community engagement starting in elementary. You may not be an elementary parent, but you may know somebody in your community that has elementary children because the program begins in kindergarten and we currently have a kindergarten class and a first grade class.

[01:10:21] Next year we are expanding to second grade and we will be building it out at two schools. Our two schools are Potomac Elementary and Sanders Corner. Not everybody is able to apply for this program and show interest just like the other programs. We have a lottery system that we work with so that families from outside of these schools can also attend the program and have those opportunities.

[01:10:44] It is a 50/50 two-way model which features 50% of the partner language instruction is going to be in Spanish. language-balanced classes, because it's fairly equal numbers of two groups of students. The literacy instruction in both languages, so students are getting instruction in both Spanish literacy and English literacy, so they can become bilingual and biliterate.

[01:11:08] And the core subjects, math, science, and social studies, are divided between the languages. Just like the other programs, we also have an enrollment timeline. It's a little bit different. Ours does not start until January the 1st, because that is when, sorry, January the 3rd, because that is when our kindergarten registration starts.

[01:11:30] Parents who are interested in the program can show interest at that time during their online registration form, complete the registration, and once a student is enrolled fully in the program, they enter a lottery. They must complete this process, fully register, and be a student for Loudoun County Public Schools by April.

[01:11:48] In April, we hold a lottery, and then we send out the notifications in May and hold our classes. It stays open, so anybody that comes into the county and applies late to the county or registers late because they move, they still have an opportunity to enter that wait list that we have at the bottom, so everybody has an opportunity to, if there's a seat that comes open, to become part of it.

[01:12:07] Because seats are limited, a lottery has to be held, and we hold a wait list. Transportation. We do not offer any transportation for students that are outside of the schools zoned. So if you are zoned for Sanders or for Potomac Elementary, you are able to have transportation.

[01:12:26] But if you're coming from outside of those zones, there is no transportation and parents must assure, are responsible for getting their children to and from school. We do have outreach to our families and communities. So if you know of anybody that has little children and would be interested in this program, we are holding community sessions starting December the 3rd all the way to January the 28th.

[01:12:47] in where we visit different schools throughout the county so that we can inform our communities and let everybody know about the program that they can start in kindergarten. We have a table over there, and we'll be glad to answer any questions. All right, just to wrap us up, I do want to just echo what Mrs. Sharma said about an exciting time in Loudoun County.

[01:13:13] We have more programs than we've ever had, and we are continuing at looking at expanding new opportunities. So a couple quick things. Most of our information nights for HAMSI and some of the others have already concluded, but we do have our IB nights coming up tomorrow night at Loudoun Valley at 6 o'clock and then at Heritage on December 3rd at 6.

[01:13:35] We do have our tables over here, so we do hope that you come and visit and not just pick up information for programs that you or your child is interested in, but we encourage you to take them all and take them back to your school communities and make sure you share out with others.

[01:13:51] So thank you again for allowing us some time tonight, and we'll be over here as long as you need us to answer any individual questions and provide you some information.

[01:14:30] Before we break and do table visits, I just want to offer just a couple minutes, if Ms. Williams doesn't mind, if anybody has any questions specifically for her. I know this was a lot of information, but we wanted to make sure we got everybody an opportunity to present.

[01:14:46] But if there are any questions that you might have specifically for her, we can take a couple of minutes to ask those. You can get your own table.

[01:15:03] Yes. OK. So with that, we are going to break for a little bit. So you can visit the tables. Again, all of the tables over here for special programs are in the back. The wonderful ladies from Loudon Mentors are right here. Ms. Williams is going to set up shop over there.

[01:15:21] And right here, that single table right in between Loudon Mentors and the special programs, we have some things for you all as delegates. They are one-pagers, an FAQ for you to take out and share with your community in case you're out and sharing.

[01:15:38] And we have some postcards. The front says MSAC. The back has QR codes to scan to offer people an opportunity to become a member, a delegate, or a student delegate. So please feel free to grab some of those and grab some of the wonderful stickers that my amazing helpers also put on the table for you all as well.

[01:15:57] And so we're going to take a little break. Table visits, please visit with each other. And we'll come back in about 15 or so minutes.

[01:41:24] If we wrap. That was it. That was this time. Okay, everybody. We're going to come back together so we can wrap up for the evening.

[01:41:40] back together and just pause our conversations for just a little bit. We'll have more time for you guys to come back and ask your questions and finish making your connections. And yes,

[01:42:09] I decided to switch it up a little. And I moved our updates and announcements to this portion of the meeting. So I just have a couple of updates and some initiatives that MSAC is going to start working on and has been working on behind the scenes. The first update is we are underway in the process of writing our MSAC parent advocacy handbook. And this handbook is going to be basically written from the perspective of us, things that we've learned as parents and community

[01:42:48] members, as MSAC delegates that have helped us become better advocates in our schools, better advocates for our students and better advocates in our community and so we're going to try to cover all grade levels from kindergarten through 12th grade and even include a section in there that talks about if your child is going to go to college or what they do if they choose not to go to college and they are going to enter the workforce and so in the next week or so be on the lookout for an email from me because we could use some help in pulling together some of

[01:43:25] the tips and some of the ideas that you have even resources that you'd like to be included our goal is to write this handbook and put it through edit submit drafts get the clearance to publish it and have that set up on our website by the end of this school year so we could use help in writing if you know a section if you're elbow deep in the elementary years or you're in the last year for your senior in high school

and you've got some ideas and you've got some things you'd like to share please we could use all the help we can get to

[01:44:04] make this handbook a success I think it will be a valuable resource and tool for the community and for LCPS. We are also going to start holding listening sessions or informational sessions rather for the upcoming MSAC executive board elections in the spring. So starting in December we are going to try to host about four informational sessions, one in December, one in January, and two in February before we open the nomination and application process up. So again that's going to be coming out with the information and the dates to sign up and

[01:44:41] it's just your opportunity to hear about the leadership roles on the executive board, contemplate whether you were interested in running, and then also we'll try to get you set up with individual meetings for to learn more about the role of MSAC chair, MSAC vice chair, any of the roles that will be open and available um we're also going to include a section um because we need a little extra help to have um some of you come along and join our policy committee just to help support rod as

[01:45:18] he is our policy lead and he does amazing work but i am sure that he could use a little extra help a few more eyes and ears on these policies as we draft our comments and our feedback for them as well so we're just going to host these listen these informational sessions for about 45 minutes for you to get your to get the basics ask a couple of quick questions but we will also follow up with you i will follow up with you if you're interested in running with chair to answer your questions and

[01:45:48] give you details and then going into the after winter break and after our recess starting in a couple minutes. We are also going to start, our meetings will focus more on getting your kids ready for the next phase. So we're going to start talking about the joy of learning, learning new things. Our February meeting is going to center around the topic of AI and computers in school and what AI can do for you and how your students can use it as a tool.

[01:46:22] And I even recruited a special guest to come and talk about data privacy and how to keep your child's information secure when they're browsing web pages and you know looking up things for projects and things like that we're going to have a meeting that centers on you know what are the next steps in course selection and everything like that so we're really going to focus on how to prep your students and it's going to focus if you will on our family and our students and helping prepare them for the rest of the school year and going into the next school year with With that, thank you for coming tonight.

[01:47:02] Thank you for sticking it out. I know it was an information-heavy meeting, but I would just like to say that while we are in recess, we're still here. We're still doing the work. If you need anything, please feel free to reach out with your questions. If you need support, please let us know.

[01:47:18] Have a safe and wonderful winter break. Have a safe holiday season, however you may celebrate that. and just have a safe rest of 2024. Lord, have mercy. I just jumped a whole year. Just have a great rest of the year.

[01:47:36] And we'll see you next year. Okay. Good night, everybody.



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