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Loudoun County Public Schools, Human Resources and Talent Development (HRTD) Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 27, 2025

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Place LCPS Administration Building / School Board Room, Ashburn, Virginia
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[00:00:00] Good afternoon. I was going to start. My name is Dena Griffiths, and I'm calling to order the HRTD committee meeting for March 27, 2025. I have Ms. Chandler with me, and I'm hoping we'll have Ms. Donahue virtually any second, any minute now.

[00:00:18] We will begin with public comment. This meeting will be audio recorded and posted in BoardDocs. Today we have two speakers signed up for public comment. We will allow, it says here two minutes, but if you go a little bit over, that's fine. Our first speaker is Ms. Andrea Weisskopf.

[00:00:38] Good evening. I am here to comment on the discussion item that includes career growth and professional development and the rhetoric being used.

[00:00:58] So today my students came to class half asleep, so I had them telling jokes to one another to wake up. So here was mine. What do you call an English teacher with a social media addiction? An Instagrammer. But I have a few more jokes for you.

[00:01:14] What do you call someone who runs the world wrestling entertainment? The secretary of education. The next joke has two punchlines. What do you call someone who taught in the classroom for four years? The assistant superintendent of teaching and learning.

[00:01:33] Here's the other answer. The superintendent. Shame on a system that tells teachers to advance their career, they need to leave their career. Teaching and administering are both careers in the education field, but they are different careers.

[00:01:52] The career growth and development I want is to take classes that have nothing to do with middle school education. As much as I love middle schoolers and teaching middle school, there is only so long I can teach Hatchet without my brain atrophying.

[00:02:09] For me to continue professional career development means that I need to take more advanced classes in English or Latin to keep my brain growing. Career advancement does not necessarily mean going into administration.

[00:02:31] Thank you. Black Lives Matter. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Corey Brunet. Hello, my name is Corey Brunet, and I'm an English learner teacher at Broad Run High School.

[00:02:47] I've had a chance to look at the teacher attrition data that will be presented later, and I've seen the presentation. And according to the presentation, you will see everything is wonderful in LCPS. The presentation makes it sound like whether teachers retire, resign, or transfer, the main reason is a new principal.

[00:03:08] What HRTD must do if this data is to be taken seriously is to drill down, give exit surveys to each employee, and, of course, maintain confidentiality. Ask each teacher leaving, why are they retiring this year?

[00:03:25] Would they have considered staying another year if certain factors had been in place? More importantly, survey those who are resigning. What are their reasons for resigning? Financial, home life balance, colleague conflicts, lack of admin support?

[00:03:41] But the most important group to survey, in my opinion, is the transfer group. These people are professionals who want to stay in the profession, but feel it will be better at a different school. They are also committed to LCPS. Sometimes it's to work closer to home, to teach a subject you can't or aren't allowed to at your current school, or because of extracurricular opportunities at a different school.

[00:04:05] So my first recommendation is to drill down with confidential exit surveys that are comprehensive. Number two, when you look at the data, don't be distracted by the green and the red. You'll see what I mean when you look at it. There are many schools that have high, on that chart, high attrition.

[00:04:29] And in the far right column, sometimes there's a reason, and a lot of times, more than likely than not, it says N.A. Horizon, Countryside, Cardinal Ridge, Elaine Thompson, Forest Grove, Meadowland, Newton Lee, Pinebrook, and so many more.

[00:04:49] They have super high attrition. Why is that? Why is that? These are schools with consistently high attrition rates. Why is that? Ask the principals at those schools why they think they have such high attrition.

[00:05:06] then identify the schools with low attrition like algonkian dominion there are many more and i'm fortunate to work at one of them broad run ask those principals why do they have such low attrition what's going on that's it thank you thank you so much um and with that uh let's see we will move on to item 3.1, approval of the February 27th, 2025 meeting draft minutes.

[00:05:40] Could I please have a motion to approve the February 27th minutes? Yes, Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we approve the February 27th, 2025 draft minutes. Thank you, Ms. Chandler, and I will second that.

[00:05:58] Any discussion? No. All those in favor, raise your hand and say aye. Aye. All those opposed, raise your hand and say nay. uh the motion passes unanimously with uh uh oh miss donahue is there so um uh do you approve the minutes do you need to okay all right we're good i think you i think it's required to vote on remote participation oh right and i don't have the script for that i don't have the script for that but um i guess we will take a vote on remote uh participation for miss donahue all those in

[00:06:37] favor uh if it if i if i may mrs griffiths yes i was going to say i'm i'm in my day job office in leesburg uh by myself and i requested to be able to have remote participation for a personal reason um but um i am i am with you and there is no one else here with me thank you for entertaining my request thank you so much and it's the first time i've had virtual so i didn't have the information on me. So, all those in favor, say aye, or second. I move that we allow Ms. Donahue to

[00:07:16] permit to participate remotely. All those in favor, say aye. Aye. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chandler. And with that, we'll move on to, we approved the minutes just now, right? Yeah, okay. We'll move on to the next thing, 4.01. Revisions to policy 7520, employment supervision of family members.

[00:07:39] Ms. Boland? Good evening. Thank you so much. So tonight, as you said, we are bringing forth Policy 7020, Employment of Supervision of Family Members, as an action item. If the committee will recall, we did bring this item as an information item at the February meeting.

[00:07:57] And I will ask Ms. Nicole Davis to remind this committee of the proposed edits and changes for your review. Good evening. As Ms. Bolin mentioned, this item was brought as an information item at the February HRTD committee, and as a reminder to summarize, the policy generally was reorganized to clearly delineate sections and to add the definition of family members to the forefront of the policy.

[00:08:30] Additional language was added to clearly define the role and relationship in which a family member should not be employed. I would, however, like to point out that one change that was made after this policy was first introduced at our last meeting in February, that change is Section 5B to reflect that in the event a relative of the superintendent is hired, the chief human resources officer is responsible for certifying that the superintendent had no involvement in the hiring decision.

[00:09:00] Previously, it reflected assistant superintendent of LCPS. As that position does not exist within the division, it was revised to the chief human resources officer. This policy was sent for public feedback, which was reviewed with no additional recommended changes at this time.

[00:09:16] Thank you. Thank you. Any discussion? Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for kicking us off tonight. In terms of this policy, I just want to make sure that I understand this is mostly related to employment of family members of the superintendent or members of the school board specifically?

[00:09:46] It includes those as well as in general for any employee and supervisory relationship in a direct capacity. Okay, so within a school it's possible that you would have spouses or parents as long as they're not in a direct supervisory capacity that's appropriate.

[00:10:04] that is correct okay and then does this committee contemplate nieces nephews cousins to does it the family relationship go out to that extent it does not it would just be immediate family as defined yes okay thank you thank you um miss donna you had a question yes thank you very much chair griffiths um i had a question about the well two questions i guess so um in part a2 it says

[00:10:40] the Loudoun County School Board may not employ, and I'm assuming we mean like anyone who works for LCPS, because I don't, I just, just to be clear, like I'm assuming we mean anyone who works for LCPS, not specifically limited to people who work for the board. But my, my bigger question is um, where it says may not employ or pay or hire. Um, for example, as I say in my disclosures at

[00:11:16] every board meeting, my sister-in-law works for LCPS. She has been a teacher for LCPS for many years. Um, obviously the, you know, the decision to hire her into the division occurred long before I was on the board. Um, but she re-signs a contract every year, um, or is offered a contract every year, uh, to continue working at LCPS. So I just had some questions about, um, you know, the language that says may not employ, uh, you know, does that, would that apply

[00:11:52] to that situation or is what we mean, like new hires, not retaining people who are already here. So Ms. Donahue, if I can draw your attention to, um, under the exception section, which is 3A, In your case, in particular, I believe you said your sister would have been employed prior to you becoming a board member.

[00:12:20] And so that would be an exception within this policy. And that is still true, even though the contracts have to be renewed. Yes, ma'am, because she would be under a continuing contract and there are specific rights, property rights, given to continuing contract teachers that would have to be followed in order to remove that contract.

[00:12:46] Okay. Okay. And if I may, some of why you will see throughout various policies where it says employed by the school board, that is because it is the right or it is only the school board that is authorized to hire and terminate employees, which is what you do by approving the consent agenda with the personnel action items.

[00:13:15] So technically, all LCPS employees are employed by the school board. Okay. That absolutely makes sense. Thank you for the clarification, Ms. Boland. That does make sense. I had that thought in my head that we've heard sometimes that the board's only direct employee is the superintendent, but I understand different contexts for what that means. Thank you. That's all I had. Thank you very much.

[00:13:41] Thank you very much. And I just had a quick question regarding the superintendent, You know, and you can get into detail per the policy, anybody, any of his relatives working for LCPS, can you explain to me as far as how that works?

[00:14:01] Is there a conflict there if the superintendent has a relative that ends up coming to work for LCPS? So that direction or guidance is very specifically defined in code, and that language within our policy is the exact language that is within code with the one exception.

[00:14:25] In code, it says that the assistant superintendent would write the notification to the school board. In our policy, it would be the chief HR officer because we don't have an assistant superintendent within HR. But the language in regards to employment of a superintendent's immediate family members comes straight out of code. And where can I find this code? Is it, was it in the policy? It is, it is referenced in policy. It, there's a hyperlink too, so I, I can. Yeah,

[00:15:01] what number is that? It's 2.2-3109, open parentheses C, close parentheses, open parentheses 1, close parentheses, dot 2.2-3119. Thank you so much. You're very welcome. I appreciate that.

[00:15:24] Is there any other discussion? Well, with that, this was an action item. So we can, I guess, move this to consent on the school board you have to take action or you have to take a I'll do that but I'm just trying to you know update myself on that's what we what we can do so would you guys like to move this to consent um yes madam chair I'd be happy to make a motion to move this policy forward for consideration of the full board okay okay we'll go ahead and do that same

[00:16:00] for you miss Donahue second okay all right thank you so we'll go ahead and do that and move that to consent I'm sorry I thought that was our vote oh my gosh I haven't done this in so long um let's take a vote and see if you know I guess we want to move it over to consent to the school board information and it as an information item oh so it wouldn't be consent no the only way it is consent is if the board um after seeing as an information item determines

[00:16:35] that it can go straight to consent instead of action okay so then we'll go ahead and move this over to an information item thank you um and with that we'll go to the next um mrs griffiths i'm so sorry but you do need to take a vote since it is an action item so let's vote to send it over to as an information item then all those in favor aye okay so all in favor to send it over as an information item uh so the next item let's move over to um 4.02 uh 75 policy 75 20 revisions to

[00:17:14] policy 7520 non-school employment. Thank you. Thank you so much. And again, like the previous policy, we did bring policy 7520 non-school employment to the HRTD committee's February meeting as an information item. But to remind the committee of the recommended edits and changes, I will again turn it over to Ms. Davis. Good evening. So as a brief reminder, policy 7520 was recommended for language changes to provide additional clarification on examples of

[00:17:50] solicitation where we used to receive questions on what that entailed as well as to address employment while an employee is out on sick leave and working during their designated contract days or hours. That is specifically outlined in section B.1 where we added language to ensure that an employee was aware. If they were out on leave, they were not allowed to work during their scheduled working hours or contract outside of LCPS. Thank you. Thank you. Any discussion?

[00:18:24] Yes, Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. So one of the things that I notice about this policy is it's very specific to sort of MLM type sales positions. Is there a reason why there's a particular focus on that in this policy? And would it be helpful to have less specific non-sales related examples listed? So thank you. I can confirm that that is the most common and frequent

[00:18:59] questions that we would receive or employees or supervisors and administration reaching out regarding that type of item. And so that's why that was specifically included. So also something that's easily relatable for people to connect with. Okay, and then when an employee is working off-duty but the activity could include students, is there a standard form or template that's used?

[00:19:30] So there is not. That's something we could look into. It's just been email in the past, and then we do keep that on. We can keep that on record, yes. Okay, and the responsibility for the email lies with the employee? Correct. Okay. Thank you for that clarification. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Donahue.

[00:19:49] Thank you, Chair Griffiths. I just wanted to clarify the prohibition on use of LCPS workspace is limited to soliciting or advertising. So do I interpret that or do I understand that correctly that

hypothetically, if I know that a teacher down the hall happens to sell Mary Kay and I want to place an order for Mary Kay, can I walk down the hall if we're after school hours and say,

[00:20:28] hey, I'd like to order some Mary Kay and she can take my order? Or is that not allowed under this policy. So I think, Mrs. Donahue, the important thing here is work time and solicit or advertise.

[00:20:52] In your example, you walk down to her. She is not soliciting you or her colleagues to purchase Mary Kay, nor is she advertising in such a way that she does, in fact, sell Mary Kay.

[00:21:12] Okay, that's what I was hoping and what I wanted to clarify was if an LCPS employee is not actively soliciting, it would not run afoul of this policy for them to be doing these activities in their LCPS classroom as long as it is not during work hours and they're not soliciting.

[00:21:37] Correct. We recognize that there are many LCPS employees that have multiple jobs, many of which would be considered entrepreneur-type jobs, such as Mary Kay, or maybe they have their own cleaning business on the side.

[00:21:55] And other employees may utilize their services, but when it becomes a violation of this policy is if and when they start soliciting and or advertising at work. Okay. Thank you very much. That's all I had. Thank you. Any further discussion?

[00:22:13] We can take a vote for this one to go to information items for the school board. All those in favor? Or do I have a second, rather? I would be happy to make a motion to move policy 7520 forward to the full school board for consideration.

[00:22:31] Thank you, Ms. Chandler. Second. Thank you so much, Ms. Donahue. And with that, we'll just take a vote to send it over to the school board. Information items, all those in favor, say aye. Aye. Thank you. And we will move on to the next policy, revisions to policy 7612, experience credit for teacher licensed and auxiliary new hires.

[00:22:56] Thank you so much, Mrs. Griffiths. So again, this policy was brought to committee at the February meeting as an information item. And to briefly provide an overview of those changes, I will once again hand it over to Ms. Davis. Thank you, Mrs. Boland.

[00:23:15] So as a reminder, Policy 7612, Experience Credit for Teacher License and Auxiliary New Hires, was revised. Sections of this policy were updated to reflect the division's current salary scale titles. Additional changes recommended were to provide opportunities for additional step placement credit for specific types of internships, such as those completing a teacher placement, school counseling, and school social worker internships with LCPS, as well as a step placement credit for paid internship experience with LCPS, which would apply to school psychologists.

[00:23:50] Additionally, to support an initiative supporting recruitment and retention, Section D of the policy is being recommended for removal, which previously restricted placement at 15 years maximal allowable credit for newly hired teachers and licensed and auxiliary employees.

[00:24:07] As a reminder, this was reviewed at the October 22, 2024 school board meeting, where Ms. and reviewed key recruitment and retention initiatives for LCPS. I would also like to point out that this has already been implemented and all employees with more than 15 years of experience meeting the criteria of this section received retroactive step increases. These step changes were effective November 3rd, 2024, with employees seeing any adjustments to their pay on their November 29th, 2024 paycheck. We are very

excited about the recommended changes to this policy as it supports our goal of being the employer of choice. Again, public comment was

[00:24:46] reviewed with no additional changes recommended at this time. Thank you. Thank you. Any discussion? Yes, Ms. Donahue. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Chair Griffiths, excuse me. I just had a question.

[00:25:08] So lines 66 to 67 of the red line that say for other experience deemed relevant by the chief human resources officer. Are there any limits to what type of experience the chief human resource officer can deem relevant? And if that individual deems certain experience not relevant, does the employee or potential employee have any avenue to seek reconsideration or review of that

[00:25:44] determination? So yes and yes. The reason why that is slightly vague is because it would be hard to capture every scenario or situation. And the purpose of that is for example, at the Academies of Loudoun, there are a variety of classes, cybersecurity being one of them, where we may have an opportunity to obtain a cyber security professional in which maybe does not have a

[00:26:24] license. And we are able to do that because of another policy that the board has reviewed. And we are able to give them an exception for a year. And we would want to look at experience that is outside of teaching, but that is specific to the area in which they will be teaching.

[00:26:44] So, that provides us with the ability to do so without violating any other placement practice or policy. As far as limit, yes. The limit is it has to pertain to the specific job that they are doing, right? And outside of that, there is absolutely an opportunity. There is someone above me there always is someone above me and the employee would have the ability to appeal and go

[00:27:16] to the superintendent and or the school board that would be an email a let's talk a concerning complaint form and we have had those situations where we've had to review and I've had to justify to the superintendent my my decision thank you very much Ms. Boland and thank you Chair Griffiths Yes, Ms. Chandler.

[00:27:42] Thank you, Chair Griffiths. I notice in several places in this policy, it refers to 400 hours, and we may have talked about this at the last committee meeting. I apologize if I'm asking a repetitive question, but I was hoping that you could give me some clarity about why that is the standard.

[00:28:00] And related to, I'll just point out that it's two years for military service or Peace Corps. If you could just give me a little context, I'd appreciate it. So related to the military experience, I would have to look into that.

[00:28:16] I know that's been historically in place for several years, and so I don't know if Mr. Bennett or anyone has any additional information. But for the first part of your question related to the 400 hours, for student placements, it's a semester, which equals 10 days, 8 hours a day, 400 hours, which also aligns with our part-time status of 0.5 employee or more.

[00:28:36] And so we apply that consistently across the board to make it equitable. So would it be appropriate to say that's adequate to almost, or comparable to student teaching? That's typically about a semester? It is for student teaching, yes. That's what ours are based off of.

[00:28:52] All right, thank you. Can I just add to a couple of things? The military piece, prior to, I can't remember if it was the last board of the board prior, it typically, it historically just had Peace Corps.

[00:29:12] They specifically added military, and the reason behind it was not in all cases is the military experience directly associated with the role, but the sentiment is that when you are in the military, you learn certain skills, leadership, organization, structure, and there was a real sentiment that there should be some recognition of those years of service regardless of. And that is why it was added in the two years. Now, if that job that was in the military

[00:29:51] directly is directly associated with the job we're hiring for, that CHRO piece allows for me to give additional service based on the position, if that's helpful. The other piece about the 400 hours, I know there's always conversation, too, about part-time.

[00:30:09] Some of the difficulty is really honing in on how you can capture accurately the number of hours and what type of credit you give for placement on the scale. And so that is why there is always this finite piece of, you know, why not 300?

[00:30:29] Why not 500? You have to pick an amount. Thank you. Any other discussion? Nope. okay with that um this is an information item so um oh i'm sorry it's an action item so with that can i get a second to um send it over to the school board oh i'm sorry i'm going to make a motion uh to send this item to the school board okay thank you thank you miss chandler and with

[00:31:04] that um we will go ahead and do that as an information item to the school board um moving on to um now to our information items i believe um we will be looking at 5.01 human resources and talent development revisions to policy 7306 personnel records records and file so good evening um tonight we are bringing forward policy 7306 personnel records and file for review as an

[00:31:37] information item. Based on proposed edits, I will hand it over to HRTD grievance management supervisor Alex Smith to walk the board through these changes. Thank you. Good evening. As Ms.

[00:32:04] Boland shared, we do have recommended changes to policy 7306 for your consideration tonight. As you will note in looking at the revisions, we are not proposing any changes to sections A through F. So I would turn your attention to section G, which begins at line 64, which is where our recommended revisions begin.

[00:32:28] Beginning on line 68 and 69, we have proposed clarifying verbiage to specify that under this policy, requests for corrections or removal of a document from the personnel file are limited to situations where an employee feels there is a factual inaccuracy in the document, such as an incorrect date or other objective error.

[00:32:50] And then moving on to lines 72 through 74, in the interest of and with the goal of transparency, we have included the standard by which requests from employees under this policy will be reviewed, and that is whether or not evidence in reviewing their requests, a preponderance of the evidence, meaning more likely than not, shows that the document in question is inaccurate or incomplete in some manner.

[00:33:17] We have maintained the same window of time that an employee has to make a request under this policy, and that's as soon as practicable or within the same calendar year, and that's covered in lines 76 and 77. And then beginning on line 79, running through line 86, we've updated the remedy an employee has when their request for a correction or removal is denied.

[00:33:40] They may ask that the documentation related to their request be included in their personnel file along with the document in question. And they have 30 calendar days from receipt of the denial of

their request to request that their documentation be included in the personnel file. In this section, we have revised, we revised this verbiage to remove the reference to a rebuttal because rebuttals related to disciplinary action are covered under separate policies, specifically under policy 7310, staff discipline. And so recognizing that and

[00:34:16] recognizing that these proposed changes proposed revisions change the scope of what can be requested under this policy we have added a section F and that begins on line 88 and in that section we have clarified the avenues by which an employee can rebut or challenge a disciplinary action so you will see that we have noted three separate policies by which a rebuttal or a challenge an employee can make a rebut or a challenge. Policy 73010, staff discipline, provides employees the opportunity to submit a written or oral rebuttal to the reasons for the disciplinary

[00:34:54] action, and they need to do that within 30 calendar days of receipt of the action. And then looking, there's two other policy avenues by which an employee can grieve a disciplinary action. Policy 7018, the procedure for adjusting grievances, provides employees with the right to grieve a disciplinary action and that includes dismissals. So in practical terms, what that means is if an employee receives a letter of reprimand that they feel was unwarranted or based on a misapplication of policy, they can initiate a grievance under part two of policy 7018.

[00:35:30] And then if they are recommended for dismissal, they may grieve that recommendation under part 3. And then similarly, Policy 7024, Classified Employee Dismissal and Demotion Grievance Procedures, provides non-exempt employees with the right to grieve a disciplinary action that results in a demotion or a dismissal. So these proposed revisions, our goal with this is to enhance clarity and consistency across policies, the policies that govern employee complaints and grievances, and to ensure that personnel records are maintained accurately

[00:36:06] and confidentially while providing employees with a fair process for correcting legitimate errors. Additionally, the revisions direct employees to the appropriate grievance and appeals policies for contesting disciplinary actions, reinforcing the distinct purposes of each of these policies. Our goal is to bring greater transparency and efficiency to the management of personnel records while upholding legal requirements and protecting employee rights. Thank you very much. Any discussion? Yes, Ms. Donahue. Thank you, Chair Griffiths.

[00:36:44] So if an employee receives some form of discipline and then challenges the discipline through those other policies and is successful in that challenge, what happens with the personnel record and information related to the discipline?

[00:37:06] So if the result of that grievance or that challenge is that the disciplinary action is removed, basically moot, it is removed from their personnel file as if it does not exist. And does that happen automatically or does the employee need to affirmatively make the request that it's taken out of the personnel file?

[00:37:28] In a grievance procedure, that would be the outcome of the grievance, and the employee would not have to make a separate request if that is the decision in the grievance process. From that, HRTD would take the action to remove it from the personnel file.

[00:37:44] Okay, thank you very much. Sure. And can I just follow up a little bit on that too? So in that case, specifically, if that employee then requested a copy of their personnel record and found that that

memo or letter was still in there, that would fall under this policy because that would be in error.

[00:38:09] And they could demonstrate not, I want you to look into the fact that I received it, but the fact that it is in there, they can demonstrate the outcome of the grievance. and therefore this would be in error so that would fall under this policy thank you any other discussion yes miss chandler thank you madam chair um i noticed that um at line 15 under definitions it says all past and present employees have the right to review their personnel file in accordance with the freedom of information act and then there's a separate uh at line 36

[00:38:49] there's more context in terms of the employee's right to review and receive copies of the personnel file. But is it two separate scenarios? In effect, they can FOIA their own personnel file?

[00:39:04] So they don't really need to FOIA, right? It is basically stating that by law, they have a right. And then in D, it's how they go about exercising that right. But they don't have to FOIA it if they request to sit.

[00:39:25] They can receive it or... They can receive a copy or request to sit and review it. Or they can sit and review it. Okay. But it does not require necessarily a FOIA request. Absolutely not. We actually have a specific form button on our website by which an employee can request access or a copy to their personnel file.

[00:39:52] It's through our Let's Talk app. Okay, great. Thank you for explaining that. Thank you. Any other discussion? Well, since this is an information item, I'm just refreshing my memory. It's supposed to come back to us for action next time?

[00:40:09] Yes, ma'am. We will send it out for feedback, and then we will bring it back to the committee at our April meeting with that feedback for the committee to review and take up as an action item. Great. Thank you so much. I guess we'll move on now to discussion items.

[00:40:27] We're going to be going over 6.01, teacher attrition and transfer data. Thank you so much. So, as part of our discussion, we will be sharing information on attrition and transfer data by school, given the complexity of this topic, we did feel it was important to provide a brief presentation to offer both the data and the necessary context for analyzing it effectively.

[00:40:52] The presentation includes key considerations in data analysis because simply looking at a single data point in isolation can sometimes lead to assumptions or incorrect conclusions. Our objective tonight is to provide context around attrition and transfer trends, helping to ensure a thorough analysis that gets to the root causes, if any, of higher than expected attrition or transfers in a given school year.

[00:41:19] We hope this presentation will support a more informed discussion and a deeper understanding of the factors at play. And with that, I will turn it over to Mr. Bennett, HRTD Executive Director, to walk us through the data. So, good evening, everyone.

[00:41:36] So, procedurally, it looks like the presentation is backwards in here, so you're going to be out of order if you're following along with the packet, so if you just kind of flip back a few pages, it'll be a lot easier to follow along.

[00:41:53] So what I thought would be helpful is if we kind of frame ourselves a little bit in why data analysis is important. So go ahead, Miss Butcher, you drive, and go ahead and jump to that one.

[00:42:11] So really what we want to do is make sure we're diving into the data, that we're not just looking at a number making an assumption drawing conclusions that may or may not be accurate so one of the

the kind of the four key elements we want to make sure we're looking for is that we we are doing a comprehensive review we're being fair to all of our our leaders and our constituents and we're also making accurate interpretations from the data we also want to try to limit those assumptions and emotions that can often come and then also figure out what our action plans are let this drive some appropriate action plans for how we can improve some of this data. We recognize

[00:42:49] there are places where it's not ideal, and so what do we do next? So we thought it might be helpful. Go ahead and go to the next slide, Katie, to sort of dive into two examples. So there's two examples in the data. There's more than two, but there's these couple that if you looked at the number, you could draw some pretty significant assumptions that would be inaccurate. So I felt like it was helpful to sort of frame it at the beginning of our presentation. So I'll draw your attention in a little bit to the attachment, but basically there's two schools on there that have significant

[00:43:23] attrition and transfer data, and that's Brambleton Middle School in the 22-23 school year. So if you just look at the number, it's 38.6%, which is significant. But when we drill down and when we dig further, we opened Watson Mountain. So the school had to lose 42.6 FTEs. So in essence, we needed people to move. We would expect that to be higher. But again, if you just look at the number, you can have a reaction to that number. The same holds true when you go down to the next

[00:43:56] example at Lowes Island Elementary School in the 21-22 school year. That has a 41% attrition rate. During that school year, the principal of Lowe's Island was selected to be the principal of a new school opening the following year.

[00:44:12] We know people like to follow principals. People develop loyalties and relationships. So a lot of people left to go and work at the new school the following year. But again, if we just looked at the number and made the assumption without digging in, we could come up with some false assumptions there.

[00:44:30] So those are two that I felt like just wanted to frame it off the bat, what we've done as we're looking through the data. So go ahead, Katie. Go ahead and go to the next one. What I also want to make sure we're clear on is the who that we're talking about.

[00:44:48] Because we can run this analytics on different positions and different scenarios. We are focused on teachers because teachers are the ones that can most easily transfer laterally from school to school. So we focused on teacher attrition, which is resignations and retirements, and we also focused on lateral transfers, meaning that person went from being a teacher at one school to a teacher at another school.

[00:45:13] If they took a promotion, which is basically anything different, if a teacher became a school counselor, that's not captured here. If a teacher became a dean, a facilitator, a librarian, those are all promotions. It's a different job. So what we really tried to funnel in on is people who moved to the same job at a different school because we felt like this is what tells us the data that we want to know about each of our schools.

[00:45:39] People retiring, people resigning, and people taking lateral transfers. So that was our focus in this particular data set. So I do want to draw your attention just for a moment to the attachment. I want to talk through that just for a few moments before we jump to our next slides.

[00:45:56] get my own out so what i want you to to realize what we did and i'll clarify what all of these things mean what we did is we conducted um a data and a data analysis of all of the school by school data

over the last three years of these of attrition and transfer numbers and what we did is we we looked at a school against itself because if we look at a school against the average it's going to give us a lot of false positives and a lot of false negatives so we didn't want to either

[00:46:36] over identify or under identify so we sought to identify for that school if there was an outlier year so we use something called the interquartile range method i am happy to have a full statistics class with the board if you all would like but this evening i was not going to get into all of the nitty-gritty of it but basically if you see something in red it means it's statistically significant for that school, that particular school year, based upon the five-year trend.

[00:47:07] So what our plan is also every year to add an additional year to this. We want to keep the anchor year of 1920. So next year when we bring this, it'll have a sixth year and then a seventh year and so on, so that we can really start to look at our trends at our schools. So when you look at that, that's what red means. Red means it's an outlier. And when you see NA, that's not saying there isn't an issue. What that's saying is that school did not have an outlier year. That they trend within what would be statistically appropriate numbers to each other. Again, not

[00:47:44] saying that this isn't stuff to dig into, but that school didn't have a blip, a spike, whatever you want to call it. They just sort of continued on their trends. And then what we did is anywhere there was red, we tried to dig into what were the reasons. So I'll just go through a couple just to walk you through kind of what we have here if you look at Arcola which is the first one in red in the 21-22 school year they had an uptick well in the 21-22 school year they also had a reduction of 10.2 FTEs for the following year so kind of like Brambleton we needed them to have that uptick

[00:48:21] if we jump down to there's a wide variety of schools I talked about Lowes Island earlier in that same school year there are actually multiple schools in the 21-22 school year for to be exact that had significant reductions when we opened Elaine Thompson so again we're going to expect to see that attrition when we have that kind of movement there are also you know what you see over here you see a comment where I have combination of factors so what I did is I looked at the numbers literally the numbers of resignations retirements and transfers to figure out sometimes there's just

[00:49:00] one extra or two extra of our particular decision and that happens a cohort of people retired well now I'm I'm thrown into that statistically significant range but that doesn't mean in and of itself that it's an issue so we we tried very hard to look at trends across the board so again I'm happy to answer questions as we go along through that but that's really what we were trying to get at with this particular this chart and grid did you want to say something yeah can I just clarify something too because when when Mr. Bennett says we needed that uptick we didn't

[00:49:39] need resignations or retirements right we needed voluntary transfers I don't want it to come across as if we were hoping more people would leave at that school we just knew or needed an uptick involuntary transfers which are identified or captured here as well. So I did just want to clarify that we aren't hoping more people resign but we are hoping more people voluntarily transfer to keep from us having to involuntarily de-staff or transfer them. Thanks for clarifying. No we

[00:50:16] don't want people to leave so we would love if those numbers would go down. So again this is a lot to take in so what i what i also did is went through this to try to look for trends are there particular things happening at each of these years so go ahead and go on to the next go ahead and skip there that's perfect um and these are sort of the high points of what i saw across the data again when it was an outlier

when it was an uptick at a particular school with the highest percentage of those in red on this chart when a school experienced a reduction in FTEs.

[00:50:54] So when schools opened, when things changed, that seemed to be the time when those schools experienced it because they had to have more voluntary or even involuntary transfers. A transfer is a transfer. So in those scenarios, people needed to volunteer to go to other schools.

[00:51:11] The other thing we saw is it does happen for whatever reason when new principals start at a school, maybe people were loyal to the other principal in the Lowe's Island example I shared earlier but there also could just be if there's going to be change I might want a different change anyway maybe I like the principal I was working for and maybe I want to try out something new so again there are several example times where you can see that in the data and so for us what we also want to look at is did it stay that way that a new principal come in and then it stayed high because that would signify to us we have a different problem so again we're trying to

[00:51:49] look at our trends of each of the schools is that the change or were people more willing to make a change and then again i talked about the staff transitioning with a principal to a new school which is very common and then the other thing is when you look at small schools very small changes can have significant impacts there is an example on here in the 23 24 school year at middleburg charter middleburg sits at 10 or 11 positions so literally two extra people retired that year and now they're at 45 which again you look at the number and you draw conclusions but if you look

[00:52:28] at the trends over five years they that year a couple extra people decided this was my year to retire so we want to look at all of the data but we also don't want to make assumptions of what the data is or isn't telling us go ahead and jump to the next one Katie what we also looked at is there are several years and these are three examples where schools didn't really have any changes they had no changes in leadership they had no changes in FTEs relative but for whatever

[00:53:02] ever reason that particular year, and it's the 21-22 school year at Riverside, 21-22 at John Champ, they each had spikes for whatever reason and maybe more people wanted to transfer for one reason or another. And then in the 2020-2021 school year at Goshen Post, a new principal came in while they also lost nine positions at the same time. So again, in fairness to our leaders, we want to see does that trend continue and how do we monitor these things along the way?

[00:53:33] So for us, what we see as our action steps is really working with the Department of School Leadership, sharing this information with them so that they can kind of dig in and look at what is the school data telling them, how are they working with that principal, and then what is this telling them about each of the schools?

[00:53:55] Is it consistent? Are there trends or there patterns? How do they compare to the overall? Maybe how do they compare to schools within their cluster, within similar elementary schools or other schools? So I'm happy to, you want to say something?

[00:54:13] I know you do. Go for it. I just want to add two points. We also recognize that this five-year data isn't necessarily the best data, right? We are going to have to continue to look at it, and here's why.

[00:54:30] In March of 2020, COVID happened, right? And so following that, the next at least two years, teachers came back to a very different classroom. And some of them made very different choices based on that classroom they walked into.

[00:54:53] And so while it's important to monitor, what's going to be more important is how are we trending in the 24-25 and what does that look like in comparison to 23 and 24? Because 23-24, we consider the year we start to stabilize into what we call the new normal, right?

[00:55:14] So I just want to recognize that too, that those three years in between those kind of like guardrail years, we recognize could potentially be higher than normal, but we don't know.

[00:55:30] We just don't know until we start to figure out more of this stable new normal. The other thing I want to mention is that while we track data in a variety of ways, it isn't ever in one system.

[00:55:47] And so this isn't data we've had routinely like this. It has taken us some time to get this data like this. And so while we wanted to make sure that we presented it to the school board, we do intend to continue to track this and dive deeper and figure out what else we need to do to kind of make some of those differences.

[00:56:09] And HR is already working with the Department of School Leadership, like Mr. Bennett said, on what some of those action steps could be, both in the good schools, what are you doing, that have really low numbers, and then in some of the more higher schools.

[00:56:29] Thank you. And did we lose Anne? Any discussion? She's still there. Yes, Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. I am. Oh, there she is. Sorry. I'm so glad that you said COVID. That definitely stood out to me as well. It's very hard data set to analyze, I think, because it was such an abnormal time in the middle. That said, I think it would be helpful if we could review what the process looks like when an employee chooses to leave the division, either by retiring or by resigning,

[00:57:06] and if there's any similar process when somebody moves from school to school, what information do we capture at that time? Thank you. Any more discussion? I can't see her hand, if she has her hand.

[00:57:25] Okay. When people leave, we do send an exit survey. We try very hard for it to go to a personal email so that people give us honest feedback, but the data is only as good as if people choose to give us that feedback, but we do send that.

[00:57:50] And the exit survey, I can't recall if it was last year or the year before, was greatly enhanced to require a personal email address. And here's why. When someone decides to separate, they often provide their separation.

[00:58:07] If we send them the exit survey and they have more time still to work, they are more hesitant to provide a truthful response. because there is a real fear of retaliation. Who is this going to?

[00:58:23] Who's going to see it? And so we require a personal email address. Now, we can't require them to complete the exit survey, but the exit survey does go, they do have the opportunity then to complete it, or there is a tickler put on to send it out at a timeframe in the future, and I don't know the exact timeframe, to their personal email address as a, hey, now that you have officially left, do you want to complete the exit survey?

[00:58:54] So we do collect that data as well. But in the event of a transfer, some of the issues that you mentioned would be even more applicable because, of course, if you're staying at LCPS but moving schools, you might not be willing to say why you want to move.

[00:59:09] That's accurate. So we do try to collect the data, but it's only as good as what we receive. Okay, and so when people are asking for a transfer, there is no, there isn't a process for collecting data in that piece?

[00:59:25] There is not a formal process, no, unless the employee reaches out. That's a tough one. Yeah, thank you for that clarification. Any more discussion? With that, I will tell you that I have had a little bit of experience with a principal leaving, and she took a good portion of the staff.

[00:59:52] I am familiar with that. When I was trying to find out why we lost so many teachers at this particular school, I was told that that principal was allowed to take 25% with her to other schools.

[01:00:09] So I'm thinking, you know, if that is one of the issues, maybe we should lower that from 25% because that was my children's school and I was wondering where all the teachers went.

[01:00:26] And I happened to know that principal was really good and people wanted to follow her, but they struggled finding people for that school. So with that being said, I'm familiar with the transfers. I'm familiar that it's 25%.

[01:00:43] Maybe we should revisit looking at that. But also, you know, there are many factors, I guess, as you mentioned. You mentioned transfers and people don't want to give information on the exit surveys, which I understand that, but when some schools have really low, you know, numbers where there's a lot of people leaving, it's exactly what you said.

[01:01:13] We need to take a deeper dive into those areas. There are a few schools which seem to be high in attrition and others, you know, when it appears that no other factors are in play, such as Aldi, Cardinal Ridge, Countryside, Guilford.

[01:01:30] And if I may mention Guilford, it could be because of the conditions of the school. The conditions of that particular school are not good. Mercer, Seneca Ridge, Sterling, Trailside, North Star, and Roby. Other schools such as Champ, Light Ridge, and Parkview even each had a year with higher than average attrition rates due to resignations and or transfers.

[01:01:57] So you've mentioned transfers. Do the teachers tell you exactly why they want to transfer and go to a different school? Are they giving you those details? But it seems like a lot of transfers for particular schools.

[01:02:15] And like I said, I'm familiar with the principle issue. Everybody loved this particular principle. But I think we need to have all that data as to why people are leaving. I know you've mentioned principles and you've mentioned trends as well.

[01:02:32] And I want to get back to COVID. Maybe we should look at the data before COVID more so and see where we are as opposed to today. Because I understand the trends with that, but it's now been a couple of years, so we should be getting back to good levels of, you know, teachers and, you know, and being able to look at why we're losing teachers in a certain school.

[01:03:00] I don't think that has to do with COVID at this time. And you already mentioned the exit surveys, which I think, I think they need to, we need to have them. But I agree, some people fear retaliation.

[01:03:16] If they want to move on to another LCPS job, you know, they can look at the file. There's always somebody that maybe they feel like would retaliate against them. But if we could go back before COVID

maybe and bring some more data to the table, but also we've lost a lot of administrative positions, which I didn't ask you for that data, but I think that'll be maybe for our next meeting.

[01:03:40] Maybe we can discuss administrative, why so many people are leaving some schools as well. That should be added into the data. And then I think about the bus drivers. You know, we have a bus driver shortage, and we're planning all these different programs, and we're throwing transportation out there, and we have a transportation shortage.

[01:04:07] So we kind of know where the issue is with that. But to really discuss that more and find out how we can fix that problem as well. So maybe we need to bring data, which is before COVID, more information on transportation, more information on the administrative, because the administrative might tell us also which schools have an issue.

[01:04:33] Let's say we have the administrative data and we can look at countryside. Why is the attrition so high there? You know, something's going on there. It may not necessarily be a new principal. Maybe a new principal didn't come on board. Why is everybody leaving? We just need to, we really need to figure all this stuff out. And I'm really not sure how you want to answer what I just went through, but if you could help me out here. Thank you. So I'm going to do my best.

[01:05:02] Going back pre-COVID, pre-1920 would be really difficult. This is really manual due to the fact that we don't have a single system uh we are going out for erp and in the hopes is that we will have a more centralized system that captures more of this information so um and and pre-1920 there are even more systems i meant school year sorry to 2019 2020 i think that's where our data

[01:05:36] starts sorry um back prior to school year 1920 we had additional systems so going further back the other piece is well that might show us then we're in a very different school environment now so what might have worked then I'm not sure would work now um that might very well be the case I also looking at other areas such as transportation you can't compare transportation turnover

[01:06:09] in in the same way we don't have a transfer process for example um the other piece is what i would say and what i am fairly proud i i don't believe we have a bus driver shortage any longer um hrted has worked really hard with the transportation department and we are down to very few vacant bus driver FTEs. So I think focusing on bus drivers, while we still monitor and maintain, I don't believe there's a bus driver shortage the way that we have a teacher shortage.

[01:06:47] Outside of that, what I do think we can do is we can absolutely pull administrator information in regards to resignations and retirements. I do think, and just based on postings, I do think we are starting to see more of our tenured principals coming upon retirement eligibility.

[01:07:09] And so I do believe that we will start to see more of that just because of the fact that they are now hitting those 30-year, 25, 30-year and the age necessary, 55 years, to be eligible for their retirement benefits. And so I do think we will see more of that. So we could provide that data to the committee and the board. But outside of that, I think the other ask might be difficult. I think that if we do have another meeting about the administrative side, we might

[01:07:45] see some of the same schools. It's possible. So I think it'll be helpful in the future to take a look at that. So that's why I just wanted to bring it up as something maybe we should be looking at because if you do it school by school, it'll give you an idea if there are specific problems at the school and it's not transfer issues.

[01:08:09] And I understand what you're saying. Principals retire. And they might have an administrator that they worked for for many years and that person decides, oh, I'm going to retire too. I get that too. But, you know, we just need all that data because we really, and you're right, we really need teachers.

[01:08:29] So I want to stay on that focus if possible. Is there any other discussion? No? Okay. So then we'll move on to the stay survey presentation. Thank you. Thank you so much.

[01:08:44] And I promise this is relatively short, just three slides, so we can get through it. But we did feel it important to bring it before committee. We took our first ever stay survey. We spoke a little bit ago about exit surveys. And while we find it extremely important and informative to learn why our educators are leaving, it's even more important for us to find out why they're staying to ensure we continue to do those things and continue to get better.

[01:09:16] That said, we also often get asked, what do we do with these survey results, right? We never hear back. We complete these surveys, and there's never any follow-up. So we also thought it was very important to bring to committee the results of those surveys and highlight some of the things we plan to do or are doing to take action based on those results.

[01:09:41] And I will turn it over to Mr. Phillips to talk you through those slides. And thank you. And as Ms. Boland said, I will not go into the level of statistical analysis that was done in the previous slideshow, but just give you the overall overview highlights and the key takeaways from this first stay survey given to all of our full-time employees in Loudoun County Public Schools.

[01:10:07] Next slide, please. So the stay survey was distributed to all full-time staff on November 12th, 2024, and remained open until November 26th, 2024, a total of two weeks. Its purpose was to collect meaningful feedback on staff experiences and perceptions of the LCPS work environment.

[01:10:28] The survey focused on three main areas, their overall satisfaction and sense of value in their roles, the reasons employees choose to remain at LCPS, and feedback on strengths and weaknesses for potential improvements as the employer of choice.

[01:10:45] The stay survey was sent to 13,237 staff members, and we received 5,487 responses, resulting in a 41% response rate, which is pretty good. You could see the breakdown of the total respondents of licensed versus non-licensed on this slide on the bar chart on the right.

[01:11:04] And you can see from the levels of satisfaction as well as the level of value that many employees, 84%, feel satisfied or very satisfied working for LCPS. And that 68, over two-thirds of those who did respond, feel value in their role with Loudoun County Public Schools.

[01:11:25] Next slide, please. When we asked the respondents to rank the nine reasons they continue working or stay at LCPS, these on this slide show the top five, salary, relationships with colleagues, location or area, health benefits, and retirement benefits rankings combined with all respondents.

[01:11:48] So this is the combined top five of those 5,000. The other four reasons that were not ranked in the top fives included quality of schools, support from leadership, leadership and growth opportunities, and professional development.

[01:12:04] A key takeaway from this slide is that while licensed and non-licensed had similar ratings for the top five, licensed staff ranked salary number one and health benefits number four, while non-licensed staff ranked salary number four and health benefits number one.

[01:12:24] Next slide, please. Finally, the last part of the survey asked for overall feedback with two questions. What could LCPS offer you to encourage you to continue working here? And what are some LCPS highlights that we can share with others to get them to join us in LCPS?

[01:12:46] Much anecdotal data was reviewed and kind of categorized of the open response questions and responses to several common themes that you see on this slide. And they're outlined below, which strengths, weaknesses from that feedback, and then our opportunities for growth.

[01:13:04] Some of the things that we've started to do or we will continue to do in the near future to remain as an attractive employer for LCPS staff as well as new staff bringing on board. And that's it.

[01:13:21] Thank you. Any questions? Any discussion? I personally really appreciate everything you're trying to do to keep our employees happy. Um, if only 41% of full, and I realized we went over, we went past six, so I'm hoping this is okay.

[01:13:45] Oh, oh, okay. We can continue if Ms. Donahue, if you're okay to continue. Great. Thank you so much. Um, I did have some questions and I, again, I appreciate what you're trying to do as far as, um, you know, uh, keeping teachers on board.

[01:14:01] But if only 41% of full-time employees participate in the survey, are these a true representation of our employees? I do have three other questions, so what are your thoughts on that?

[01:14:17] Is it a true representation? Well, working with Ms. Kearney, who's our data person in HR, she said this was a higher return rate than other surveys typically given to all staff. Since only 17% of licensed employees are very satisfied and feel very valued, do you think the employees who responded on average are more satisfied or ones that were dissatisfied?

[01:14:44] What are your thoughts on that one? For satisfaction, well, combined, satisfied or very satisfied in ranking, 84% said that they were satisfied or very satisfied out of the top two.

[01:15:01] so that leaves about 16 percent who answered others out of the 5,000 respondents so I think that would be very high 84 percent and you feel it's a true representation that's what our data is showing I don't have any feelings about it it's just that this is what it was our first one I don't know how frequent we are going to do this if this is going to be a yearly survey but in our first shot, I thought we did pretty well in terms of the satisfaction and the value.

[01:15:37] For slide three, what is the breakdown for the top five reasons people choose to work at LCPS? Do you have a percentage of salary versus relationships with colleagues versus location? I would have to get that disaggregated data by response to you.

[01:15:52] We have that, but these were, again, the top five without the numbers, the statistical part. So I would have to get that to you. Okay. Maybe I'm just reiterating stuff, and I can certainly send you these questions. I mean, obviously, with giving bonuses and that sort of thing, that helps keep teachers from leaving.

[01:16:14] You know, it's come up, you know, teachers and awards and, you know, recognitions helps morale as well. But, you know, as I mentioned earlier, people leaving schools like Guilford, it could be because of conditions. So, you know, bonuses and that sort of thing always help.

[01:16:33] Awards are not always the answer, but if we give awards to employees with a bonus, that might work. That's something that I'd like to have a further discussion about. Also, I mean, to bring up awards

and awards of recognitions, I've noticed that sometimes we give awards to teachers that is less than, I don't know, less than 10 years when we have a lot of teachers that have worked for LCPS for over 20.

[01:17:03] So that's a morale issue. And plus, I mentioned if we give awards, maybe we should be giving bonuses as well along with the awards. So these are just things I just wanted to bring up and have a conversation about if this helps at all teachers to stay in the future.

[01:17:21] So do you guys have any thoughts on that? Bob, can I chime in? So I think a lot of that may not necessarily go directly with the stay survey. Keep in mind the questions that they were asked are why do you currently stay, right?

[01:17:40] What keeps you here versus one of the questions I ask when I go into faculty meetings is when is the last time you thought about leaving and why, right? What prompted that? That question right there and the responses there wasn't captured necessarily in the survey.

[01:18:01] That's more anecdotal what I ask. But that gets to, I think, your point more of would a bonus have changed your mind? Would recognition have changed your mind, right?

[01:18:16] And fairly consistently, we see that our compensation, while it impacts their ability to live in Loudoun, is relatively high. We recognize that we have a lot of work to do with the county to find some affordable housing.

[01:18:35] But from a compensation perspective, we pay relatively well. So I'm not sure. I think more discussion can be had about what you're asking. I'm not sure it goes with the stay survey results, if that makes sense.

[01:18:52] And any time we're talking about bonuses, of course, there's a budget impact to that. And we do have our union in the room with us, so I will acknowledge also that compensation is essentially something we will need to be discussing in the near future with them as well.

[01:19:14] Thank you so much, Ms. Mullen. I know we went over attrition and we're going over stay, so I kind of wanted to bring all of that up as far as, you know, the exit surveys were brought up, why people are leaving. We're going to do the data on administrative, and that might give us some information at the different schools.

[01:19:34] But also, you know, we're going to do a deep dive into why certain schools, people are leaving. and if there's anything we can do to make our teachers, administrators happy and keep them from leaving. I'm thinking of recognition, I'm thinking of going a little bit further.

[01:19:52] So I just wanted to bring that up and I thank you so much for that. But I think unless Ms. Donahue has any questions, I think we're done. We can probably finish the meeting and adjourn for today.

[01:20:07] So thank you so much, everybody.



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