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Loudoun County Public Schools, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting, Thursday, April 3, 2025

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[00:00:06] All right, we're gonna go ahead and get started. If everyone could please find their seats. Thank you all for being here this evening. Welcome to our Special Education Advisory Committee meeting.

[00:00:22] We have a fantastic presentation for you today, all about self-determination by our LCPS students. So can you all please give them a big warm welcome? We also have some guests here this evening moderating for us.

[00:00:43] We have Kendall Swartzen-Truber, did I get that right? Okay, all right, and they are from I'm Determined. So just a quick little bit of housekeeping, the QR code is up on the screen. If you could please just take a picture, log in, let us know that you're here.

[00:01:03] Let us know if you'd like to get further communication from SEAC, and we are happy to oblige. and we will go ahead and get started. There are snacks in the back. Please help yourself to those, as well as flyers and more information on SEAC.

[00:01:20] And of course, as always, we have our parent resource services in the back of the room who are happy to meet with you and answer any questions you may have. So with all that said, Kendall, would you like to come and take it away?

[00:01:37] Or, okay, all right, perfect. Well, first of all, let me just say thank you for inviting me to come here today. I'm looking forward to moderating and having a conversation. I was also brief that I should probably just give a little update regarding I'm Determined.

[00:01:56] There has been a lot happening in the last several years, and so I will just share a few brief things before we get into the panel. In the last month, I'm Determined has had some really good news in the fact that we have become a statewide center.

[00:02:12] So in the last, for the last almost two decades, I'm determined has kind of operated under underneath the TTAC, Training and Technical Assistance Center. And just in March here, we have now become our own center.

[00:02:29] So we are currently hiring, not to steal anyone away from anywhere, but if you're interested and wanna talk more, I'm more than glad to do that. So what that means is that we'll be able to come to places like Loudoun County and do more long-term TA and do more things on the ground with you across the state because we'll be focusing solely on self-determination and building youth leadership and self-advocacy skills with our young people in the Commonwealth.

[00:02:58] Another thing that I just want to mention is that for the last two years, we have been producing a feature-length film called Pulling Threads, and if you haven't heard, we have now won two awards. One was at the Over the Rhine Film Festival, which is in Cincinnati, Ohio.

[00:03:19] We won a, I think we won the title was Best Narrative Film at the Film Festival, and then we were also at the International Film Festival in Richmond, and also won an award there for our casting and the film is about following three young persons with disabilities each of them represent a disability category and the actors actually have the disabilities that they represent so it's about disability representation and talking about our elements of self-determination so those are just two things highlights the things that are happening right now we

[00:03:57] continue to interact and let youth leaders lead and kind of drive where we go as a project, and that's something that we're very, very proud of. So I'm going to let each of you kind of, as we kind of shift into this panel, I'm going to let each of you kind of introduce yourselves just briefly. Why don't you tell us your name and your grade, and then we'll jump into

[00:04:25] some questions from there. Does that sound okay? So who would like to start? Hi, I'm Milo. I'm a junior at the North Star School. Hi, I'm Tyra, and I'm a college at NOVA, and I'm part of Rockridge Cass. Hi, I'm Shay. I'm in 12th grade. I go to Woodgrove High School. Shay and I were just

[00:05:01] talking about how excited she is to be done in just a few months. So I think the first question I'd like to ask you is, can you tell me a time about, tell us about a time when you spoke up for yourself at school. How did you do it? And what actually happened? Shay's going to go first for us.

[00:05:30] Yes, I had an English teacher in seventh grade who was old school and stubborn. He didn't like for his students to use technology to work on their schoolwork. As a disabled student, I always had an accommodation where I could use my iPad or any other electronic device to complete my schoolwork.

[00:05:48] And I have not had a problem until I met this teacher. With the help of my parents, my aides, And my case manager, the teacher, eventually gave in, accepted it, and learned that he always can't expect the same exact thing for every student and that he needed to adapt.

[00:06:07] If you want me to ever repeat the question, you just have to ask. So the question was, can you tell us about a time when you spoke up for yourself at school? How did you do it and what happened?

[00:06:27] The time that I spoke up for myself in school was to answer a question and letting you know the answer, I asked for help with that question. Thank you.

[00:06:46] So one of the first times I spoke up for myself in school, it was about the fact that I needed adaptive PE. Though I may not look it, I do have a physical disability. Unfortunately, that did not go well for me.

[00:07:02] I had to fight tooth and nail with the team at my home school, only to wait so long for them to finally honor my needs that I lost my PE credit for the year and I would soon transfer to the North Star School, which would help me make up my credit with a PE teacher in a class that worked for me. So I'm going to go off script really early here because one thing I hear is this idea about people being able to adapt.

[00:07:33] And what is the hardest thing to communicate to teachers who are unwilling to adapt? I think it is they have a rigid script of how they want their day to go.

[00:07:59] And for them to have to go off that script sometimes feels so out of the way for them. But unfortunately, it kind of is important for their students to be able to learn. Love that.

[00:08:22] I think the hardest thing for the teachers are that they are like what she said, very rigid.

[00:08:54] But they need to learn not everyone learns the same thing. Awesome. I think that's like some good advice already in the first question. The second question is, what helps you most at school? Like tools, teachers, or extra time?

[00:09:10] How did you learn to ask for what you need? Because that's not always easy. Even for us adults in the room, it's always not easy to know what to ask for, for what we need. So... Curious what you would say. For different assignments, I would ask for either some assistance or guidance to finish or accomplish an assignment.

[00:09:36] I would say what helps me most is my current accommodations. They are having extra time on tests or assignments, having a calculator in math and science, leaving a few minutes early from class, having assignments chopped and showing mastery.

[00:09:55] They all have been proven helpful in my classes. I always had my parents and aides speak for me when I was younger, but as I grew older and matured more, I learned to advocate for myself for things I need. There are a few things that helped me most.

[00:10:17] Some are accommodations like having a fidget, movement breaks, and leaving five minutes before the bell. The other things that helped me are consistency and communication. And I did have to learn the hard way when I started really struggling and falling back in my classes that I needed to speak up for myself.

[00:10:33] okay because you're gonna you're gonna learn like i adapt on the fly too so i love this idea of accommodations but can you tell me like have has what you needed changed as you've gotten older and how has that changed like what would be an example of something that's changed as you've

[00:10:57] gotten older in terms of accommodations i think a lot of my needs have actually stayed pretty consistent um but learning that i needed those things was something that was more difficult

[00:11:25] that's very insightful i love that so for college i apply for accommodations and this month i'm doing the meeting for it to get accommodations for college that's one thing we hear a lot right high school and college two different worlds right and then the accommodations that you need at those kind of are different, and the way that you even go about asking for them changes.

[00:11:56] So navigating that terrain is something that I think is something that a lot of our young people struggle with, and so it's one of those things that we continue to work through, right? And self-determination, regardless of whether you're in high school or college, is really, really supporting that work and really asking for those accommodations.

[00:12:19] I know Shea has like a wisdom-filled answer coming. I only wish my vision was a little bit better, so I think it would cover it.

[00:12:38] I think my accommodations have been the same throughout grade school, but recently I have applied for accommodations at college.

[00:13:02] They're not all the same. Mason offers very helpful accommodations. It's a great school for people with disabilities as what I have witnessed. Yeah, so I think this understanding, this idea that we're all undergoing kind of transitions as we get older and that things change and that we might need different supports along the way is important.

[00:13:25] And as supports, I think it's important to remember that those changes happen and that we might need to have new conversations every now and then. It's great. All right, I'm going to shift a little bit to what things helped you do well in high school and how did you get ready for what comes after high school?

[00:13:46] Because I know we're all kind of moving in that direction, right? So what are the things that are helping you get ready for after high school? The things that have helped me do well in school are my accommodations, which are having extra time on tests or assignments, having a calculator in math and science, leaving a few minutes early from class, having assignments chopped and showing mastery.

[00:14:10] They all have proven helpful in my classes. I always wanted to go to college. My parents and I read articles about disabled people who went to college and what worked for them, then researched colleges in VA and West Virginia that were known for being accessible and diverse.

[00:14:27] I applied to two universities, George Mason University and Shepard University. I got accepted into both of them, but I chose to commit to George Mason. After applying and talking to disability services at GMU, I have had to get a lot of paperwork done dealing with accommodations I would need, and my parents and I are currently in the works of trying to get the word out there about finding personal care attendants for me at college.

[00:14:52] My family and I also have been working on my independence to help me prepare for college. It's awesome. Congratulations, by the way. That's huge. And George Mason has a good school. And you're making your mom cry. And your mom's making me cry.

[00:15:12] Thank you. So I'll repeat the question again, just so that, um, what things help you do well in high school and how do you get ready for what comes after high school?

[00:15:28] So one of the things that helped me other than my accommodations was the North Star School. And it's not the choice for everyone. Um, but for me, the flexibility it gave me and the support that they had there and the class sizes was a huge thing and being able to learn a lot of the career readiness skills was really huge for me and learning how to transition into college

[00:15:54] and into the workforce. For me before I got into college to Nova what really helped me the most was being able to get some assistance before testing quizzes and make sure I study them.

[00:16:21] Was that hard for you, or do you feel like it? Hard. Yeah. What made it hard, particularly, like, at college? Like, me, like, trying to memorize and not finish on time.

[00:16:41] Yeah, just, like, the difference between what happened in high school and then what was happening in college. All right, here's another kind of transition-focused question. And I know, Tara, you're kind of already in the college place, but I want you to think like after college now.

[00:17:04] So here's the question. What are your plans after high school, like going to college, getting a job, or learning new skills? So we already know that Shay's going to George Mason, but do you guys like have any dreams for like what happens after college? Or like what's the big like 10-year, 15-year plan for you?

[00:17:27] Maybe just a goal you have.

[00:17:43] I will be majoring in communications. I am hopeful that I can get into the field of journalism after college. Let's talk, because I have a friend who works with me on I'm Determined, who has CP, and she just graduated from VCU two years ago and just got into JMU's grad program for communication that focuses on advocacy.

[00:18:10] Let's talk. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So we absolutely have to talk. What else? What other big dreams do you guys have? So I want to, I'm graduating a semester early, which is an amazing thing that North Star offers.

[00:18:32] Thank you. So I'm hoping to take maybe a gap semester and get a job. And then I want to maybe go to VCU or ODU. I'm still kind of scoping out my choices. And then I want to go for elementary education and teach like the lower end of elementary school.

[00:18:51] Love that. We need as many educators as we can get. Well, I'm already working, but I'm still trying to study physical therapy in college. So that in 10 years, a few years maybe, while I'm working, I can see myself doing physical therapy, but also trying to do work at the same time so I can earn a little bit of money, but also working.

[00:19:26] Okay, off script, turning 40 next month. I have this tendonitis in my shoulder. Have any advice? everybody says just stretch that's that's the advice i've got so all right um we'll probably try to do maybe one or two more questions is that okay for time we're still golden okay i love this this question this is kind of uh one that i i've asked before to other people if a younger student

[00:20:06] with a disability asked for advice what would you tell them to help them feel more confident make sure that you get your accommodations early before ahead of time so that you can be more prepared love that and just even like developing like the language to know what how to ask that right i think that's one thing that i know a lot of students struggle with is like finding the words to advocate for their

accommodations or advocate for what they need they don't always know how to say it or or how to state it or what tone to use when they say it right so the sooner that

[00:20:43] you can do that it seems like that's that's really helpful in the long term i love that i have a few pieces of advice for the younger students with disabilities be yourself don't make yourself try to fit in with the typical people your personality your quirks your disability everything about you makes you unique speak up for yourself not everyone is accepting but if you speak up and say what you need you can get help whether it's from one specific person or multiple people the help may

[00:21:19] not come to you right away, but you can get it. Lastly, this goes along with the previous piece of advice. You should advocate for others as well. If you see discrimination, bullying, or any kind of mistreatment someone is experiencing because of their disability, you should help them speak out against the oppression they're experiencing. That would help you and them in the long run, and you're doing a good thing. You hit on a piece a little bit that a lot of people don't

[00:21:54] understand about self-determination is that one of the outcomes of a self-determined individual, and this is in the research, says that when an individual becomes self-determined, one of the first things they want to do is they want to share that information with someone else or do that on behalf of someone else. So it's not, I think sometimes self-determination gets little bit of bad rap for it all being so self-focused but actually what I think happens more often than not is when you become self-determined you learn how to

[00:22:30] recognize how to advocate support and care for others and I think that's that's one of the markers I look for as I as I kind of look for the self-determined individuals that I run across three of which I see here tonight all right so the question again was if a younger student with a disability asked for advice what would you tell them to help them feel more confident? You are the one in control and you deserve to have your needs honored, even if it means you feel like you're being annoying. Be

[00:23:04] annoying. Yes. Be so annoying. Be a teacher's pet. Oh my God. Um, because someone will eventually listen. I feel like I just got the next t-shirt idea for I'm determined. Be annoying. Love it.

[00:23:33] All right. We'll try to get serious for just a second. We're doing a poor job at being too serious here. No, I'm joking. This is great. Next question. If you could change one thing about our schools to make it better for students with disabilities, what would it be? I'm taking notes. Thankfully, the experiences I have had at school have been very positive. I started in preschool within an early childhood special education program, then transitioned into a

[00:24:12] general education kindergarten class. After that, I have been in all general education classes with the assistance of a special education team for my physical needs, safety, and to meet my accommodations. I was very lucky with all of the schools I attended, so I don't think I have any suggestions. That's fantastic to hear. That's great. I think things I would like to see is more college readiness and more workplace readiness, but especially college readiness. I feel like we're

[00:24:50] not getting our disabled students ready for college or just kind of throwing them out there i don't think there's any change needed so far i think keep doing what we're doing yeah okay and i think the college readiness career readiness are both uh good things because they're i think in general like college readiness is something that we could do better universally right and career readiness is something that we could do better universally as well and so just i think

[00:25:26] those are both reminders about what we need to do as administrators and faculty on colleges as well as employers how we communicate what it is that we need from our workforce and then how to prepare for that so both both of those are good reminders for sure all right last question this is another transition um question what programs teachers or tools help you get ready for life

[00:26:04] after high school is there anything you wish you had that would have helped more or you think might help more as you're making that transition what has helped me the most are my accommodations which are having extra time on tests or assignments having a calculator in math and science leaving a few minutes early from class having assignments chopped and showing mastery i did have a computer extension in my freshman year called EquatIO, which allowed me to write my math problems and equations on my computer, but I felt like it was more complicated, so now my eads just write my

[00:26:41] math for me while I do math. I wish EquatIO was easier because I think it could help me be more independent. I also wish schools did a better job of finding new tools for accessibility. There are tons of tools out there that would make life much easier for many students, but they don't seem to be offered often enough another thing that could have been better i think dares should be involved much more and much sooner i am racing to finish out my senior year with one meeting per month with them since january and we could have been working together much sooner lastly the school

[00:27:16] could do better with college prep they offer times to visit the career center but i think they could spend more time with seniors especially those with disabilities who don't have the typical path to college or life after high school? I love the one comment you made about finding new tools and I think the one thing that we need to remember is that this younger generation probably knows where they are so we shouldn't be searching them out in isolation. Include them in the process right of

[00:27:52] finding that new technology and getting them on board and then as you implement that implement that those new technologies into your classroom into your schools help like let these young people show you how to do that right that we have young leaders in this state that can help us make our schools better and so it's about working together and working beside that I think is that really matters there that's good oh by the way I don't really like dares I have had it up here with

[00:28:27] them. Okay, let's talk later. Any other thoughts? What programs, teachers, or tools helped you get ready for life after high school? Or are you helping you get ready for life after high school?

[00:28:53] So, campus is a program that I'm sure many of you are familiar with, but it is a college readiness program that we offer here, and that has helped me significantly. I've been able to go on college visits, learn about the dates that I need to have stuff done by, and just in general, learn more about college.

[00:29:13] And then, you know, I'll do a teacher. My teacher, Ms. Tootin, she is fantastic at teaching us about life, even when it's not part of the curriculum, and also keeping us accountable.

[00:29:30] And sorry, I didn't email you that I wasn't here today. For me, because I already graduated high school, I was already prepared, already ready. I have so much help for getting into college, which I was excited for to already got in.

[00:29:54] And I should have done my accommodation before I got in. But I've done it now, and I'm getting ready for the meeting on the 17th. So that's helpful. What I like about what you said there is it is a process of learning, right?

[00:30:14] and the one thing that we repeat over and over again every time that we stumble or we hit a barrier or we fail or we don't do something right we can choose to like wallow in that or we can choose to use that as an opportunity to learn and move forward and it's that growth mindset that really sets the stage for everything that we do as it relates to self-determination so i love that you said like hey yeah i should have done this but i learned from it and i'm going to do something different the next time and we're going to find another way. There's multiple routes on our life journey, right? And it's about choosing to get up and try another way, try another way, try another

[00:30:50] way until we get to our goal. So I think that was a fantastic way to end. Let's give our panelists a round of applause. I did bring some swag for them and I brought one of our biggest items that people love is we got post-it notes that have some of our tools on it. So one of our most popular tools is the one pager which talks about your strengths preference interests and needs they are

[00:31:28] now on a little sticky pad so i brought a pack and i will put them in the back you can feel free to take them with you hand out to students you can film out for yourself uh and uh thanks again for inviting us here tonight it was a pleasure talking with you and talking with you thank you skin jay tara and milo my goodness i just can't say enough you guys are amazing um i was sitting over there a little bit crying I'm so inspired by each of you and the paths that you have taken and you

[00:32:06] have shared so openly with us it's truly a beautiful thing and I you know as a parent of younger kids I can't tell you how much it means to me that you guys have kind of been there paving the way and making things better for all of our kids and opening opportunities in people's hearts and minds like truly the work you've done is amazing and I know hearing your future plans I'm really excited and I hope we're going to get to hear more from you and what you're up to and I

[00:32:38] just I feel like we need to give them another really big round of applause and thank you Kendall you're masterful at this I'm so glad we outsourced it you ask wonderful questions and have such good follow-ups so now what we will do is we will take a little break there are treats in the back please help yourself to some treats we'll take probably about a 15 minute break or so and then we'll come back and we'll do our business meeting and maybe we'll get out a little early

[00:36:31] tonight all right thanks again guys all right guys I'm sorry I gave us an extra break because

[00:47:37] was just having so much fun with our panelists. I'm sorry. But we are going to go ahead and get started. For anyone who missed our presentation, I highly recommend that you go to our website, maybe in like one or two days, and look for the recorded version of our panelists because that was absolutely fantastic. If you have not already, please log in using our QR code. This slide shares with us the role of SEAC and our Virginia regulations one of the things on the regulations we will be seeing the school divisions annual plan tonight so

[00:48:16] more to come on that I will just quickly go through our SEAC officers since probably by now most of you know us my name is Liz Crotty I am the chair of SEAC to my right we have Carla Sola our vice chair of membership and then we have Katie Rosenbrook our SEAC secretary we have some we over there we have Catherine Moran who is our vice chair of planning we have Erin Rosalpo who is

[00:48:50] our SEAC vice chair of communications next to her is Carrie LaBelle who is our school board rep for SEAC and then all the way on the end we have Dr. Paige Carter who is our special education

director and our liaison so first thing I want to go ahead and admit our virtual attendees do I have I'll entertain a motion all right all in favor please raise your hand and say aye all opposed

[00:49:27] nay any abstentions all right so we will have Beth Carlson Jennifer De Donato Kelly Ralston and Sharon Trofe joining us in this meeting. I sent out the March meeting minutes earlier. I hope everyone had an opportunity to review them. Were there any changes that need to be reflected in the minutes? Hearing none, we will go ahead and adopt and post those. Next, we have Parent Resource Services with Leanne Kidwell to give us an update.

[00:50:03] Good evening, everyone. I'm Leanne Kidwell with Parent Resource Services. We are winding down for the school year, and we have one workshop left. It is tomorrow evening with Dr. Heather Applegate. The problem with perfectionism, it will be here at the admin building from 630 to 8 and 102 A and B. And this is me if you need me.

[00:50:35] Thank you, Leanne. And now we will go ahead and do we have anyone signed up for public comment? All right. No public comments. Your last opportunity to give us public comment will be at our May meeting. So if you have anything on your mind that you're burning to say, please come and sign up then. And with that, I will turn it over to Dr. Paige Carter for our Office of Special Education update. Good evening, everybody. Leanne said we're winding down for the year. And for me,

[00:51:14] I feel like we're winding up for next year. Um, so, um, there is a very brief lull, I think in January and then we pipe it up again. So, um, but, um, that presentation tonight, I feel inspired and renewed. Um, it doesn't take much to, um, get me fired up, but this was like going to a conference. Like it was something that was so, it was just so inspiring to remind us of why we do what we do every single day when the days are long when the days are hard when the days are unexpected recalling something like this is really all you need so thank you for who all who planned

[00:51:51] it and got that together and and for the participants I'm just I'm in awe and of course I am a little bit thrilled when I hear everything was great we don't need to change anything I'm glad that their experience was such that they can look back on it so fondly and and with such confidence that they got what they needed to move forward. So I do have just one big update for you.

[00:52:18] We are serving 10,745 students. Yes that number does seem to go up every single month but the key is I thought we'd be at 11,000 by the end of the year and to let you know we have 376 students in the eligibility process as of March 27th and at an 80 percent rate of eligibility because we do really take the process seriously and and do not refer willy-nilly about 80% of our students are found eligible when they enter the process will get us to 11,000 by the end of this fiscal year

[00:52:55] so we are growing by leaps and bounds and maintaining somewhere in the 12% range of our population creeping up a little bit but I just always like to put that number up because each and every one of those 10,745 are individuals who have an individualized plan. And I like to be reminded of the number every single day so that we know why we're doing what we're doing.

[00:53:23] All right. On your screen, you'll see a QR code. This is if you are interested in the minutia of the annual plan that we are required to do, please use that QR code and a PDF of the draft.

[00:53:38] I want to emphasize draft of the plan will be there for you. It will be tiny, but you'll have the way that you can look at it on your laptop later or whatever to make it bigger. But I did it from my phone a few minutes ago, and you can get it big enough to see the dollar amounts and the narratives.

[00:53:57] But if you need it another way, Liz will let me know. And I do think I sent it to you another way. If not, I will today. Okay. All right. So just to let you know, every year the federal government and the state requires that special educators or special ed directors submit a plan for the division every single year for how we are going to use federal funds that we receive.

[00:54:24] And we'll talk a little bit about those funds that we anticipate in a few minutes, but this is a requirement and it is for me in the years I have served as director or assistant director we were fairly locked into our annual plan because we use it to fund positions and that is the case here in Loudoun which you'll see in a few minutes but it is an agreement between LCPS and the Virginia Department of Education that says this is what we're going to do with these funds okay and we're going to do that by following the regulations and spending the money the way

[00:55:02] that we have outlined in the plan and our funding is completely contingent upon the approval of this plan both by the school board here in LCPS I'm going to be presenting this plan just as you see it tonight and I'll have time to answer questions in the work session on the 8th of April but and another requirement is that I present this to SEAC for feedback so I am doing that now on the 8th next week it will go to the school board as an information item and then in may they will either approve it as a consent item or as a night and another kind of item and i'll be there to answer

[00:55:41] their questions and i can't remember what that's called um but anyway um we'll be there um that night should they have any additional questions and a lot of times school board members will reach out in the interim between those two times to answer to ask any questions that they have about the plan or any recommendations so that we can take care of those things. Okay, so the parts of there are many tabs in the annual plan it comes to me as an Excel file from the state of Virginia at the bottom there are tabs across the bottom and here are the tabs that I really have a lot of responsibility in to really

[00:56:18] think about and I want to explain each of those to you. So the insurance and certification section is really about saying we are who we say we are we're going to do what we say we're going to do basically and the superintendent is the one who signs off on this plan. We also talk about our agreements with the with any kind of jails and we do have an agreement with or we work with here in Loudoun both the adult and detention center and the juvenile detention center and we we have actually a grant through VDOE separate from this funds where we

[00:56:55] support students who may be incarcerated. So we talk about that, yes we do have facilities here in the division and yes we do support students who may find themselves there for a time. The next session is maintenance of effort and I want to briefly explain that what that is. Maintenance of effort is a requirement in federal law that says we are going to spend the same or more every year per student as we spent last year. So when the school board makes their budget, they can't go, we're just going to slash special ed. We're just going to cut that way down. There are maintenance of

[00:57:31] effort prevents that. So we have to spend more every year or the same amount per student every year. We cannot cut back on special education. I mean, it is a per student expenditure. So if we suddenly had 500 less students it might change but so would our requirement for MOE based on our child count that goes in on December 1st but that is what that is about we have to maintain our effort financially toward the service of students with disabilities and the next part is proportionate set-aside a requirement of a regulation is that a certain amount and that is determined by

[00:58:11] the state it's a formula be set aside to support students who are not enrolled in LCPS but live here so that might be students enrolled in private school students who are home schooled are also included there so anyone that is a resident of Loudon who is a person with a disability who is between the ages of two and 22 we have to write about how we will support them in the plan and I'll talk about that in just a few minutes it outlines also how we're going to spend the money that the state allocates for us it's not like a grant application where we apply for

[00:58:49] as much money as we think we want they tell us how much they're going to give us and then we tell them how we'll spend it and 611 it's all part of title 6b that special education 611 is school age so basically kindergarten really first grade but kindergarten through 22 and 619 money is that money that is allocated to go toward our early childhood special education kids who are preschool

[00:59:18] age beginning at age two. Okay so in our annual plan and we anticipate \$14,671,341 for K-12 plus our post-graduates too. So that's the amount of money we anticipate getting from the federal government and the breakdown in the plan as it's written now is there for you but I want you to see the positions that are highlighted in the list. 130 special education teachers that we have are

[00:59:54] funded through this grant. Five teacher assistants, two coordinators, and so on it goes. But the one I always feel like I need to explain to you because it makes sense that we would have an audiologist. It makes sense that we would have special education teachers, coordinators to support that that kind of thing the financial analyst piece because you are required to have someone to administer the funds that you have both federal state and local for special education and to support maintenance of effort and things like that our financial analyst in our office is the person who manages that and that is an allowable expenditure through the grant so I wanted to

[01:00:32] explain that that is someone in our department not someone in business and finance randomly doing calculations. It is someone who works directly with me in our office. So and then in addition we have money set aside for curriculum materials and a lot of that curriculum money for example in the grant we have used it to purchase reading materials before. We have used it to purchase the materials set aside for a mant in Ukeru. It really just depends on on how on what the needs

[01:01:05] are for the particular year. And then our proportionate set-aside amount is \$71,349.99 randomly. But that amount, if we do not expend it all, we can apply for that to come back into the other grant funding and help support those positions that we have listed there.

[01:01:26] But that is how we have it outlined in the draft of the grant right now. This is not a change from last year except that the curriculum and materials amount of money has gone up a bit because we have less let's see how I can explain it the 130 special education teachers that go into the grant we can decide which ones those are and looking at the ones that are in there now it fluctuates depending like if you have a teacher with 30 years experience they're more expensive expensive than a teacher with five years experience so there is some fluctuation

[01:02:04] and looking at patterns, we were able to capture more money for curriculum and materials, which is always a good thing. But it is the exact same amount of positions as previous years. Okay, so for Title 6B 619 preschool, it's \$200,140. That does not buy very much, but we do pay for two ECSE teachers, and the proportionate set aside amount for that is \$445.25. Now, I want you to know that if there are more preschoolers than that who come to us needing, for example, speech therapy services

[01:02:44] or consultation services to their preschool or whatever the need may be, if that amount exceeds \$445.25, we don't say, I'm sorry, we're out of preschool money now. We would access the other other funds that we have, local funds, that kind of thing. We have never turned away someone because we ran out of proportionate set-aside money in the 619, or in either of them, but the 619 is such a small amount. If you got speech therapy services twice a week, that would run out fairly quickly.

[01:03:17] We have never turned anyone away. Tammy is back there going, no, we haven't. Yes, that's true. So I just want to let you know, because that is such a small dollar amount. I did not want anyone to think, well, how far is that going to go, right? It goes as far as it needs to, to support the needs of the students. Okay, so here I just want to talk about the budget just a little bit. These funds come through because of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As you may know, lots of things in the federal government are in flux at this moment.

[01:03:49] It is my deepest desire and hope that there would never be impact to IDEA. But that being said, I want you guys to know what a very small percentage of our budget this is. That's why I stand before you quite confidently not worried about the state of IDEA as far as money goes.

[01:04:12] So when IDEA came out, and I know I say this every year, but I just want to say it again, that they promised that they would fund special education at 40%. They never have. 15% is approximate now, but that's a high estimate on what they actually pay for across the United States.

[01:04:32] So full funding of IDEA has never happened anyway. It is my hope that somebody will wake up and go, wow, we've never really funded that one day. We're going to do that because that would be life-changing for school divisions. And a lot of school divisions that would be impacted by something like this are rural school divisions with a high Title I, high special education population.

[01:04:55] They will not survive in the same way that Loudon would should those funds go away. But I just wanted you guys to know that it is important that we continue to advocate for full funding of IDEA regardless of how small of amount it is for our budget, okay?

[01:05:13] The majority of the money we spend here in Loudoun on services to students with disabilities, the teachers and related services folks that support them, are state and local dollars. In LCPS, it is only 5.7% of our overall budget is this federal money that we spend a lot of time talking about, a lot of time taking data for, reporting out on, doing all those things.

[01:05:38] It is 5.7% of my budget. So I'm not saying I want to absorb that. I would never want to, but if I needed to, we could. And services to students would not change. Our superintendent said that at a recent school board meeting.

[01:05:53] It's absolutely true. So I just, with the state of things, I just wanted to add that to the presentation. Only 5.7% of our budget. It would hurt, but not enough to impact kids. We would make sure of that. Okay. So that is, in a nutshell, the draft of the annual plan, but you have the document in its entirety from the QR code.

[01:06:20] Just for the sake of time, I will take a few questions if anybody has any, but you can also email me directly or send your questions to Liz. Thanks, Paige. Okay, so my question to you is, for the, so I see that the special education teachers, all the FTs, they pretty much stayed the same, except for one specialist. You added one more specialist to?

[01:06:54] No, that has always been there. Well, we have one for last year, and we have two for this year. All right, we will check on that, but I think that it may have been an error next year. I want to look at the year before. Let me look at it, but that list is the ones that were funded last year.

[01:07:11] So I'll double-check, but thank you, and I'm going to make a note so I don't forget. And then can I ask a question then? So the next part where we say that a certain amount is budgeted for instruction, reading, math, and behavior interventions, Last year it was \$36,519, I'm sorry, I don't have my glasses, but I think \$0.89.

[01:07:32] And then this year we're at \$159,542.84. Could you just let us know? Yeah, and I tried to explain it a little bit already, but it really depends on the costing of the teachers that are in the grant, and we can fluctuate that.

[01:07:49] And so we want to move, I don't want to say the less expensive teachers, but that's kind of the way it is, you wouldn't put a 34-year teacher in the grant because it takes up a lot more of the money. So we were basing it on the costing of the teachers the year before, and we were able to manipulate it a little bit to get more money for curriculum out of it by who we place in the grant is basically where that came from. And our estimates came directly from budget and finance after analysis, so I feel really confident in those numbers based on because we were able to do that even though we are having a raise you know an increase

[01:08:29] in pay next year so those i mean like besides being the generic reading math sure yeah the it's likely curriculum materials are a good part of that but also um curriculum as um and and fees associated with like mant or ukeru or any of our required trainings anything but it's all directly for staff or students in special education every single dime that comes from this grant like if I wanted to help out you know if we wanted to split some costs or do some whatever I don't have any

[01:09:08] flexibility with the federal money it is 100 special education so it really does depend on who we're training so for example if we were training as all of the teachers all of the people who support a bit team a behavior intervention team we could only cost from the grant those who serve in the role of special education because the grant is very specific it is for special education not for anything else i hope that answers your question but it's very and the way we inventory those materials the way we do things is very different because of the federal requirements

[01:09:44] at getting a proper curriculum for our program classes like a so that would very likely be local dollars and not in here but yes but we can talk about that outside of this but not from this not from this one right not this year we're looking more at more reading materials those kinds of

[01:10:12] things for everybody what if there's an increase in um how many how many children are enrolled in special education program how does that impact the number of teachers if we're keeping it you know 130 are we looking at the numbers of enrollment and how is that impacting those numbers and is it

[01:10:51] having an influence on if we're saying yes or no to it well because we have 1000 1000 ish special education teachers if we have more students that would cause me to allocate more teachers we have a very solid staffing standard here so we would absolutely pay for more teachers but not from the federal grant because they say this is how much money you get this is what we're paying for with the federal money but that that aside the first 130 we could say come out of that

[01:11:25] and then the rest of the thousand teachers come from local and state dollars and as and as our population grows we do have to increase the number of teachers that we have for example we added We have 23 more CrossCat teachers this year and 40 more program teachers this year and all of the TAs that go with them.

[01:11:45] And you can see that we did not get any more money to add any more teachers from the federal grant the way we have it laid out now. Now, we could have paid for the other thing locally and moved it around, but basically that amount of money is set.

[01:12:02] But, yes, we have to increase the number of teachers we have based on the number of students we serve. And we try to predict what we'll be at at the end of the year when we hire. And I look at percentage of capacity. For example, one of our elementary schools is at 82% capacity, allowing them to grow by about 30 students.

[01:12:22] And this year they found 28 eligible. So I think we're good if that pattern holds. So those are the kinds of things I look at school by school by school. And I have colleagues who help me with all kinds of formulas and calculations to make that happen.

[01:12:40] they say, what else do you need? And then I say, oh, can I have this? And then it magically appears on a spreadsheet. So I'm very grateful for that. I could figure it out, but I don't need to, because I have those folks. Right, Margaret? She's one of them. But there are many, many folks who help me with that stuff. But I think it is very important that we look at the data from every possible angle so that we are maintaining a staffing ratio that helps us to maintain and grow our students okay that was a great question all right if you have other questions feel free to

[01:13:15] email me I am I would love to say I get back to you in 48 hours but it doesn't always um roll that way right now with um with staffing emails I'm a little behind just going to be um I'm telling myself a little bit as Nakia says um but we are um absolutely I will entertain any questions and feedback you have about this grant and other ways that we could do it it is challenging to change it because of the way we've locked in our staffing because we get our annual plan and and and devise it after the budget has already been submitted so we sort of lock ourselves in as we go but but any

[01:13:53] feedback for this year's plan that I can't implement now we would certainly use in the development of next year's plan but please um you know share that and i'll make sure that uh pdf um gets emailed to liz so she can share it out with you guys so you can see it on a screen that's a little bit bigger okay um and yeah for anyone who would like to to talk more about the annual plan um our policy subcommittee will be looking at it on april 21st um so we will go into it in more depth and Paige usually joins us for that. So it'll be another opportunity to ask questions.

[01:14:33] So if you go home tonight and you're like, oh my gosh, I wish I asked that, come to our policy subcommittee and you can do that. Just that. And I will be joining you live from Texas. I'll be at home, but I have already planned for attending that meeting with you guys. Lovely. Thank you.

[01:14:49] All right. And next we have Ms. Nakia Purnell giving us our student services update. Good evening. I am not Tedra, but I am Nakia Purnell, and I am here, Assistant Director of Special Education for Loudoun County. And today, we hit the trifecta. It was above 60 degrees. We have homemade goods in the back, and we had kids at SEAC. That, to me, is all I need to get, at least through the rest of the month. And Milo gave me permission to

[01:15:27] be annoying so like I just I don't know I don't know if it gets better than that if anybody has a problem with it I'm gonna send you to Milo she's my people now you're gonna have to talk to my people about that so I do have the DSS updates for you since Tedra is not here with us so exciting things last month a nice size group of us from here we're able to travel to New Orleans right at the end of Mardi Gras I promise that we were not there for the festivities but maybe at the end of the week once the festivities were over for

[01:16:03] the ASA conference which is the school superintendents association conference and where some of our colleagues were able to present and it was so well received and amazing on what we've been able to do with our student support assistance in the division and how well that has been serving us so it was really nice to see other divisions from around the nation hear our team speak on something really progressive we've been able to do here lots and lots of questions how'd you do that how do you have social workers there

[01:16:37] how do I mean so many questions that made me remember what Tara said we're doing some things right because hearing other people say you have what per school you have psychologists where yeah us it was i mean it makes you grateful for the resources that you have so to speak to what page just said it is a blessing not to be impacted even if we lose funds from the feds because we are able to sustain with the funds that we have and that it was really apparent being around other school divisions that could not fathom the idea of having the resources we have so it's always good to have that perspective and it was nice to be in New Orleans because it was way above

[01:17:15] 60 degrees there which is amazing but we also have started a collaborative work group where we do have members from the Office of Special Education working on so we do have that representation to advocate for the needs of our students but the FY 26 budget has passed the new behavior support positions and I think we came here and shared that information that those were coming I still don't have exact information for you about the function of that position I can tell you they will be based in elementary schools maybe two per elementary school but the actual function with that will look like who they will serve all of

[01:17:54] those specifics this workgroup that has been formed is gonna iron all that out so more to come we will report out on that once we have better information but it was just passed so it is fully funded so that is a thing that is happening It's not just like a wild myth that you've been hearing out in the street.

[01:18:11] It is a thing, I promise. Okay, and so that's going to be really helpful because we've been talking about behavior quite a bit in a lot of our subcommittee meetings, so we just wanted you to know this is another way the division is planning to support behavior across the board. This is not just a special education effort. The school counseling team also launched School Links, and we had a nice presentation for School Links.

[01:18:33] Was that last month? Yeah, I feel like two months ago. my gosh, yeah, it was a virtual meeting. And so we had a nice presentation on School Link's course planner in collaboration with the Department of Teaching and Learning. So that has launched. So again, if you guys have questions about that, you know that you can reach out to anyone in the Department of Student Services and the school counseling office or contact members of your school team to get more information about how to utilize that, how to access it. If you missed the opportunity to participate in the meeting, obviously you can always contact any of the people I named to kind of get a run through to learn how to access that for

[01:19:11] your student and what the benefits are of using that and it is a huge improvement from what we had before so I think you will enjoy that more stuff more this is not all the LCPS Transition Center proposal thank you SEAC for helping to get that approved yes yes across the board the proposal will be presented at the May 6th special programs committee meeting, May 6th, put it on your calendar if you want to be there. That will be proposed. We are very, very excited. Lots of meetings about

[01:19:46] all of the preparation that is going to go into that. It is going to take a couple years to get off the ground, but certainly everything is in the works, going through branding, going through logos, going through naming, all the things you have to do before it actually becomes a thing is all happening and again thank you thank you thank you for advocating for us go ahead Paige I didn't I attended a meeting today it was so exciting because there were folks that get permits there and folks that apply for use land use and people who apply for construction permits

[01:20:20] and people who are architects who design things and people who like it was just a really awesome gathering of folks um to get us kind of revved up um for the things to come so this is a really awesome opportunity um that we're embarking on and one that was a long hard fight i know and i'm just really i feel fortunate to be here for such a time as this nikki and i both do and tedra and i and we are all three um along with jenna and her team participating in these early conversations to get it going, so I just had to interrupt to say it's been a banner day,

[01:20:59] all the things that Nakia mentioned, but I was also in that meeting today with all those very important people who have levels of patience and brains that I do not have. I cannot imagine applying for a permit knowing it might be 12 months, you know, those kinds of things, but learning the process and what delays may come and they are expected, which it really helps me to feel comfortable it was just a great meeting today so those things are underway and conversations are happening at least weekly sometimes twice a week so we are we're very excited yeah it has been good news all around and I think looking forward to FY26 like we said 40 new programs

[01:21:39] which means tons more teachers tons more supports for our students almost 11,000 students recovery school transition center I mean yes we're always going to have things that we can grow areas where we can grow things we need to do just a little bit better because you have to continue to get better but I think sometimes stopping and just being grateful and thankful for what we have and what our students have and what we're able to do for them is amazing because our neighbors on either side of us don't always have things the way we have it so I think sometimes when we sit back and go, wow, look what we did. Look what we did when we came together with SEAC and pushed

[01:22:18] something across the finish line and kept asking, kept asking, kept advocating. Yeah, yes, but Milo said so. Milo said we could be, so continue to be annoying. Yeah, t-shirts, I love it, and we're going to have to brand it. We're going to have to give Milo a cut of that, but the very last thing on our list, probably not the last thing we've done this month, but again, these are the highlights from the previous month student health services will be hosting immunization clinics at schools in collaboration with health works and Safeway and we know again with a lot of the changes that are being made cuts to different federal

[01:22:56] funds and different things like this initiatives like this bringing health care to those who need it because while we may be very affluent like I just said we do have lots of things certainly we serve families who do not and so we always have to think about those who don't have the way that others have and so

when we're able to put on initiatives like this it is another way that we serve our community so these are our updates and i hope we have a good rest of the night thank you so much nikia all right carrie

[01:23:33] you're up our school board rep she said she has a lot to say so everyone stretch and get ready oh boy okay i have some news i can't give it all out today but i will tell you we do have a building

[01:24:10] for our transition center and i was there without permission climbing around the building peeking windows and it is perfect it is lovely there is a large space for using as an auditorium using as a large area for working with people in different groups

[01:24:44] we have lots of room for classroom space if that's what we're going to be using it for office space a cafeteria there is also a couple of metal doors around one side and I suspect not that I could get in or even see into that part but I think it was the storage area for equipment and if that is the case we are hoping that we'll be able to turn that into like a small engines classroom or

[01:25:16] do something with HVAC or something like that in that space. There is a big need for landscaping around the building so that would be one of the programs that we're hoping to put in. Perhaps we can use some of the money that we're being given for this for a greenhouse so that we can start practicing and growing our own basically. So I'm really excited about this. I can't tell you where it is yet, but it's moving forward. I have also been involved with the transition planning. I've

[01:25:53] gone to several of the meetings that we've had. We do need your advice for names, but one other thing that I just got today from Dr. Richardson, the Loudoun County Public Schools is excited to invite you to a roundtable event for the Future LCPS Transition Center, a comprehensive program dedicated to supporting students with disabilities. This initiative focuses on career and technical education, as well as independent living skills to enhance workforce integration, independence,

[01:26:33] and the overall quality of life for our students. LCPS is hosting this roundtable event to bring together educators, parents, community members, and other stakeholders to discuss and collaborate on the best practices and strategies for supporting students with disabilities. This event aims to foster a collaborative environment where we can share insights, address challenges, and develop innovative solutions to ensure the success of our students. The LCPS Transition Center will serve high school students with disabilities who are working toward an applied

[01:27:11] studies diploma or an extended standard diploma or who have earned applied studies diploma but are under the age of 22 and still eligible for educational instruction through LCPS. Additionally, career exploration opportunities will be available for middle school students with disabilities to aid in their transition to high schools.

[01:27:34] We look forward to your participation in this important event and to working together to support our students' success. The date, you've heard just a few minutes ago, is May 6, 2025. Time, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., with breakfast and networking from 8.30 to 9 a.m.

[01:27:57] And the location is here, right here in this room, so you don't get lost in the building. And we need you to RSVP by April 29th. So I am going to forward all this information to Liz Crotty and make sure that you have all that information and the link to RSVP.

[01:28:22] It's going to be awesome. So that is my news for the day. I'm sure we will be announcing a lot more about our new building, May 6th. One can ever be hopeful. and I will see you all there. Thank you.

Thank you, Carrie. All right. And Carla,

[01:28:51] would you like to give us our membership report? Hi. We currently have 21 voting members on SEAC, but I have not received any new applications for SEAC membership in over four months. So I would like to encourage anyone attending or if you know someone who would be interested in applying

[01:29:24] to be a member of SEAC. We encourage rolling applications so that we can fill any positions that might come open for next year. And actually, I believe we only have 79 schools with PTA, PTO representatives. I lost one through, I was checking. It was a bad email. And when I went to correct the email, I discovered the individual was no longer serving

[01:30:00] for that school. So we do need 22 additional. Awesome. Well, you know, it's never too late to start recruiting for, or too early to start recruiting for next year. So, you know, if you have a burning desire to be a PTA PTO rep, email Carla. Applications for membership are on the back table so if you want to apply now to be a CEAC member you can do it right now or you can go onto our website and find the application on there. It's a nice little fillable PDF and you can just send it on over to us. We we would love to have you. There's always a little bit of you know

[01:30:38] movement in our membership from year to year so we would love to have some some new members join us. We're a fun group, we're annoying, but we're fun. Yeah, we have permission, it's fine.

[01:30:55] Is Carly here with us tonight? Carly, welcome Carly Sabatino. She's one of our new SEAC members. And because we like to put people on the spot, Carly, would you just like to like, you don't have to do anything fancy, just give a quick introduction.

[01:31:18] - I don't usually look like this. It's an off day for me, thank you. I'm Carly Sabatino. My son is currently in the Early Childhood Special Education Program at Kenneth Colbert. He is autistic and nonverbal, which is what is bringing me here. I very much want to have him in the best place ever, and I've lived around the country, and I do think this is the best place ever for him especially and I want to be part of making it even

[01:31:55] better once he was diagnosed at two and a half he is five and a half now so three years ago I needed to learn more so I'm about to graduate from George Mason with my master's in special education and a concentration in autism thank you so I'm graduating in the summer and then I'm gonna roll right into St. Mary's University School of Law to get a master's in jurisprudence and special

[01:32:28] education advocacy so I am here to learn from everybody and I hope to do great things thank you well we are so glad to have you Carly thank you so much for joining us we look forward to your contributions um for our SEAC chair report I'm going to keep it light um we've got the SEAC awards coming up nominations have closed we got over 350 nominations

[01:33:04] which is absolutely insane what did we have last year 170 something like that some about like 170 So we have like about twice as many this year. Yeah, it's a lot. So they're wonderful so far.

[01:33:20] We started, the executive committee has started to review them. We're going to have the most phenomenal awards ceremony. I am so excited. I mean, it's always great. It's going to be really extra great. It's going to be wonderful. Okay, so that means that we need to start working on our donations.

[01:33:42] And soliciting all of our favorite businesses for a gift card, or if you would like to purchase a gift card and donate it to the SEAC Awards, it would be so appreciated because these are going to go directly to

our awardees, and it's \$25 denomination.

[01:34:01] So it's not a big number that, you know, our awardees are not getting. It's all in the honor and love, but with a teeny tiny little tangible gift as well as a trophy. So anything that you guys can do, we've already gotten some amazing PTOs who have offered to chip in with purchasing cupcakes and waters and pay for some of our trophies.

[01:34:26] I mean, it's just, we haven't even gone to price out the trophies yet, but it grows a lot each year. So any, you know, help that we can get would be so appreciated. And we will thank your PTO.

[01:34:44] We will put them in our program. We will thank you if you want to become one of our official sponsors or any other business. So we have recently sent out all of that sponsor information. So take a look at that and feel free to just go around the community and ask.

[01:35:03] It's not a hard ask. People actually really like to contribute to things that honor our educators and students, you know, who are helping out our community of students with disabilities. So it's a little scary maybe the first couple of times that you ask, but it gets a lot easier.

[01:35:21] And you'll feel so good when you are able to actually help and be a part of the awards. So if you have any questions at all, Shanaz is here. She and Laura and Marsha are kind of, you know, running things on the SEAC awards.

[01:35:42] So please just hit them up. I think we also gave out their addresses for if you have gift cards that you want to drop off or just say hello. So, yes, please reach out to us if you have any questions. For the CX survey, we have drafted the CX survey for this year.

[01:36:02] I've been waiting to get some feedback from people. It hasn't changed a lot from last year, but we did clarify some of the wording and added a question about mental health supports. So if you have any questions about that or would like to see a copy of it, I am happy to share and always happy to receive any feedback um and then the final thing is we have um i have the quarterly presentation to the school board on april 8th at 4 30 so i guess paige and i will be

[01:36:34] sharing sharing the spotlight there um it'll be a it'll be a heavy c or a special education night All right. And with that, we're going to move into our nominations. We have to elect a new board for next year. And so Carla and Laura have been kind of headlining that. So first, yes, thank you.

[01:37:02] First, let's do a quick run through and make sure we have quorum because we can't take a vote without quorum. Beth Carlson. Here. Liz Crotty. Here. Jennifer DiDonato. She's online. Here. Kathy Fuligatti Lambert, Marcia Kelly, Tom Ketchum, Shanaz Khan, Razina Katak, Laura Colossi,

[01:37:32] Alicia McFadden, Craig Metz, Stephen Meyer, Catherine Moran, Kelly Ralston, Erin Rizalpo, Catherine Rosenbrook, Carly Sabatino, Carla Sola is here, Sharon Trofe, Melissa Waugh, Sakina Zarbouche. Thank you. Yeah and just real quick it's amazing how much you guys show up for the meetings. I said something at the very bottom of my email that I sent out today but I just really

[01:38:09] want to like call out our SEAC members for such amazing attendance this year. Like it used to be a struggle for us to get quorum and I think there's only been one meeting this year where I might have sent some panic texts. You guys are just amazing in your commitment to SEAC and I want to thank you all so much so with that I will let Carla and Laura take over our electing

[01:38:35] of officers for next year I think we want to present us the slate for the executive board for next year for chair Shanaz Khan for vice chair of planning Catherine Moran for vice chair of communications Erin Roselle Poe for vice

[01:39:09] chair of membership Tom Ketchum for secretary Catherine Rosenbrook and at this time we'd like to ask if there are any nominations that would like to be made from the floor seeing none then can we move to make a motion to accept the nominations or the slate this late okay thank you do you want a roll call or

[01:39:48] just uh three yeah all those oh yeah also all those in favor say aye all those opposed say nay okay any abstentions oh uh beth carlson how do you vote aye jennifer d donato Aye Kelly Ralston Aye Sharon Trofe Aye Congratulations

[01:40:27] to our new for your service All right Okay Committee reports Literacy and math Alicia, do you have an update for us

[01:41:07] that you would like to give? No, it's not So the only big update from our last meeting there had been some concerns about families not receiving being able to receive data when they're requesting on their reading programs that are being implemented the reading intervention programs so although schools cannot give you any copy written material they should be able to provide all of the data as far as what is

[01:41:44] being given and the progress that they're making so you can go ahead and request that of your team And then our next meeting is Thursday, April 24th at 9:30 a.m.

[01:42:01] - And then also, I just wanted to mention textbook adoption. If you noticed out in the hallway, there are a lot of books out there. And so if you would like to go browse the middle school English textbooks, they are out there, as well as Math K through 12.

[01:42:25] There's a lot of big math textbooks out there. So if you want to look at those, they're there. But there's also some kindergarten ones, too. So, you know, pick your favorite. But those are going to be out there for a month before the school board votes on whether to adopt them.

[01:42:41] So, you know, I think we all as parents of kids with disabilities know how important that curriculum is and that it's accessible and it makes sense to us. Oftentimes we end up tutoring it at home. So, yeah, this stuff really matters to us.

[01:42:57] So please take some time and take a look at those materials and make sure that you agree with them. And if you don't, reach out to your school board member or Carrie, she'll carry the mantle too.

[01:43:15] All right. And our next one, meaningful inclusion. So our last meeting we outlined an agenda for our work session coming up at the end of April on adaptive PE which you can see there is at 12:30 p.m. here at the admin building and we begin to discuss our plans for heading into next year some of the issues that we may tackle including the availability of specials

[01:43:47] yes and just note that we are not having our April regularly scheduled evening meaningful inclusion subcommittee because it's during spring break and actually i think a lot of ours are but some of our subcommittees decided to move it a week and meaningful inclusion gave you a month off so enjoy uh and then policy um subcommittee melissa

[01:44:20] do you want to give an update um page thank you so much for the great annual plan um introduction to our group and so uh that was my on my agenda for our committee uh report part is i wanted to personally invite everybody to come to our April 21st Monday April 21st at 6:30 it's virtual our policy and compliance subcommittee meeting because that's where we will be digging in on the annual plan and developing the comments

[01:44:54] and the feedback that we are supposed to do as part of our mission as a SEAC so that we can comment on those things to include comments on the set-aside funds and how we in this disability community our feedback on how we'd like to see those spent so we're excited about it we've been looking forward to getting the annual plan and I invite all of you guys to come participate in that discussion and transition subcommittee do you have an update Shana I mean we haven't met and we've gotten a lot of really awesome transition I don't think

[01:45:34] you can beat that no for sure so the next transition work session is on April 8th at 9.30 a.m. here at Admin. So I'm sure we'll be talking about the Transition Center.

[01:45:50] So please come and join us. And then SEAC Awards Planning. Was there anything else you guys wanted to add to that? Okay. All right. And then our Executive Committee will be meeting after our meeting tonight over at Clyde's. And all are welcome. And our SEAC Rep Report. So SEAC.

[01:46:19] Did they add another letter to their abbreviation? I think they might have. There's something else, but do you guys have an update for us, either Carla or Steve for SeaTac? Okay, that's what I was thinking, but I wasn't sure.

[01:46:39] So their next meeting is on May 21st, and they're going to be doing some cool stuff. Isn't there a big plan that's going to be presented at the next SeaTac meeting by Dr. Grubbs or the last one?

[01:46:57] Okay. All right. Very cool. And equity committee, they also did not meet? Yes. Okay. All right. So no updates there either. We are just moving right along. We have already done our roll call for quorum. So I think we're good there. So we can get right into our policy review. So Melissa and Craig, I'll let you guys come up. It looks like a lot of policies on here, but don't be too scared they're they're not that bad i don't think there's any one of them that's really scary so

[01:47:36] all right um so there as you can see there are several policies that we don't have any recommendations for do we want to do those first okay um so policy 8125 uh we would entertain a motion to adopt the recommendation of policy and compliance subcommittee that we have no recommendations do i thought we wanted to do them separately so people had a chance to comment I'm happy to do it as a slate.

[01:48:09] We tried to do that before, and we got pushback. We can do it as a slate, and anyone can call to separate the question if they disagree. Okay. Sounds great. Yay. Is there any discussion?

[01:48:33] So it's been moved and seconded that we adopt the recommendations of the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee that we have no recommendations to the listed policies. Is there any discussion? And this would be the time if you wanted us to break anything out. Nope? Okay. Hearing no discussion, we'll move to a vote.

[01:48:50] All those in favor of adopting the recommendation of no recommendations to these policies say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right. Beth Carlson?

[01:49:06] Aye. Jennifer D. Donato? Aye. Kelly Ralston? Aye. Sharon Trough? Aye. Excellent. Okay. So that passes unanimously. All right. Then we're going to look at policy 6130.

[01:49:23] Find it. That is, that's the policy for unpaid meal debt. This addresses the school board's commitment to ensure that students have access to nutritious meals to support academic readiness by addressing how to handle unpaid meal debt. And actually, SEAC had addressed or reviewed this policy back in October of 2022 and had adopted a recommendation.

[01:49:46] And so it was the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee's recommendation that we adopt the same concern and recommendation because it was not adopted by the school board back in 2022. And so the concern is that, that we also had back in 2022, that we have received, CIC has received reports from the community that LCPS would not communicate with parents in their preferred language or language they understood and or their preferred mode of communication or a mode they can access, such as Braille.

[01:50:17] should be written to be inclusive of the needs of our parents and guardians therefore our recommendation at line 55 after the word mail to add quote in their preferred mode of communication end quote so that the new sentence in the policy reads students parent or legal guardian is notified via email text phone and mail in their preferred mode of communication all right so do I hear a motion to adopt the concern and recommendation from the policy and compliance subcommittee

[01:50:51] to policy 6130 unpaid meal debt. Okay. Second by Tom. Thank you. Any discussion on this? Yes. So aside from the policy aspect of this, I, as a parent, oh, is this not working? Oh, hello. Is this working? Hi. I think it is. Yeah. Okay. Thank you. So aside from the policy,

[01:51:27] Whatever the company or their method of communication, I guess, they have been, like, falsely making calls and e-mails and text messages, at least to me. I don't know if anybody else is experiencing it.

[01:51:44] Everyone got it. Okay, so it's, like, it's continuing to happen, and, like, my child is five, and I sent him with food every day, so he has never gotten food from school, so I know that that's, you know, it's faulty. So I just wanted to see if that was an issue for anybody else and, like, what maybe, no?

[01:52:04] So that is an issue, but that actually, it's not related to our policy that we're, and the recommendations that we're adopting. That's more of a technical glitch. Technical issue, okay. Right, but, yeah, so not directly related to our policy recommendations.

[01:52:24] Okay. So one other thing, though, I don't know if this is like, if it goes along with the policy, but as for the unpaid meal debt, I know that some places will allow other people to pay meal debt. Is this something that I can look into how to do? Pay for other people's meal debt?

[01:52:43] It's my understanding that is, in fact, the policy does address that these can be paid from other sources. Okay, I would love to hear more about that. But I don't know if anyone from the staff wants to address that directly, that question. I will oh okay yeah and again the policy number 6130 if you want to look it up um and I know Liz sent out um yeah and if you um scan the qr code that's up there it takes you we have a shared folder you probably don't know about but yeah where we post all of the um policy packets that

[01:53:17] we're looking at but also if you want to find the draft policy um we usually send that out when we send out the subcommittee notices but you can also go on to board docs if you just google LCPS board

docs and then there's a little thing that says policy and you can search for the policy number and you'll also see the draft of that and if you have any questions if anyone has any questions I'm always happy to walk you through because I know it was a little overwhelming for me when I first started trying to figure out where are these policies. Thank you. Definitely yes so Please come to any of us who have a question.

[01:53:54] Steven, yeah. Oh, hold on one sec, communication. - In your preferred, in the added wording in their preferred mode of communication, what would that be?

[01:54:14] You mentioned braille. - Yeah, well, braille was in the context of a mode that the parent could access, such as braille. That was the context of the braille comment. - Okay, not knowing who's gonna read this, should we include that?

[01:54:29] not including but not limited to braille aac in other words so that if a parent is reading that they know that's an alternative right and are there um other than braille the other alternative modes are we talking like you know aac sign language i would make a motion that we insert um the wording including but not limited to and the ones that you just said braille sign language Should we say, for example?

[01:55:08] Sure. Right. But, you know, there's some kind of overarching themes that you'll see come up in our policy recommendations. And, of course, this is part of one of them, which is communicating with people in a way that they can receive if they have a disability. But the other one is we love to make it easy for people who are working in good faith to pick up the policy and know what they're supposed to be doing.

[01:55:30] So anything we can do that makes that easier, everybody wins. I apologize. What was the comment? No, no. I think she was talking about that ADA accommodations would be met.

[01:55:47] That ADA accommodations are met? Yeah, something like that, that referring to other modes of communication are available. Because we don't provide, for example, a sign language interpreter to every single event. But if we know that somebody needs that, we absolutely provide that.

[01:56:03] Do you see what I'm saying? I see where you're going. Because Loudoun County has like a form. Say if you were coming to this meeting and you needed CART or you needed, you know, a sign language interpreter, then the individual will fill out that form, submit it to Loudoun County so that that resource can be provided, say, at this meeting.

[01:56:20] Yeah, because I think we would need to know that you needed something in that format in order for us to deliver it to you that way. So I think that ADA accommodations available upon request or modes of communication available, you know, because we would need to know what that mode of communication is in order to deliver it that way.

[01:56:41] I'm sorry, I'm tired. I'm droning on, but you know what I mean. So could the wording be in their preferred mode of ADA communication? Okay, I'll accept that.

[01:56:57] I really think we should stick with an example like Braille or sign language rather than refer to the ADA because the ADA does cover a lot about signage and so forth, Not necessarily modes of communication, and I'm worried that if we reference that, it starts to put it in a more murky area.

[01:57:22] And if our purpose is to make it more obvious to a layperson what is intended there, we just give a couple of examples, such as. Yeah, but maybe kind of addressing the concern over here, maybe

adding some language, maybe not referencing ADA per se, but just saying, say a parent picked up this policy and was reading it.

[01:57:47] And they might think, well, how do I do that? And so maybe dropping some language in, you know, these modes of communication can be accessed at this link and put a link to the request form or something so that it makes it more accessible, maybe?

[01:58:08] I think we may be getting down into the weeds in implementation. For a policy. Fair enough. I think our objective in this recommendation is merely to flag to student nutrition services as they are developing like a technology for notifying parents that this is something that they need to consider.

[01:58:27] If we go to, I think that was the level that we were at. There's a whole lot of other implementation details that are bigger picture. Some of that may be a parent view issue or so forth. This is not the place for that. Well, and maybe, you know, since the staff are able to communicate, and if there's a regulation that goes with this, maybe that might be information that could be in a regulation.

[01:58:53] I just, some of that is bigger than this particular policy's domain. Yeah, well, I mean, the staff can add anything they want to a regulation, and if that's important, then, you know, and I think there is some value in making sure people have, understand how they can get access to these things.

[01:59:12] But I do fully agree that may be more detail than is what would be appropriate for a school board policy. Yeah. All right. So do I hear a motion from the – is there any more discussion on that topic? I don't want to cut things off too quickly.

[01:59:30] Okay. Is there a motion from the floor because we need to amend – We can adopt as amended. But we haven't amended yet. We don't have a base motion. The base motion can be to adopt the subcommittees with – Okay.

[01:59:57] Do I hear such a motion? Okay. And do I hear a second? Okay. All right. So, any discussion? All right. All those in favor of adopting the motion to adopt the recommendations of the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee as amended from the floor to Policy 6130, all those in favor say aye.

[02:00:21] Aye. Those opposed? Any abstentions? All right. Beth Carlson? Aye. Jennifer D. Donato? Aye. Kelly Ralston? Aye. Sharon Trofe?

[02:00:36] Aye. okay so that passes unanimously moving on our next policy oh oh okay oh we haven't had slides thank you oh my gosh okay oh okay let's go past that there we go policy 2310 committees of the school board all right um this addresses uh school board standing select and advisory committees and just so everyone knows cx serves as an advisory committee to the school board um and the following is the recommendation of the, uh, policy and compliance subcommittee. Uh, the concern is that

[02:01:13] there, what we think is a typo at line 256 that makes the intent of the sentence unclear, and so what we are recommending is that the end of line 257, which is the end of the sentence, um, add the word, quote, community, end quote, so that the full sentence now reads, SEAC advises the school board on the needs of special education students and examines issues of relevance to the special education community um so that's it do i hear a motion to adopt the recommendation of the policy

[02:01:43] and compliant subcommittee to policy 2310 are the even seconded is there any discussion uh so it's so it's been moved and seconded that we adopt the recommendation from the policy and compliant

subcommittee to policy 2310 is there any discussion okay all those in favor say aye Aye. Opposed? Any abstentions? All right. Beth Carlson? Aye. Jennifer DiDonato? Aye.

[02:02:16] Harry Ralston? Aye. And Sharon Truff? Aye. All right. So that motion passes unanimously. All right. Now we're to policy 5430, use of generative artificial intelligence. This policy establishes standards for the use of generative artificial intelligence or AI and LCPS to enhance learning through adaptive technologies such as this one.

[02:02:40] And there were actually three concerns and two recommendations. Okay. Oh, that's okay. I've got it here, so I print it out. All right. So concern number one from the committee was that the current policy, while it's not objectionable at all, the committee felt that it lacked the guardrails that should be required when implementing an AI policy.

[02:03:03] The following items and others are missing. any detail on limitations, appropriate use, AI ethics board, algorithmic bias safeguards, data ownership, and review beyond once-a-year approval of apps.

[02:03:21] So recommendation number one, which is on here, yep, that's it, is to establish an AI ethics board that would include a representative of the disability community to further define this policy and associated regulations. So our concern number two is that eligibility decisions, IEP generation, placement decisions, grading, or course design should not be solely automated via AI.

[02:03:52] A human decision maker should remain involved in the decision making. And concern number three, programs or applications, et cetera, while generative AI decisions are based on models.

[02:04:08] Models should address algorithmic bias safeguards, data ownership, trust and integrity, etc. Quote, programs, end quote, are less of a concern and there should be more focus in the policy on actual generative AI, quote, models, end quote.

[02:04:28] Therefore, recommendation number two is at lines 30 and 36 to replace the term programs with the term models. Okay, so, go ahead. I'd like to suggest an amendment to concern two, which would be to change the word should, as in a human should be involved, to must.

[02:04:52] Okay, so do I hear a motion to adopt the concerns? Yeah, we didn't do a base motion, but if we're going to do it like we did the previous, then we'll go ahead and do the base motion as adopting with this amendment from the floor.

[02:05:13] Once there's a motion on the floor, you need to amend the base motion to change it. We typically don't. I'll grant you that, but just so that there's no ambiguity. Okay. So do I hear a motion? I've got to love Robert's Rules of Water, right? Not so much.

[02:05:34] But anyway, so do I hear a motion to adopt the recommendations and concerns from the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee to Policy 5430 as amended from the floor to change the word in concern number two from should to must.

[02:05:53] be a human decision maker must remain involved in the decision making their second second all right any discussion to include about the amendment go ahead tom oh i'm just going to make a comment about this because we took a look at this policy and it doesn't really say anything it just sort of says well there's ai and we should really do kind of good things with it so if there is any

[02:06:32] policy that you guys read read this policy and comment back to the school board on this policy directly as well as the comments coming from SEAC because this is a really important issue obviously this is a technology that's beginning to develop very very quickly there's a lot of minimal understanding amongst most people that are not really immersed in this technology and so we made some of these recommendations at a high level to help deal with this and when a couple times we mentioned the issue of bias i'll give you an example of that right now one of the

[02:07:10] ways that a lot of folks in education are concerned about the use of AI is whether or not it's being used to generate papers and write you know student assignments and so forth there is a known bias in LLM in generative AI right now where if you're a non-native English speaker you've learned English as a second language you're more likely to be tech to be detected as having it been written by AI because you're following rules and a lot of us who grew up here in the United States we don't follow a lot of rules when we write things and come up with ideas and so forth

[02:07:47] if you come to this as a second language you follow those rules much more strictly just like well a gen AI engine so as a result you get detected more often than not as as plagiarizing your work so that's one example there are other examples like that but just read through this policy and give feedback on an individual basis I would encourage everybody to do that yep and you know full disclosure we actually had two to include tom uh members of our policy and compliance subcommittee who literally do these policies for ai as part of their job so we did have some experts um who were involved in this yeah and real quick um the curriculum and

[02:08:25] instruction committee is the committee of the school board that is looking at this policy and so they actually had a meeting right before this one um and it usually is the first wednesday of month um so you are and they're going to be looking at it again next month so if you would like to go and give public comment there or you know or you can do it through let's talk you are more than welcome to and they they are looking for community input so any more discussion

[02:08:59] okay all those in favor of adopting the concerns and recommendations from the policy and compliance subcommittee to policy 5430 as amended from the floor say aye aye those opposed any abstentions all right beth carlson aye jennifer de donato aye kelly ralston aye sharon trove sorry sharon i'm getting tired it's like who are you do i know you uh okay that is it so just one

[02:09:34] and the motion passes unanimously okay last thing um so while the policy compliance subcommittee part of our job is to review policies that are being reviewed by the school board we also um can make uh recommendations and bring concerns to the school board and to the superintendent um outside of policies that are already being reviewed and this is one of those and um so the concern that has been raised in the committee was regarding classroom observations in LCPS. And SEAC has recommended for years that the LCPS school board develop a policy regarding

[02:10:09] classroom observations that addresses the public policy concern to balance a parent's right to meaningful participation in the educational process, a private treating professional's need to collaborate with the school, and the administration's need to minimize disruption to the educational environment.

[02:10:29] All of these are very important concerns. So in response to that, the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee has put forward one concern and, sorry, two concerns and two recommendations. Concern number one, there's a lack of understanding by families and school-based staff of the rules and the

parameters of classroom observations, which leads to inconsistencies in implementation across the district because the only current information regarding this issue is in a guidance

[02:11:04] document that was developed in 2018 there is concern that the guidance can be changed without the input of the community and the school board and then in our policy packet which you guys would have received prior to this meeting there's a link to that guidance document so recommendation number one that the school board should develop a policy on this issue that would go through the deliberative and open process of policy adoption and be more readily available to parents and staff.

[02:11:35] This would provide more information and clarity regarding classroom observations. Concern number two that was raised is that there should be some oversight of decisions made by principals regarding classroom observations. The current guidance document on classroom observations gives the principal or their designee the authority to deny a request for an observation with no opportunity for review of that decision. So recommendation number two is to provide in the policy developed by the school board some kind of oversight of a principal's decision regarding a

[02:12:14] classroom observation and a process for a parent to appeal that decision. So do I hear a motion from the floor to adopt the recommendations um and concerns from the policy and compliance subcommittee regarding classroom observations is there any discussion on this issue oh everybody's tired yeah i thought this would this would be the one that was going to drag it out okay great yay um

[02:12:53] so uh with there's no additional discussion then um then we will move to a vote all those in favor of adopting the recommendations of the policy and compliance subcommittee regarding classroom observations. Say aye. Aye. Opposed? Any abstentions? Okay. Beth Carlson? Aye. Jennifer DiDonato? Aye. Kelly Ralston? Aye. Sharon Trofe? Aye. Okay. And it passes unanimously. Thank you guys.

[02:13:23] All right, and next month, May 7th, is our last SEAC scheduled meeting. We are going to be meeting with the chief of staff to discuss what kinds of policies might be headed our way.

[02:13:45] There's always that possibility that we might want to schedule something additional just so that we don't start off the school year with like 20 policies to review. But we will definitely keep open communication and figure out what needs to happen there.

[02:14:01] But as of now, May 7th is our last meeting, and we usually conduct that with, there's no presentation, but we do have a subcommittee work session where we sort of summarize the work that each of our subcommittees has done during the year, which is extensive, obviously, and get it all ready to go so that we can incorporate that into our annual report that captures everything that we've done this year.

[02:14:25] And then June 4th is our SEAC awards which will be at Loudoun County High School and we would love for everyone to come and to volunteer their time. It takes a lot of hands to make the event successful and we would truly appreciate that. And with that we are finished for the evening so thank you all so much and have a wonderful night and we'll see you next month.



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