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Loudoun County School Board, Performance Monitoring Committee Meeting, Tuesday, March 18, 2025

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[00:00:01] - Good evening, everyone. I'd like to call to order this March 18th, 2025 meeting of the Performance Monitoring Committee. My name is Arben Estreffi. I'm joined by Chair Mansfield, as well as Ms. Chernoff, who's also part of the committee, but not yet here yet.

[00:00:19] I wanted to start us off and inform that we do have public comment for this evening. So we'll start with 2.01 public comment. And I believe our first and potentially only public commenter is Ms. Crotty.

[00:00:38] - Good evening. I saw that ESY was on the agenda for this evening, and ESY is definitely a topic of interest to our SEAC families. It's one that has for many, many years caused a lot of pain, and I think, you know, because it's a topic that specifically impacts our community, we would have loved to have been a part of the process in some way, at least providing a little bit of input.

[00:01:13] When you talk to a lot of our families about ESY, it's normally a negative reaction that you get from them. A lot of the parents don't even put their kids in ESY and choose alternate arrangements because they feel like it ends up being more of babysitting, even though I know that is absolutely not the intent.

[00:01:34] They sometimes feel like the students are improperly grouped. Sometimes you hear from parents who say that their child with a learning disability was put in a classroom. You know, maybe with students who were nonverbal and so then they feel like their child's not getting the level of instruction that they need.

[00:01:54] There's that pain of transition to a new school, which I know you guys looked into specifically and the problems that can come from that. Not just a new setting, but also different staff who don't know your child. and it takes weeks to establish that knowledge and rapport with a student and a teacher and also then the resulting communication that comes to the parents so that they actually understand how things are going at the school.

[00:02:23] Transportation was one area that I didn't see that was looked at, but that's always quite a bit of a challenge, and I wonder how that would be impacted if we looked at doing ESY at individual schools because at least I think a lot of our elementary schools that provide summer schools, they don't actually have busing.

[00:02:44] And so I don't know if that would be an additional concern. We had open houses for ESY where the teachers aren't there multiple years. I've seen that happen. Also, parents are concerned about how eligibility for ESY is determined.

[00:03:04] Sometimes parents hear from their teachers that, no, you don't actually really want your child to do ESY. That's only for the kids who are, you know, really disabled. So, you know, I think some of it is the selling of ESY. Maybe that's because the teachers don't feel comfortable recommending that to a family.

[00:03:24] Let's see. We do, I do really like the idea of having ESY in the home schools because that would eliminate that transition for a student. They would be more familiar with the environment, all those materials and stuff that have to get shipped over to other schools wouldn't need to occur, and hopefully it could also be staffed by people who are familiar with the students, and there might be opportunities for inclusion as well.

[00:03:56] You know, if those schools are also hosting summer schools, there might be some time, you know, at recess or snacks or something. And maybe for those students who have those specific learning disabilities, maybe we could group them a little bit more creatively so that they are getting what they need out of it.

[00:04:14] But I think everyone is kind of in agreement. The ESY doesn't work very well for anyone. But it would definitely be something that if you would like to speak more about, we are always happy to chat. And I didn't get, because I only just found out about it, I didn't get a chance to completely poll all of my SEAC members.

[00:04:34] So I was just going off of the parent feedback that I've gotten over the last couple of years. So thank you. Thank you very much. That will conclude our public comment. We'll move on to approval of the draft meeting minutes from February 18th.

[00:04:52] Do I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes? - Motion to approve the minutes. - That motion has been made by Ms. Chernoff. Do I have a second? - Second. - Seconded by Chair Mansfield. Is there any discussion?

[00:05:10] Seeing none, we'll move on to a vote. All those in favor of approving the meeting minutes, please say aye. - Aye. - That motion will pass unanimously. The meeting minutes have been approved. And we'll move on to our information items.

[00:05:27] I just wanted to, before we get into the information items, I may have to step out a little bit early depending on how long the meeting goes, But I will just pass the baton to Chair Mansfield or Ms. Chernoff. We'll see how that goes. So with that, we'll start with 4.01, Department of Academics, Program Evaluation Update.

[00:05:50] I'm actually just going to turn it directly over to Dr. Tyler. I will drive the slides. We're going to give you a brief overview of the program evaluation that you've already seen. So we'll move quickly through that and then dive deep into ESY.

[00:06:07] Good evening. As Dr. Ellis stated, the purpose of this segment of our meeting is Dr. Blakelock is going to provide a quick primer on continuous improvement, some key concepts. He'll hand it over to Dr. Carter to go into more detail on the SY, and then we'll have a kind of plant some seeds for getting feedback from you in April about the schedule of items for the next two years.

[00:06:33] So at this point, I will hand it over to Dr. Blakelock, who will do as a reminder of continuous improvement, some key principles, and kind of set the stage for Dr. Carter. Thank you, Dr. Tyler. So just as a quick reminder, our continuous improvement process follows the plan-do-study active cycle, which is basically you're looking to plan or modify a program, implement that program, collect data on that program, and then reflect as far as the effectiveness of the program, and you come back around to, do we need to make any changes?

[00:07:06] How do we go from good to great with it as well? So in thinking about what a program is and defining a program, it is ultimately a series of activities focused on specific goals and outcomes. So you've got very systematic concepts that are based on a need that are meant to change something or move a needle around something so that students can be more successful or some kind of positive change can occur based on an established need. So I've got the list of, the bolded list up there, but that's sort of the sort of nickel tour of it right there as far as just a set of activities focused on goals and

[00:07:44] outcomes. So when we look at the evaluation phases, we have a section where we develop a logic model which includes the programs, goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes, and then that informs the evaluation design. And the logic model process allows for some critical thinking from the program staff about each of the pieces of the program and how they all fit together. And that really launches well into the evaluation design, which speaks to research questions and data collection strategies. So we're going to take a quick look at the program schedule for 2023-24.

[00:08:23] I will just back to the last slide just for a second. We then collect data and then we report on the data over the summertime. So I apologize for that. If we go back to the next slide, basically these are the programs scheduled for 23-24. Each of those programs, the four at the top there, have a report published. They are on the research website. We've got some report briefs we're going to put up there as well. We did have the alternative education program on the schedule for last year because it was in startup year over the course of this year. We will actually have the

[00:08:58] data and outcomes on that available for the sum during the summer of 2025. So I'm now going to turn it over to Dr. Carter to speak about extended school year services. Thank you very much. Good

evening. I'm really here to talk about the process that we went through to begin to think about evaluating ESY. So for our program description, I just want to sort of take a brief time to talk about ESY and what it is, just in case anyone here is not familiar. Extended school year are all the

[00:09:34] services outside of the regular academic calendar. So that could be in between school breaks, it could be over spring break, it could be after school, it could be before school, it could be during the summer. The program evaluation that we completed was specifically about those services that occur during the summer session but ESY services are determined by the individual IEP team and they're just like any other part of the IEP tailored to meet the needs of the individual student. ESY

[00:10:08] services again are determined by the IEP team but we were specifically looking at our ESY programming that runs from for about four to five weeks depending on the summer schedule for students with disabilities. One of them, there are six reasons in the law for extended school year as a determining factor for students with disabilities. The main thing we are looking at, however, is if they did not have extended school year services, would they either lose ground or have trouble picking up right where they left off when school starts, beyond what a typical student would do,

[00:10:47] because we all lose a little ground in the summer for sure. But this process tonight, again, is specifically about summer. But basically from a director's perspective, this is one of the most challenging tasks for the school division. It is basically a pop-up school or 20 pop-up schools that start fresh every summer. We gather materials, box them up, send them for each individual student and to the school that they are assigned. And we'll talk a little bit more about school

[00:11:20] assignments in a second, but it really is, it is like opening a new school for every ESY site every summer. But the rationale for our evaluation was basically just what I said, because it is such a challenge to do ESY every summer, but it is a requirement and certainly something that our students need and can benefit from. But our evaluation was to really identify the barriers for implementing services in a way that they are beneficial to our students.

[00:11:56] Specifically, we looked at the recruitment and retention of staff, the timing and location of ESY services, and comparing site-based, like we do now, to school-based programming, thinking about student benefit.

[00:12:15] A lot of the things that Ms. Crotty mentioned we touched on during our evaluation. On the screen now are our research questions that we asked. And some of them might be a bit odd, but I want to go through them with you so you kind of understand where each question was coming from.

[00:12:32] How can we minimize the amount of time spent on hiring ESY staff? We've already made some headway in that ground. How can we implement strategies to attract more qualified teachers and assistance to instruct students during the summer?

[00:12:49] How much time is spent on training that staff to be ready to teach the students they're assigned for the summer, many of which they do not teach during the school year? And how many students are impacted having to transition to a new school?

[00:13:05] And I will even add, with new staff. And what is the impact on the host site? Because if we're there the entire month of July and teachers return two weeks later and sometimes even less than that, What is that turnaround time?

[00:13:21] How does that impact the custodial staff from having the building ready? And then changing buildings means that we're moving a lot of equipment, a lot of equipment that isn't really made to be transported in that way.

[00:13:37] So there is a bit of impact to specialized equipment. And how many students would be served at each homeschool in the summer if they kept them, and how would that impact staffing? So that's what we looked at. Our next slide tells a little bit of the story about, no, I didn't skip one.

[00:13:57] Okay. How many, a little bit of the story about our teacher candidates and assistants during ESY. Did I? Or did I? I think you might have. Maybe. They're out of order.

[00:14:14] That's okay. I'll go with this order. All right. I'll come back to that other slide. This is the percentage of students that are served in the summer somewhere other than where they're served during the school year. And this is a population that is already often not served in their neighborhood school during the school year.

[00:14:35] And then for the summer, they're often transported to another school, likely in that cluster or region. But it is disruptive for students who have just gotten settled about October and then come summer, we are moving again and then moving back to the school, sometimes to a different school still if they're in a transition from, for example, fifth grade to sixth grade or in a transition from a K-2 classroom to a 3-5 classroom that sometimes, because of space, is located in another building.

[00:15:09] But if you'll notice this slide, 82% of students that are served in ESY are impacted by a transition to a different school. And in looking at that data, a lot of times the host school is serving the least amount of students who actually go to that school.

[00:15:27] And other schools are sending even more. But it is important for you guys to know there are lots of things that impact that. For example, I'm sure you've seen the list of schools this summer that are impacted by construction or by renovation.

[00:15:44] And that would be a school that was not available for ESY. So a lot of those things, it's a bit of a jigsaw puzzle when determining which schools are available for summer programs. And that will always be a barrier, but we would like to get that number down where less of a percentage of our students are served with those transitions.

[00:16:06] every summer. I'm going to talk about that other slide before we go to conclusions because it didn't make this slide deck, but I pulled it out. We surveyed teachers who support ESY in the summer. We had 234 responses, which is a really great response rate. And 90% of them said, or the question was, how can LCPS make ESY more appealing to you? And here are some of 90% of them said, of course, more money would be awesome. And to let you know about that,

[00:16:44] our rate was much lower than surrounding divisions. And each year for a couple of years since COVID actually, at sort of the last minute, we were able to get that pay up to a level where we were able to get more applicants, but not in a timely manner so that we could plan accordingly.

[00:17:06] And so a lot of the struggles that Ms. Crotty spoke about tonight are remedied by getting that pay rate out earlier. And we have managed to do that this year. So I want to celebrate that with you. And then the next thing that they answered was a Monday through Thursday ESY week.

[00:17:25] A lot of other divisions that I'm sure the teachers are aware of do go to a Monday through Thursday schedule for ESY. So they can have some semblance of a summer break in that Friday to Sunday weekend. Also, working with students at your home school, 42% of them identified that as something they would like to do.

[00:17:47] I also think we would attract more teachers who teach the kids during the regular school year if they didn't have to pack up everything and send it to another school. It may be that more of them, a few of them for sure, would be willing to stay if they could stay in their classroom with their familiar things.

[00:18:08] And then the next one I wanted to talk about was being able to split the position with another teacher. With something that 40% of them identified as something they would like. And that is something that we are able to accommodate if folks are interested. A few years ago, it was my first summer here in Loudoun, we were having trouble finding ECSE teachers.

[00:18:29] the early childhood programs and when I started calling them one by one and they were saying well if it was only two weeks I'd be willing to do it and I'm like we'll take it that's awesome let me find someone else to split that with you so I was able to fill the classroom that didn't have a teacher with seasoned ECSE teachers who were willing to do it now I know that's more transitions for the students but these are teachers that work together to make it pretty seamless for the students and for teachers who who are seasoned and know early childhood well is a lot better than a substitute who doesn't so splitting the position is beneficial so just for your assistance here

[00:19:08] reference uh if you go into board docs uh dr carter's on slide 12 of the full report for esy she's referencing if you need a reference point thank you all right well i'll move on just to some conclusions that we made from this process but i want to express appreciation to these guys in Rossi for the time and effort because they were able to book the time with us we had it on our calendars they gave us homework to bring back to real because in our schedules and in in the life of our department we're sort of it's part fireman part planner part all kinds of things

[00:19:46] and having this as a priority and someone else leading that work so that we could really do the important pieces, and then they helped us put it together, was very beneficial. I'm not sure that this initial evaluation would have been as robust if it was left to us to lead our own evaluation. So there is tremendous benefit to this process, well beyond our department, I am sure.

[00:20:15] Teachers reported that the salary, of course, the short work week, and the ability to work at their own school from the other slide I was reading from as the top three things that would make a difference for them and recruiting and retaining teachers as you know is the highest priority of my office during the school year but it's especially important during extended school year because there are so few applicants during that time and of course teachers need a break and I as a teacher I often taught ESY and every once in a while I was like not this year

[00:20:53] so I totally get why that's also important. I also wanted to point out from this slide again that about 80 percent of our students attend a school during the summer other than the school they attend during the school year and we wanted to point out just a hypothetical to give you an example. If each school served their own students and this is from 2023 data and 2024 ESY enrollment were averaged. 63 schools would have served 10 or fewer students, and 28 schools would have served

[00:21:29] five or fewer students. So not every student in your program, in your building, is going to need ESY, but I suspect more would say yes to ESY if it was recommended, if it was in the home school. So it's a bit of a vicious cycle we're in with that, but I will tell you that if a school has four programs that serve students with ESY, that would be a really great hub for schools who were closed for construction or renovation. So there is really a way to think about this to get that

[00:22:04] percentage of students who are transitioning away from the school they're served in down and still recognizing that we have schools that won't be available. And then the next slide on staffing. One thing that we gained from this evaluation was to advertise the rate of compensation earlier, and we have been able to do that this year, and market the ability to split and share positions.

[00:22:31] We are considering a four-day work week, but as that doesn't solely reside in my office, that is something that we'll be asking to be looked at more thoroughly next year, and still maintaining a shortened day, but try to keep the hours that the students are served the same every week, but in a four-day period instead of five. And potential benefits to that are really obvious and address a lot of the concerns that folks do bring to us about ESY. But I would like to say that there are students who benefit from ESY in the summer, but it is after hurdle after

[00:23:09] hurdle after hurdle. We do worry about ESY with all the challenges that it presents, but there are folks in my office who are highly committed to planning it and executing it every single year. They meet bi-weekly and monthly beginning in January to make plans for ESY, but staffing and those transitions for students are our greatest challenges that are remaining, and we are working hard on those. But really being able to have the data to back up what we were already feeling about ESY, and not just in my time in Loudoun, but in every division I

[00:23:48] have ever served ESY is a huge challenge and we really want to make the most of that time for our students so they don't lose ground but I really appreciate your time in allowing us to talk about this evaluation process but also just for me to be able to get a few plugs in about extended school year and I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have about this process or ESY. Thank you very much for that. Board members, any comments or discussion? Yes, Chair

[00:24:25] Mansfield. So, having been one of those parents who declined ESY myself for my kid, is there any appetite for asking the parents what they feel the barriers are and why they have not, why they would or would not accept something and what they think would be helpful as well? I know you guys focused on staffing and so I'm wondering if the next part is are the parents and why or why

[00:25:02] not why they would accept ESY or why they didn't I mean they could be going on vacations and so then they're not doing it I mean there could be different things or they could feel like the program is not going to help their child at that point like for me years ago it was because it wasn't um it wasn't orton gillingham instruction for my kid right so we didn't have the appropriate instruction structured literacy for years ago um so i'm just wondering if that's if somebody would

[00:25:37] have an appetite for doing that kind of work too because if we don't have the kids then we wouldn't have the teachers right and i'll also put a plug in that year-long school get rid of that if i might address i i heard three things and i don't want to miss him so i'm going to hold these three fingers up. Yes, there is always appetite for parent input. This particular, we really entered this process to figure out staffing because we knew a lot of what we were already hearing about ESY from our close relationship with SEAC and other families that call our office. Let's talk all of

[00:26:17] that about ESY. We knew that staffing appropriately and staffing well in advance so there's time for planning and training would solve a lot of those issues but yes there's always appetite for that the second thing I heard you say well maybe it was the third was year-round school and I in the back of my mind I want you to know that I'm trying to figure out a way how to make a significant number of specialized program teachers 11 months so that it goes into their retirement because it didn't Teachers didn't get into it because I'm on the other side of my ESY years, approaching retirement years.

[00:26:56] Not this year. Every time I say that, she looks at me. But, you know, approaching those years, I think it's important to realize that all those summers that I taught, I will have no benefit from that in my retirement years. And it was, you know, long, hard summers, amazing, fun summers.

[00:27:13] But it's just an hourly wage during that time for our teachers. If our teachers that for the students that we know need ESY were 11 months, it would eliminate transition to a new teacher for a lot of students or at least to a new teacher altogether.

[00:27:31] Because I had this teacher last summer and there's something about her I remember this year or him. I think that would be a really great idea to entertain. So you opened the door for that idea that I've been holding on to. So I thought it's out there now. But that is one that I'd like to do for at least a few teachers to get us started in that idea because that would create a sort of year-round school situation for our students who are already doing it in the form of ESY.

[00:28:02] With that, could we look at it as kind of a pilot of some sort? I think the first thing we would need to do is look at interest and see if our teachers would have interest in that. An 11-month contract is enticing for some folks, especially if they're the folks that already teach ESY.

[00:28:22] But it would be a budgetary planning thing, you know, well in advance. But it is something that I have on my list for new initiatives for next year. So, I mean, it's just a thought. Some school divisions across the country have gone to that. I have not investigated the success of that.

[00:28:39] I just know that it makes sense here in Loudoun. Another thing that I heard you say was investigating why parents, yes, yes, why, no, yes, why. And for me, I really want to investigate that, but I don't know how I can gather that data except for IEPs one by one.

[00:29:02] So I think this year, as we're asking when parents say no thanks, I'm going to ask my, often my supervisors are in those meetings, I'm going to ask for real-time anecdotal information to get us started. So we would know what questions to ask in a survey. But the other thing I want to investigate is ESY attendance.

[00:29:22] Because often, even in programs that are fully staffed, you may have six students on your roster and you spent the whole summer with three. Might not be the same three every day. Now that is an awesome ratio. And I know that kids do fun things in the summer. They go on vacation, that kind of thing.

[00:29:38] But sometimes you sign up for ESY and I staff it and those families do not come. So we need to find out, you know, a little bit more about that, too. What could we do to increase the attendance of students that said yes to ASY?

[00:29:54] So, but I hope, I think I answered all of the parts of your question. Thank you, Dr. Carter. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. Any other questions or discussions? Yeah. I just want to say I really appreciate your candor and your ideas because that's how we know what people want to do.

[00:30:15] So I'm really grateful that you were very forthcoming with that. I think it's a great idea. I worked ESY in Fairfax when I first started teaching, and they had the four days, which was nice. And I think that the thing that I hear the most, and I think you might have been talking about it as I walk in, Miss Crotty, so I apologize if I'm capturing or doubling up, but I do think that piece of that continuity with a teacher or to be able to connect that teacher the following year, it's just building those classroom communities and relationships is so fundamental to learning especially for our littlest ones so I think that

[00:30:53] any kind of effort to get to that point is awesome and I'm really grateful for your honesty and responsiveness to this program evaluation that you know definitely identified some struggles so for us to be honest about that and make it better I think it is the way to go so I appreciate it.

[00:31:11] Well I would just like to say that when I taught ESY and some of the teachers that I have observed here in Loudoun, they make the ESY things that they are doing so much fun and students are making progress. So I do believe that it is beneficial for some of our students, even though some of our students do struggle. And there is something to be said for sometimes our students, even though they require ESY, also need a summer. So structuring our ESY to make it feel a little less like school and a little more like summer, a little more like camp, you know, those kinds of things can go a long way, too.

[00:31:48] So I think we are moving the needle in a lot of different directions, but the more information we get, the better. So maybe coming back to these guys for phase two. I also want to thank you very much, Dr. Carter. I really appreciate that this presentation was so data-driven from my perspective, And I just want to say that the fact that we can talk about the issues, to Ms. Chernoff's point, in a way that is very open and transparent and exciting, I think is exactly what we're looking for in this committee.

[00:32:26] It's really one of the reasons why we created it together. So thank you very much. Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity. So really briefly, before we switch to the next item, and in the interest of time, if you don't mind, we're going to give you a little homework assignment.

[00:32:44] and we'll come back and revisit this next time. Dr. Tyler, do you wanna talk quickly through the homework assignment? - Thank you, Dr. Ellis. So springboarding off of your suggestion around what's next, we have programs on the schedule for this year, and the timeline would be to expect some presentations similar to what you've heard today and later this summer.

[00:33:06] But if you go to the next slide, we're thinking about the next two years. So we've kind of inserted here some questions for reflection, the idea of what program or practice would you like to evaluate? Give us some background as to where the suggestion came from and then what do you wanna know and what are some uses or applications, not just for the 25-26 school year, but for 26-27.

[00:33:31] So when you propose the idea of following up on the implementation of the new ASY programs in the summer of 26, put it in on the schedule so we can plan ahead for that. but knowing that we do have limited bandwidth here.

[00:33:46] So kind of wrapping up, if you think about the four or five topics for next year and the four or five topics beyond that, that you would put on the schedule so that then RASI and Dr. Blakelock, his amazing team, could meet with each of the programs for next year and prep them to get started.

[00:34:02] But this is really about today and conversations like today. What are the things that are topics you really need to get to the bottom of? There's so many, but what can we prioritize over the next two years

kind of moving ahead? So if we could in April get a chance to hear some of your initial ideas and start planning ahead, we can continue wonderful conversations, purpose-driven conversations like this one.

[00:34:30] - Before we segue, I have one question. And since I have two board members here who might also support this and it would avoid an email chain, this might sound silly, but is there a place where we could have a list of all the programs that we do in LCPS so we might know what to choose from.

[00:34:50] I mean, I have a pretty good sense of some of the things in elementary and I've learned some since I've been here, but I don't know what we're grabbing at. And I have been onesie, twosie-ing, messaging Dr. Ellis, like, is this a program?

[00:35:06] Is this a program? Is this a program? To try and prepare for this question tonight. And I just really don't have a sense. So I know that will be extensive work to consolidate a list like that. So I think you would probably need per policy two other board members to support. So putting you on the spot, guys.

[00:35:23] But I would love to see at least a baseline list if possible. You have my support. I would love to see that list. Yes. It's on the record. This is why you have to be so careful when you give school board members homework. I know.

[00:35:38] I'm like, how can I be prepared to best answer this question? Duly noted. Yes, we can get you that list. Yes. If you have enthusiastic support from your board member colleagues, we'll use the program. You weren't going to give it to just me. I hear you. Anything for Ms. Chernoff.

[00:35:55] So we're going to use the program definition that you see in the slide deck as our guide. What is a program versus something that would be like a data request about our practice as something specific. So we can work on that. That would be so helpful. Thank you so much. I imagine other board members will want to see that as well.

[00:36:12] So are we good to move on to the next information item? So it'll be 4.02, Department of Academics, Goal 3. I'll just pass it back to Dr. Ellis and or Dr. Tyler. Thank you. I am trying to pull up the slides.

[00:36:29] So in Board Docs and actually in your packet, you have the data for the Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan, the metrics. We've included the aligned actions, the metrics, and the baseline data, as well as the 23 and 24 targets, and actual data, typical way that we have been presenting this data.

[00:36:52] We don't have a formal presentation for this. We wanted to make sure you had this information, and we are happy to address any high-level questions now, and then any specific questions, I would just request that you allow us time to go back to the subject matter expert and get those questions answered for you.

[00:37:12] Thank you. Board members, any discussion or questions? Feel free to just unmute in this one. Just let's, yeah, please. I have two quick questions. One is I saw with, first of all, I want to note that a lot of these numbers are, we're getting close on our actual, and the targets are very high.

[00:37:29] I would say they're very aspirational. Would you adjust those targets if met? So I'm looking at some of the survey data and the positive measure of responses, the target isn't quite met yet. When would the target move? Would you move it once it's met?

[00:37:45] Is that the best practice? Or would you change it? Yeah. So the question is, once we achieve a particular goal, before we get to the end of the strategic plan time period, would we adjust the goal upward

to continue to move towards it?

[00:38:04] Or do we indicate that the goal has been met and sustained? So I know Dr. Blaycock and I, Dr. Blaycock in particular, has an expertise in this and remembers the conversation from the previous board members. And I think we can follow up with that.

[00:38:20] But I think part of it is if we think that that particular goal represents a level of high performance and excellence, there wouldn't necessarily be a need to adjust it just because it's been met. The idea is that we sustain it at this level because that's what we need to have the optimal outcomes and not to just adjust goals up because they've been met.

[00:38:40] Okay, yeah, I appreciate that. I figured that there was more thought than that into it. And if Dr. Blaklock needs to come forward to correct me, feel free to do so. He has exited to the back table. And then my last question, and I'll pass it over, is through the Legislative Audit Policy Committee, which I also serve on, we've done a lot of work with the Auditor General, and we – oh, he's here.

[00:39:02] Hi. Welcome. I'm talking right about you. I have noticed that in our conversations, a lot of these audits are a pretty heavy lift, and it includes corresponding and dealing with multiple departments and waiting on information to come back and then collaborating with those different departments, which isn't always necessarily a natural occurrence, so those occurrences have to be created, and feel free to correct me if I'm wrong, but I am wondering if five a year is an appropriate goal for

[00:39:36] this to also be effective so i i don't know i would defer to mr woods to really chime in on that but for my understanding so far we've gotten through about three and it's been they're very helpful we just had a presentation on one tonight which was really insightful and i'm grateful that he's taking the time and his team are taking the time to do that so i just want to be mindful of that um five seems sort of arbitrary and also kind of a lot so i appreciate you asking that question and that's something that dr tyler and i have talked a little bit about um i definitely

[00:40:13] don't want to burn out him and dr blake lock and their relatively small team for the for the work that they do um i did quickly want to clarify that the that program evaluation and audits are not the same. So Mr. Woods and Dr. Blakelock do different work. They're looking at different things through a different lens. And part of what Dr. Tyler and Dr. Blakelock are setting up are a system that you saw this evening where they work with the program experts on the front end.

[00:40:46] They design that evaluation process. And then for a good period of time, they are simply resources if needed but the program experts actually gather the data and do the evaluation and then work with Dr. Tyler and Dr. Blakelock to finalize the results so there's a lot of time in that period and and I actually learned that process because that was the first comment Ms. Chernoff that I had for Dr. Tyler like five six that seems like a lot how are you going to do all the other work and then he explained it and I've seen it go through we've we've gone through that process

[00:41:24] this year and it seemed to work well he also promised me to tell me if that changed and then five was too much so did I answer that appropriately absolutely and just we actually have periodic meetings with the auditor general we met with him earlier today to share the program evaluation schedule and and requests and a lot of it is around each board member what are they looking for that may be cost-benefit analysis that would be more auditor general looking at that versus a program evaluation that would look at how something was implemented. So we actually meet,

[00:42:00] I think it's a monthly schedule, we actually met earlier today where we align our efforts and we try to share different requests from different stakeholders to board members, how would they be divvied up and what makes sense as far as each office's role. And then one last comment, sorry, then I promise we can move on. I did also just want to add that there will be times and there have been times where an external program evaluation is far more appropriate than what you saw today and we are aware of that and that's always a question we ask ourselves. So for example a couple years ago we needed a complete and extensive evaluation of our English learner

[00:42:40] program and we partnered with an outside company that has far more resources for evaluation than we do it is costly but it is worth every penny in in those circumstances where an external evaluator is really necessary thank you any other questions or discussion seeing none we'll move on to 4.03 department of academics 2024 2025 student achievement data i believe this is presented by Okay, Dr. Ellis.

[00:43:14] So there are several resources in board docs. One is an extensive set of tables that I'm sure the three of you have perused. And then we're going to provide some of the highlights. And then we have a pretty amazing presentation from a school that's kind of walked all of this out using this data in an applied way.

[00:43:35] So again, there's reference documents and tables that are there. We're going to do some highlights and you're going to hear some voices from one of our amazing schools. Before we start that, I saw that VALS has their technical report out.

[00:43:52] That's not real technical. If there's a way that we could talk about that sometime, about I don't see, I think there's a lot of holes in it, and how, if you could make some space and time for me to talk about that, if you've seen it yet, the new technical.

[00:44:15] So this is a very appropriate timing because we also have Catherine Neal as our supervisor as elementary reading. So if there's context around maybe a later time to unpack that technical report versus our overall risk kind of numbers.

[00:44:33] So yes, there would be an opportunity for that. And she's here if there are very specific questions. So, okay. She ready to go to the next one.

[00:44:48] So what you see here is called a Sankey chart. So the premise is that it gives you three different layers of data. If you start on the far left, you will actually see the percentage of students who took the VALS assessment in the fall in their different risk categories.

[00:45:07] And you see there, and I'm looking at the numbers here, 48% low risk in the fall, 29% moderate risk, 23% high risk on the far left. If you go to the far right, you'll see what the actual distribution was in mid-year. And you can see that we had a significant increase in percentage of students who were low risk, 48% in the fall to 64% in the winter.

[00:45:30] But you also see that a lot of that movement came from that moderate risk category that decreased significantly, and the high risk decreased slightly from 23 to 21. So let me know if that's clear as far as what you see on the far right, the far left.

[00:45:45] Those are snapshots. Okay, I see his nodding. So what's nice about in the middle is that you see a transition, meaning you can see in the fall of the moderate-risk students, a little less than 4,800 students, 2,538 of them went from moderate-risk in the fall to low-risk in the winter.

[00:46:10] Do you see that movement there? Moderate-risk, 4,781, 2,538 moved to low-risk. So you see movement there. You see some movement for high risk of the 3,800 plus who are in high risk. You see 303 of them moved all the way to low risk, and 690 of them moved to moderate risk.

[00:46:31] So the Sankey chart is nice because it gives you multiple data points of where we fall, where we winter, and what kind of movement did we see. And just looking at this, you see that we had some success moving kids out of high risk. A lot of that movement and increase in that low risk category came out of that moderate risk category.

[00:46:49] So this is not necessarily representing a student who might have gone from that higher end of moderate risk, the lower end of moderate risk, but stayed in moderate risk. Some of that deeper level of analysis is something we get over time in the technical reports that Chair Mansfield might have referenced.

[00:47:09] But this gives you a nice overview of when we're looking at just movement within the risk categories, we're seeing something positive as far as increasing the students in the low-risk category moving out of that moderate risk. And then there is a report in board docs that actually breaks it down by certain student groups.

[00:47:28] And you can see it broken out that way. So before we go on to looking at MAP, are there any questions about the Sankey chart? I've never seen this before, and I really think this is really great. I have to say because you really can see who's staying at high risk and that 303 going all the way to the low risk and then the the bands on the side where the low risk gains to 64 percent I think that's that's really exciting thank you for this so we will take the first time I've ever seen this

[00:48:03] so we will take this as one visual that the board members like so thumbs up Dr. Blake Locke yes that was going to be my comment too way back when we first were all elected and getting trained you guys asked how we wanted to see data this is how I want to see data every single time for every single thing I think there a lot of the work that I used to do as an ELA facilitator was identifying these change points it wasn't so much just the raw data but you want to look at what changed and then you can ask why and then you can wonder right and then once you can wonder you can start to problem solve around what worked for certain kids and what didn't and I know these

[00:48:40] lovely ladies my besties over here um are going to talk about those wonderful strategies that they use um but i like one of the wonderings i have is what what worked for those 303 kids that went from high risk to low risk and how do we replicate that um and then another wondering is you know there's sort of this trade-off of 582 moderate risk that went down to high risk but then you the 690 that went up so what is that trade-off and you know is the focus on the tier 3 high-risk kids impacting our ability to meet the needs of all our

[00:49:18] tier 2 kids and what are those things and how do we ask how do we kind of suss that out I guess is what I love about this chart so yes yes yes and I think it's awesome so thank you so much and really overall great data to see thank you for the feedback and Dr. B and his team will be high-fiving tomorrow so So looking at map data, there have been a lot of conversations about life before the pandemic, and you see it here.

[00:49:50] Before the pandemic, we were like 54th conditional growth percentile for math and like 52 for reading. For the first time since the pandemic, we have, and this is fall to winter growth, we have both

content areas above the 50th conditional growth percentile. So the idea is that will it ever be the old normal?

[00:50:09] Perhaps not. but the idea is that this is promising and the idea that you're able to see and feel that in the schools when maybe it'll never be the old normal, but there's growth that we're familiar with. And if you go into the reports and board docs, you see that there's really impressive growth happening with students in that tier two and tier three level.

[00:50:32] We will say in all transparency, one of the many things I appreciate by my boss is just being transparent with, but you also see tier one. There's students in the high end of tier one where the growth is not at the 50th conditional percentile, and they're losing ground, but there are kids who may score a 560 on an SOL and then score a 550, then a 540, but everything looks phenomenal because they're still high achieving, but we're not sustaining them at the same level with their peers.

[00:51:02] But our focus and our schools have been super effective with accelerating kids in those tier two and tier three situations when it's needed. So that's that data there, and if there's any other feedback before we hand it off to Madison's Trust team to kind of show you how all this gets walked out.

[00:51:24] I will say that the K-5 for reading was great. I mean, there's a lot of really good numbers in here. I do often wonder, why isn't Tier 1 for reading doing better when you have so much growth in Tier 3?

[00:51:48] just because they had more to grow? So the way the metric is set up, if you have Melinda, who is a very bright and accelerated fourth grader, she is compared to other fourth graders around the country.

[00:52:06] So what we don't know is that, what we can see or maybe surmise from this is that what these schools and teachers and principals and parents and kids are doing for Tier 2, Tier 3, They're accelerating their kids at a much quicker rate than Tier 2, Tier 3 kids around the country.

[00:52:24] But we don't know which practices are driving it. Something that this principal and others have talked about is, well, are other schools around the country with Tier 1 students accelerating them in content or going deeper in content?

[00:52:40] Why are they getting a little stronger growth than we're getting? And we don't know the answer to what is happening around the country where other schools are having a little bit more success with sustaining high readiness or high achievement students. So the answer to your question, we have our practices, but we don't know why these schools are so much more effective than other schools around the country in accelerating tier two or tier three.

[00:53:03] But we're not quite there with tier one. We don't know how our practices are different. Are they going deeper in other parts of the country and they're able to sustain high readiness kids? Or should we accelerate and push kids in a grade level of content above with our gifted practices?

[00:53:22] So it's not quite clear why we're not faring quite as well at that high level of readiness compared to the country. I appreciate the data and it's like you read my mind that you wanted me to see all these numbers for the past five years.

[00:53:40] And I know you and I have had lots of conversations about this data, and I will say I am encouraged. I'm always looking at that 2019-2020 because it was a marker for us, and we're almost five years out, and this is the closest we've gotten.

[00:53:56] And so I'm grateful to see that trend, and I don't want to short sell that. And I was impressed with the subgroup data. I think, you know, we're seeing some higher numbers there, which is great. Continuing to push, I think, to, as a county, like I've said this before, I would love to see us have that 60% as a goal for Tier 2 and Tier 3 kids, because that's the only way you're going to close that down.

[00:54:17] And that has to be sustained year after year, because now we're talking about five years of gaps in some cases, which is daunting, but it is something that I think we can strive for, especially as we're changing our core instruction and working towards those curriculum goals. I know math is also looking at a total overhaul at the state level, too.

[00:54:36] And you also read my mind about Tier 1. And I think I'm going to go out on a limb here and project something a little bit different. I just think it's manpower. I mean, when you put that effort towards Tier 3, that has to come from somewhere else.

[00:54:53] And I think I don't want to harp on we've got to make sure everybody's growing, but we do. That's our responsibility as educators and as the school board, I think, to hold people accountable to that. But we also have to ask the questions, what supports do our teachers need in place and our specialists to make that magic happen?

[00:55:12] Because it is a tall order to make sure our Tier 2 and Tier 3 kids are growing at massive rates and that our Tier 1 kids are having their needs met and having extension. Do I think we have the resources here in Loudoun County to do it?

[00:55:27] If we don't, I don't think anybody does, so I believe in that, but I also think this is a question about support, and it could just be sheer manpower, and so I just want to put that on the table. I know we've talked tonight about retention and recruitment, but when there's high needs, you need high support, and so we have to really look at both of those things.

[00:55:48] I also wonder if it's high-quality curriculum, too. All right, so we're going to turn it over to Mr. Stewart from Madison's Trust to introduce his team and talk a little bit about what they do at their school.

[00:56:13] We don't get used to these things. Well, good evening. I'm Dave Stewart, the principal of Madison's Trust. First of all, I'm a little geeking out because I love numbers. Literally everything you're talking about, I'm like, oh, my gosh, I could be here all night. So to my right is Kelly Gesser, one of our reading specialists, Dana Trumbly, our other reading specialist, Paige Riemann, first grade teacher.

[00:56:34] And without them, none of this is possible. I just need to start with that. We love numbers. So you can see in the first slide, a little bit of breakdown of our school. Our school was once surrounded by trees. They are all gone. We now have a fence, though. That's good. But we have a lot of things.

[00:56:50] You can see the fluctuation. We've been redistricted multiple times. we've had kids shift from one school back and then back again, but you could see the fluctuation. 1250 was during the height of the pandemic with masks and that fun.

[00:57:07] But all through that, we kept the same focus and that is on the kids. So everything, the numbers never lie. So we have vowels now, but back then we've always, we had map and we had other data points. And the next slide goes into our CLT model, structures revolves around learning by doing. If you know the DeFore model, what are we doing?

[00:57:30] Where are we going? What do you do when the kids don't get it? What do you do when the kids already know it? So everything revolves around that. The first thing the teachers do when they come in, we have to get running because we have 50 minutes, which usually makes about 45 minutes because in elementary school, the kids don't go to their special without their teacher. So by the time they get to the room, we're off and running. And we jump right into the objectives. These are all led by the teachers and we go through from what module we're on so we're all in the same module per team our teams are large make sure our EL teachers our reading teachers were all on the

[00:58:05] same page and we do this for all subjects but with reading we took more of a focus the first quarter every other week was reading and we had PD every other week and some of that PD was just having conversations as teams and you could see we meet seven times we have seven teams that meet every week, and our specialists meet once a month. And that's simply because specialists are teaching the kids while we're meeting. There's not enough time to meet as a group. And those meetings, again, revolve around a consistent focus, and it's vertical. So if we're talking about math, all teams

[00:58:43] are talking about math that week, or reading, and there's always a data point, and there's always a question about grading in terms of how many grades are in the report card, in the grade book, so that were consistent and then every assessment that is given what what did the kids do well what did we not do well or what how could we do things better that is asked and presented and if you can see it better on your screen we have it to the minute because again we don't have many minutes but that is our flow so i'll turn this over to talk a little bit about vowels all right oh my

[00:59:17] gosh, okay. We were fortunate enough to rule out a soft launch of VALS last year. So I have been able to conduct a beginning of year's VALS testing protocol in both an inclusive classroom and this year being a high need reading classroom. So the testing window opens pretty early in September. And as you know, as first grade, you're still learning how to function. So what that looks like in our classrooms across our school kind of varies. Sometimes we're offered half day subs, full-day subs, site-based subs, just any extra set of hands, even parent volunteers to just make sure that we are getting the support we need because these components of the VALS test

[00:59:54] specifically are individual. So every single section is administered one-on-one except for the encoding or the spelling. Realistically, you can give it as a whole group, but you do have your learners that cannot keep up, which causes frustration. So our team has worked to make sure that, you know, we've built in that small group time for those students that need that accommodation. Looking forward into that, there were 13 total component components, which you can see in that circular image to the left. We utilized the pacing that was given to us last year, which you see on the right. Again, with a little trial and error, kind of made it our own to see what

[01:00:30] sections worked faster and which sections we could knock out, again, quicker without invalidating the fidelity of the assessment. Realistically, this did take about 15 to 20 plus instructional hours out of our day. No, that was not consistent. We bought the time where we could get it, spaced the time out where we didn't, and again, just made sure that every single component was done one-on-one successfully. This isn't to take into consideration our exceptional learners that have to have this paced out in a very different format, again, not to invalidate the fidelity of the test. So between each component, it took probably about 50 to 60 minutes per child,

[01:01:09] And again, that's to say everything went the way it should. Once that's all said and done, I kind of look at the big picture of the data, right? I look at those big bands of risk, but specifically I really like to look at the scale score that they have for each band. I like to see how solid each child is within that band, how close were they, you know, to that moderate risk, even though they were in high risk.

[01:01:28] So kind of getting a better idea of where exactly those students sat. From there, I dive into the separate subskills. VALS does a nice job of color coding, adding asterisks, of getting teachers attention of what we need to look at for our learners. So then from there, I immediately kind of start to put my groupings together and just again instructional areas overall. And then at the same time, our amazing reading specialist and literacy tutors are simultaneously looking at the exact same data I am to make sure that they are supporting our readers

[01:02:01] across all the grades, um, to meet with them with proficiency. Can you go back to the slide before? Thank you. Um, so as a reading specialist, we are waiting for classroom teachers to complete all of their assessments, whether that's MAP, VALS, or in some grade levels both, so that we can take a look at the data across all of our grade levels. Um, in some cases, we do support giving these assessments depending on, um, the teacher's comfort level or circumstances

[01:02:39] like that that they require more support so this is one of the reports that we have available through the VALS website I do wish it was way more user-friendly and that you can manipulate this data but this is what we get as a PDF but this is a good snapshot for us to see whole school wide how we're doing in each of our grade levels how many students are in each of the high moderate low bands of risk, and then just a good reflection on our core instruction on how that compares to the rest

[01:03:15] of Loudoun County. And then we also take a deeper dive into students that were in the, what band of risk they were in the fall compared to the numbers in the mid-year. We wish we had a beautiful slide for just our school but focusing just on first grade we did take a closer look at band of risk movement so like it was said before we're looking for students to move into our lower band of risk

[01:03:50] so we went from 127 to 137 which is exactly what we were able to celebrate that our moderate risk students went from 21 to 18 and then our high-risk students went from 4 to 6 so that's when we take a deeper dive and look and see exactly who those students were it could have been a case that they weren't at our school at the beginning of the year and they were new at some point during the school year but just getting a tab on who those students are so then once we have the data from all of our classes in an individual grade we take all the results and we rank them

[01:04:27] by their scaled score. So now you can go to that. Thank you. Um, and unfortunately we have to do a lot of this work manually in our own spreadsheets. Um, because as you can see, we pull across grade levels and then we rank them from lowest to the highest. And then we also have to take into account their intervention time because not all of these kids have their intervention block at the same time. So we do a lot of work with making sure that we're following the LCPS decision trees from the

[01:05:00] MTSS office to tier these students. So I will pick up where Dana just left off. So as she said, this report that we use is very useful to us is not something that the VALS website can provide us.

[01:05:19] So we have to pull a lot of data and it's manpower for us to just even create this document. When we create this document, each teacher has their own individual tab, so their own classes are ranked

in this manner. And then we pool that across the grade level, and we do that for every grade level so that we can see the need across an entire grade level.

[01:05:42] The goal being that we can give all of our students the kind of supports that they need. So, as she said, we use those decision trees to decide if the student is falling into our Tier 1 and they're able to be successful with just our differentiated core instruction in the classroom with their classroom teacher.

[01:06:01] Then we look at those students that fall into the Tier 2 and Tier 3 areas. And for us, the next step is then we need some more data. So then we go to our FastBridge assessment, which looks at early reading skills or oral reading fluency.

[01:06:17] So we are getting more information on those Tier 2 and Tier 3 students to see what is, aside from the data that VALS gives us, what is the more specific areas of need that we can identify so we can best determine the supports that we're going to give those kids.

[01:06:33] So this is an example of the first grade data sheet that's pooled across the grade level. the students names have been blacked out but you can see we pull from all the first-grade classrooms we have the mid-year scaled scores that comes from the Val's and then next step being giving them the fast bridge early reading assessment and that gives us even more information on our students so then we can determine okay these are the students were able to see based on their needs based on the times available in our master schedule and then who's who's available to cover them at that time.

[01:07:09] So this is a tool that we create, we put a lot of time into to do this, but it really does help everyone who is serving these children understand why we're doing what we're doing and who's doing what. So we're all working together and holding everybody accountable.

[01:07:27] Specifically, we're also looking at that we can serve these Tier 2 and Tier 3 kids, give them those supports five days a week, whether it's the supplemental support, whether it's the intensive intervention, we're trying to make sure that we're giving them this time and we've really worked hard with our master schedule this year to have a designated intervention RTI time where anybody who is getting these extra supports, they are not missing any core instruction.

[01:07:55] They are getting the Tier 1 core, they are getting the supports that they need, in addition



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