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Loudoun County School Board, 4th Tuesday School Board Meeting (Reconvened from March 25, 2025), Tuesday, April 1, 2025

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Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1069432152?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DEANZV6245CC>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-11. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:15] Good afternoon. I'm calling to order the reconvened March 25th, 2025 Loudoun County School Board meeting. I don't think we've done this before since we've been on the board. So a reconvened meeting means that we will start where we left off on March 25th, 2025, which will be item 13 on the information items. So starting with 1301, my understanding is that there is additional information that's forthcoming as the board of supervisors and the general assembly are

[00:00:52] both finalizing their budgets and therefore i recommend that we move this item to a future meeting when this information is available so that we have a more fruitful discussion and then that we will be moving on to 13.02 so 13.02 curriculum instruction committee revision of policy 50 30 assessment and grading presented by Dr. Ashley Ellis, Chief Academic Officer. Dr. Ellis.

[00:01:45] Good evening, Chair Mansfield, members of the board. This evening I am here to talk about policy 50-30 assessment and grading. This has been an exciting and very thorough process and we're glad to be able to share it with you this evening. While this is a little more extensive information than we would usually share for a revised policy.

[00:02:11] I think it's important that for this particular policy, we do a little bit deeper dive. Many stakeholders have deeply personal feelings about assessment and grading, and we have been through quite an extensive process. So this evening, I'll share the timeline of our work over the past several months, highlights and major themes from the extensive feedback that we've received, draft recommended changes to the policy and our plan for implementation.

[00:02:40] The journey really started over a year ago as part of Dr. Spence's listening tours. We consistently heard in those listening sessions about challenges with assessment and grading, specifically regarding three topics that kept coming up over and over again.

[00:02:56] And those were the floor of 50, the concept of retakes or reassessments, and the role of formative and summative assessments. And so while this policy was not up for its five-year revision, There was enough feedback and concern about the policy that the CNI committee and staff agreed that it was time to take a closer look.

[00:03:16] So in August and September, staff shared a timeline for gathering feedback and revising the policy. We also shared initial themes from feedback we gathered through a thought exchange prior to the start of the school year. This was a really important check to confirm our understanding of the issues that teachers were facing with this policy.

[00:03:38] We then formed focus groups, gathered research around assessment and grading best practices, and gathered more feedback from the public and our advisory committees. We have essentially been through two rounds of feedback and revisions at the committee level, and we bring that to you this evening.

[00:03:56] Our goal is to have a board-approved policy to go into effect for the start of the coming school year. From now until the start of the school year, we are also developing guidelines, revising regulations, and developing training and communication plans. Over the next few slides, I'll talk a little bit about the recruitment for the focus groups, the themes that were identified, and the summary of recommendations.

[00:04:20] Participants were recruited through several methods. A link was sent to parents and guardians and secondary teachers that included a form where they could sign up. As you can see from the percentage of emails read, about 45,000 parents and guardians and 1,000 secondary teachers opened the email.

[00:04:37] Participants were randomly selected from the people who volunteered. Principals and students also participated in focus groups to provide their feedback. I do want to point out here, before I forget to mention, that while the policy is grades K through 12, we are focused just on secondary assessment and grading, and we have a plan for addressing elementary assessment and grading in committee after this process is over.

[00:05:09] So, this next slide shows the themes from the focus groups, and in board docs is a link to a more extensive report of the focus group conversations and the main themes.

[00:05:28] So, based on this initial round of feedback, which was quite extensive, staff presented a first round of potential revisions to the policy to the C&I committee. These revisions are incorporated in the red line version attached to board docs and summarized here.

[00:05:47] So, for example, we reorganized the entire policy for better flow. We simplified concepts that would be defined and expanded on in regulation. We added key definitions. We added some weighting for homework and formative assessments.

[00:06:05] We created a criteria for when reassessment and the floor of 50% can be applied. We added language to differentiate across grade levels, and that will be built out more in regulation and guidance. Overall, we were attempting to provide clarity without constriction for teachers using the policy.

[00:06:25] After the C&I committee provided input on our first round of revisions, the draft policy was posted for public feedback as part of our normal policy review process. In addition to our typical advisory committee feedback, we received over 100 additional responses, mostly teachers providing feedback.

[00:06:45] The raw data from both SEAC and MSAC committees as well as the public-facing form to submit feedback, all of that raw data is included in BoardDocs as well. The themes that rose to the top of this round of feedback are listed here and also outlined in BoardDocs in more detail.

[00:07:06] So those responses included continued concerns around the floor of 50, questions about the number of retakes and the ceiling for retakes. overall feelings of frustration about teacher workload and autonomy. Number five, grades for formative assessments and homework was actually was positive feedback. They appreciated that being one of the recommendations in the first round of edits. There were still concerns on due dates for assignments and penalty for late work and overall lack of student effort. These next two slides that

[00:07:43] I will not read to you are the changes that we made based on the second round. So this is the second round of feedback that influenced these recommended changes. Those changes are also incorporated in the red line policy and then slide 10 illustrates the major changes to the policy that you'll see in the red line version that came out of the committee. I do think this is a good balance of maintaining the philosophy of assessment and grading outlined in the introduction of the policy and the actual implementation in the classroom. We have tried hard to strike a balance

[00:08:22] between keeping assessment and grading about student learning and mastery of content, while also recognizing the significant burden of certain grading practices on teachers. So, for example, the major changes are that we have defined the concept of reasonable effort for students.

[00:08:39] This was a big sticking point, both in focus groups and in the written feedback we collected. We are recommending changing the floor of 50% to apply only to quarter grades and not individual assessments throughout the quarter, which we think will take a significant burden off of teachers. We also created specific criteria for when reassessment and the floor of 50 can be provided. Teachers felt that the original policy was unclear and assumed that reassessments and the floor of 50 must be applied in all circumstances, and so we have clarified that there absolutely

[00:09:18] are circumstances when a reassessment and a floor of 50 is not appropriate. We added waiting for homework and formative assessments of a total of no more than 10% of the quarter grade, and we've already received significant positive feedback about this specific change.

[00:09:36] We've also specified that deadlines for late work not only may be assigned, but they should be assigned, and that late work will not be accepted after the major summative assessment it is associated with has been administered. Sorry, I wasn't following along with the slides.

[00:09:55] So in terms of next steps, really quickly before I turn it over to you, Chair Mansfield, We anticipate this to be a school board action item. We are already beginning to update the regulation accompanying this policy. We are initiating the planning for an assessment and grading handbook work group to develop even more specific guidance than the regulation will provide, including specific examples of how the policy can be applied to different grade levels and content areas.

[00:10:26] We will also be developing a communication and implementation plan, and we have shared with the C&I committee that we will monitor progress throughout the year and collect feedback after year one of implementation. And with that, I will turn it back to you.

[00:10:46] Thank you, Dr. Ellis. Board members, do you have any questions? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. I don't really have any questions. I've been a part of this process from the beginning. Like Dr. Ellis said, this, even before Dr. Spence's arrival, I was hearing about some of these changes.

[00:11:06] And if you go back and listen to the many meetings where we address this, the implementation with in conjunction with COVID is really where I think a lot of this was born. And I just really wanted to say thank you to Dr. Ellis and her team who have really we've been on a journey with this and the process and many steps to reach this point.

[00:11:27] So I'm really excited about where we are, and I'm really looking forward to it. I'm hoping to hear from you tonight about some of the changes that we've made and then also some of the recommended changes that I'm going to propose next Tuesday, the two amendments that were presented in committee and then also will be presented here tonight or next Tuesday.

[00:11:53] But I really wanted to highlight that I'm proud of how this went because I think that some of these things can be a little bit contentious and it never felt that way. And it has really been a tremendous learning experience for me as I was an elementary educator.

[00:12:10] I never taught middle school or high school, so I was really pressing into those conversations and those experiences from those teachers to really understand how this has lived out in the day-to-day. And I believe that the process did allow for that feedback. And I just wanted to highlight that there were multiple stages of feedback.

[00:12:28] As Dr. Ellis said, we had the focus groups and there was revisions that happened. And then we had this second round. And I believe that the public commenters that came last week and some of the feedback that we've had, almost 100 comments to the policy online, really reflect that second round of feedback, which addresses just taking it maybe a little bit further in certain areas.

[00:12:51] And we really did try to account for how to put this into policy and reconcile the human element because we know every learner is different, and students come with all kinds of unique challenges and also unique strengths. And so we really wanted to create a policy in collaboration that would support that.

[00:13:11] And that's really where I'm coming from. I think a lot of this conversation has been framed in terms of those different stakeholder groups. And I don't really want us to think about it being just teachers or just students or just families, because honestly, every conversation that I've had, whether we were aligned in our beliefs or not, really was student-centered.

[00:13:34] There was so much discussion about how do we lift up our students in this policy, and that has always been the lens. And I think that's why we're in a really good place. And that is really how I want to frame it, because I really want to have a policy that supports high expectations for students and teachers and not necessarily a policy that just assumes students will struggle and that teachers will let them, because that's not who they are.

[00:13:57] And so that's where my amendments will come in. So I'm going to toss it back to you to open back up for other questions, but then I would love to discuss, in particular, the retake floor and also the idea of maybe some higher expectations in our more college-oriented coursework.

[00:14:15] So thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Since you didn't say it, I'm going to say it. The one thing that I have some struggle with is the 80%, and the reason being is because coming from the special education lens one thing that when you're in an eligibility meeting is that you have to show educational need. So if your kid has grades that are B's that doesn't necessarily show educational need. If you have an IEP meeting and they're

[00:14:52] looking to discontinue services they will also look at grades. Now I will say you're not only supposed to look at grades they're supposed to be more comprehensive look at everything but the reality is is that grades do make a difference and so if we are only doing an 80% floor then in my mind we're masking a little bit and so I know that's probably I'm sorry that I'm taking your amendment but that's something that I feel strongly about I would even go down to 70 but I

[00:15:27] I understand that 75 is what they call a solid C. So, board members, any other thoughts? Yes, Dr. Deans. I also am a member of the C&I committee, and through all of this process, I thought that we would let the process work, and the process has worked and indicated with all of the teacher involvement, the parents and the students, the 80%.

[00:15:58] So I don't think that we should lower what the majority have already said, the 80%. And let me give you a personal example. And it has nothing to do with LCPS, right?

[00:16:13] But I have an IB student down in Fairfax who made a 74% on her first geometry test for the quarter. Her makeup test, she could only make up one test for the quarter, and she wanted to make up that 74% test.

[00:16:32] When she was given that makeup test, she made a 100% on that makeup test because she utilized her time to go back and relearn and figure out in math where you lose the negative or the positive sign and where you lose the sin and the cosine.

[00:16:54] math people don't hold it against me for me to say it through my teeth but I think that I think that when you have students such as IB students who are in IB and it is more rigorous day-to-day not just in the assessment that if there's a makeup that 80 percent is much more representative than a 70 percent and that's my belief and I believe that if we lower it to 70 percent it's

[00:17:28] almost like we are we would be punishing that child who makes 100 percent and then lower it to 70 percent and I just have a problem with the punishment of children and to me I see that as a punishment. Thank you Dr. Deans. I do see that in the in the focus group report on page six where they talk about the retake ceiling teachers agree with the idea that 70 percent being the highest grade a student could receive on a retake they believed it was it's represented a score of

[00:18:03] average but parents had a mixed opinions on the highest grade being lowered to 70 with some questioning the reason and others thinking it was a good idea and then let's talk was split and some and there was a parent guardian says lowering the retake threshold to 70 seems like an unnecessary punitive measure like you said I think I think it is going to be a hard um it's it's it's going to be a hard shift in my but um and you're right it go it went through the process

[00:18:36] and and reading through it seemed like this was one of those that was really um do you mean what do you say like it's um it was really um hard to get through it was kind of split 50-50 so um so i appreciate your comments i understand yes um mrs griffiths thank you madam chair um ms chernoff thank you so much for taking this on um i appreciate all of it um i don't know that it goes far enough and i'll i'll be sending you uh some of this information but um you know removing

[00:19:11] floor of 50 because 50 floor inflates grades um limit number of retakes and reassessments will not only maintain academic rigor, but will also remove excessive workload for teachers who must administer these retakes.

[00:19:29] We already mentioned the 70%, so thank you for that. Midterms and final exams should be required. It would help students prepare for college, and late work must have a clear deadline. This will help students develop personal responsibility and reduce overwhelming our teachers who must grade all these late assignments at the end of the quarter.

[00:19:56] So if you don't mind, I'll be sending you this information and if we were able to maybe implement some of this as well. It just didn't go far enough, but I appreciate everything you did with the grading policy and also homework and class assignments to count up for 10% of a student's grade, but I'll send that all to you.

[00:20:18] But I just wanted to get that out there that this is a good discussion to have. Thank you. Yes, Dr. Rasheed. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair. For me, the IB portion, I understand, is a little bit challenging because it's separate.

[00:20:36] It's a different monster. It's a separate entity. I echo Dr. Dean's sentiments. So for that reason, I think that that's the only one that really predominantly doesn't sit well with me, because, and especially what Chair Mansfield had mentioned earlier when it, a little bit of the split. So I just wanted to share my thoughts with that. Thank you. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you. I just wanted to take a second to respond to a couple of things that I heard and make sure that I heard them correctly. Dr. Rashid, are you referring to removing the 50% floor? Are you saying that you

[00:21:11] would be supportive of it, removing it in AP, but not if we took IB out, you could support that amendment yes if you took out the ib portion i would be more supportive of that yes okay that's great to know um additionally i just wanted to address miss griffiths i know we talked about a lot of these things in our committee um one of the things that i was really set on in the beginning was limiting retakes but as we kind of flush that out in committee and it's going to end up being the teachers that have to keep track of every retake of every quarter and we just couldn't come up with a good enough solution that would alleviate that workload in terms of keeping

[00:21:48] record of all of that because middle school teachers and high school teachers have hundreds of students and so if we were going to limit it based on each summative or even each quarter it started to grow bigger and bigger in terms of the responsibilities for teachers so I just wanted you to know that we

did talk about that and I did originally like that idea what we came to in some discussions was that was that idea of lowering the floor would help to reduce some of those retakes naturally. And I understand where you're coming from, Dr. Deans, in terms of punitive and punishment.

[00:22:21] And I understand that perspective. But I also am hearing so much about the retake loop and how real it is. Because if you are not, if you are taking the retake, you're preparing for a retake while new content is simultaneously also being delivered. And so teachers are juggling that, right? That balance of I have to get through the content and I'm teaching new content, but I'm also reteaching topics to kids that need it for retakes. And so if that ends up being a large number of kids, it can disrupt the progression of getting through your content and your standards. And so

[00:22:55] in honoring that, I think we heard that last week, that that ends up, that's where the workload is being put on them. And I think it's also a disservice to the students because then they continue to fall behind if they're missing the new content. And so when we think of it in terms of let's really press into teaching kids with where they're at and use those formatives as a way to know those checkpoints, to know where kids are. If you know your students, and I believe that our teachers do know their kids, if they know where they are with those formatives, they're using that to reteach before the summative. And therefore, hopefully kids will give it their best shot on

[00:23:32] that first try. Um, and so I, I too would be willing to go to 70%. I, I settled on 75% and certainly Dr. Ellis and the team, we, we have gone back and forth on this. Um, certainly. So I, I hear you chair Mansfield as well. I think that this is not as crystal clear, but I am definitely, um, I think I've, I've come to a good place of setting, settling on the 75% and feeling like a solid C is the right place for us. Um, and then additionally, uh, I think I, I could get there with the, the 50 floor being removed only for AP courses, just as they mirror that college credit

[00:24:11] coursework. Um, and we did not set a firm guideline on deadlines for late work, but teachers can correct. And it, and should is what the language is. Yes, that's correct. And that's something that we envision teachers doing in their CLTs at the school level is establishing clear and consistent guidelines for late work based on grade level, likely grade level at the middle school and content area at the high school. So it doesn't say specifically, we didn't want to put a specific number on it if someone was out or couldn't collect that work, but we did say that they

[00:24:47] should have one. So hopefully that that will also help empower teachers to feel like they can do that work. So just wanted to add that on. Thank you. One more thing is the, okay, yeah, let me go. The one other thing, I just want to piggyback on her real quick. The one thing, if the teachers are just making more and more assessments every time, then that gives them less time to work with the kids who are struggling because they're spending so much time outside making the assessment, giving

[00:25:21] the assessment grading the assessment if we have that 80 percent floor um because and so what i might be interested in is if we are if if the board decides as a whole to move down to 75 percent i would be interested um in taking some or figuring out how to take some data on how much that really, or some perception or something, observation from the teachers, is that really

[00:25:53] decreasing your load? So, Dr. Deans. Yes, ma'am. I just wanted to say that the logistics of retake should not put any more work on the teacher. If you have a building that has three IB geometry classes, then that building has established what day the reteach is and what day the retakes are. And those reteaching and retakes are not done during the class period.

[00:26:32] And if that is so, then that would save teachers to do their collaboration with each other rather than each individual teacher reteaching every subject. They can reteach, you know, study session on Tuesday and Thursday for math, on Monday and Wednesday for reading or writing or language arts or whatever. I think the school has to deal with that logistics, not let individual teachers have to deal with it. And when that logistics is established, kids know it. And they say,

[00:27:13] okay, I won't be on Thursday because I'm going to stay for reteaching. I'm going to stay for remediation. I mean, there are things that buildings can do, not individual teachers. I guess I'm looking at it's not just AP and IB.

[00:27:29] It's for every single class, that 80% floor, too, I believe. Ms. Chandler and then Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair. I find myself very open to all of the proposed edits.

[00:27:47] I can't say that I've completely made a decision, but I am definitely very open. I want our schools to prepare our students at each stage. and that's one of the things I've always been a little bit perplexed by that in my year 13 at LCPS is sometimes there's more homework in a lower grade and then there's no homework and then you have a ton of homework and and you know I guess it's it's the experience I'm having now with a senior who takes mostly classes that are meant to prepare her for college and and ultimately

[00:28:23] that's what i hope that she will get from her lcps experience is the ability to to go to college or perhaps a student can go into the workforce and be prepared rigor is essential to that the only hesitation i feel and it's very hard to articulate i can't necessarily say exactly what my hesitation is based on but i'm thinking about students who um might be english language learners and i don't want anything in this policy to be too rigid or

[00:29:01] punitive where people really are working towards mastering um and i i just i that would be an area where i would really love to hear more feedback um and and that might be oh um dr ellis i'd be happy to hear what you think i didn't mean to cut you off um so but i did want to add i think it's important for me to point out a couple of significant changes in the policy that are in

[00:29:33] the draft that I think address teachers concerns while still allowing assessment and grading to reflect mastery of the content rather than compliance because I think that's really what this conversation is about or is sort of narrowing down to and so we have taken great strides and I have to give a huge shout out to Dr. Blakelock, who has been leading the charge behind the scenes.

[00:30:04] He says he's just the mouthpiece of the data, but he has really helped navigate this project. And he probably came up with the most solid definition of reasonable effort, which is, by the way, really difficult to define. But we have actually put the definition of reasonable effort into the policy and then referenced it specifically for the floor of 50 and reassessments so in line on line 335 says the floor of 50 it explains what it is and it says to address this LCPS supports a minimum grade of 50 percent quarter grades and

[00:30:41] final grades for students who have demonstrated a reasonable effort throughout the quarter so if a student is abusing the grading policy the floor of 50 does not apply. Additionally under reassessments we've added the same language line 353 reassessments of only major summative assessments so we've already narrowed it only to summative assessments to students who scored below an 80 percent and have demonstrated reasonable effort to complete all

[00:31:20] homework and formative assessments. So I just point that out to say that we recognize we hear teachers loud and clear that there are students abusing this policy and there are just as many students who really need that in order to support their growth and their mastery of the content so I don't know if that helps at all but we've really tried to tighten up the policy in those areas Ms. LaBelle thank you madam chair there's a couple of things that I I've heard tonight that I think we need to address first of all reteaching the

[00:31:59] The teacher, as it has been pointed out, is not only responsible for going back and reteaching students that have not mastered a concept, but also trying to put into place and progress with the curriculum as assigned.

[00:32:15] That in itself is difficult enough. The next thing that I heard was that reteaching could take place and you could assign teachers on certain days, like reading one day, math another, history maybe another, or science, First of all, when would you do it?

[00:32:33] Students aren't always available during a certain period during the day, and we do not ask teachers or even assign them to do reteaching work or any kind of work after the regular school hours.

[00:32:48] So when would you do this reteaching? Students can come in early if they want, if the teacher wants to invite them, but we cannot require teachers to do that. So that's two things. The other main thing that I wanted to say when we started this conversation is that usually we describe grades with words.

[00:33:14] With A being superior, B being above average, C being average, D meaning needs improvement, and F is failing in performance. So when you look at those descriptions, and you look at the grade number codes that go with them, all A's are in the 90s range, all B's are in the 80s, C's are 70s, D's are 60s, and anything under 59 or under is an F.

[00:33:47] So when you look at that, students, if we assign the ability to do a retake at 80%, we're telling a student who's already above average that, oh yeah, you can take this and see if you can get an A. An above average student has the ability to stretch to get that A. An above average student knows how to study, knows how to move forward, and knows how to ask questions if they don't understand something. We talk about rigor. We talk about preparing for college,

[00:34:26] giving them a 75 or even an 80 is not preparing them for college. Retakes, even one or two or three retakes per content piece is not preparing them for college.

[00:34:45] So I think we really need to look at this in terms of rigor. If there are carve-outs, if there are opportunities for teachers to help struggling students, such as special ed students, ELL students, students in these types of categories.

[00:35:01] That's great, that's the way it should be. But just giving everybody a blanket, okay, you've already above average, see if you can make it to superior. That's not teaching rigor. I would personally, if I were given the opportunity, say 70% is where we should be putting it.

[00:35:22] You are average, you wanna reach forward, Move forward, stretch a little. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Mr. Streffi. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[00:35:39] I've been told I have to speak into the microphone directly. First and foremost, I just want to acknowledge to what Ms. Chernoff said in the beginning, that I very much appreciate the work that was

put in by the committee members on this, and just really making this discussion, this very difficult discussion, as easy as possible.

[00:36:00] there's so much to synthesize, and I appreciate all the points that were brought up. For me, what I really want to focus, kind of the perspective that I want to share is really on how are we asking students to engage in the learning process through things like the retake policy and the floors.

[00:36:22] And I thought about this, and I'm similar to Ms. Chandler, I can kind of go either way here, I'm pretty flexible, but I really think I'm more supporting the solid C strategy here, and it's not just as simple as rigor or preparing students.

[00:36:44] I think for me it's how are we asking them to show up when and approach the content the first time, and then the trust that we're putting into our teachers and our staff to be able to get that student to a place that they want to be and to fulfill their potential.

[00:37:05] I heard words like stretch, how do we get them to stretch? And I don't know that getting them to be for retake is the way we get them to think about stretching themselves. And so for me, I agree with Ms. LaBelle as well around there are students with unique circumstances that we have to really think about those scenarios.

[00:37:29] But across the board, I think it's potentially a-- I would like to see how this works out for the division moving to 75%. And I also agree with-- at this point, I agree with Dr. Rashid around the IB program piece as well.

[00:37:52] That sounds like the right strategy. It sounds very prudent to drop the IB piece. but it's just a matter of how do we get students to be comfortable with discomfort.

[00:38:07] It's not about the grade, it's not about the letter, it's about the fact that they feel the need to really apply themselves and what that does to their psychology, right? And when they enter the classroom, how are they feeling about what they're going to try to accomplish and where they are in the classroom?

[00:38:30] Don't want to make this too philosophical, but that's really where I've landed on this. - Thank you, Mr. Estreffi. Before, Ms. LaBelle, I was wondering if our instructional leader, Dr. Spence, had any thoughts. Do you have any thoughts, Dr. Spence?

[00:38:47] - I have lots of thoughts. I have lots of thoughts about grading. I would commend also the committee discussion. I think it's been a pretty robust discussion. I think it's been thoughtful and a lot of feedback has been received And it's clear that the committee, the board committee as well as staff, have been trying to figure out how to take that feedback and mold it into something manageable.

[00:39:16] So I'm appreciative of that. I don't think, absent no policy on grading, I don't think you're going to find something that pleases everybody. I think the important underlying issues for me are, are we structuring grading in such a way that students are held accountable?

[00:39:36] I think that's absolutely critical. And I think the criticisms of implementation of the grading policy as it was are fair in as much as there are concerns about accountability. I also think it is important for us to understand that not all students learn at the same pace and that there are students who may need additional time or additional opportunities to demonstrate mastery at the core of the – how much do you want me to go here, Chair Mansfield?

[00:40:09] We have all night, Dr. Spence. I'll try to I'll try to be brief I mean I have to say I do value your opinion and you've done this for a very long time so I do want to hear your thoughts so so I'll try to be as brief as I can but I would say you know with regards to the whole thing I think you have to step back from the policy and ask a question and the question that I try to ask when thinking about grading what is the purpose of a grade and I think that's the most important question right When you're thinking about how do you apply a policy around grading?

[00:40:46] What is the purpose of a grade? So a grade generally, as it's understood at least kind of in terms of the research on the effectiveness of grading, is a communication between a student, a family, and a teacher about the mastery of the content.

[00:41:04] So this is what we've been studying. This is what we've been learning. How well do you understand this? How well are you able to apply the knowledge and skills that we have tried together in class to develop to an assessment that we have determined is a good assessment of those knowledge and skills. So when you look at how we think about grading, the biggest question we should be asking is, does that grade effectively communicate what I just said? And if the grading practice is structured in such a way that it does grade, I'm all for it. Does that incorporate the

[00:41:42] understanding that not all students learn at the same time? Does that incorporate the understanding that conditions for studying and learning are different for different students depending on what's going on in the family depending on what's going on in their lives depending on a lot of different variables that happen when kids come to school great I'm all for it does it reflect kind of a sense of a reasonableness great I'm all for it and then when you when you put all those things together is it also making sure that we're holding students accountable and that our teachers we're

[00:42:17] not asking our teachers to do unreasonable things so I think those are really tricky things to accomplish in a policy and I think ultimately this this does that I don't know I the one thing I would say I struggle with is the lowering of what a student can earn based on a retake right if the board has decided through its policy that a retake is a reasonable thing for a student to do the board is essentially saying we recognize there may be times and maybe it's how we define those times but we recognize there are times when a student

[00:42:57] legitimately did not master the material at the pace that we needed them to master it or there were other things that got in the way and now they've come back and if they've demonstrated they have mastered it at an advanced level and deserve an A or an above average level using the definitions that Ms. LeBeau was talking about then I think for us to say well that's all great but because you didn't do it in my timeframe or because you experienced some things that were challenging for you before you took this assessment, I'm only gonna let you be average today.

[00:43:30] I think that that is troubling for me. So that's the area where I think I do disagree, but on most of the other things, I think the board and the committee wrestling with the policy have tried very hard to strike a balance between what's reasonable, what holds kids accountable, and what does acknowledge that things happen differently

[00:43:51] different kids. Thank you, Dr. Spence. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair. There are two things that I forgot to add. One of the things when I was speaking about all the things that the teachers are trying to juggle in the classroom, I forgot to add that we are also doing SOL reviews. Students are pulled

from classes, teachers during their planning time have to give up some time to be able to sit down with students and reteach what is needed in order for them to

[00:44:26] pass SOLs. So that's another biggie that I did forget to put in and deserves to be said. The other thing that I wanted to say is we did have a meeting with special programs just before coming in here. And one of the things that we learned is, and correct me if I'm wrong, Mr.

[00:44:43] Slevin, the IB classes have a different way of or set of requirements for assessing students' work, and so us being able to apply our grading policy to IB students is inappropriate, would you say, Mr. Slevin? Was that what I understood? I think that would be more appropriate in conversations related to our dual enrollment courses than with IB. We have more flexibility with our IB courses.

[00:45:18] Okay, thank you. And one more thing I do want to say, having been a teacher, any teacher worth her salt knows her students. If they have all of a sudden dropped in performance, have a grade that looks a little odd, that teacher is going to go and try to find out what happened. Was it because a student misunderstood what was being taught? Was it because there was a problem with the family? Were they sick the day before or the day of the assessment? That teacher is going to

[00:45:52] to ask. No teacher is going to deny a student a chance to better themselves if she has the opportunity to do so. So that being said, I think that's an important thing to keep in mind. Teachers are not evil. Thank you. Thanks, Ms. LaBelle. Vice Chair Donohue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[00:46:15] Thank you, Dr. Ellis, for the presentation. And I apologize to my colleagues for being late, but I was listening while I was driving here. I just had a question that may or may not be appropriate in in this conversation but do we provide guidance to our teachers on how to respond when for example parents a parent wants a child to do a retake but the child doesn't want to do a retake and/or parents want multiple retakes want for grades to be changed those kind of situations so those

[00:46:51] conversations happen at the school level and I would say that schools have different protocols but mostly the teacher should be the first point of contact and retakes should happen between in a conversation between the teacher and the and the student so I don't really have any more specific information than that if you're thinking of any specific examples or anything like that i don't have that information but that really happens at the school level in terms of

[00:47:25] moving forward it is not addressed in policy and could be something that is in the guidance for teachers thank you dr ellis i was curious about that because that is a concern that i've heard teachers raise frequently is feeling like right when when a parent contacts them and pushes hard about what they think the appropriate grade should be for their child that not all of our teachers

[00:47:56] feel like they have the support they need to push back against that. Thank you. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. You know I have to close it out. I just wanted to thank you guys. This was really helpful and I will definitely be reflective certainly about the IB and the different amendments to bring forward and I'm really grateful to hear your perspective because we've been on a long journey in a small group but this has been really helpful so I thank you and I am really you know when I think about all the conversations that we've had I just keep going back to the philosophy

[00:48:35] in lines nine through you know 58 that really just outline what the core values are about the policy and I think a lot of that can be addressed in there when you talk about how to answer these different extenuating circumstances and certainly my hope is that some of that will also be cleared up in

the regulation piece and the handbook as we look to develop these for the long term but I'm just grateful to you all for entering into the dialogue so appreciative thank you. Thank you

[00:49:07] Dr. Ellis. Appreciate all your work on this and thank you team for that. Okay and thank you to the committee members for taking it on. We will now move on to I guess let's see 13.03 finance and Operations Committee revision of policy 40/20 student fees and charges presented by Mr. Streffi, chair of the Finance and Operations Committee. Mr. Streffi. Thank you Madam Chair. Board members, before you is policy 40/20 student fees and

[00:49:46] charges. These were minor updates to the policy to reflect some of the changes to the internal practices and regulations. Not very many substantive changes it's just worthwhile to note that the board or the committee last February not this past February but in 2024 included the removal of CTE supplemental materials fees from students which you'll see in the in the information item includes a

[00:50:23] bunch of CTE materials that were previously you know charged to students including stuff from Academies of Loudoun and Mata. And so we've removed the barriers for those students to access those materials and have those out-of-pocket expenses.

[00:50:41] But I'll just stop there and see if Mrs. Casale wants to add anything above and beyond what I mentioned. The only one thing I'd like to add is on line 66, that was more of a larger removal of the graduation ceremonies.

[00:51:00] That's a notable change. Could you speak a little bit more into the mic? sorry line 66 that's a notable change as well removing graduation ceremonies thank you board members you have any uh questions discussion thoughts nope um okay well we will move on um do you want to put this thumbs up for consent action for the next meeting okay that will go on consent

[00:51:38] for our next the april 8th school board meeting okay we'll move on to 13.04 i think yes legislative audit and policy committee revision of policy 2510 school community community communications and community involvement presented by april chandler who is the chair of the lanp committee thank you madam chair um we are bringing forth tonight um policy 2510 community communications

[00:52:15] and community involvement the purpose of this policy really is to outline effective communication strategies that are meant to reach all the segments of our community from parents and teachers students members of the community even businesses and civic organizations that might not be directly invested parties in our school system.

[00:52:37] That said, this policy was brought forth because of some comments that arose in our retreat. We had a fulsome discussion in committee around not only the frequency of newsletters, but also how we should address the delineation of board members assigned schools.

[00:53:00] And the primary changes that are brought forth and policy are related to an effort to make it more clear to the community who represents specific schools and I look forward to the discussion. Thank you. Board members? Yes. Dr.

[00:53:17] Rashid. Thank you chair and thank you Ms. Mansfield. I mean Ms. Chandler. I am very excited for this. This is going to bring lots of clarity and it'll be more clear to the community. It'll be clear to the parents. It'll be clear more to the students. I really look forward to this and it also definitely brings me

clarity as well. Um, and you know, when it comes to, I guess, reaching out in terms of communication, this will really bring a lot, uh, really get rid of all the confusion that is out there. Thanks. Thank you, Dr. Rashid. Uh, yes, Ms. Chernoff. I just wanted to share something that

[00:53:53] I learned that you might not go back and listen to in committee, which is we talked a lot about newsletters and receiving everybody's newsletters and in their inbox, but on the website under each of our little faces is a tab and a link to all of our newsletters that we've ever posted. So if people did want to, by choice, go see all the different newsletters, they have that opportunity.

[00:54:14] And I did not know that. So I wanted to share that with the public in case they wanted to, you know, in their free time, peruse our newsletters. So thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other? Yes. Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. I noticed MSAC had a good point, I think about civic organizations or other organizations contacting board members because they wouldn't fall into this new language of individuals who reside in our district.

[00:54:48] But that being said, certainly the policy as drafted does not prohibit us from responding to inquiries or communications from sources like that. So I thought it was worth bringing up. Not sure if it's necessary to make any changes the policy in that regard but did want to did want to raise it also I in rereading this again we state on lines 120 to 121 to 22 of the red line lcps school websites should list only the

[00:55:26] board member who represents the families of the voters residing within the voting district that encompasses that school building and I know I've raised this before my kids go to a Leesburg district school we don't reside like my home address is not in Leesburg district it's actually in Little River district so I'm I suspect that there's not a lot of families that fall into no there are weird situation but there are quite a few families who fall into that situation and currently

[00:56:03] on our websites the reason why there are potentially multiple school board members listed on sites is because the voting districts do not align with our attendance zone districts so as it's closer than it was before redistricting but basically what has happened is there's some overlap so just using dr.

[00:56:27] Rasheed's district as an example she has you know multiple schools within her district but then she also has people who vote for her whose kids might go to Heritage High School for example which is not physically within Little River and so that's why she is listed on the Heritage High School website right now because she has a small you know contingent of kids who go to Heritage High School who reside within her district within her voting district so there is some overlap with that I think most of you have at least some of that

[00:57:02] thank you for clearing yeah any other questions thoughts comments okay thank you miss Chandler um do we want this to go on consent okay that will go on consent for April 8th meeting okay the next one is 13.05 department of teaching learning English 6 through 8 primary resources review presented by mr. Neal Slevin our assistant superintendent for teaching and

[00:57:37] learning actually would that go yeah I guess it is you guys it's not curriculum instruction too yeah thank you chair Mansfield members of the board I'm happy to be here tonight for the first

[00:58:11] of two information items on textbook adoptions we'll start with our English 6-8 instructional resource recommendation first as a reminder to the board the adoption for middle school 6-8 is as a result of the Virginia Literacy Act last year the board adopted instructional materials for k-5 to make sure we are

in compliance and the act allowed for an additional year for preparation for middle school hence we're bringing this to you as an adoption out of cycle

[00:58:47] this process started in november of 2024 where we invited all approved vendors or publishers to participate in our local adoption process in december review committee members were invited to participate and I'll provide you an overview of who those people were and in January the review committee were provided the resources February publishers came and presented to the selection committee and we went over the process for scoring and for the same time we determined two finalists

[00:59:21] those two finalists were submitted to DDI for technical reviews and interface reviews and we We then opened up for initial public feedback and school staff feedback with open comment. We did have this scheduled as an information item last week.

[00:59:38] Because this was moved to this week, our regulation does require that the materials are available to the public for 30 days following the information item. So we're gonna start that clock tonight and that'll push the action on this item to the May 6th school board meeting, which will give us plenty of time to go through procurement and have these materials ready.

[00:59:59] we want to make sure that we are able to have as much of a public process as possible with our adoptions. So hence, moving it to the first meeting in May instead of the last meeting in April. The VDOE reviewed multiple programs through a process similar to what they went through with our K-5 materials, and these were all of the programs that we reviewed internally.

[01:00:21] We had Savvis Learning, Amplify Education, HMH, McGraw-Hill, and Perfection Learning Connections literature 2024 our steering committee based on the new textbook adoption policy which the school board recently convened adopted the steering committee was made up mostly of classroom teachers we had a total of 45 participants we also had administrators facilitators and specialists and community members and parents and you can see on this slide the members of the steering committee we had middle school teachers from across grade six seven and eight and across all 18 of our

[01:01:00] schools. We had representation from English learner classrooms, students with disabilities, gifted reading, and classroom teachers. We had representation from the division office, from the office of English learners, special education, and secondary English and reading. And we also had representation from our committee members, our advisory groups, MSAC, SEAC, LEAF, the gifted education association committee, and general community members who volunteered to participate.

[01:01:30] Scoring was, a scoring rubric was developed in alignment with the Virginia 2024 standards of learning as well as Scarborough's reading rope and the requirements of the VLA for research-based instructional practices. You can see the rubric on this slide. It's hard to read, but if you go into the appendix that's included as an information item in BoardDocs, you can see more information about that rubric.

[01:01:52] This slide shows the scoring of the initial steering committee scores, and based on the scores, there was a recommendation to go with a top two finalist between Savas Learning and Amplify Education.

[01:02:08] This went out for public feedback, as well as middle school English teachers were able to provide feedback, and you can see their scoring on this slide across the rubric.

[01:02:30] And as you could tell, we had two products that were similarly reviewed, but ultimately Savas was the one with a higher score. For the technical review, DDI reviewed the technical requirements documentation provided for each publisher and determined both met the requirements of our network, offered integration and SSO options, and could be supported.

[01:02:51] Savas realized is currently utilized in LCPS, whereas Amplify would be a new integration, but if we did go with that recommendation, that would not be an issue. Instructional Technology recommended Schoology integrations for both resources, that's important to our teachers and our schools for seamless integration.

[01:03:08] This is supported by the providers. And there was an observation during the review process that Amplify utilized a lot of digital PDFs while Savvis was more interactive and engaging. As far as accessibility goes, the recommended digital resource will reside on an integrated digital platform used in LCPS, Savvis realized.

[01:03:29] Print text will also be available in alternative formats for students who require it. And there's more information on the accessibility review if you follow those links. So the recommendation for the adoption is Savas My Perspective.

[01:03:47] The steering committee ranked Savas My Perspective 91% and Amplify 87% well above the other programs. Each grade level CLT ranked Savas My Perspectives above Amplify 79% and 73% respectively.

[01:04:02] And then when results are disaggregated by grade level, each middle school grade level also selected SAVAS, my perspective, as a better program that matched the whole. DDI noticed that these programs are compatible. SAVAS realizes also currently in LCPS, whereas Amplify would be a new integration.

[01:04:19] SAVAS offers a wide variety of features for accessibility and adaptability, and both programs are approved by the VDOE. So for next steps, these resources will be available for public preview. They are out in the lobby for folks to review.

[01:04:35] If they want to see them in person, they're also available online. A communication will be sent out this evening, inviting community members to participate in this final phase of the adoption. And at the May 6th meeting, the school board will take action on the recommendation to adopt SAVAS by perspective.

[01:04:50] We will then work to order materials, plan for professional learning, going to next school year, and begin the process of designing and writing new curriculum immediately after the April school board meeting. We'll also be able to get early digital access established with a vendor, so teachers can access these materials prior to leaving for the summer, while we may be waiting for the physical materials to make it in.

[01:05:13] So with that, I'm happy to answer any questions or receive any feedback on this recommendation for the Middle School English Resource Adoption. - School board members, do you have any questions? - Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. - Thank you, Madam Chair. Just feedback only, excuse me.

[01:05:31] According to pages three, four, and 13 of the Middle School English Resource Adoption Appendix, when these programs are reviewed, We are scoring on the following. The content features

materials and content that are for diverse to represent different cultures and ethnicities.

[01:05:50] The content and interface must be culturally sensitive, free from stereotypes and bias. The text images are gender fair and free of racial, ethnic, and cultural bias or stereotypes. We must have programs that support diverse learners, of course, but we should not be focusing on identity, race, or culture.

[01:06:13] We are still dealing with COVID and learning loss, and I think that's of utmost importance. So I would personally like to put the focus back on our students and how to read. I don't know why we're focusing on those areas and scoring.

[01:06:29] That's just feedback from me. Thank you. - Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. So I have real concerns with our sixth through eighth graders because these are the kids who were hit most through COVID during their foundational instruction.

[01:06:49] These are the kids who were taught online. They were taught with Lucy Calkins. They were taught with Words Their Way, which is owned by Savas. They were also taught with Fontas and Pinnell. And all of those programs and instructional resources are not on the VDOE approved list.

[01:07:06] We all know that from the science of reading that our brains are not wired for reading, that our brains are not pre-wired to translate letters into sounds, and therefore reading must be directly and explicitly taught. And that's how we change the function of the brain to rewire it to read.

[01:07:22] For example, we don't learn to read like we learn how to speak, which is through exposure. We also know from research that if students aren't taught effectively by second grade, reading difficulties will persist. And that's why I have a real concern about these particular sets of kids in sixth grade.

[01:07:43] They did not get that foundational instruction because how could they? It was COVID. And I'm just saying this not to belittle anything or what we did. It's just that we understand this population and why I feel compelled to speak about it.

[01:08:00] And I'm afraid we'll see more issues with fluency, spelling, writing, and comprehension. And that's why I think the curriculum that when we start looking at this curriculum, I think that it needs to be direct and explicit and cumulative. And I'm afraid that in the middle grades, we feel like we make these assumptions that certain skills in middle school, like spelling rules, should be review.

[01:08:26] And I don't know that that's going to be the case right now. I think instead of review, it's actually going to be new to some of these kids. So they're going to need more help with fluency, greater attention to vocabulary, morphology, and just increasing their world domain knowledge to help with comprehension.

[01:08:46] And I know that Amplify is focused on building knowledge. I have a concern with SAVAS because I feel it's more of the same as opposed to something different. And I feel like this particular generation of 6th to 8th graders might need something different than what we had before.

[01:09:05] And so I'm really interested in more conversation and for people in the public to really look at these resources and provide input. Because the 6th through 8th grade is a population that's important right now.

[01:09:25] Anybody else? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. And I always do really appreciate your thoughts and background and all the advocacy that you've done in the literacy world. And I, in full disclosure, have not had a chance to sit down and really dig deep into the resources.

[01:09:45] I do plan to over the next 30 days. I am torn as well. I have, my kids are sitting right in that range. We were all teaching and learning online together in that time. And so I agree with you.

[01:10:01] I think we're seeing gaps, foundational gaps in middle schoolers, unlike anything we've ever experienced. And I know through our committee, through curriculum instruction, we've focused a lot on those things. And, in fact, tomorrow we're going to talk about vowels in grades four through eight.

[01:10:17] So what that impact will be in highlighting the kids that do need additional intervention. And so we really need to have a strong core instruction. The piece that I'm struggling with is the feedback piece because we really, per policy and per best practice, we engage with the people who are working with these students and who know our students.

[01:10:37] And it seemed very clear on its face that this was the winner, if you will, across all categories but i will definitely be taking um your thoughts and what you said into consideration as i view these resources and i too am relying on um others to do the same and hope that we can get to a very clear um decision because it is going to be important in guiding not just the foundational knowledge of these three years where kids have these gaps but a continued trickle down as we now have HMH, and we're trying to, you know, push more systematic explicit instruction, and I'm

[01:11:16] looking forward to tomorrow night in committee having that conversation about what that identification process for intervention is going to look like. So all the things are kind of swirling right now, I think, at the right time, and I'm glad that we have a little bit of time, but so appreciate your insights and also the insights of the committee, and I'm going to try and balance the two because if we take feedback, I do think it's important to listen, but also need to foundationally understand. Thank you. Any other? No. Thank you, Mr. Slevin. And those, they're outside now because they weren't earlier. Will they be there tonight or tomorrow? They are

[01:11:56] there now. Okay. So they weren't there earlier this afternoon, but yay. Thank you for putting out there. Okay, the next one, Mr. Slevin, if you'll just stay put. 13.06, Department of Teaching and Learning, Math K-12 Primary Resources Review by Mr. Neal Slevin, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. Mr. Slevin. Okay, so I do thank you, Chair Mansfield. I recognize this presentation has more slides, but we're going to go through it fairly quickly because we do have different recommendations for the different courses. I will not take till 10, but I'll go

[01:12:31] through quickly but I'll be happy to answer any questions you have. So similar to the ELA adoption I kind of want to start with some background. We are on our timeline for this particular adoption for a seven-year adoption. We have been working with the VDOE in terms of them developing recommendations for instruction materials but unlike the Virginia Literacy Act we're not required to adopt any of their particular materials, but they do review textbooks for alignment to the new standards that they have developed. And so this is more of a traditional textbook adoption

[01:13:11] than the previous presentation that I just did on ELA. So in December of 2024, the Office of Mathematics worked with procurement to develop an RFP to vendors. In February of this year, a review committee was launched and in February 19th and 20th elementary and secondary committees reviewed and scored materials and narrowed down to a finalist based on the particular grade level or course. Between February 24th and March 14th the public schools and DDI reviewed the finalists with open comment. March 5th and 6th the vendor presentations from the top resources were held

[01:13:48] for the review committee and the committee made a recommendation. On March 12th and 13th school math leads reviewed materials and made recommendations and i'm here tonight as an information item to the school board similar to the middle school ela adoption we are going to delay action to the may 6 item to make sure we get that full 30 days for one final opportunity to engage with our stakeholders i would share that i want to give a big shout out of appreciation to our math teachers they were so engaged in this process and were very interested in a lot of back and forth in dialogue particularly through our let's talk platform when it came to these resources

[01:14:26] so they took full advantage to engage in this important conversation we did of course have a diverse set of courses that needed to be considered in grade levels for the k-12 adoption so the committee was somewhat larger but as per policy the majority the vast majority of members of the committee were our classroom teachers we also had administrators and we also had members of the community from our advisory committees you could see the breakdown here we had elementary and middle school, high school teachers from kindergarten to AP calculus BC across 67 schools.

[01:15:00] We had English learners, teachers, students with disabilities, gifted and classroom teachers, coaches, facilitators, and administrators. We had central office staff from teaching and learning as well as student services, DEIA and HRTD. And we also had community members involved, general community members, MSAC, SEAC, LEAF, and GEAC. We'll start with our elementary K-5 resources. All the curriculum resources reviewed are VDOE approved. We reviewed Accelerate, Curriculum Associates, Houdin-Mifflin, Harcourt, Kittum, and Math Learning Center. Based on the

[01:15:39] scoring in round two, we are making the recommendation for the core resource to be Kittum, Illustrative Mathematics, and for our digital practice and skill building tool, Magma Math. For middle schools, Math 6 and 7 resources specifically, these five resources were reviewed by the VDOE and were approved and they were also reviewed by us. The recommendation for math six and seven after round two for the core resource with math space as well as the accompanying digital and practice and skill building tool math space. For middle school pre-algebra and high school

[01:16:18] algebra one geometry two geometry and algebra two there were five I'm sorry six resources that were submitted and reviewed all of them were approved by the VDOE and based on the feedback MathSpace was the clear recommendation for that particular grade level, as well as MathSpace being the accompanying digital practice and skill building tool.

[01:16:44] For high school math courses above Algebra 2, such as trigonometry, there are some cases where there was only one response to the RFP. And for pre-calculus, we had three items that were reviewed, and the recommendations are as seen here with 100%.

[01:17:03] For probability and statistics and AP statistics, you can see the materials that were reviewed and the recommendations for each of those courses with the accompanying data.

[01:17:21] And if you go into BoardDocs, there is an appendix similar to the ELA adoption with a much more detailed breakdown of this material if you have an interest in that. For AP Precalculus and AP Calculus A, B, and C, you can see the materials that were reviewed and then the recommendation for each of these courses.

[01:17:41] Similar to the middle school ELA adoption, we appreciate our partnership with DDI and our instructional technology team, review the recommended resources, and they can be supported on our

network and infrastructure with Schoology integrations available.

[01:18:00] I would note there are physical materials out in the lobby. It's not all digital. So while we do have a digital component, there are also physical materials for each of these resources. We also had an accessibility and adaptability review done.

[01:18:17] Cengage, BFW, Pearson resources will reside on existing LCPS digitally integrated platforms and all platforms meet web content accessibility guidelines and offer accessibility features in Schoology integration. KITM, MagmaMath, and Mathspace resources will reside on a new digital platform, but they meet WCAG standards, offer accessibility features, and support Schoology integration.

[01:18:42] Public comment was also considered for this recommendation. We received over 200 comments, both supportive and critical of specific resources as noted, particularly with our elementary recommendation and our middle school recommendation.

[01:19:00] And you could see the two resources recommended received mostly positive comments with some critical feedback. So the next steps is we are going into the review period for recommended resources. We'll remain open for the public through May 2nd.

[01:19:17] We encourage the public to visit our website or to visit the lobby here at the admin building to view the physical copies of the materials. And we'll ask that the school board take action to either adopt or not adopt recommended resources for math grade K-12 during the May 6th meetings.

[01:19:34] And once that occurs, we can begin ordering and planning for professional learning for next year. I would note it's gonna be a big year for our math teachers. That's why they were so engaged. They know the impact this is gonna have. So again, I just wanna appreciate them for their participation and also the leadership of the Office of Mathematics as they navigated this adoption.

[01:19:55] So happy to take any questions or feedback. Thank you, Mr. Slevin. Dr. Deans. There was just one area where you only had one book, one, I think it was Trig and Algebra 2.

[01:20:12] We're only going to look at one? I mean, is that the only company that produces? Yes, that was the only company that responded to the RFP. That responded, but there must be others that produce Trig and Algebra 2, right?

[01:20:31] that is the so we did we were working through the RFP process for that particular one I didn't hear you we we we are working through the RFP process with procurement so we'd be reviewing the materials and so if the board wanted us to expand and go back that that could be something that would could be recommended yes mr. Griffiths thank you madam chair um I feel like when we you do these presentations uh you're trying to reinvent the wheel um when it comes to teaching basic skills

[01:21:11] Can we just teach our students how to read and stop focusing on all the equity in the SEL? According to page four of the mathematics K-12 resource adoption recommendation, DEI and human resources were part of the instructional resource adoption committee.

[01:21:29] Can you explain the roles that they had with this? I also had a couple more questions, but I'm just, I fail to understand why we have to put everything in there. just can't we just do the the skills you know make sure our kids can read I believe the members that participate in HRTD were our instructional coaches in our mentoring office we have coaches that support new teachers and so we try to be inclusive

and invitational to participate I would express appreciation for our partnership with members of the DEIA team in bringing a lens

[01:22:08] to consider the cultural responsiveness of the instruction materials that are being in place when you look at our policies regarding when you look at our school board policies regarding selection of instruction materials we talk about mitigating bias we talk about materials that represent the values and the diversity of our community and so we are fulfilling school board policy by following a process that has that lens in the process i think i mentioned before i don't understand how that fits into math and instruction. Page 19 and 26 of

[01:22:44] Mathematic Resource Adoption Appendix, all potential resources were assessed for the following general criteria. Instructional resources affirm diverse perspectives and experiences by engaging teachers and students in deeper learning around cultural literacy, authentic challenging programs, and or open-ended, driving questions, including issues of justice and equity.

[01:23:10] Instructional resources respond to the needs of students in the school community, empower student voices, and culturally affirm the identities of those who have been traditionally underserved. This is instruction. One more.

[01:23:26] Instructional resources provide a balance of diverse perspectives, experiences, and roles, including but not limited to race, religion, citizenship status, gender, ability, family status, age.

[01:23:41] I mean, I guess I'm confused as to how any of this should, I mean, I'm looking for basic skills here. How does all this other stuff fit in? Dr. Spence, I'm wondering, isn't there like a standards, like what, seven or something, cultural competency from VDOE?

[01:24:02] Standard six. standard six yes so I'm looking for your particular the where you're referencing but when you think about materials even in math books there are there are representations of people and we try we value real world authentic experiences in our classrooms and so I think about an earlier experience we had at one time where we adopted a resource where most of the characterize most of the characters that were showing up, particularly the African American characters and the stories and examples that were used, were displayed in a poor light. We actually

[01:24:42] had a community partner that came and said 90% of the depictions of African American students in this series of books are shown to be in a negative behavior or some kind of reinforcing stereotype. Those are the type of things that we want to reduce or eliminate within the classrooms within LCPS and so when we're going through the process of selecting instruction materials we don't want to put families or the school system in that position again because we want we want the materials to to to match our values and so while we may not be thinking about dividing polynomials with with a

[01:25:20] culturally responsive lens it's the approach we take to teaching that particular content and how the students is experiencing it is what we are tasked with considering in the department of teaching and learning um so that is one example of an actual misstep that we worked to course correct over the time over our time in loudon we looked at those materials we gave feedback to the vendor and we're in a better position than we were at the time and so while that may not be specific to your question about math that's an example of the challenge that we have as instructional leaders in loud and make sure our environments are are effective for all of our students don't get me wrong we must have programs

[01:25:59] that support diverse learners but we should be we should not be focusing on justice identity race or culture that has no place in math as far as i i can see i mean i went to high school i went to public school i don't remember any of that i just did my work i did my math work um i don't know that anybody thinks about that when they're doing their their math so i don't think it has a place there so i just want to make that point thank you thank you mrs griffiths any other questions Yes.

[01:26:29] Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to, I have two questions. One is about the elementary resources. Surprise, surprise. I was very curious to see that Bridges as a core curriculum did not score as high as some of the others, given that we have the Bridges intervention in place.

[01:26:51] And that seems to be pretty popular from what I can tell once people get the resources all sorted out and organized. It seems to be very well-liked by a lot of our math interventionists and especially the hands-on component. So if you could just speak to the difference between the two and maybe shed some light on that.

[01:27:12] And will we still be able to use Bridges as an intervention if we adopt a different curriculum? Thank you for that question. And Bridges has been very well received across our classrooms, both general education and special education, and it will remain an important tool in our toolbox for intervention.

[01:27:30] The main feedback we received regarding Bridges was the level of prep and the materials to handle for full group, whole class instruction. Teachers felt it was much more manageable as an intervention for targeted groups of students that needed it.

[01:27:48] That makes sense. So it would still be available in something we're using in our classrooms. It just wouldn't be the primary instruction material. That does make sense to me. Additionally, this is kind of a question retroactively to literacy as well, and it sort of caught my eye when you talked about DDI and whether or not our networks can support the digital platforms.

[01:28:08] Is there a component for our participants that give feedback to reflect on how much reliance there is on a digital platform? I know we've talked a lot about our digital platforms here, especially in terms of interventions and different things.

[01:28:24] So is that a part of the feedback process where you're evaluating how much is hands-on and how much is digital? I think it really matters for literacy, but I think for hands-on learning, especially for our youngest foundational learners in math, that seems like a no-brainer to me that it would mostly be hands-on and not digital, but I know things are shifting.

[01:28:43] So if you could just shed light on that as well. As you know, as chair of the CNI committee, this is a conversation that's happening across multiple areas within teaching and learning in the division as a whole, as we think about what we want to do with instructional technology and its appropriate use.

[01:29:00] So the short answer, again, is yes. That's something that is considered. As I've shared, that we do have both physical and online resources available, and we want to make sure that there's a balance of each of those. We also are thinking about the digital resources a little bit differently.

[01:29:17] with this adoption we've we've had multiple digital platforms in the past such as dreambox for example or achieve 3000 and we're trying to align the digital tools that exist with the the resources encourage that that use so that it's more aligned and cohesive within the classroom and where there's not an accompanying digital tools such as kiddom we're making one recommendation for use for magma

math so we'll look at that collectively as a whole when we make recommendations of the balance. I think it's a good point also for us to think about for professional learning.

[01:29:51] So that's something that I'm sure the team is listening to now, but we can make sure we focus on when we roll out the professional learning plan to give some thinking behind that. It's good feedback. Mr. Sullivan, we don't still use Achieve 3000, right? Not for a while. We do not. Okay, good. Thanks. Yes, Dr. Deans. I appreciate your using the DEIA and other resources to look at the math curriculum. When I came up to look at the math curriculum, I was looking more for a book that I could hold in my hand so that those geometry angles could be turned upside down and

[01:30:28] right side up. But both digital and hard copy resources are necessary for math as well as through your cultural lenses. So I appreciate that. Thank you. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:30:44] Thank you, Mr. Slevin. I would like to reflect back a little bit on your example. I really appreciate the fact that we are being honest about some ways that we have worked to overcome some past issues, and I will say it matters to me. I am a completely public school educated person, and I went to a school in which I was taught that the Civil War was the war of northern

[01:31:10] aggression. Is that factually true? So when I consider math, yes, math is factual and structurally true, but it's also not an appropriate place to pass on a bias. And so I guess I would just like to ask, and I'd be open to hear from Dr. Ellis Williams or Dr. Spence or from you, Mr. Slevin, What is the amount of students that we represent in our division who identify as some culture other than white?

[01:31:53] At the moment, under the current identities that are listed when our students select in registration, it appears that we are 60% Caucasian and 40% other. But with the new regulations that are coming down through the Office of Civil Rights for identities for West Africa and other continents, that will actually flip to 65 to 70 percent traditionally not minoritized but considered minoritized students versus their caucasian counterparts okay and and why is representation

[01:32:30] important in educational materials because if you can see you can become it there has to be a connection to understanding who you are having knowledge of who you are where you've come from is a great predictor by reasonable research as to when you can actually reach a promise.

[01:32:52] So to not see yourself represented within a construct of the organization that you're attending, to not see yourself represented within a construct of the curriculum and the curriculum infrastructure literally says that you are erased, that you don't exist, that you have no future.

[01:33:09] And that's why it's important. Thank you for that. And then when it comes down to bias, bias is not factual correct could you give us a definition of bias so there's several types of biases one bias is which we see in our dominant culture and societies when we see representation of minoritized groups or traditionally minoritized groups which is now the majority and we see the ramifications of that you see persons of color often represented in the news often represented in television shows with a deficit mindset and model,

[01:33:48] and so it puts the imprint on persons that don't engage with persons of color that that's who they are, the purse clutching in an elevator because traditionally marginalized people will steal from you. So there's several identities that are ideals that are established through the media. When you see on the news who's the person being sought after as being a robber, the person that committed a crime.

[01:34:09] So when we have these thoughts consistently perpetuated through media, through magazines, through television shows. It becomes normalized if you have not had that experience with a human being. So then these biases show up in schools because we're a microcosm of the larger society.

[01:34:27] The young man that, you know, unfortunately was shot in D.C. going to the wrong door was because that gentleman had been socialized to think that if a brown male came to his door that he had to defend himself with lethal force on a 14-year-old boy.

[01:34:44] So these are some of the illnesses of society that permeate our school systems because of the mindset of individuals who have not had the opportunity to be in diverse settings, to learn about other cultures, to embrace the differences that exist in this amazing tapestry that makes Loudoun County so beautiful.

[01:35:02] Thank you so much for that context. I really appreciate it, and I think it is essential that we look for ways to continue to overcome some of the systematic problems that we've had in the past and make space for all of the students that we serve in this county to succeed.

[01:35:22] Thanks, Ms. Chandler. Dr. Deans? And in math, there are word problems, and in the word problems, there are descriptions that can or cannot support the different biases.

[01:35:38] So math is a perfect place to make sure that biases don't exist. So math is not just numbers. Math is also reading and word problems and abstract thinking and et cetera. So I appreciate that, Mr. Sulebin.

[01:35:55] Thank you, Dr. Deans. Okay, so with that, oh, Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. I think we should be looking at test scores to see how DEI programs in math have helped our students.

[01:36:14] I think that would give us a real idea. More data on our test scores as far as we started the department, I think, in 2019. Let's take a look at that data and how it affects math. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Griffiths.

[01:36:34] Okay, we can – thank you, Mr. Slevin. I have no comments about math. not nothing um okay let's move on to item 14 board members comment and committee reports starting with ms labelle three minutes thank you madam chair i see this is my turn to be the beginning end um we've met several times since the beginning of the year i think we met once in

[01:37:10] january and then we were snowed out in february and then we just met in march again um in that time period. We have actually looked at and revised policies on weapons. We just finished looking at corporal punishment and admissions, exclusions and reassignments. That came up under information. We passed it forward to committee for review and we should all be seeing it another month or so as time passes. And that's about all we've been able to do in the SBAC committee as

[01:37:47] well as a couple of appeals. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Dr. Rashid. Thank you, Chair. As a scheduling note, MSAC will not meet in April due to spring break, but the equity celebration is coming up in May, so you can find details about the event at lcpss.org/lcps/msaac. Earlier this afternoon, the Special Programs Committee was presented with overview information about Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, including enrollment numbers for LCPS students and transportation costs.

[01:38:19] We also received an update on bringing the IB program to Parkview High School. LCPS has just recently entered the request for candidacy phase, and the committee will receive more move updates as the process moves along. The SPC committee also voted to approve the 26-27 school year calendar for charter schools.

[01:38:39] That information should be coming to the consent agenda at the next school board meeting. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. Ms. Chernoff. - Thank you, Madam Chair. Last month in the curriculum and instruction meeting, we had, we obviously talked about the grading policy, which is now in our hands here.

[01:38:59] We also discussed the new policy, 5430, use of generative artificial intelligence. So this is more of a foundational policy that supports using AI as a learning and teaching tool. The division has also developed detailed AI guidelines and will update the student rights responsibility handbook to include AI and academic integrity language. We were, we are not, we're actually going to cover that again as an information item as the feedback window is still open on that policy. So we're not going to move that to the full board quite yet, but looking forward to digesting all of the public feedback, especially with the different career fields that, and just the way AI

[01:39:38] is progressing in our community and in our world. So definitely be on the lookout for that. We also got an update on the Trailside and Watson Middle School alternative schedules so we had administrators from those schools and teachers come and present about how their pilots are going both seem to be wildly successful and in survey data and more importantly in achievement data both of these schedules have allowed for flex time that has allowed them to meet the needs of all their MTSS tiered students, and both staff and students and parents of both schools with the two different

[01:40:16] pilots resoundingly want to keep that schedule the next following year. So I thought that was very interesting. We really enjoyed the conversation, hearing from the teachers and the excitement mostly around the data. As I mentioned, tomorrow CNI is meeting again.

[01:40:33] Snuck up on us fast. We're going to talk about the AI policy feedback. We're also going to talk about as I mentioned the vowels assessment and how that's going to be rolled out in grades four through eight and then we are talking about policy 5440 which will be outlining our literacy plan and then we will be reviewing policy 5070 on field trips and then just on a more fun note I just wanted to highlight my visit to Cardinal Ridge Elementary last week I was able to see some of the work that Ms. Sipe is doing as the director of sustainability and the work that they have there with outdoor learning as well as some of their green teams it was an exciting morning that they

[01:41:10] had planned and got to wander through the woods and listen to birds and it was lovely as well as attend dominion high school's international summit and meet some of our students abroad that have just really impressed me with their presentations and some of the issues that they're tackling and surprisingly or not so surprisingly some of those struggles are some of the things that our youth here are also struggling with so it was great to hear from them great day of of student leadership so thank you mr.

[01:41:43] Streffi thank you madam chair on March 18th the performance monitoring committee as we call it PMC met and we got to dive into the vowels and map data and the highlight of that meeting was really the presentation by Madison's Trust Elementary School on how they drive instruction through

through data, through the use of data, specifically assessment data. It was a fabulous presentation. I also wanted to highlight that the Finance and Operations Committee met today

[01:42:21] actually and we we had a full agenda it's a lot of it you'll see in the consent agenda through procurements but two policies I want to call out specifically one was the annual review of walk zones which got heard today in committee and which will also be presented to the full board and then we also asked mr. Lewis and the team to present an information item today regarding the Guilford Elementary School facility update.

[01:42:54] That was a very thorough presentation that not just focused on Guilford Elementary School and the specifics of what we've seen in terms of the outreach from the school and some of the issues, but also what the process is for work orders and how things get resolved on the ground.

[01:43:15] It answered so many of my questions around how things are escalated, recurring issues that might be at a school and how we, you know, what is that back and forth that happens within a school. We talked about modulars and cottages and the fact that we have across the county, we do have many instances of modulars, you know, being quite old, over 20 or 25 years old and just potential areas for, you know, direction from the school board around how we approach modulars or cottages in the future.

[01:43:50] And we just got from A to Z, right, work orders. We got the schedule for Guilford, as well as some of the other schools, specifically Title I schools. And then we got a review of the cap and what's been prioritized and how we look at school renovations versus refreshes.

[01:44:12] And just really see how these things get prioritized and highlighted. So, yes, that's it from me. Vice Chair Donohue. Thank you, Madam Chair. I was late to this meeting because prior to us scheduling it, I had been invited to and RSVP'd to attend the Loudoun Education Foundation's fueled PAC event this evening.

[01:44:37] So I stopped by there. The Loudoun Education Foundation every Tuesday coordinates a group of volunteers that get together and pack meal bags that go out to 1,400 of the families in our community. and it was absolutely amazing to be able to see that process going on.

[01:44:57] Anyone is allowed to volunteer, so if anyone is looking for something to do on a Tuesday night when you don't happen to be here, I encourage you to visit loudeneducationfoundation.org and sign up for a volunteer shift. Also, as has been said recently, it is theater season.

[01:45:16] I attended the Blue Ridge Middle School production of Frozen Junior over the weekend. It was excellent. And I'm aware that there are still plays going on at many of our middle and high schools around the county. Encourage everyone to go out and support the kids who put on those performances.

[01:45:37] At our last Student Services Committee meeting, which was almost two weeks ago, we addressed or commented on a couple of hanging out issues. For one, we, while this board has voted on the revisions to the restraint and seclusion policy, staff is still working on a draft policy related to what we are informally calling isolation and exclusion. And we expect to be able to review a version of that policy in committee before the summer recess. We will also

[01:46:11] be looking forward probably not at April but maybe the May meeting to getting an update on special permission and how the special permission process has been going this year since the board voted on changes to that procedure and we also or I stated at the last meeting that we will not be bringing 80/40

back to committee for discussion or for any action at this time because of some pending, legal matters. And then a scheduling note, the third Thursday of the month for April

[01:46:49] happens to fall during spring break, so our next Student Services Committee meeting will be on April 24th. That's it. Thank you, Vice Chair Donohue. Let's see, I went to Legacy Elementary to see a kindergarten fashion show about the ABCs, and it was really adorable. It was all about like the sounds of the ABCs and they had digraphs that's very exciting and so then after that then they showed me they're very it's called a small ratio

[01:47:26] resource cross cat room which is for those in between students that that it's kind of an unusual program that I'm looking to maybe further in other elementary schools as well it's um it was it's it's it was really pretty exciting for me because those are the kids that we can see that goes transition to the transition center later um your higher functioning autism children your and um cross cat so there was that and then i went

[01:48:02] to champ and i again saw their special education rooms i think you're seeing a theme here um and i talked to in one of their self-contained rooms for ED students. And again, we talked about the transition center and how there are some students with ED that might not be on the SOL track, and that might be a good spot for them as well in the transition center, transitioning them on to do

[01:48:33] other things because um so there's that and then we had um then i went to uh we had the joint uh committee meeting and we talked about the topics that we will be talking about for the next i guess two years maybe or a year at least um and one of them and for june we'll be doing the school boundary discussion and CIP, CIP impact as well as the the Commission on Use report at the June meeting and we're looking to do that every year at this

[01:49:10] time in June and then the Mars transmission line more information for that the other the word is that I don't know if you guys remembered but I did ask you guys for thoughts about topics I didn't get any but Board of Supervisors talked about activity fees for extracurricular activities, talking about safe passages for schools, DARE t-shirts, and unpaid meal debt. We did suggest actually more on the transition center

[01:49:41] and contents of testing for our confiscated vape devices. And I think that is pretty much all I have. Oh, I did go to the International Day and that was amazing with those students. There were some students from Ukraine and I just can't even imagine what they have to go through including they were I know the thing is going to beep at me but I know that they're going to they were talking about I'm going to pull I'm going to pull an Arvin and I'm just going to keep going I did also see that in Ukraine they were talking about undergrounding schools because of all the

[01:50:21] bombing that went up above and that was really heart-wrenching so we have to be thankful about what we have. Dr. Deans. We did not have the equity meeting in March, so we will have it this Thursday, the first Thursday of this month in April, and we invite all of you to come out and be a part of Arab Cultural Appreciation Month, and that's Thursday at 5 30, and we have a

[01:50:59] I've lined up a panel that is going to speak, and then we will receive questions from the audience. But I also have been to the science fair projects that were just over the top.

[01:51:15] They were better than the one I did in college. And then on the Saturday morning, I met Neil at, what was the technology showcase? Inspire Loudon. Okay, Inspire Loudon, okay.

[01:51:33] But I enjoy the technology piece because I'm learning. So that's been the past couple of weeks for me. Thank you, Dr. Deans. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. This month has felt like a whirlwind.

[01:51:49] I have enjoyed so much my school visits and my PTA visits. So good to hear directly from parents. I also just found the School Business Partnership Breakfast to be delightful. And I made a point to attend both the opening and the closing ceremony of the International Summit.

[01:52:12] I think it's one of the most amazing things that we do at LCPS. I found the keynote speaker to be incredible. He has written a book. I believe it's Call Me American or Call Me America, but he's a refugee.

[01:52:30] He came from a wealthy family in Somalia because of the conflict in Somalia, spent several years living in a refugee camp in Kenya and won a lottery to come to the United States and became a citizen. And I think in so many of the conversations that we have around that issue, we lose sight of the resilience and the strength and the determination it takes to survive.

[01:52:57] And I think he really had such an important lesson to share with our students. And then on the closing ceremony side, to actually hear from students not only about what they learned, but what their dreams are for the future. I mean, it's exactly what we're here to do.

[01:53:12] So good. At Head Start in the last month, we enjoyed a visit from Representative Subramaniam, which was wonderful. but I think it was mostly beneficial to him because he came in at a moment when one of our parents was talking about how impactful the program had been on her parenting and how it had made her a better steward of her children. And it was just, everybody was really, it was

[01:53:43] amazing, such a good experience. And in LAMP, we've been trying to understand more about how the legislative process is evolving as we see the governor's the the bills that passed in the legislative session and then we'll be looking deeply I'm sure this month that the items that were vetoed by the governor and then how the special session that's occurring this week will impact and and ultimately hopefully we'll have a better understanding of where we end up by the end and we'll be talking about the committees of the school board as well so I'm sure I'll be

[01:54:22] reaching out to everyone to to gather more feedback on that um but that's it for me thank you thank you miss chandler mrs griffiths thank you madam chair um the school board will just as a reminder the school board will be in discussion uh of renaming mercer middle school and princess hazel reed in april i guess next week um the meetings will begin at 6 30 p.m here at the administration building the first one is our board meeting which is next week on the 8th We will review renaming recommendations for Mercer and Princess Hazel Reed.

[01:54:56] Wednesday the 9th, the school board public hearing on renaming recommendations for Mercer and Princess Hazel Reed. And on the 22nd, the school board action on renaming recommendations for Mercer and Princess Hazel Reed. Take note, I will continue to mention these and focus on the taxpayer in our communities that we represent.

[01:55:16] We simply can't ignore the town halls and the surveys. there are so many reasons not to rename schools in Loudoun County after these two schools this board is pursuing seven more I think this is you know we're giving their taxpayers the wrong message we must be fiscally responsible here let's have common sense and be reasonable up to 2,000 per school 2,000 per school is not necessary or reasonable

we must treat dollars like our own dollars we are taxpayers as well in Loudoun County the schools in question Frances Hazel Reed who seemed to be a lovely woman that dedicated her

[01:55:52] life to the London Times mirror for over 70 years and Mercer middle school that is not named after anyone just recently I had the pleasure of learning that the great of the great strides at Mercer middle school and making and their partnership with Microsoft they are very proud of it and it's a big deal we are now going to change the name of the school? I don't know why. No reason to spend up to \$200,000 again to rename these schools. This is just misguided and wasteful. Renovations of our schools should be number one before renaming schools. Getting to committee reports at our

[01:56:29] recent HRTD meeting on March 27th, we went over attrition. You might find this information interesting. You can find the documents and the audio recording at lcps.org under school board meeting documents hrted continues to dive into what our to why our teachers and our staff might leave some schools for others we will continue to work together to find out why and put that information out there thank you thank you mr griffiths we'll move on to item 15 new business board members do we have any more new business seeing none the loudon county school board's reconvene meeting

[01:57:08] from march 25th 2025 is now adjourned please drive safely home



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