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Loudoun County School Board, 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting, Tuesday, April 8, 2025

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Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1071992637?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DEPP826335A9>

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

[00:00:58] Good afternoon. I call to order this April 8th, 2025 Loudoun County School Board meeting. At this time, we will read the disclosures, and I'll start. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:01:21] Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I'm included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:01:39] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits.

[00:01:58] and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS

employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included.

[00:02:19] I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Ms. Chandler. Mr. Streffi. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[00:02:37] As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, as a school board member, I'm eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee.

[00:02:56] These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Mr. Estreffi. Ms. LaBelle.

[00:03:15] Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which

[00:03:53] I am included. I can and will perform fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Ms. Labelle. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in the excess of the statutory

[00:04:31] three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public record of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. We will now move on to the approval of the consent agenda, item three. Board members, are there any changes to be made to the consent agenda? Seeing none, before we vote on the consent agenda, we have one proclamation to read. The proclamation formally declares April 2025 as Arab American Heritage

[00:05:04] Month in LCPS and will be read by Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. National Arab American Heritage Month, April 2025, whereas National Arab American Heritage Month is an opportunity to celebrate the great pride and vibrancy of the more than 3.5 million Arab Americans in the United States, with Virginia home to 85,198 Arab Americans and Loudoun County home to over 8,000 Arab Americans, and whereas Arab Americans' abilities and contributions strengthen Virginia's

[00:05:40] economy, diverse culture, and communities by helping shape, advance, and enrich the Commonwealth in all areas of life, including government, business, education, arts and sciences, medicine, law enforcement, technology, and the military, and whereas Arab Americans living in Virginia have shared their rich culture and traditions with neighbors and friends while setting examples as model citizens and public servants, and whereas Loudoun County is the proud home of a diverse and thriving community within which exists a large and flourishing Arab American population, and whereas Loudoun County Public Schools has a commitment

[00:06:20] to providing all members of its community a safe, supportive, inclusive, affirming, and respectful environment. And, whereas, Loudoun County Public Schools is stronger when it reflects and respects the full diversity of the school community that enabled 97.1 of all students in LCPS to graduate in 2024.

[00:06:43] And, whereas, during National Arab American Heritage Month, It is important to promote cultural awareness and understanding through educational initiatives, events, celebrations within Loudoun County Public Schools, and whereas the school division continues to collaborate and partner with various community-based individuals and organizations to further its efforts of forming strong, culturally connected relationships with the Arab-American community in Loudoun County.

[00:07:10] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board proclaims April 2025 as Arab American Month in Loudoun County Public Schools. Be it further resolved that the Loudoun County School Board encourages staff and students to observe, recognize, and celebrate the culture, heritage, and contributions of Arab Americans throughout the year.

[00:07:32] Thank you, Ms. Chandler. I will now entertain a motion to approve the consent agenda. I move to approve the consent agenda. I have a motion by Ms. Chernoff. Is there a second? I second. Okay, I have a second by Dr. Deans.

[00:07:50] it's been properly moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda at this time we will take a vote to approve the consent agenda clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote that motion passes with mrs griffiths and ms donahue absent for the vote i will move on to the advisory committee update special education advisory Committee SEAC quarterly update presented by, I call her Liz, but Elizabeth Crotty, SEAC chair.

[00:08:30] Welcome, Ms. Crotty. I'm very happy to be here this evening or afternoon. Next slide, please. This just gives you our role and the seat of the SEAC as well as our Virginia regulations. I'm not going to read them to you because I know you are all very familiar with the role of SEAC. And so this presentation this evening is just a time for us to connect and share what's going on in our

[00:09:07] committee and give you the feedback that you need. Next slide, please. So I'm Liz Crotty. I am the chair of our SEAC. With me this evening tonight is Catherine Moran, who is our vice chair of planning. Carla Sola is our vice chair of membership. Erin Rosalpo is our vice chair of communications. Katie Rosenbrook is our SEAC secretary, and Sharon Trofe is our SEAC past chair. And then we also, of course, have our liaison, Dr. Paige Carter, who is our director

[00:09:41] of special education, Carrie LaBelle, who is our school board liaison, and then you, Chair Mansfield, are our alternate. You haven't had to be an alternate very often, though, because Keri is very dedicated. Next slide, please.

[00:09:59] So I wanted to start off this evening just thanking the wonderful people that SEAC works with. Dr. Paige Carter, our Director of Special Education, and Ms. Nakia Purnell, who is the Assistant Director. Dr. Kim Jones, who helps us in all the ways and keeps us organized.

[00:10:19] Ms. Kristen Lovell, we could not do it without them. And of course, Ms. Tedra Richardson. They are just extremely collaborative. They're a joy to work with, deeply knowledgeable about everything, of course, and generous with sharing with us that knowledge, which helps us to be a better advisory committee and also forever patient with us, which is important.

[00:10:45] They care so deeply for our students, and I know you all see that as well and are always available to discuss challenges. They've created a culture of collaboration, both in student services, but also across many departments within LCPS.

[00:11:04] I also wanted to give a special thank you to the special education supervisors who support our subcommittees. These supervisors have been appointed as liaisons for the four active subcommittees that we have, and they take time after their workday to come to sometimes lengthy SEAC subcommittee meetings.

[00:11:30] And we are very appreciative of the knowledge that they bring to us and being there to answer questions and contribute to the work that we're doing. Then I also wanted to thank especially Miss Carrie LaBelle, who is our fearless champion and fellow troublemaker.

[00:11:48] It's been so rewarding to work with you. and we are very grateful that you are our school board liaison. And then also just a special thank you to each and every one of you. You guys are amazing. It's truly been the biggest honor to get to know you and to work with you and talk with you and problem solve with you.

[00:12:12] You guys bring such a wonderful energy to this school district, district, and it's just been incredibly rewarding to work with each and every one of you. And then also just a general thank you to all the LCPS staff, because SEAC is not very good at staying in our lane, and we've had a lot of wonderful help from everyone, honestly, in the LCPS admin building, so thank you all so much.

[00:12:44] Next slide, please. We have a full roster at this time, we have 21 voting members, but we are probably going to have some openings at the end of the year. So please, if you would like some representation from your districts, try to encourage people to submit an application.

[00:13:04] Our application forms are on our website, and we just love getting new members and putting more people to work. So we have 80 of our LCPS schools that have PTA/PTO representatives. We do strive to have one from each school.

[00:13:19] So next year is the year we're going to do it, I'm confident. We have our five active subcommittees that meet monthly, three of which have quarterly work sessions. So this is in addition to the work that we do in those evenings after school, we also come into the admin building and work very specifically on a topic and really try to tackle it so that we can bring in all the stakeholders and really understand what's going on.

[00:13:45] We've provided feedback on, since this slide was made, I think we're up to 21 policies so far this year. We really take them seriously, as I know you all know, and we appreciate it when you come and ask us questions about our recommendations.

[00:14:01] We're always happy to provide that. And then our SEAC awards are coming up, and we received 354 nominations from the community. Last year we got 170, and that felt like a lot.

[00:14:18] So we have twice as many this year, and we have been just diligently trying to get through them all. They are an absolute joy to read, and we are going to have some incredible people that we and kids too that we're honoring this year so you know get your tissue boxes handy I think a lot of you have said that you're going to be able to join us for the SEAC Awards like it's gonna be wonderful we're really excited next slide please I just wanted to give you guys a brief overview of the

[00:14:55] presentations that we had this year we had a kickoff with dr. Spence which was fantastic also a what's new in special education with miss Nakia Purnell who is the assistant director for special education. We had our social workers in LCPS with Miss Jennifer Evans and Dr. John Walker from Student Services and that evening we also had an LCPS resource fair to kind of help our parents navigate all the many resources that we have just in LCPS so that they can find what might be helpful and that went really well. We had a presentation

[00:15:32] on health care and transition with Miss Jeannie Kloman from Student Health Services, as well as a screening of On Beauty with the film director, Rick Guidotti, and that was amazing as well. If you want to go back and watch that presentation from March, it was definitely, it was a good one.

[00:15:52] And then just last week, we had our student panel on self-determination, which was moderated by Kendall Schwartzentruber, the director of I'm Determined, and gosh, it's really hard to pick a favorite of all of our presentations, but that one, truly, hearing from our students, they were amazing, so profound, so wise, very impressive, and just, I just can't say enough.

[00:16:24] I can't describe it. You have to go and watch it. The first 30 minutes of last week's SEAC meeting. I highly recommend that you go to our website and pull that up. You will not be sorry that you did. We have so much to learn from our students. And so anytime we get a chance to amplify their voices and learn from their experiences is just an incredible opportunity.

[00:16:48] Next slide, please. So just a quick call out for our SEAC survey this year. We are finalizing it and we would like it if you could share it with your constituents when it comes out. The CX survey informs our work and it provides valuable feedback to you and if we don't get enough responses from a particular district, then when it's analyzed, they won't give us the breakdown for your district.

[00:17:16] So we really need to have it, you know, even if there's a lot overall, if we don't get enough from, I don't know, I don't want to pick on a district, but if we don't get enough from one, then, you know, they will just leave that district out. So it's really important that as much as you can, you get it in your newsletters, put it on your socials, and just encourage people to fill that out.

[00:17:37] And it does a bonus for you getting information and it helps us. And then also, I just wanted to mention this year we have expanded languages. I think I added about 120 options to the survey, it was a lot of clicking, but hopefully it'll go well.

[00:17:55] feedback that anyone has, any difficulty with it, please let us know. You know, it's a new endeavor, but we're excited that it will hopefully be more accessible to more families and hopefully get us higher quality information. Next slide, please. And then I just wanted to take a moment to talk about some thoughts on meaningful inclusion in our schools. This is a topic of great passion for me and honestly what brought me to SEAC in general.

[00:18:26] You know, as a district, we do inclusion really well. And next slide, please. But many schools, we have many schools and many teachers, and so that always creates a difficulty with consistency.

[00:18:43] And I know that we want to deliver that for each and every student, for them to have that feeling of true belonging and meaningful inclusion. So to define it just a little bit, you know, it's sometimes people think about inclusion as they're there, right?

[00:19:01] And so it's not about just being in that room or that space. It's about being actively engaged, sharing experiences, relationship building. That's how you know when you're starting to see some meaningful inclusion. You know, we really, we want to offer the same enriching opportunities to all students make adaptations as needed to include every learner.

[00:19:27] You know, we've got our gifted students, we've got our SPED students, our EL, our gen ed, like all of them can be working together and benefiting from this time together. We saw a beautiful example of this at an elementary school where they were doing activities such as podcasting, TV news shows, garden clubs, and it was for all students. We asked them, you know, how are you meaningfully including your kids, and we're like, well, they're just in all of them, you know, and they're doing all the things, and that is perfect. We don't always need to have a special activity, you know, for just this one

[00:20:03] group. We can take, it's a lot of work to do special activities, right? So if we're going to do a special activity, let's just open it up to all the groups and have all the kids learning from each other and collaborating together. And so if we partner these students with disabilities in meaningful school jobs and roles with our general education peers, then they will all benefit. We shouldn't be giving jobs that are just only for our special education students.

[00:20:34] That's where we kind of end up getting into trouble, right? And we start getting parent complaints about, well, they're having my kid do this, or they're having them do that. You know, if we think about it from the lens of, well, would I have our gifted students do this? Would I have our gen ed students do this? That's where, you know, we will end up in a place that we are all proud and very excited about. Next slide, please. So we had the opportunity to meet with another principal, and she shared with us that meaningful inclusion

[00:21:09] at her school all starts with the master plan. And her master plan was very impressive. but she schedules special education first before she does anything else because it's complicated and because there's a lot of moving pieces and it allows her to make sure that all the students are getting into the places that they need to be.

[00:21:33] So as a sneak peek into what SEAC is going to be working on next year, we've started to have some comments from the community about students not getting access to specials like adapted music or art or library, you know, when they are in the program classes.

[00:21:51] Now, some of our students can very easily push into a general education environment, but that's not necessarily the case for all of our students. And if we don't master schedule in a time for those students to have those classes, then they don't get them.

[00:22:10] So we need to be more intentional about it. And we also need to make sure that we have some incredible teachers who will give up their planning periods, give up their lunch to go into these program classes and to teach these adapted art and music lessons.

[00:22:28] And while that is lovely, and I will give them all the awards and \$25 gift certificates I have, they really should be compensated for that time, and they really should have their planning periods. You know, so we really need our schools to master plan, to include these students, these are your students, and make sure that they are getting access to all the same things.

[00:22:51] We've had some similar concerns with adaptive PE, not being given space in the gyms for their PE classes. You know, the gyms are where we have our proper equipment. It's where kids can run. If they're in a cafeteria or something like that, it smells like food.

[00:23:10] Like, I think we've all had the opportunity to be in a school cafeteria. It's not, like, the most pleasant of place. You know, and there's a lot of obstacles with tables, even when they're folded up. And all of our students need to be able to run, right?

[00:23:26] Like, we talked about that a lot with the playgrounds. And even on rainy days when we're stuck inside, we still need to be able to run. And if we're trying to do adaptive PE in a hallway or a classroom, you know, it's just not going to be the same experience.

[00:23:42] And so that is something that SEAC is going to be looking into a little bit more closely in this next year. Next slide, please. So also professional development and training is incredibly important for meaningful inclusion.

[00:23:58] So we really want to prioritize that special education training for our paraprofessionals because they are often the ones who are pushing into the general education environments. And they can make or break, whether it is meaningful inclusion or just being present.

[00:24:16] And so we need to have those opportunities to train them in person and to make sure that they are as knowledgeable as they can possibly be. They really are like the right hand of a special education teacher and are incredibly important.

[00:24:32] We need to provide regular training and coaching on tier one tools, as well as augmentative and alternative communication, you know, little iPad talking devices, to all of our teachers and paraprofessionals. We need to build our accessibility skills across all of our educators.

[00:24:52] We can't wait until a student shows up with an IEP that says that they need something, and the teacher doesn't have the time or ability to actually learn that. And, you know, so then sometimes things don't get implemented until maybe halfway through the year, or maybe not at all, because, you know, teachers have so much to learn once the school year gets going.

[00:25:14] So we really need to build up these skills of all of our teachers and just assume that they are going to have a student who requires Tier 1 accessibility tools. Because we have them. They're on everyone's computers. Like, let's just all figure out how to use them so that we can make our learning more accessible for everybody.

[00:25:32] Next slide, please. So these are just some quotes from our instructional framework that I felt like really spoke nicely to our need to provide that meaningful inclusion. We want to have, you know, resources that are rigorous, authentic, and student-centered learning. We want to develop opportunities that promote the flexible learning paths with appropriate scaffolds based on individual students' strengths, needs, or interests, that very much speaks to all of our different populations,

[00:26:11] whether they're SPED, whether they're gifted, whether they're EL. We want to utilize a variety of instructional approaches to meet the learning objectives and the unique needs of the students. So working from that, next slide please.

[00:26:27] You know, we are going to have a new reading and math curriculum, and so we need to implement inclusive practices with having making sure they are accessible making sure there are multiple access points and differentiated structures flexible assessments as we talk about grading and assessments tonight you know it's important that we figure out what these kids actually do know and not everybody can show what they know on you know a little you know paper test right that that they may need to show their learning in other ways.

[00:27:04] We want to ensure that consistency of these inclusive practices across all of our schools and classrooms. And just again, to reiterate, our students with disabilities, our English language learners, our gifted learners, really everybody needs engaging and fun opportunities that allow them to build upon their strengths.

[00:27:26] And Universal Design for Learning is an approach that aligns with our instructional framework and would enhance learning for all students. It's also something that they teach us a lot in graduate school about, and it's considered a best practice. So also, I just wanted to mention, we had these wonderful presentations recently before the school board with these gifted programs who were creating these stores and things like that,

[00:27:59] And that is another opportunity that we can be bringing all of our students together and working on these true issues together that are meaningful to them and fun to them and get people out of their comfort zone so that we can create these more engaged, better members of our community, really prepare them.

[00:28:24] next slide please and then as far as family and community engagement you know I would encourage our principals to really seek out the special education family voices when you're planning your school events you know make sure that they can attend I think oftentimes our families of students with disabilities are very overwhelmed you know and it's hard to envision making it to a school event and so talk to them figure out what what would it take like how could we make it so that

[00:29:01] you feel comfortable and able to be a part of our school community I would also encourage our principals to brag about the inclusion that's taking place in your schools because if you guys don't talk about it parents aren't going to know about it community doesn't know about it so by all means brag and I would say the same thing about our teachers I tell my children's teachers all the time. I'm like, please brag about what you're doing because I want to celebrate it along with you. And I know all of our other parents want to too. So, you know, our teachers are modest

[00:29:36] and they work so, so hard, but they are doing incredible things and they need to make sure that parents know what they are doing. And that, even if it's a small thing, small or big, everything deserves to be celebrated. And by having this close relationship, it's going to help parents anticipate what's next, help identify resources that they may need for support.

[00:30:04] You know, our families are really figuring things out day by day. They've got new challenges that are being thrown at them constantly. Just when you get things figured out, everything changes. So, you know, creating that relationship with their teachers and their schools is so, so, so important and it will

lead to trust right it leads to trust it leads to a relationship that is just so beneficial next slide please so in conclusion about this topic meaningful inclusion

[00:30:40] needs to come from all of us right it can't be accomplished by one department or one staff member at a school as a division we all have to champion it in every meeting every classroom and event it's a mindset right and it's a mindset that we all have to own and when we do it can really create something beautiful but I also wanted to lift to you all a barrier that we need to provide you know compensation and figure out what it is that's going to keep our program teachers here in this

[00:31:18] county because we've had a lot of turnover it's a really hard job and when we lose that experience it's devastating for our families it's devastating for the students it just we lose all that we invest in them and because we are investing so much in these teachers we really need to figure out what is it going to take for them to feel like they can continue to do this work year after year so that is my lift to you all to consider as you go into this

[00:31:56] next year. Next slide, please. And then I just wanted to celebrate some of the wonderful things that we've all worked very hard on together, expanding opportunities for learning career skills and equitable access in our CTEA or AE programs now to include this planned transition center, which we are extremely excited about creating a plan to provide our students

[00:32:30] with disabilities the same access to playgrounds I mean that's incredible I'm so excited to start to see more of these inclusive playgrounds be built we've revised policies to prioritize the safety and needs of students with disabilities and we've forged partnerships that respectfully consider all viewpoints and perspectives while building trust and expanding everyone's knowledge and understanding. And so I know that SEAC looks forward to continuing all of this important work

[00:33:03] with you. Next slide. And then I just wanted to give a little plug to all the people in our community to join an advisory committee for all the people who are watching because I know that the 430 hour is really popular. But if you haven't considered joining one of our advisory committees, whether it's SEAC, whether it's MSAC, whether it's LEAF. It's a fantastic opportunity. You will learn so much. You will develop incredible relationships with people. It's just, it's been

[00:33:36] the most rewarding experience that I've had. Truly, like one of the most in my life. I just can't say enough wonderful things about it. And I want other parents to be able to experience that too.

[00:33:52] And I know it's hard sometimes to envision adding one more thing, but it really, truly is worth it. So if there are any parents out there listening, check out one of our advisory committees.

[00:34:07] They really are incredible. Next slide, please. And then just a final reminder to join us at our recognition for excellence in supporting special education. We're going to be honoring our teachers.

[00:34:22] we're going to be honoring programs administrators students community members and that will be wednesday june 4th at 6 30 p.m at loudon county high school next slide please and just thank you all so much i truly appreciate this opportunity um it really it's it's been incredible and i will um certainly miss serving in this role but you are going to be in very good hands with our incoming SEAC chair, Shanaz Khan. And then Tom Ketchum is going to be joining us in the role of

[00:34:59] SEAC vice chair of membership. So if you all have any questions for me, I would be happy to answer. Ms. Crotty, thank you for your service. You've done an amazing job over the last, what, two years

now? And you've built a lot of bridges with a population that was really hurt for a little while and I think you've done a beautiful job doing that appreciate all your work and I will say that plug for for an advisory committee for me SEAC was my people and that was my support and they got me through the hard times

[00:35:36] and there were some really big hard times so I agree if you can have a advisory committee and you grow real close yeah so that any other questions or? Yes, Ms. Sherna. Thank you, Ms. Crotty, and I echo the sentiments. I also just wanted to put in a plug that the staffing conversation, I'm glad you mentioned that tonight because that has also been on my radar. We have a lot of teachers that are doing a lot of extra in those programs, particularly in music, and so Mr. Slavin and I have already had some discussions about potentially discussing that at a future curriculum and instruction meeting as it relates to staffing,

[00:36:16] So definitely grateful that you brought that up and the training as well. And we're very grateful for your service. You will be severely missed and sincerely missed. And I also agree. Join an advisory committee. A lot of people say they can't access or get involved, but there are ways, and that's a great way.

[00:36:35] So lots of opportunity for involvement. Thank you. Thank you very much. Oh, Ms. Chandler. I can't let the opportunity go by to say thank you. Working with you has really been a joy.

[00:36:51] And I think you've given us all an opportunity to better understand the SEAC community and have really represented that community so well. So thank you for your service. I appreciate all the opportunities that I've had to learn and grow with you.

[00:37:07] And we'll be so excited to see what comes next and heartened, really, to hear that Ms. Kahn will be continuing in her service as well. So thank you. That's my greatest achievement is getting her to be SEAC chair because people have been trying for like seven years.

[00:37:28] Thank you all so much. I appreciate it. Thank you. Before we move on, we've been advised that the school division's website is currently down and they're working with a vendor to get it up as soon as possible.

[00:37:45] And so in the meantime, is it back up? It's back up. Okay. It's back up. Never mind. Okay. Let's do, Vice Chair Donahue, would you mind doing your disclosure real quick? while we move to the next item.

[00:38:02] - Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries, the budget, and/or health insurance, and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:38:19] Specifically, my spouse, my minor children, and I are enrolled in LCPS health insurance that may be affected by any potential changes to employee salaries, the budget, and/or health insurance. Additionally, my sister-in-law is an LCPS employee who does not reside with me and is not dependent on me. These subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may be affected, of which my spouse, my minor children, my sister-in-law, and I am included.

[00:38:44] I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the Clerk of the School Board for five years. Thank you, Vice Chair Donoghue. we'll move on to item five work session uh department of business and financial services fyi 26 budget update presented by miss sharon willoughby our chief financial officer thank you yes i'm here to

provide an update on the FY26 budget where we're close to being done but not done yet there have been several actions that have occurred since the school board adopted its budget on February 4th and I will walk the school board through the different phases and impacts resulting

[00:39:22] from the state and county I'll start with the information that was presented to the board of supervisors during the school board budget presentation to them on February 25th that budget presentation included a revised budget request that was inclusive of the state general assembly budget bill following this meeting Mrs. Donahue, Dr. Spence and myself attended the board of supervisors budget work session on March 13th where it was a very short meeting and the board

[00:39:48] expressed its support of LCPS. So the General Assembly budget amendments included actions for the current FY25 budget and changes to the governor's proposed FY26 budget. These General Assembly budget amendments were presented to the governor to either sign, change or veto and help form the action that the County Board of Supervisors took. Starting with the FY25 budget

[00:40:23] changes, the General Assembly allocated \$8.7 million to support a \$1,000 bonus for each SOQ position or to allow school divisions the flexibility to determine the amount of the bonus per employee to maximize the usage of these funds to promote retention. These funds though must be awarded by June 1st for FY26 the General Assembly amended the governor's proposed budget as outlined on this slide for you see the elimination of the support cap which was a short term JLARC recommendation. This amendment will provide 12.7 million of additional

[00:40:58] funding to LCPS and reverts back to the funding methodology that was used prior to 2009. Next is an additional \$2.4 million to support the state's share of special education teachers and is an add-on payment to support each special education student based on their level of service.

[00:41:16] This is a positive step forward in improving the state's funding of special education services that was also identified in the JLARC report. This totals to \$15.1 million in additional state funding from the general assembly budget amendments. So how did these proposed state budget items impact our request from the county? Based on the general assembly budget impacts to LCPS,

[00:41:51] we asked the county to amend the FY25 budget by \$8.7 million. Because LCPS, like other Virginia school divisions, staff higher than the state SOQ ratios, additional funding would be required to support a \$1,000 bonus. To provide the \$1,000 bonus for all employees, an additional \$5.6 million in funding would be required. Further delineating between positions quickly becomes very difficult as all positions are integral to supporting our students and staff. As such, when these state appropriations have occurred in the past, LCPS has embraced providing the bonus to all

[00:42:27] eligible full-time employees. Based on this scenario, LCPS requested retaining 5.6 million of the additional encumbered state funding at FY26 to fill the bonus gap and provide the funding needed to pay all LCPS employees \$1,000 bonus. Contingent on the final state budget, awarding the bonuses would include splitting the payments into two payments crossing the fiscal years.

[00:42:55] We have done this in the past when funding was tight and to maximize state funding for bonuses. The first payment would be paid out by June 1st and utilize the \$8.7 million of state appropriated FY25 funding and the second payment would be paid by September 30th to utilize the FY26 funding. I'd like to also just share some additional information on why additional funding is needed to award \$1,000

bonuses to all full-time LCPS employees. LCPS staffing standards generate more robust school-based supports than required under the SOQ, as I

[00:43:35] mentioned earlier, and it would not be feasible to split SOQ-funded versus SOQ-unfunded positions to remain within the state funding estimate. On this slide are a few of those examples. First, we have the elementary school general education teachers.

[00:43:51] The SOQ is 1 to 24 students for grades 1 to 3 and 1 to 25 students for grades 4 to 5. This would require 1,176.7 FTE. However, LCPS staffing standards, as approved by the school board, provides for 1,342 or 165.3 additional positions.

[00:44:14] This is similar with the school counselors and the elementary reading teachers as listed on this slide. Lastly, we have identified as an example athletic trainers. As you are aware, the school board prioritized athletic trainers in the budget assigning two per high school.

[00:44:32] This position, though, is not required at all by the state SOQ. But it's positions like these and many more that the state's SOQ-based assessment of FTEs is not sufficient to fully fund the required retention bonus.

[00:44:51] This slide depicts the request for FY26 and the impact of the General Assembly budget amendments that was presented to the Board of Supervisors. The table shows the currently adopted FY26 budget in the blue column on the left. The initial \$8.4 million of state funding is displayed on the first row with the county funding request of \$123.4 million on the following row.

[00:45:14] The last row shows the total funding for FY26. The next column is labeled "recognize additional state funding" and in the state funding row you see the two items we just reviewed on the previous slides. This total of 15.1 increases the state funding to the 23.5 million shown in the last green column.

[00:45:35] The next column is labeled "reduced county transfer." You will see the county funding request reduced by the anticipated state funding of 12.7 from the support cap and the 2.4 from the special education add-on. However, \$5.6 million is depicted to be held back to provide the additional funding needed to support the \$1,000 bonus for all employees.

[00:45:57] This would result in a net reduction to the county transfer request by \$9.5 million. The proposed revised county request would now be \$113.9. To summarize, the overall revised budget funding request is increasing by \$5.6 million to \$137.4 million under this scenario.

[00:46:17] This would fund bonuses for all employees. However, while the budget increases by \$5.6 million, the county transfer request decreases by \$9.5 million. This was our proposed request to the county if the governor approved the state budget as presented.

[00:46:33] Since then, though, the governor has taken initial action on the budget by making one change impacting LCPS. For FY26, the governor reduced the funding associated with the support cap by \$8 million.

[00:46:51] The revised FY26 budget was sent to the General Assembly during the reconvene session where no action was taken on these specific items. So now the budget package is back with the governor and he has until May 2nd to either take action or take no action.

[00:47:08] No action would result in the currently adopted biennium budget remaining in place and everything that I have shared with you regarding the General Assembly not occurring. However, there are preliminary signs pointing towards the governor taking some sort of action.

[00:47:24] However, it is just we don't have that information at this time. This information, though, regarding the governor's action was shared with the county, and they took it into consideration as they proceeded towards their budget adoption that took place on April 1st. So on April 1st, the county board of supervisors adopted its budget and incorporated actions to address some of the uncertainty at the state level.

[00:47:52] First, they recognized the potential funding for FY25 and appropriated \$8.7 million of this potential state funding to LCPS. The county also proceeded to adopt its budget based on the General Assembly Budget Amendment and fully funded LCPS's request.

[00:48:09] This is for the second year in a row that the county has fully funded LCPS's request, which is a true testament to the collaborative working relationship the schools and county have and the relationships that school board members have fostered with the Board of Supervisors.

[00:48:25] The county also took action to address the uncertainty with the governor's potential funding reduction by moving \$8 million from the county's revenue stabilization fund and placing it into contingency. If the \$8 million state revenue reduction was acted upon and included in the final state budget, the county would appropriate the \$8 million from the contingency to fill this gap.

[00:48:50] we will continue to watch what happens at the state level and provide a final update when available now I would like to share how this impacts our bonus award plan since the timing of the final state action will run right into the timing of awarding bonuses the state budget amendment appropriating language for the bonuses identifies the one-time thousand dollar payment as I mentioned earlier with the discretion and contingent on final state action we would provide a one-time payment of \$600 for eligible full-time employees to

[00:49:28] be paid on May 30th this slide outlines the eligibility requirements for this payment for the May 30th payment an employee must be in a full-time position as of May 16th 2025 the second payment is also contingent on the final state budget adoption for FY 26 and any actions that may or may not be needed by the county if there are additional changes to the state budget if funding is available LCPS would provide the remaining \$400 on September 5th to employees who meet the eligibility requirements of having received the

[00:50:04] first payment and are still in an FTE position on August 22nd this last side slide is just a summary of the payment plan while the county has appropriated funding based on the general assembly budget amendments all bonus payments are contingent on the final state budget and again i will keep the school board updated and bring forward any resulting appropriate actions for the school board and with that i'd be happy to take any questions you may have thank you miss willoughby board members do you have any questions

[00:50:39] seeing none we appreciate all the hard work you you have put into this um thank you and then we will move on to 5.02 department of student services special education annual plan application approval for 2025-2026, presented by Ms. Tedra Richardson, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Student

[00:51:03] Services, and Dr.

[00:51:26] Paige Carter, Director of Special Education. Good afternoon. School divisions are required by state and federal law to submit an annual plan to the Virginia Department of Education for providing special education services to identified children with disabilities residing within the jurisdiction and demonstrate their funding eligibility.

[00:51:48] This afternoon, Dr. Paige Carter, Director of Special Education, will provide an overview of LCPS's 2025-2026 Special Education Annual Plan application. Dr. Carter will walk us through a narrative for the current plan as well as the proposed plan, our maintenance of effort, our proportionate share calculation, our school-age funding, and our early childhood special education funding.

[00:52:15] I now pass it over to Dr. Carter. Thank you. Good evening. Tonight, I will present to you the draft of our annual plan, but I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Liz Crotty and her team for working with us so collaboratively.

[00:52:34] I was able to present the plan to SEAC last week for their feedback. I will work with the policy subcommittee of SEAC again on April 21st to gain any more feedback or ideas that they may have for this plan or any plan going forward. All right, well, tonight I want to explain just a little bit about the annual, the annual, it's called the Part B flow-through application simply because that is Part B of education funding.

[00:53:05] We're going to talk about 619, which is for school age, and we're going to talk about 611 tonight, which I have that backwards, 611 for school age and 619 for preschool. So we are required to submit this application for funds every year.

[00:53:22] It's a formal agreement between VDOE and LCPS for how we will spend our federal funds, and that we are committing to implementing all regulations for special education through the use of this fund. And funding is contingent upon the approval of this plan by the superintendent and then by VDOE and all of the components.

[00:53:47] All right, within this plan, there are several parts. One component, we provide assurances and certifications that we will implement special education and all of the regulations that we are required to do. And we acknowledge that we'll work with the local jails for any students who have an IEP who may be spending time at a facility.

[00:54:11] We also provide information regarding maintenance of effort, which is a requirement of the regulations. Maintenance of effort requires that school divisions spend at least the same amount of local or local plus state dollars for the plan year as they did the previous year.

[00:54:31] So I like it in my department because we have the backing of the requirements of the annual plan to spend on special education. Proportionate set-aside is probably the most complex of all of the components of the annual plan.

[00:54:51] It is determined through a formula by VDOE. And what proportionate set-aside means is that it's a requirement that we set aside a share of our funds from Title 6B, 611, and 619 to support students who are parentally placed.

[00:55:08] That could be either homeschooled or in a private school within Loudoun County. The annual plan application also requires that we outline plan spendings for all funds received, and I'll go over that in the following slides. Our annual plan for some years now has been mainly positions.

[00:55:30] And as you can see on the screen, it encompasses many positions within the Department of Special Education. The first on the list is 130 of our special education teachers. Five teacher assistants, two coordinators, two supervisors, an audiologist, a program assistant, a specialist, and a behavior specialist, and a financial analyst to help us coordinate all of the funding streams.

[00:55:54] There is also a small portion for curriculum materials, and then the proportion it's set aside amount this year is \$71,349.99. Specifically, with the 619 grant, it's much smaller, as you can see, \$199,694.75, and that would cover two early childhood special education teachers who serve children ages 2 to 5.

[00:56:25] The proportion it's set aside for that group is \$445.25. Okay. All funds in the grant come from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA.

[00:56:47] That is currently funded well below the original promise. And the majority of special education dollars for here in Loudoun, the vast majority, is local and state dollars. In LCPS, the \$14,871,481, which is the total of the 611 and 619 portions of the grant, is approximately 5.7% of the total spending on special education in Loudoun.

[00:57:17] I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity. I know it is a challenging time to do so, but certainly special educators and special ed administrators across the country are advocating for not only full funding of IDEA, but for continued funding of IDEA at this time.

[00:57:36] I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have. Thank you, Dr. Carter. Thank you, Ms. Richardson. And I was wondering, so looking on page 12 of the plan, and also on page 15, it says, like, in narrative format, please provide a detailed description and budget outline of all additional activities, goods, and services to be supported.

[00:57:59] But I just see that budgeted to purchase materials and supplies to support special instruction, reading, mathematics, and behavior. Do you not have to say what those materials or supplies are in a narrative format? we do not because it allows for flexibility um for example had we put in our annual plan that we were going to purchase a particular reading program and then the virginia literacy act happened and that shifted we purchased a different program that was under that's just one example we don't want to lock it in too much with a specific program but we are using the funds to support

[00:58:36] reading and math curriculum as well as behavior intervention. We use it sometimes for MANT and UKERU training and the curriculum materials that go with that. So it is, the state prefers that we put boundaries around it but not be too specific so there's flexibility. Thank you. Any other questions? Thank you so much. Thank you. Okay, we will move on to 5.03, Office of Superintendent,

[00:59:10] the third quarter board forecast presented by dr mark bergen our chief of staff dr bergen thank you madam chair good evening board members as displayed on the screens in the room and as attached to this item in board docs is the tentative forecast of board topics for the remaining meetings in the third quarter stretching through the 24th of june this is as all quarterly forecasts are a working document and subject to change i'd like to draw your eye in particular to

[00:59:45] the work session topics scheduled for june 10 and june 24 which we have intentionally left to be determined as you also as a board have a retreat on june 9th so once you have generated a list of topics collectively through the chair that you would like to take up at the retreat on june 9 our intent would be to also then take any topics that weren't at the retreat and work them into this forecast for june 10 and 24. i'd

be happy to answer any questions about this tentative plan if you have any at this time and madam chair i'm not sure when and how you'd like

[01:00:22] to take up requests from your colleagues regarding additional topics for june 10 24 and the retreat on the 9th um board members i don't know if you remember the email that i sent uh if you guys have any uh topics that you would like to discuss at our for board talk at topics or i guess our retreat too um you want to just raise your hand okay ms shirnoff thank you madam chair um as i know we've talked about before but just piggybacking off of the budget season i know there was a lot of

[01:00:57] questions on my end and from other colleagues about the stipend process how that is created how stipends come about how they're evaluated so i would love to see a stipend overview in the the works before we go to recess so that we can process that as we get ready for the next budget cycle. I think what's interesting about that stipend is that some of them are seasonal as opposed to just a year. So many questions. Okay. Anyone else? Okay. I guess that's all. Okay. Well,

[01:01:33] we certainly have time to take more of your thinking after this meeting. Be happy to engage with you through email or an individual conversation so we can plan a retreat that meet your needs. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Dr. Bergen. Okay, and we have about 30 minutes, so I'm going to just keep on pressing in to our information items, starting with 14.01, Human Resources and Talent Development Committee.

[01:02:00] Oh, actually, Mrs. Griffiths, before we start that, would you please do your disclosure, even though I think we went through our budget, but just... Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and our health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the

[01:02:36] statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which I am included i can and will participate fairly objectively in the public's interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you thank you miss griffiths and you're up with 14.01 for revisions to policy 70 20 employment or supervision of family members and it's presented by miss mrs griffiths chair of human resources and talent development. Ms. Griffiths. Thank you Madam Chair. I'd like to make a motion to adopt policy

[01:03:15] 70-20 employment of supervision of family members. This revised, should I go into the? Well we're not making a motion right now it's just like what it is because it's information. Well this revised policy and I'll have Ms. Bullen speak to it 70-20 employment of supervision of family services was an information item on February 27th for our HRTD committee meeting. After reviewing, the committee voted to bring this policy back to an action item at the March 27th HRTD meeting. This policy was made available for public feedback via the Loudoun County Public Schools website. We received the

[01:03:52] feedback and the committee voted 3-0 to send this revised policy, policy 70-20, to the full school board as an information item today. Ms. Mullen, did you want to speak to the policy, please? Sure. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. A revision to school board policy 7020, employment for supervision of family members, is on the agenda this evening as an information item, as Mrs. Griffiths stated.

[01:04:17] The recommended changes to this policy are intended to clarify the term family member by adding a definition to the forefront of the policy and to clearly delineate policy sections four and five which illustrate the responsibility of certification and non-involvement in hiring of relatives for both the school board and the superintendent. One additional thing I'd like to point out is that for these sections in particular the language included in the section is prescribed by Virginia

[01:04:53] code and the code does not prohibit the hire of a family member for a school board member or the superintendent but it does prescribe what is required in the event of hiring a family member and I think that's it thank you miss Boland board members um do you have any questions no can I get a thumbs up if you would like to for this to go and consent for our April 22nd 2025 school or meaning it looks like that's unanimous to put it on consent.

[01:05:24] Our next item, 14.02, HRTD committee revisions to policy 7520 non-school employment presented by Dina Griffiths, Chair, Human Resources and Talent Development. Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. 7520 non-school employment was brought to the committee on February 27, 2025.

[01:05:46] After reviewing, the committee voted to bring the policy back as an action item. On March 27th, our HRTD committee meeting, the policy was made available to the public for feedback. The committee voted 3-0 to send the revised policy back, policy 7520, to the full school board as an information item for today's meeting.

[01:06:07] Ms. Boland, did you want to speak to this one as well? Sure, thank you again. So, minimal changes were made to this policy, really adjustments made to clarify language, add examples, and explicitly, clearly articulate when an employee is on leave and when they are able to participate in non-school employment.

[01:06:35] If someone is on annual leave, that's acceptable. If they are on medical leave or or FMLA that would not be permissible so those are the major changes to this policy thank you miss Boland um board members do you have any questions all right um would you like for this to thumbs up for go to consent looks like that's unanimous this item will go to consent for the April 22nd 2025 school board meeting moving on to 14.03 HRTD committee

[01:07:11] revisions to policy 7612 experience credit for teacher license and auxiliary new hires presented by Mrs. Griffiths thank you madam chair policy 7612 experience credit for teacher license and auxiliary new hires this is a revised policy experience credit for teacher license and new auxiliary new hires was an information item on February 27 2025 at our HRTD committee meeting after reviewing the committee voted to bring this policy back as an action item at the March 27th HRTD committee meeting this policy was made available to the public for

[01:07:49] public feedback through the LCPS website we received the feedback the committee then voted three to zero to send this revised policy 7612 to the full school board as an information item today and I'll ask again miss Boland if you'd like to speak to it thank you yes thank you Mrs. Griffiths, I am really excited about the changes to this policy.

[01:08:13] If the school board will recall, in November, HRTD brought a presentation in regards to several retention initiatives that they had planned to roll out, one of which was the adjustment of placement practices for our licensed teachers.

[01:08:33] We propose that we remove the cap that is currently in this policy of 15 years at time of hire. And during that November time frame, we were able to utilize funds to provide our current active licensed teachers who at time of hire should have been placed higher than a step 15, an adjustment to their placement on the scale.

[01:08:58] This policy change would make that effective for new hires as well. Two additional changes in this policy. One would include providing a credit for our current student teachers who student teach within LCPS and then become full-time teachers.

[01:09:20] It would provide them credit for that student teaching as long as they meet the qualifications. And one last additional adjustment would be our internship programs where our school psychologists currently participate in an LCPS internship program.

[01:09:39] They do not currently get credit for that on the placement scale. This policy change would now provide them with credit should they become full-time school psychologists with LCPS. Thank you, Ms. Boland. Board members, are there any questions? Seeing none, do we want to put this on as a consent action?

[01:10:04] And that's unanimous. We'll put that item 14.03 on consent for April 22nd, 2025 school board meeting. We are moving on to 14.04, Student Services Committee Revision to Policy 8450, Student Lactation Support, presented by Anne Donahue, who's Chair of Student Services Committee.

[01:10:24] Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. This policy 8450 was due for its five-year cyclical review. It was presented to us in the Student Services Committee the committee accepted some. Just a couple of minor edits. That would state that the area provided for students who are in need of lactation support must be ADA accessible and to make clear that students who exercise Breaks for lactation purposes shall not be penalized for doing so. The committee voted.

[01:11:04] Unanimously approved this version to be sent to the full board and I will defer it. Ms. Richardson has anything to add. Thank you. Mrs. Donahue. No, you pretty much covered it. We had good conversation. We did take the feedback from our advisory groups. And we did hear feedback from MSAC as well as SIAC and the committee was very thoughtful and you integrated that feedback.

[01:11:32] Thank you, Ms. Richardson. Thank you, Vice Chair Donahue. Board members, do you have any questions? Okay, seeing none, do we want to put this on consent? Okay, that will go on consent for our next meeting, April 22nd, 2025, looking at the time. Okay, I think we can get through one more.

[01:12:01] Joint Committee of Loudoun County School Board and Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, the work plan presented by me. So the Joint Committee of the Loudoun County School Board and the Board of Supervisors, we met on March 24, 2025, and we took action to assign dates for our remaining items on their approved work plan, as well to incorporate new items into a new two-year work plan to make sure we have a good transition from year to year.

[01:12:28] We approved the proposed work plan that's posted in board docs right now, the school board, and so how this joint committee works is a little different in that we have to approve it, they have to approve it before we can work on it in the committee.

[01:12:45] The joint committee that we did, we approved the topics for school boundary discussion and SIP impact, presentation of the Loudoun County Advisory Commission on Youth 2025 State of Loudoun

Youth Report, and the update to Golden to Mars Transmission Link.

[01:13:06] board of supervisors added new items such as activity fees where they stand including like marching band and theater and work towards their elimination the second one was looking at missing sidewalks and trails also covering the cost of dare t-shirts for title one schools and potentially all elementary schools and unpaid meal debt we the school board additions were transition center again and contents of testing for confiscated vape devices so that's what so i guess what i'm

[01:13:41] asking is for you all to also agree to this plan so that we can continue our work um any other questions yes um did you say the the mars plan was on this as well it was and what device what was the second thing you said um can you repeat that um from us contents of testing of confiscated vape devices. Can you explain that a little bit? Sure. Actually, Ms. Richardson, would you be prepared to talk about our new program that we are working with VCU on? Certainly, Chair Mansfield.

[01:14:20] Thank you. We are currently partnered with VCU, with Dr. Michelle Peace, in working in conjunction with our local sheriff's department and police departments here in Loudoun County for all vaping devices that are received. They are confiscated and then they are handled very carefully and sent down to VCU to be tested for the contents. So this is a statewide project really trying to identify the illegal substances that are getting into vapes and harming and putting

[01:14:58] our students and just anybody that's vaping at risk. Our participation in this project is free of charge. It's at no cost. Our Sheriff's Department was more than willing to assist us and partner in this opportunity, and we are looking forward to the results from Dr. Peace and her team from VCU to find out exactly what we are seeing within Loudoun County and in this particular region in the vaping devices that are confiscated. This will better inform our prevention efforts as well

[01:15:32] as our intervention efforts as a locality and a school division. I think what you might be missing Mrs. Griffiths is that we all saw Dr. Peace at the VSBA conference our first year and and what exactly was found in these vapes and that it was I think a lot of us felt very that it was very important to try and get that here and so Mrs. Richardson team and the mental health team has been working on this for about a year and they got her to and we got to be in

[01:16:09] the program which is very exciting so okay so board members would you can I have a thumbs up if you want to put this on consent for the school board okay that is unanimous we have 15 minutes you think we can get through one more 14.06 student behavior and accountability committee revised policy 8280 corporal punishment prohibited presented by Carrie LaBelle chair of the student Behavior and Accountability Committee. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll be brief. The Student Behavior and Accountability Committee met on March

[01:16:46] 24th. We reviewed the corporal punishment policy that we have here at Loudoun and we put it into alignment with the state regulations regarding corporal punishment. If you look at the policy 8220, you'll see that there's a lot of red lines there it's really not cutting out a lot of things what it is doing is reorganizing so that it follows the same sort of script that is used in the state policy um so basically that

[01:17:21] that is what we did with the policy that's the whole report thank you miss labelle board members does anybody have any questions yes vice chair donahue thank you very much madam chair and thank Ms. LaBelle. I had two thoughts or questions related to this policy. My first thought was I'm looking at the red line version on lines 45 to 46. It appears that there is a newly added paragraph 6 that says

restraint or seclusion procedures that are authorized by policy 53-45 restraint and seclusion of students.
My

[01:17:57] thought as to this line is simply that with the board's recent vote on the amendments to policy 5345 seclusion is not authorized so perhaps we should consider taking out the or seclusion saying restraint procedures as authorized by policy 5345 just an idea for consideration and if I may if you will go back to line 22 that is be actions not considered corporal punishment punishment corporal punishment does not include and then it lists all of them in

[01:18:37] this policy so corporal punishments restraint and seclusion is not corporal punishment therefore it actually is covered by what was it 5345 that we just authorized yeah so we had looked at that and that's how we handled that one but what is your other question so my other question was I am aware that some other districts include in similar policies, not just corporal punishment, but more broadly

[01:19:12] refer to a prohibition on aversive stimuli. And I wondered if there had been any consideration of adding language similar to that, such as no nauseous orders or tastes, sprays of water, blast of air, verbal or mental abuse. You mean done by the administration to students? Yes. Okay, no, we did not discuss that. If you'd like, I'll bring it up with the committee at our next meeting.

[01:19:46] Well, I'm wondering, Mrs. Richardson, since we do have that in another policy, or Mr. Allen, either one, would we need to put that in this one as well? I'm sorry, that was not clear.

[01:20:04] Let's start with Ms. Richardson, and then we'll add Mr. Allen. That's okay, Ms. Mansfield. I can't remember the policy offhand, but we do have that covered in terms of, as Ms. LaBelle clarified, asking the question, Ms. Donahue, if you're talking about staff to students.

[01:20:24] So we do have that in a different policy. And this one was just for code for corporal punishment. Thank you for that clarification, Ms. Mitchell. Thanks, Ms. Mitchell. Oh, I'm sorry. I just remember it in our previous committee, so that's why I was asking Ms. Richardson.

[01:20:45] The other thing, so I was wondering on Vice Chair's first question, the restraint and seclusion procedures that are authorized. Does it, I hear what you're saying, that it's not considered corporal punishment, but I see what she is talking about there.

[01:21:13] Mr. Allen, do you have any thoughts? - Thank you, Madam Chair. I think Vice Chair's comment is well taken for consideration. So I believe staff can take that back and the board could consider that as well.

[01:21:30] Specifically speaking, since seclusion was addressed in policy per the school board's vote, it's well taken that that language could be excluded here or omitted.

[01:21:48] So it's consistent for clarification, or for clarity, and consistent with 5345. Since this is just for information tonight, we still have some leeway to make an amendment next board meeting.

[01:22:08] Okay. All right. So we will stop there for right now, because I think that the career and technical education grant funding application might take a little longer than 10 minutes, probably.

[01:22:26] All right. So if we could, so that will go on for action next time and not consent that the last one. At this time, we will break for recess and we will reconvene for at 630. So the board is now

[01:22:49] in recess.

[02:00:58] Good evening. The board is coming out of recess at this time and we will continue with item eight pledge of allegiance and national anthem today's national anthem is being performed by it says five bramble middle school and five independence high school brass musicians and is conducted by mr martin blout one of them one of brambleton's emma middle school band directors the brambleton independence band cluster is recognized throughout virginia and beyond for

[02:01:36] its excellence both on stage and on the football field. The Brambleton Band is the only Loudoun County band in history to be selected to perform at the Virginia Music Educators Annual Conference and the Independence Marching Band is the current back-to-back Virginia State Champion. The four band directors at Brambleton and Independence would like to thank the school board and superintendent for helping them to continue to create a sense of belonging, consistency, and excellence in their band programs, especially considering the transitional nature of their school cluster at this time. They would also like to extend their appreciation to their students' families,

[02:02:16] as well as building administrators. Now, everyone please rise for the playing of our national anthem. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[02:02:46] Okay, we will be moving on to student staff recognitions, 9.

[02:04:36] 01 and 9. 02, one LCPS Spotlight, Harmony Middle School Library Student Advisory Group, Liam, presented by Eric Stewart, Principal Harmony Middle School, and I think he'll be introducing others. Is that correct?

[02:05:03] members of the board and dr spence good evening it's my pleasure to introduce one of the programs at harmony middle school and uh i'm just going to turn it over to them because we have some great guests we have miss rovang and miss mcgillivray our librarians and then three students we have charlotte lillian camp elliott gilchrist and cameron clark so i'm going to invite them up here

[02:05:33] now to tell you about our program called liam we flipped the slide that was mr stewart's part but it's student-centered empowering students so next slide so started in 2018 Liam's mission is to make Harmony Library a place for every student and staff member students continually

[02:06:08] could contribute ideas such as painting the tops of library tables with whiteboard paint to allow small groups to gather in in content areas to work together creating a wonder of the week, which is in the middle there that draws students into the library with new questions every week. That one says, if you could be any animal for a day, what would it be and why? And creating a comfy and welcoming space for readers and not yet readers alike. You can see some quotes from our members in the slide. My favorite is at the bottom. Kids are

[02:06:43] the most important customers. Asking for advice from them only makes sense. And I would like to introduce you to Charlotte, sixth grade member of Liam, to tell you more. Hi, my name is Charlotte Lillienkamp, and I'm here as a member of Liam. I'm here to discuss our student-led book fair this year. We had 164 volunteers, and we made over \$9,000. That's our most profitable book fair yet.

[02:07:22] By getting students involved, we taught them how to run the fair, properly advertise, make a setup that will show many interests and appeal to many students. I was an advertising specialist and it showed me what it was like to be responsible for a big project and how to appeal to things I may not really like.

[02:07:45] We taught many children life skills while still having fun. All kids in school should be able to do that. Thank you. And now Cameron is going to tell you about our latest program.

[02:08:12] This is the Badgett Book It program designed by Liam to encourage kids to not only read more, but also use sites they may never have used, such as Comics Plus and Mac and Via. But the first thing we have to discuss is what the badge system is. The way the badge system works is check out an ebook or audiobook from the digital library and read it. Write a review of the book in our digital library catalog. Finally, go to the Google form either in the library, English, or Home Schoology page. Then they will be given a digital

[02:08:48] badge they can add to their small signature or email signature. This will enter them into a raffle in which three people each week will win a prize. So far over 50 students received the digital badge and we're looking to add more. So now Elliot will tell you about our eighth grade library workers. My name is Elliot and I'm an eighth grade library worker. Eighth grade library

[02:09:27] workers, shelve a lot of the books, and help out wherever needed in the library. It's good to have something to do during resource, and we also get to wear badges because we are library staff. And I would like to thank Ms. Rovang for sponsoring us. All I wanted to say is that the 8th grade library worker program predates me. This is my 13th year in the Harmony Library, and it's just been a given that we have students running the school. I'm a steward of the space. It's theirs.

[02:09:58] So thank you. Thank you so much. I have to say I was a library worker too in 6th and 7th grade, And it was, I thought it was an honor as well.

[02:10:18] And I have to say, I really am so pleased that you guys also have audio books and books with your Book at Badgett program. I'm really appreciative of that. Thank you for making things more accessible to everybody. Board members?

[02:10:34] Any other? No? Thank you for your presentation, and students, thank you for coming and presenting at the school board. All right. With that, we will move on to 9.02, Department of Teaching and Learning, Recognition for independence high school marching band presented by mr pearson supervisor of fine arts thank you very much dr spence school board members it's my pleasure and honor first of all to be here with these students and so much talent and great teaching as you saw earlier this year the independence high school marching band received its highest honor yet by being crowned the class

[02:11:12] 6a state champions this is the first time i've had class 6a that's the largest class while competing in the Virginia Marching Band Cooperative Championship. They went on later that night to compete against the class champions from each classes, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5A, and they won over all of those champions in each of those subgroups.

[02:11:32] And with that, they earned themselves the Commonwealth Cup for the second time in a row. They won it last year as well. So we are very proud of their work, and with that, they've been recognized as the best marching band in the state of Virginia. I do want to note that after that win, the band traveled to the Band of America Regionals, Super Regionals in Indianapolis where the Colts play in Lucas Oil Football Stadium and placed 15th out of 90 bands of some of the best bands from across the country.

[02:12:02] The directors of the Independent High School Program Band are Kyle Harrington over on your right and Ms. Amanda Young. And with us, I want to recognize Samantha Cherise, who was at Brampton Middle School, and we saw Martin earlier. So thank you for all you do.

[02:12:18] And we have some student leaders here. One of the things that makes a successful program is the opportunity for leadership and delegating. So many things that go into creating a successful unit of folks together. So behind me are Daniel Kim, Sahasra Magula, Alex Heisler, Mitchell Phillips, Jack Vose, Luke Nobleman, Marissa Beam, Tim Aduya, Joanne Dia, Andy Joseph, Arham Sahail, Michael Wyant, Alexandra Cram, and Haley Shlor.

[02:12:52] So thank you so much for all you do. Thank you.

[02:12:57] We will continue on with the student school board representative comment.

[02:15:17] Tonight, our student school board representative is Lindsay Kim from the Academies of Loudoun and Potomac Falls High School. Her favorite hobby is dancing, and she frequently performs around Northern Virginia with the hip-hop team.

[02:15:33] She enjoys cooking, especially Korean and Japanese cuisine. Lindsay is an executive board member for the Academy's SCA, where she works with other SCA representatives to connect the student body and create diverse events. Lindsay co-founded a student organization called Medical Equity in America and serves as an equity ambassador.

[02:15:54] By interacting with the Loudoun County School Board, Lindsay wants to explore improvements to LCPS in education to serve all students equitably. Welcome, Ms. Kim, and the floor is yours. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Lindsay Kim, and I'm a senior at Potomac Falls High School and the Academies of Loudoun.

[02:16:13] I want to start by thanking the board for allowing me the space to speak at this meeting. The work that you put in for the students and the Loudoun community is truly important to the well-being and education of the diverse individuals in our school system. I also want to thank Dr. Murphy for working with me on this opportunity, as well as my Student Council Association sponsors, Ms. Whistler and Ms. Hiltner, for giving their all to serving the students' best interests, just as everyone here aims to do.

[02:16:36] The Academies of Loudoun is a magnet school that's composed of students from high school all over the county with three main pathways, Monroe Advanced Technical Academy, the Academy of Science, and the Academy of Engineering and Technology. Each pathway has supportive administration, strong peer communities, and unique, robust resources that allow students to excel in their respective fields.

[02:16:57] Over 70 academy students qualified to compete at the 2025 LCPS Regional Science and Engineering Fair, and 27 placed in the top three in research categories, ranging from medicine to machine learning. Five students from the academies were named finalists for the International Science and Engineering Fair and will take their research projects to the competition in Ohio.

[02:17:16] Last spring, at the SkillsUSA Virginia State Leadership Conference and Skills Championship District Robotics Competition, students in career and technical education classes received 13 banners, a gold chapter of excellence, and 35 podium medals.

[02:17:36] The Academy's RoboLoco won the Excellence in Engineering Award at the 2025 Chesapeake District Robotics Competition, and 42 RoboLoco members met with the 140 Virginia legislators in the second annual Virginia STEM Advocacy Seminar. At the 2025 Future Medical Professionals Virginia State Leadership Conference, 45 students in health sciences pathways, placed in the top five across 25

categories, with 35 advancing to the International Student Conference to present their medical projects and compete in skills competitions in Tennessee.

[02:18:08] These achievements are made possible with proactive teachers, counselors, librarians, and other staff members providing consistent support. Our enthusiastic school community allows any student to feel comfortable with reaching out for extracurricular resources, competitive career opportunities, and equipment required to produce innovative projects.

[02:18:28] The Student Council Association strives to unite the three pathways of our school, as well as the two student bodies of the A and B days. We do this by adapting events to run identically on A and B days during common times, like lunch and break periods, when all pathways can interact. We also try to incorporate the talents of our school in SCA events.

[02:18:46] For example, graphic communication students design spring dance tickets and decorations, and Academy's cultural associations host activities and food tastings during our March multicultural fair. We also work hard to demonstrate appreciation for every category of staff in our school, rallying students and SCA members to foster a closer connection between staff and students.

[02:19:06] Our unconventional school structure motivates students to be flexible and innovative, always looking to improve and diversify. The Academy showcases the great minds and dreams that exist throughout the district. Witnessing interactions from international achievements to classroom activities, I thank the board and Dr. Spence for considering all of Loudoun County in their decision-making.

[02:19:27] And I also thank all the staff in this room who helped create a safe, efficient environment for learning. Please continue to keep students at the center of your decisions and help LCPS stay at the forefront of education by upholding the needs of the students as the world changes.

[02:19:44] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Kim. Thank you so much, Ms. Kim, for being here and for your comments. We'll now move on to April item 11, superintendent's report presented by Dr. Aaron Spence, our superintendent.

[02:20:08] Dr. Spence. Thank you, Madam Chair. And it is, as always, my pleasure to share some good news from around the school division. First, if I could ask Derek Racino to stand up for us. Mr. Racino has been named the next principal of Mountain View Elementary School.

[02:20:25] Most recently, Mr. Racino was the principal of Sickling Creek Elementary School, a position he has held since 2012. Previously, he was assistant principal at Sterling Elementary School. He started his career as a teacher at Falls Bluff Elementary. Mr. Racino has a bachelor's degree from SUNY at Cortland in elementary education and a master's in educational administration from Shenandoah University.

[02:20:47] And we'd like to congratulate and welcome Mr. Racino to his new role. Congratulations. I'm also pleased to note that the Loudoun International Summit, held during the week of March 24th, showcased an incredible display of student leadership.

[02:21:06] This student-driven event brought together 19 international delegations and LCPS students to engage in meaningful discussions on cultural exchange, sustainability, and global challenges. Through collaborative workshops, interactive displays, and innovative solutions, our students demonstrated their ability to think globally and act locally.

[02:21:25] Their passion, creativity, and commitment to fostering understanding across cultures is truly inspiring. And I also want to acknowledge the expertise, collaboration, and dedication that went into organizing such a significant event. Especially to the teachers and staff at Dominion, Loudoun Valley, Parkview, Rockbridge, and Woodgrove High Schools, thank you for providing a platform for students to showcase projects addressing global challenges through local action.

[02:21:50] Next, last Friday and Saturday, Parkview High School and LCPS student leaders hosted the 98th Annual Virginia Student Council Association Convention. More than 500 student leaders from around the state participated in this event, which featured opportunities for SCA delegates to learn from each other and to grow their leadership skills.

[02:22:09] Freedom High School senior Ainsley Wood, who served as the VSCA president for the past year, and Parkview senior Ashlyn Strayer, who served as the VSCA vice president, welcomed participants to the convention. I also had the pleasure of attending the opening session, and I enjoyed witnessing the energy of so many student leaders from around the state preparing to come together to share, learn, and celebrate, and many thanks to all of the schools that participated and the staff that supported this event.

[02:22:39] This winter, staff, students, and the community participated in the design process for the Waterford Elementary Renovation and Addition Project. The project will provide additional classroom space, dedicated art and music classrooms, support space, a gym with a stage, and renovation of the existing building.

[02:22:56] The Division of Construction Services with consulting architect Horde Copeland-Macht has hosted several sessions to collect input on the project. In February, Waterford Elementary students from all grades created scaled designs for the project, and the students shared the importance of the site, topography, acoustics, grade-level interaction, and incorporated outdoor play.

[02:23:18] They developed some amazing designs which both helped our architects and enhanced their awareness of space and space usage. Congratulations also to the incredible students who competed in this year's Loudoun County Regional Spelling Bee, held on March 26th at Light Ridge High School.

[02:23:34] All 30 participants demonstrated impressive dedication and skill, making it an exciting event. A special congratulations to our champion, Vickieth Tanamala, a Seldon's Landing Elementary School student, for his outstanding performance.

[02:23:51] Vickieth now moves on to the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee in late May in National Harbor. Good luck to Vickieth, and congratulations to all of the students who competed in this regional event. We are pleased to note that Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts has awarded grants worth up to \$5,000 to three LCPS teachers.

[02:24:12] Corrine Fox, theater director at Potomac Falls High School. Kristen Friend, band director at Mercer Middle School, and Chelsea Holmes, the school string orchestra director at Sterling Middle School. All of these teachers receive grants to support performing arts experiences for their students.

[02:24:33] These teachers are among 14 teachers at public and middle high schools in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. that receive these grants, and all grantees and their students will be invited to participate in a day of learning at Wolf Trap on April the 28th. And then finally, this month's Shine Award winner George Ann Owens, a school bus driver for Trailside Middle.

[02:24:52] Ms. Owens was nominated by a Trailside student who shared that Ms. Owens supports the students on our bus by helping them find the supports when they need it, and stated that she sees Ms. Owens not only as a bus driver, but as a friend and trusted adult. SHINE, which stands for Spotighting Heroes in Education, is a joint LCPS and Loudon Education Foundation initiative to recognize LCPS staff members who go above and beyond in supporting our students and our community members of our lcps community including other staff members students and parents are invited to nominate lcps staff who shine these award recipients receive a gift worth

[02:25:27] 500 coordinated by the loudon education foundation congratulations to miss owens and madam chair that concludes my report thank you dr smith i mean dr smith dr spence gosh i don't even know where that came from all right we will move on to item 12 public comment thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process the school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system speakers must limit comments to the time allotted based on

[02:26:04] the number of speakers in the agenda this evening all speakers have been allotted two minutes each for public comment please be advised that speakers who missed their time slot will not be called at a later time all audience members shall maintain civility decorum and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times please remain seated unless arriving departing speaking at the podium or during a break violations of civility decorum and respect include shouting heckling jeering applause or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting obstructing speakers from being

[02:26:39] able to see the school board and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair, and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate, disparage, or distract a speaker, staff member, or other meeting attendees. Speakers should refrain from vulgarity, obscenities, defamation, profanity, or other like breaches of respect, nor may speakers target, criticize, or attack individual students and or individual division employees during public comment.

[02:27:14] As a reminder, School Board Policy 2520 states that speakers may not target, criticize, or attack individual students during public comment. Speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official.

[02:27:30] The school board requests that comments on individual student or employee-related matter not be shared at public meetings where the disclosure could violate applicable confidentiality requirements. Speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board.

[02:27:47] Per LCPS Policy 2520, members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period. Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting.

[02:28:04] Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in, on the decision of the chair, public comment being tabled until a later point in the meeting's agenda, limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons, or the public comment period ending for the evening.

[02:28:22] Copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information officer in the media box at the back of the boardroom before the start of the meeting. Please provide 12 copies of the materials. Under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais.

[02:28:39] The public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through LCPS-TV on Comcast Channel 18 and 1070 HD and Verizon Fios Channel 43. The live stream of the meeting may be viewed on the website.

[02:28:55] we look forward to hearing your comments and we have no virtual public comments today so we will start with our in-person public comment the first one is Cooper Burns followed by Santos Muñoz

[02:29:19] okay we'll move on to Santos Muñoz followed by Christine Spinoza good evening and thank you for the opportunity my name is Santos Muñoz I come here today to talk about the school renaming initiative. My daughter went to Mercer Middle School, and to this day, when she hears the name

[02:29:54] of Mercer, she has an adverse reaction to it. She has been seeing a therapist about this and other issues, but to be specific, it's not actually the name that triggers her, but the bad experiences that she experienced while she was a student there. Renaming the school seems to be, for me and taxpayers, a wasteful event with no benefit tangible to students, faculty, or the taxpayers.

[02:30:25] I implore you to reconsider this course of action and refocus your attention to solutions to the issues like the ones that created the bad memories for my dear daughter and apply resources to the fundamentals of security, well-being of our students, well-being both mentally and academically. One of such items at no cost to LCPS could be the conversation or training on possible bystander actions from students and teachers. Basically what I mean

[02:31:00] by that is if you see something, say something. Bottom line that I want to leave you is this initiative presents itself as a personal virtual signaling disregarding your responsibility as elected officials to be good stewards of the taxpayers' money. I implore you to please reconsider and do a 180 on this initiative and keep the main thing, the main thing, and that is the fundamentals of education and the well-being of our students. Thank you so much for this opportunity

[02:31:35] and God bless. Thank you. Christine Spinoza followed by Jonathan Radau. Good evening. I'm Christine Spinoza. I teach high school math at Belmont Ridge Middle School, and I made the decision to transfer to Loudoun County in 2004 from Fairfax County. I made that decision specifically because of the health care that you offered for retirees. In the time that I've been in Loudoun

[02:32:10] County, I've lost over \$140,000 in potential salary by transferring to Loudoun County from Fairfax. We've had six years where our salaries have been frozen and never adjusted. I've taught over 2,000 students in this time and work countless hours outside of contract hours to provide the absolute best instruction that I can for my students. At the time of my impending retirement, you have decided to pull the rug out from under me. The fact that you are naming this

[02:32:44] as choice and flexibility is wrong. What you're trying to do is cover as CYA the fact that you did not appropriately fund the correct insurance for the retirees and those of us who will be retiring and hit 65. Honor your promise to staff. Don't change the health care. Thank you. Jonathan

[02:33:15] Radow, followed by Tim Rush. Good evening. I am a Loudoun County resident, Loudoun County voter, taxpayer, and a Loudoun County public school teacher, and I am also here to talk about the proposed changes to retiree health care benefits. I will admit that I am still wrapping my head around the details of the new proposal concerning retiree health coverage, but from what I understand under the proposal, retirees age 65 or older can either join the Medicare Advantage

[02:33:53] plan offered by LCPS or accept \$400 to spend on the health care option of their choice each month. I hope I have that right. Everyone I know who is over 65 has both Medicare and supplemental health insurance to cover the gaps in their Medicare plan. With this in mind, \$400 per month seems woefully inadequate to cover seniors' health care needs.

[02:34:18] Many teachers, myself included, have turned down the opportunity to make significantly more money in the private sector in order to give back to their community. In return, we were promised a solid pension and stable health care after we retire.

[02:34:35] Please honor this commitment to your teachers and LCPS staff and raise the \$400 amount considerably or reconsider the plan in its entirety. Thank you. Thank you. Tim Rush followed by Dust McCready. Good evening. I'm Tim Rush from Leesburg, a 40-year county resident part-time historian. I strongly urge you to keep the name of Mercer on the Mercer

[02:35:11] Middle School. I've written a memorandum on the historical issues involved, which I've left with the public information officer for you, and I'll summarize that at tomorrow's public input session. I address you now on a procedural matter, which I believe relevant to your deliberations.

[02:35:30] When you hear later the report of the chair of the ad hoc committee on the renaming of the Mercer School, Meredith Ray, she will report three suggested names which will not include that of Mercer. This does not accurately reflect the sentiment of the committee.

[02:35:46] In the December 19th vote, only 15 of the committee's 24 members were present. In a straw vote, to narrow the possible names, there were eight votes for Gum Springs, five for Mercer, and one each for John Mercer Langston in Stone Ridge.

[02:36:05] When ranked voting was applied, the order was the same, and Mercer's name should have been forwarded to you as one of the three. Instead, there was an intervention and the voting procedure was switched to one of majority vote for each name.

[02:36:24] This was not done in the Hazel Reed voting, I understand, so even though Hazel Reed's name didn't get the most votes, it was duly included in the three forwarded to you. In the Mercer case, the bare majority of eight was determined to block the Mercer name and did so.

[02:36:41] The five strong advocates for retaining the Mercer name felt disenfranchised, and one of them was reduced to tears. I bring this up not to ask for any redress of the unfairness of the switch in the procedure, but to simply urge the board to recognize that retaining the Mercer name was the sentiment of a substantial number of members of the committee, as well as a majority sentiment of the broader public as in. Thank you, Mr. Rush. Thank you. Um, Dustin McCready,

[02:37:12] followed by Eric Sutton. Eric Sutton, followed by Todd Fielding.

[02:37:34] Todd Fielding, followed by Aaron Hello, everybody. My name is Todd Fielding, and I'm a teacher at Farmville Station Middle School, and I'm on the Loudoun Education Association Board of Directors. Please preserve the retiree health benefits for all Loudoun County public school staff. Do not go from a full coverage situation to a partial funded situation or a credit. These dedicated educators and support personnel have devoted their careers to shaping the future of our children, providing our

[02:38:13] community with the Foundation for Success. After decades of hard work, these individuals deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing they will be taken care of in their retirement years.

We can afford to do this as shown in our recently touted fully funded budget. Retiree health benefits are not just a promise, they represent a commitment to honoring those who have served with excellence. By ensuring these benefits remain intact, we demonstrate our respect and appreciation for their sacrifices and contributions it is vital to recognize the long-term impact these decisions will have not only on retirees

[02:38:51] but on the continued recruitment and retention of talented professionals who are essential to the success of Loudoun County Public Schools I was surprised to see this cut proposed cut after a fully funded budget unless it was never intended to preserve it unless it was never intended to preserve this benefit in the first place. If this benefit is maintained, it is a way to attract future hires. Let us stand together and preserve these benefits, ensuring that those who dedicate themselves to our children's futures can retire with the dignity and care they truly deserve. Thank you for your time and thank

[02:39:29] you for your service. Thank you. Erin Krumbly followed by Chris Countryman. My name is Erin Krumbly and I'm here to talk to you about the grading policy and to ask you to support the amendments that Ms. Chernoff's going to put forward, but also ask you to realize that that's not the end of this. There's more that needs to be done to this policy. I did a little bit of digging into the data that I have been keeping track of myself, and in the last three years,

[02:40:08] I had 2,817 tests qualify to be retaken. That's a lot. I then went and looked at just for this year so far, what would that be in total for my classes? And how would that change if the cap was dropped? For my research chemistry class, so these are honors level students, if the cap was dropped to a 75, the number of retakes that I would give for that class would be 77% lower. It would be 83%

[02:40:43] lower if it was a 70. Just showing that a lot of those kids are falling into that 70 to 80 range who if they studied the first time and knew that that was their chance they would do it and I could remediate those ones who really needed the help who right now I don't have time to sit with them because I'm making tests remaking tests regiving tests regrading tests in my AP and DE class I have a unique situation because my DE students cannot retake their exams and in total this year so far my DE classes had 110 retakes, where my AP class had 223. So almost double the number of retakes

[02:41:23] between those two classes being given the same tests, one with one expectation and one with another. And again, my AP class, it would only drop 27% if we went down to a 70 floor, where my DE class would drop 31%, showing that if you hold them to high expectations, they achieve the high expectations. If you allow them to be average or get by. Thank you. Chris Countryman followed by

[02:41:56] Matt O'Donnell. Good evening. Today was a historic day for Loudoun County Public Schools. LCPS and LEA came together today at the collective bargaining table and I am sad to say we fell short of the goal. But tonight I want to address retirement health care. I'd like to thank LCPS for the challenge to learn about Medicare. I consider myself a lifelong learner and I'm pretty sure I have already met my quota for the next two and a half years in the last two weeks I'd like to thank the board though for delaying the vote as a school board member you have an obligation to

[02:42:35] understand the consequences of your vote everything I have seen so far has been focused on the changes with no data provided on the impact to employees LEA is working with Medicare professionals to compile data to not only help you with the vote but also educate employees on what these changes mean to them in a transparent manner as should have already happened. A promise was made to employees hired before 2013. Life decisions have already been made based on this promise.

[02:43:06] Some of these decisions are as simple as when they should retire, but other decisions were far more complicated, such as spouses giving up employment opportunities to stay at LCPS for these long-term benefits. I'm greatly troubled by a letter that was sent out yesterday to employees.

[02:43:25] The heading said, just the facts. And the very first line, I quote, LCPS is transitioning to a new retiree health reimbursement arrangement or RHRA plan as of 126.

[02:43:46] Apparently, LCPS staff either feels your vote doesn't matter or that they have given you no choice but to support this change. And finally, how did we get here? hold whoever is responsible accountable and please deserve it thank you matt o'donnell followed by mike thornton as a liberal and a democrat i'm here to defend francis hazel reed as a democrat

[02:44:23] i'm a little skeptical that some of you are in the same party as me this is a vastly unpopular decision you don't have the support of the people i spoke to the majority of elected officials in and around leesburg and i guess you forgot to ask for their support too because it doesn't seem that you have it. Teachers won't talk to me one way or another. They are so terrified of being labeled a racist by a radical part of my party. Voting this Thursday will hurt Democrats if you change

[02:44:56] AHR's name. It will cost us votes in November. If you rename Francis Hazel Reed, 100%, I will seek remedies in the circuit court through judicial review. I will do it. I don't understand the political suicide. I just don't. You know, I only thought I had a minute. The only other thing I wanted to let you guys know is your superintendent is currently denying FOIA requests using working

[02:45:33] papers exception. So last time I checked, he's not a governor. He's not a state senator. He's not a delegate. And that's probably illegal. So when I go to court, I'm going to kill two birds with one stone. Make good choices. Thank you. Mike Thornton, followed by Sandy Sullivan. Board, Spence, Thornton, teacher, nine years, grading policy.

[02:46:03] Before I forget, because I'm afraid I'm going to cut this off at the end, we want to talk to you guys. I know that this is up for review in another year. I don't expect large changes to happen now. I get that. We're teachers. We want to educate you on what's happening with the grading policy in our schools, specifically the high school level, because it's a big deal.

[02:46:21] Erin was up earlier, and she talked a lot about what is happening in terms of teachers. All that's right. What do I have here? The three things that we normally do is we're planning, teaching, assessing, and grading. The amount of assessing and grading that we're doing is ridiculous with the policy. We have to do everything twice.

[02:46:38] And before you go, not everyone's retaking twice, you're right. But if we want to make good assessments work again, we need to make completely new assessments. That means two copies of everything. In the midst of doing that, what we're cutting back on is planning. And planning is where innovation is occurring. It's where we're supposed to be doing differentiation, where we're supposed to make sure that we have education equitable all of our students. That is what is getting cut from our time because we need to focus on assessing and grading and assessing and grading. Students, let's look at students. I have two, three groups maybe. We'll see what we get through.

[02:47:12] AP students that I teach, the most common thing I see that this is holding against them is they get stuck in a treadmill. They do poorly on an assessment. They want to retake it. They want to retake it. They're now stuck in the past unit, which means they can't focus on this unit, which means they're going to

do poorly on this unit, which means they're going to go ahead and have to retake, and this is going to happen over and over and over again. They get stuck. We can't get them to move on. My students that struggle, my students that are in science because they need their advanced diploma, they're sitting there putting everything off until the end because they can, and they're waiting so they're not actually accessing the content.

[02:47:50] This is great because they're teenagers, and we know that teenagers are really good about thinking about long-term consequences and not dealing with immediate gratification, right? No, this is not the fault of the students. They actually don't have the physical ability to do this and make these decisions. We are making them do this because they have that lack of decision-making skill. Thank you so much. Have a great day. We want to talk to you.

[02:48:15] Thank you. And the last public comment is Sandy Sullivan. Good evening. Questions must be answered. Impacts must be understood. The impact of the proposed changes to healthcare retiree benefits has sent retirees and employees who will be retiring in the near future into confusion fear and anger proposals have been made without school board members being given the information they need to fully understand the need for these changes and the impacts of these proposals the proposals have been made without retirees and employees

[02:48:54] nearing retirement being given the information they need to fully understand the need for these changes and the impacts of these proposals. School board members when making decisions you must be informed and you need to receive input from stakeholders. Stakeholder input had to be reactionary as this took us and you by surprise. Time is needed so you the school board can understand the impacts. Your employees rely on you to be fully to fully understand the impacts of your decisions before you make your decisions and take your votes, no matter how seemingly large or small those decisions are.

[02:49:33] I'm pleased to say that over 100 retirees attended Ms. Chernoff's town hall to express their concerns yesterday. Time is needed for us, retirees and employees, so we can understand the impacts and provide feedback to you.

[02:49:49] School board members, take the time you need to make a decision. School board members, ensure that your employees, current and past, understand the impacts of these proposed life-altering changes. Thank you.

[02:50:07] And with that, we'll end public comment. Typically, we have a break, but I think we could push on. Is that all right? Thumbs up? Yes? Push on? Okay. All right. We will start with item 13, action item, curriculum and instruction committee revisions to policy 50-30 assessment and grading presented by Lauren Chernoff, C&I committee chair.

[02:50:29] Ms. Chernoff, do you have a base motion? It is my pleasure to bring the base motion for Policy 50-30 tonight. I move that the Loudoun County School Board adopt the Curriculum and Instruction Committee's approved revisions of Policy 50-30 assessment and grading for implementation on August 21st, 2025.

[02:50:51] I have a motion. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Vice Chair Donahue. Is there any discussion? I was going to let her speak to motion, but go ahead, Dr. Deans, go ahead. Dr. Deans, go ahead.

[02:51:07] I'm a member of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee as well, and it is my concern that we are not trusting the process that we have previously approved. Our process is that we send it out for public comment, we let senior staff summarize that public comment and bring it back to us.

[02:51:34] For us to reduce a student's ability to get no more than a 75 on his or her retake, to me, is punishment. And I don't think that we're in the job of punishing students.

[02:51:55] We should be in the job of guiding students and leading them. We could correct some of the retakes by adding a Part C to Section 5 under line 172, where we would say there would only be one retake per quarter.

[02:52:15] That could correct or improve the retake numbers. But I think that there's nothing in education that would allow us to punish a child who would take a retake, make a 100 on it, and that grade be reduced to 70.

[02:52:35] To me, that's a punishment. So we are not trusting the process that we've already put in place for our policy revisions. Dr. Deans, did you make a motion?

[02:52:52] Well, first of all, can you tell me what line you were on on the red line? On the regular one, I was on line 172. I'd have to find it on the red line. 172 okay I'll look I got it my motion would be to let the grading policy go forward as given to us by our process and vote only on what the process has given to us versus making additional adjustments that would result that

[02:53:28] would result in punishment okay I don't I think that's the motion that's already on the floor right now so I don't know that we need a motion because that's already we haven't changed anything yet the amendment hasn't happened an amendment hasn't been okay given quite yet okay which brings me to mission off okay thank you madam chair and thank you dr. Deans I before we when I'm speaking to the base motion I'm very grateful for the conversation that we had last time I think we've had good dialogue around this and I do respectfully disagree about it being a punishment I think setting high

[02:54:05] expectations for students is never a punishment it is an opportunity for them to rise and I know that they will and with that I would like to make an amendment to the base motion I am I move that on the red line version lines 350 and 360 that we change the 80% to 75% second hold on mr. and off can you tell me what line that's on it's clean or red okay let me go back red line version isn't that right

[02:54:42] line 350 yes okay 350 and 360 it's mentioned twice 350 and 360 okay i have a motion on the floor to reduce the onlines uh 350 and 360 to 75 do i have a second second i have a second by

[02:55:13] Dr. Rashid. Is there any discussion? I have some discussion. So I have to thank the teacher who sent me some of the data. And I was looking at it from unit to unit. And an 80% floor for this, or I guess it's an 80% is the place where you would take a retake. It looks like, I mean,

[02:55:48] From unit to unit, there was anywhere from 63% retake to 74% retake. That is a lot of retakes. 75%, it was anywhere from 20% to 40%.

[02:56:06] And 70% floor for retakes was anywhere from 8% to 20%. So I have a, I'm going to make an amendment to the amendment because I think that's just way too much.

[02:56:26] I think that it stops time for MTSS to happen. I think it stops time for special education intervention to happen because they are too busy doing this, making retakes and testing, and then grading

the tests as opposed to focusing on our struggling readers and writers and people who, the kids who really need it.

[02:56:49] I know I'm going to, I don't know that it's punitive. I think that it is reality right now. So I would like to make a motion to decrease that floor from 75 to 70.

[02:57:12] That's an amend the amendment. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Ms. LaBelle. So that's the floor for what we have. So is there any discussion yet?

[02:57:29] mrs griffiths do i need to discuss your particular amendment yeah mine first yeah okay i just wanted to add something after that's fine i'll wait if you want me to wait over that now's the time for discussion okay now's the time for discussion okay i appreciate everything you're doing and i know teachers appreciate it too so thank you so much um i don't think i i think going down to 70 is great um but i did want to uh mention that there should be a more of a focus on extra credit eliminating it that would eliminate retakes by extra credit um i had recommended this that if

[02:58:06] when we had the uh school days um due to snow that kids that maybe um that are falling behind maybe do extra credit and i realize that extra credit is in the policy but it's not consistent um i have talked to teachers at several schools and not every school offers extra credit so um Next time, I'm not saying we have to do this now.

[02:58:32] This is not an amendment, but my suggestion is more consistency on the extra credit. That will definitely need to be implemented, and I know it's in the policy, but I'm hoping teachers can offer that more rather than having retakes.

[02:58:49] That would take a lot off their plate. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Yes, Dr. Deans. Students are even given an opportunity to retake SOLs when they fail them. So why couldn't they retake a summative assessment?

[02:59:08] Not the formative ones, but the summative ones. I think that it does not always involve the teacher having to reteach the information, but it would give the child an opportunity to relearn that they have missed, the gaps that they have missed in that classroom.

[02:59:30] Teaching is teaching and assessing, reteaching and reassessing. So therefore, it is within the job description unwritten that a teacher would give a retake for, there can be restrictions, as I said, but that a teacher would reteach and retest on any topic that a child did not learn.

[02:59:59] Students learn at different paces, at different rates, and therefore, student A might have learned it all the first time the teacher taught it, but teacher B might need it retaught and use different words for that student B to learn the data.

[03:00:21] Teaching is teaching, reteaching, testing, retesting, or assessing, reassessing. I still hold firm that it is punitive to have a child to take the time for that one retake.

[03:00:38] And I do, if you need me to, I'll do my amendment over. For that one retake, that that student would be given an opportunity for that quarter to retake and improve his or her learning as well as his or her testing ability.

[03:00:57] So we have, so right now it's just that floor that we're talking about, the 80, 75, or 70, mine was 70 at this point, the amendment, and then if you want to make another amendment on top of, after we go

back up to add what you were thinking about, I guess the only ability to take one retake, is that what you were?

[03:01:24] We could add that under section five. Okay, so that would be another amendment on top. So this is just a discussion for this particular 70%. Yes, Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to address a few things that Dr. Deans has said.

[03:01:43] First of all, a child that has gotten 70 or above has not failed a thing. That's average. I repeat that, average. Secondly, SOLs are retaking because students have done poorly, have not passed the SOLs. Now, to prepare the student for retakes of SOLs, they are pulled from classes and taught specifically what they need to know for the SOLs just before

[03:02:15] they retake them. Pulling the student from the class for SOL remediation does not interrupt the rest of the class. The teacher and the class keep on going, and they are pulled out by teachers who are specifically identified to help retake SOLs.

[03:02:35] So that does not interrupt the classroom. SOLs are important to retake because if you don't pass your SOLs, you don't get a diploma. So in that case, of course, we want them to have as many opportunities as possible, and you can retake your SOLs five times.

[03:02:53] Every time, it is a different test. The same specific areas are retested, but not with the same questions. It is a totally different test, and they can retake it five times, so that's important.

[03:03:11] But, as I said, the most important thing is that the child or student who gets a 70 hasn't failed anything. If it's less than that, it's in an area that needs improvement. That I can qualify saying, yes, we need to reteach that to this student and allow him another opportunity to show that he can progress.

[03:03:33] Again, I stress that we need to stretch the children's ability to learn, to study, because these are things they're going to need when they go to college or when they go out in the real world. If they have to learn a new skill to a certain degree of competency, they will have to stretch and do it or they won't have that job.

[03:03:57] So we need to teach them to go ahead and stretch themselves, learn as much as you can, do better. Not just say, okay, poor thing, we'll let you do it again. That's not teaching. Okay, so I will have to say that I'm not a believer in retaking SOLs unless you're in high school.

[03:04:15] And the only reason you would retake it is really for accountability purposes and for, you know, to graduate. However, for me, SOLs are the basic minimum understanding basic.

[03:04:31] It's not advanced. It's not anything else. It's not even average. It's lower than that basic. So, yes, Dr. Rasheed. Just a quick question to piggyback off what, well, to ask what Ms. LaBelle had mentioned. And out of curiosity, when a student, I guess you say, fails SOL, do they have to retake it?

[03:04:50] And when they remediate or retake it, do they lose class time for that? Dr. Spence, do you want to answer that? I mean, I wouldn't answer yet, but. Do they lose class time for retaking the assessments currently?

[03:05:07] Or any class time for any remediation for SOLs? Well, sometimes, yes. For remediation, there may be times when students are pulled out to do additional remediation. Sometimes that may be done in class. So it can happen in multiple ways.

[03:05:23] And if there are retakes, yes, students who are retaking the SOL will miss class time. That's post-SOL class time. And as you know, there are ongoing conversations about what occurs in that time. But for sure, they will miss that class time.

[03:05:39] Thank you. Yes, Mr. Straffi. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to add a perspective I think I alluded to in my feedback in our last meeting. And I'm speaking for myself, but I think as a board, we have tried to use all of the levers that we have available as a school board, including flexible staffing, increasing staffing ratios, focusing on specialized positions, all of the mechanisms we have in our budget to improve our school division.

[03:06:15] Yet this policy is an opportunity for us to address the issues that are inside the classroom, and that is the way we ask our students to show up for the learning. It is also the obstacles that are in the way of our teachers and our educators.

[03:06:34] And so I do support the 75%. I think that it is a good start to us looking at the data and looking into the policy further. Hearing the data that Chair Mansfield presented, I think there is a case and a strong argument for revising it to 70%.

[03:06:57] I don't know that I'm there just yet, but I think it is important that we reduce what's been talked about as a cycle for our students and our teachers in terms of these assessments and the retakes and asking more from our students the first go around so that they can master the content.

[03:07:20] and we give space to our educators to differentiate the learning versus just focusing on the retakes and the assessments. I think this will help to put balance back into the classroom in that regard. My feedback is this go around on the policy revision, collect data, try to understand the impact inside the classroom, and focus on the 75%.

[03:07:45] Thank you, Mr. Streffi. Dr. Deans, I'm going to allow Ms. Chandler to go since you've talked twice. And then one more time, and then we'll continue on. Thank you, Madam Chair. As I reflect on these changes, I didn't end up in this process where I thought I would.

[03:08:07] And as I said at the last meeting, I am very open to making this change, and I am grateful for the opportunity that we have to reintroduce or reaffirm accountability. I do think the work our students do at school should be progressive, and they should be always working towards whatever is coming next.

[03:08:29] That said, oddly enough, I was thinking back on the cell phone policy today in my conversation with Ms. Chernoff, and it's a big change. This is a big change for our students. And I find I'm definitely comfortable with the 75, but I would probably be more comfortable with the 70 after we tried it out for a little bit.

[03:08:51] And that is something that we've discussed in terms of this policy, Letting it change, letting everybody get used to the change, and then reassessing what's working and what's not working. And I find that I would be more open to that 70% at that time.

[03:09:09] Thank you. All right, Dr. Deans. Most or much of the instruction takes place by way of guided practice on the Chromebooks. So the student could re-study or re-teach him or herself without the teacher doing a lot of reteaching and when teachers make their tests at the beginning

[03:09:41] of the unit make two tests for each summative not formative but for each summative because you know you may have a student who's going to retest it's not like you gotta come up with that second test

It's the same content. So I think, again, we are leaving all the accountability on the student and no accountability to the teacher who is there for the purpose of making sure that each student, every student, learns the content.

[03:10:18] it thank you dr. deans okay so the motion on the floor is 70% where's okay all right we'll just go ahead and take the vote I guess yes this is for 70 this is

[03:10:55] for 70 all right all right would you please please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote and And that motion passes with Dr. Deans, Mr. Streffy, Dr. Rasheed in opposition, and Ms. Chandler absent for the vote.

[03:11:35] Okay, so then that goes, that is not 75, and that's not 80. Is there, so now we can take another, an amendment for this policy, if anybody, yes, Ms. Chernoff, you have another amendment.

[03:11:52] so this is back to the base motion as amended so we have another amendment thank you madam chair i move that on the red line version on line 399 after the words college or university we add a sentence that says the floor of 50 will not apply to advanced placement courses i have a motion from Ms. Chernoff. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Vice Chair Donohue.

[03:12:24] Is there any, actually, Ms. Chernoff, would you like to speak to your motion? Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I alluded to this last meeting with dual enrollment courses that are aligned to the university standards. They do not have a 50% floor. I feel similarly that the advanced placement courses also should not. I think with the changes that we just adopted with 70% for retakes, I think that that should help alleviate the rest of it. So I'm going to stick with it just for AP courses. And I did take IB out because of the certain requirements of that program that it also

[03:13:00] has. So just advanced placement. Okay. Yes, Dr. Deans. Doing that means that all students are not being treated equitably, not equally, but equitably. So I disagree with removing either AP or IB. Thank you Dr. Deans. Anybody else? Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. LaBelle. I agree with removing AP. So many students enter into AP not understanding the rigor that it requires and we

[03:13:39] have to pay for them to take the tests at the end of the year and if they are not getting better than 50 they shouldn't be in an AP class. Thank you Ms. LaBelle. Any other discussion? Seeing none.

[03:13:58] We will go ahead and vote on Ms. Chernoff's amendment for the 50% floor being taken away for AP. Is that correct? Okay. Clerk, please open the vote.

[03:14:14] Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion passes with Dr. Deans in 8 to 1 with Dr. Deans in opposition. And so now we're back to we have amended it twice, base motion amended twice, and we will vote on that but is there any other any other amendments seeing now we can vote on the base motion as amended by those two amendments clerk please open the vote board members please

[03:14:52] record your vote clerk please close and display the oh she already did um seven to two with um dr deans and dr asheed in opposition all right moving on to the next one uh we are back to Information items, and we got to, what, 14.06 last time, I believe, or we're on 07, is that correct?

[03:15:27] Okay, so 14.07, Department of Teaching and Learning, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, grant funding application presented by Michael Grubbs, Director of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

[03:15:44] Oh, and it looks like Mr. Slavin, too. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. So I'm joined by Dr. Grubbs here tonight to present our 2526 Perkins plan.

[03:16:02] Dr. Grubbs will go into details of what is included in the plan, but prior to that, we appreciate the opportunity to present this as an information item. Can I get the next slide? There you go. Thank you.

[03:16:24] So the Perkins plan is a federal support for CTE programming focusing on improving academic and technical achievement of our CTE learners. It strengthens the connections between secondary and post-secondary opportunities and improves accountability for our CTE programs within LCPS.

[03:16:40] It is a state formula grant fund under Title I, our basic state grants, and school systems can use these funds to supplement but not supplant local funding, and it cannot be used for consumable items. Dr. Grubbs is going to talk us through what we're currently using Perkins' plan for this school year, and then contrast that with the plan that we're proposing going into next school year and then we'd be available for any questions thank you mr slevin greeting dr spence greeting madam chair greeting school board members if we could advance to the next slide

[03:17:12] thank you so as mr slevin shared i'm going to talk a little about our 25 or 24 25 perkins plan we funded two positions so roughly 30 of our budget was for two individuals one was for a specialist for career and technical education one was for our ham sci resource teacher we also supported career technical student organization competition travel. Those Perkins funds have to be used with a focus on special populations. So we can only support advisors that are traveling for CTSO competitions that are also supporting special populations. So those are students that

[03:17:51] are English language learners, special education, even students that are non-traditional, meaning males in cosmetology or females in engineering. We've also used 24-25 Perkins funds for training for teachers, stipends for professional learning, and equipment improvement. However, halfway through the school year, we did not need the amount of funding for our two positions, so we did do an amendment in spring of 2025, and we shift that for school-based and program needs, things like upgrades for classrooms and additional professional learning for our teachers. For 25-26, we're thinking about our Perkins funds a little bit differently. Through the work of Mr. Slevin and

[03:18:30] the Department of Teaching and Learning, we leverage system resources to reduce the need for our positions. If we go back one slide, thank you. So I think what that ultimately means is that more of the funds are growing directly to our programs, our teachers, and our students, rather than FTEs and positions. As we look at 25-26, we are funding one-third of our budget for program improvement. We have a lot of needs in our classrooms, a lot of aging equipment, One-third for professional learning.

[03:19:02] Much of that is mandatory, like our project Lead the Way training for our teachers to access curriculum. And one-third for strategic initiatives. We're looking to do more K-12 career development and outreach, more special population resources and support. We look forward to partnering with our special education office, English language learner's office, and other LCPS offices.

[03:19:23] And then looking at opportunities for supporting program improvement moving forward. So looking a little bit differently about how we use our Perkins funds moving forward. Timeline, December to March, our CTAE team has reviewed student and industry data soliciting input from stakeholders and program needs.

[03:19:42] March, we spent time drafting our Perkins 2526 local application. We're here tonight to submit to the school board for review. April, we will submit for review to our advisory council in Northern Virginia Community College for review. April 29th, we're hoping to submit to the Virginia Department of Education for approval.

[03:20:01] May, we will likely get revisions and feedback from the state, and then July 1st, spending authority. One thing that I do want to note is that the budget in front of you is based on this year's allocation. We do not have our allocation for next year yet, so you could see a budget increase or decrease as we find out what our 25-26 allocation looks like, but the state advised us to use this year's Perkins funding to plan for next school year.

[03:20:31] - So at this point we are open for feedback or any questions the board may have. - Thank you very much for your presentation. Board members, do you have any questions, discussion?

[03:20:52] No? I knew you would, Ms. LaBelle. - Of course I would. - Ms. LaBelle. - I want to know or confirm that if we don't receive federal fundings, that is Perkins fund, correct?

[03:21:09] - Yes, that is correct. - Okay, thank you. any other discussion questions I guess no questions so is this something that we should that we need to put on either a consent or action next time yes we are seeking to have it approved by the end of April so consent or action be the next step okay board members can I get a thumbs up to place this as consent all right that's unanimous go to consent oh what oh never mind okay it should go to

[03:21:48] to action next time um april 22nd this will go to action okay 14 thank you very much for your presentation 14.08 finance and operations committee revision of policy 6530 changing school attendance zones presented by arvin astreffi chair of finance and operations committee thank you madam chair policy 6530 changing school attendance zones was first brought to fno committee on february 18th the policy was brought with proposed revisions that would clarify the different attendance zone change processes specifically just pulling in

[03:22:25] elements of the regulation into the policy and adding clarifying language was also to capture revisions required by the USDA related to the provision of socio-economic data of school populations that could previously be provided by attendance zone and the the changes to the policy removed the ability to require to provision that data based on attendance zone per the USDA. The committee also moved forward with the proposed changes along with an amendment offered by Chair Mansfield to the policy that would require a

[03:23:02] comprehensive review of all school attendance zones at least every five years and so you will see those changes in the red line version of the policy in front of you. I'll also pass it to Mr. Lewis in case he would like to add any further context he is with us thank you mr. Streffi I was getting ready but I did not hear I mean if I overlooked it I apologize the couple of changes that we are making in the present in the policy based on the work of the Finance and

[03:23:38] Operations Committee was on line 25 we were adding a five-year review of all the tenant zones and we'll be working with the board to look work through that over time that was also one of the comments made by MSAC through their review and then we did restructure a little bit of the policy to try to make it a little bit easier to find the different ways to do the tennis zone change you also notice there's

quite a bit of red text most of that is data that we pulled over from the regulation that established what the the set of meetings were for that required for each of the different things and talking

[03:24:15] Mr. Allen and his team we prefer since we're obligating the board to make certain meetings that it should be in policy rather than regulation so it looks like a lot of changes but a lot of that is based on things that we just pulled over from regulation happy to take any questions um thank you mr. Lewis I have a couple of things well first the that just reminded me of my own amendment at F&O it says however all school attendance zones will be comprehensively reviewed every five years to assess student enrollment in school capacity imbalances is there any way does anybody have any heartburn for me to make an

[03:24:53] amendment that says by the school board because I want to make sure that that it's the school board really doing it putting their eye on it as well every five years yeah okay then I'll then look for that amendment next time the other thing is so let's talk about socioeconomic characteristics um so we remove the wording and so what does that mean and what's the implication of that because what are the actual changes to the attendance zone process taking those out and

[03:25:30] should we do we really need to remove it um so that's my first thought thank you miss mansfield so um in the the past and the the reason we brought this up in the in the finance committee is the information that was provided to the school board by staff was information on free and reduced meal information based on students by planning zone we're not allowed to give that information out by planning zone at that level at that aggregate level so that is what started the conversation about removing that in the past the boards have looked at that information and you use that to consider

[03:26:09] their plans of moving forward so the implication of that would be that simply we would not have a tool to to do that um however we are looking for um in the help of dr tyler and his team and mrs tate and her team other ways to collect information that may be able to satisfy that requirement don't have that for you right now but staff would be in support of leaving that there with a qualifier that any information that we have is permissible to be used and so we would would not be able to provide you with that free and reduced meal information, but maybe there's other information we could put together

[03:26:48] that we would find and be able to do that. So then maybe like around line 227, we could have like, and we could work on this and work on some wording on this together. You know, the social economic characteristics of a school population where data is available and permissible by law.

[03:27:12] And you said that there might be some other, and the overall impact on students and families, but you said that there might be other ways to gather that information that's publicly available? There may be other data that we can collect.

[03:27:29] I don't know how publicly available it is, and that's something we'll look through with Dr. Tyler and his team. Yes, Dr. Deans. Would we still have Title I schools designated as such?

[03:27:46] Yes, ma'am. This would have no effect on the Title I designation. this is only related to how we make changes in attendance zone um so this uh and the changes attendance zone is not a permissible use for that information so that's that's why we're at this juncture discussing that because we just can't use it for the reason we've used we used it in the past but we still would know which schools are title one yes ma'am yes miss Chernoff thank you madam chair um I just wanted to thank you for your work on this and I especially wanted to thank you chair mansfield for your amendment i think that this is something that is definitely needed

[03:28:26] here in Loudoun County with the amount of growth that we have and also as we are constantly evaluating changes in enrollment but what schools have capacity so I really am fully supportive of this and I know that this may not be the appropriate time but I do look forward to a larger conversation around a full look at all of our attendance zones and boundaries I know it's not a popular conversation it's a lot of work but I do think that with the amount of growth that we've seen in such a short amount of time and how we're constantly what I would call maybe putting band-aids on certain situations year after year I think that it could be a good time for us to

[03:29:06] level set and I would support that process so thank you. Sure enough I would have to agree with that because we might not be growing all that much and we might need to be maneuvering around spreading out spreading things out yeah um any other discussion no thank you Mr. Lewis very much okay moving on 14.09 oh that's that'll be for action on the April 22nd since I'm going to have

[03:29:40] possibly two amendments um okay finance and operations committee request to name the J.L. Simpson Middle School Auditorium the Beth Paquette Fine Arts Center school board policy 6510 presented by Arvin Estreffi, Chair, Finance and Operations Committee.

[03:29:57] - Thank you, Madam Chair. Another policy coming out of F&O is the request to rename the J.L. Simpson Middle School Auditorium. Dr. DiNicola, principal of J.L. Simpson Middle School, with support from Ms. Chernoff and the school community has requested that the school's auditorium be named the Beth Paquette Fine Arts Center in honor of Ms. Beth Paquette.

[03:30:25] The proposed naming align does not significantly, does not have significant fiscal impact aside from the \$215.76 cost for the signage. Per policy, a full background and social media check was conducted through Castle Branch Inc.

[03:30:42] with no concerns found. There was a good amount of discussion in committee around our renaming policy, not just in regards to spaces in schools but with respect to the overall the continuing discussions around school renaming as to whether spaces or schools should be named after people but ultimately the committee decided two to one to advance this to the school board so with that I will pass it back to Mr.

[03:31:15] Lewis to add any additional context thank you Mr. Estruffi I don't really have anything to add the staff is in support of the uh the action and I'm happy to take any questions you may have yes uh Mrs. Griffiths yes this is time for discussion thank you Madam Chair um I am part of the FNO committee and I would like our Loudoun County constituents to see my perspective uh we are only doing a search seven years prior for Miss Paquette I'm sure she's a lovely woman. Ms. Bacchett just retired and worked in different schools. She retired in 2024. I would

[03:31:55] be remiss if I didn't point out there were several schools on the chopping block for renaming when we didn't even update the policy yet. For the renaming of Frances Hazel Reed and Mercer Middle, we are going back over 100 years and pulling at strings to make excuses to rename these schools with a cost significantly higher. This auditorium would be named after her for 10 years or until someone else comes up and we can rename it again. In the 10 years as a retiree, she can make controversial comments and might upset some constituents. We are looking at possible future complaints and drama.

[03:32:30] I appreciate all the letters Ms. Chernoff got for support, but we should not be making decisions on emotion. I am always good with plaques, murals to appreciate great staff members. We also do staff

recognitions and awards that are set aside for teachers and staff. I think if Ms. Paquette was nominated for awards, that would be great. We should not be naming schools or auditoriums for anyone. While this seems to be a minimal cost, renaming of schools is significantly higher, but I wanted to share my thoughts at the height of social media, which is where we are today.

[03:33:05] Thank you very much. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Mr. Lewis, for kind of walking me through this. This particular piece is new to me. I do want to make the distinction that this is a naming of an auditorium.

[03:33:23] We're not taking a name away and adding something else. So that is a little bit different than our next two agenda items. But I had the opportunity to engage with Simpson Middle School about this particular staff member. I haven't had the chance to meet her yet, although I do believe she'll be here at our next meeting.

[03:33:40] And just in talking with the community, it was just an overwhelming sense. And I did receive letters from students and staff members supporting this and asking for the support since I'm the Leesburg Rep. And it just, it really, it felt like an opportunity to honor an educator that really has left her imprint on not only the students, but the fellow staff members as well as the fine arts, which I have been a proponent for from day one and will continue to be so.

[03:34:14] So this kind of checked all of those boxes for me. I understand that there are bigger conversations around naming things going on, but for her very positive, wonderful qualities that I heard over and over again, I fully support this moving forward and hope that it will get named for her.

[03:34:32] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other discussion? Seeing none, I'm assuming this item will be brought forward as action on April 22nd, 2025 school war meeting. Thank you so much, Mr. Lewis. And I guess you get to stay there.

[03:34:49] For 1410, Department of Support Services School Name Review, Mercer Middle School, presented by Mr. Kevin Lewis, Chief Operation Officer, Meredith Ray Chair, Mercer Middle School Renaming Committee. And I think I'm just going to go ahead and say Mr. Rader as well, since he's coming to sit.

[03:35:11] but the first one will be 14.10. Thank you, Chair Mansfield.

[03:35:28] I have asked the chairs of both committees to come up, even though we'll take one of these items at a time, but I do have some opening comments that I'd like to do that would really address both of those at the same time. I would like at this time, as you mentioned, to introduce Ms. Meredith Ray and Mr. Larry Rader, who were asked to chair the two renaming committees, which was no simple task appointed by the chair, And we very much appreciate the efforts they made and commend them for the work that they did.

[03:35:58] They ran a difficult conversation and managed that very, very well. And we're very proud to have them here with us tonight to go through this process with you. I will say that our work was governed by Policy 6510, which is naming of schools.

[03:36:15] It was revised in 2022 to add a section for renaming of schools. And so the process was centrally built on a modification of the process we used for years for naming new schools. And the policy

does then ask and assign the facilitation of that process to my department, mostly at the skilled facilitation of Mrs. Tate here on the end of the table with us this evening.

[03:36:44] I will say that we have learned a few lessons in this process. The policy I think we need, and we're going to have that conversation in the coming weeks to address the policy and some revisions to the policy. Even though the policy did say that the Support Services Department would manage and facilitate the process, I think we need to be more explicit to help the chairs of these committees navigate these conversations in the community.

[03:37:09] You heard this evening there were some questions about the voting of the process. We are very convinced that the voting that we have and the names that we have brought forward to you represent the will of the committees. We had a very good turnout at all the committee meetings, and the voting on the night of the vote was a majority of that group was there.

[03:37:29] And so we believe that what we have for the board is, as I said, the will of the committee. We do believe that we need to work on some other of the rules of engagement in terms of the surveying that took place. We had some conversations about that and also the process for public comment.

[03:37:46] So we'll bring those to you when we have the comment. But I just wanted to share that with you from the beginning that we recognize that this was the very first time any of us has done that. Mr. Rader and Ms. Ray navigated through that with us with great skill and were able to have that conversation and come to a successful process.

[03:38:09] Then I want to describe a couple things about the policy. The policy does recommend through the renaming section that the committees provide a preferred name for the school and then at a minimum two alternate names for the school board's consideration.

[03:38:26] The school board is not obligated to take their recommendation and so you always have the opportunity to come up with your own name or to even in the policy specifically says that you can one of your choices could be to keep the name as it is. I will say that specifically now I'll just turn to Mercer since that's the one that we're here and if you see your your item there are a number of recommended motions to provide you the information that was developed by the committee the first recommendation is reflects the the preferred name

[03:39:04] that the committee came up with so for the Mercer school the first choice was Gum Spring Middle School the second choice or the first alternate was Stone Ridge Middle School the third choice or the second alternate was John Mercer Langston Middle School if you notice there's a fourth choice there to rename Mercer Middle School with a blank if the school board member would like to put that you have a crafted motion here for that and then the last option is to maintain Mercer Middle School as a name because that's specifically noted in the policy as one of the board's choices

[03:39:39] here so I think with that I will in my opening comments and just see if the board has any questions and on the process and be happy to take any questions board members do you have any questions yes Mr. Don I was sure on here thank you Madam Chair I don't actually have any questions I just wanted to thank Mr. Rader and Miss Ray and everyone who is involved in these committees I'm we're all aware I think that this has been a little bit of a contentious conversation for our community and it was a brave choice for everyone who chose to be

[03:40:19] involved and I appreciate all of you being willing to do that and especially you two who are in the spotlight leading these conversations. I'll have to echo Vice Chair Donahue's sentiments since I was the one who asked you guys to be chair. I appreciate that your willingness to do that and your thoughtfulness in these conversations because they were not easy, as we all.

[03:40:46] So I appreciate you guys. Ms. LaBelle. Just a quick question. Thank you, Madam Chair. Gum Springs, are you aware that that is the community started by the freed slaves that belong to George Washington?

[03:41:07] That is where they set up their community. Was that brought up in committee? So I did bring that up in the committee. Gumspring actually was a suggestion, the top suggestion that came out of the community survey.

[03:41:26] It was not introduced by anyone that was on the committee, which is why I brought it to the committee before it was time to vote. I did do a little bit of looking into where that name possibly came from, because I have lived in the area for five years.

[03:41:43] So I assume that there was probably history there that I did not know. And that is where I found out about the Gum Springs community, which was actually in southern Fairfax County, somewhere in the Occoquan area. And I did give that information to the committee, but I did not know if it was in any way related to the name of the road by the school, which is Gum Spring, which is why I believe it was a community suggestion.

[03:42:16] Okay, thank you. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you both for being here tonight and for your work. I was wondering if you could speak a little bit to the student involvement on your committee. As for Frances Hazel Reed, I was more involved with that one in Leesburg and following that, but I believe that you had student representatives.

[03:42:37] So how was that? How were they incorporated? What was their experience? If you can speak a little bit on, or maybe even just about the process. You don't need to speak for them, but I would love to hear how that went and if they had contributed to the conversation. Yes, so we had two student representatives on our committee.

[03:42:58] They were both great. And while I think it was kind of intimidating for them to be in a room full of adults during some contentious conversations, they both did a really excellent job and they spoke up when they felt like they needed to.

[03:43:17] I would say I'm actually really appreciative of the fact that there were students on the community and wanted to hear more from more of the students and I was hoping that our community survey could actually be done of the students in the school once they were presented with the information but that isn't the way that it ended up but it was brought to my attention during one of the meetings that you know one of the adults said you know some things were inappropriate to be talking about in front of the students.

[03:43:50] So that might be able to be managed better in the future. I appreciate that. Knowing the heaviness of this topic, it was interesting to me to find out that children were students that were participating and that that would be an interesting conversation for them to navigate. So I appreciate your insights. Thank you.

[03:44:15] Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Contentious is the word. I attended the Mercer committee meetings, and it was contentious because there was a lot of arguments about people wanting to keep the Mercer name, and they were not allowed.

[03:44:32] One of the members, the committee members, there was a threat to disqualify him because he wanted to use Mercer as his required three alternative names. So I felt like sitting in on these committee meetings, they were rigged, they were biased, they were partisan, and not appropriate, and not handled well at all.

[03:44:55] This board just pushed through what is not necessary for our students. It was a waste of time, a complete waste of time, when people could be home with their families. Title I schools suffer and beg for renovations, and we're going to do renaming of schools, which is purely cosmetic and helps no one in achievement.

[03:45:17] I have to say I'm pretty much disgusted with even the thought, I'm astounded that we're even here to possibly change the name of Mercer. Do you have any idea how many achievements and successes are associated with the Mercer name in just the past couple of years?

[03:45:37] or several years maybe. The National School to Watch in Virginia, Most Distinguished School, Loudoun County Public Schools Principal of the Year, who was here just last year getting her award, Nikesha Deal. Countless science and math Olympiad awards. I mentioned that there's a new program through Microsoft under the Mercer name. Superior Musical Programming 2015 to 2024.

[03:46:06] Current striving for an AMLE school of distinction. Honestly, even surveys were done in two zip codes, which it should have been all of Loudoun County. I do want to quote the principal.

[03:46:25] She does not believe that educating our community and students should be the path this has taken for Mercer, considering that the legacy we are building around a name that while historically tied to individuals, It was named due to the magistrate. During my time as principal, I have not heard from any student, community members, nor staff regarding how this name is impacting their ability to learn, support, or thrive.

[03:46:52] Our community has collectively worked together to spread light and peace in the name of Mercer. And that is from their principal, a proud Mercer principal. Changing the name wipes away all the achievements Mercer has had.

[03:47:07] Most of the county does not want their tax money wasted on renaming schools. We are looking at up to \$200,000 per school for nine schools. The people of Loudoun County would like to see money helping our kids to achieve and having up-to-date conditions in their schools, as I mentioned, Title I schools, not cosmetic renaming.

[03:47:31] Our constituents put us here to make common-sense decisions, reasonable decisions. This is not reasonable. Keep in mind that the attendance zone for Mercer will most likely change. So, again, I mentioned the zip codes. That's not accurate, the two zip codes that were surveyed.

[03:47:48] Not to mention that the cost will fall on the entire county. This should not be partisan, but it has been biased and partisan from the very beginning. Voting for Mercer, the whole committee was rigged from the very beginning.

[03:48:04] I say, hands off Mercer Middle School. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Dr. Rashid. Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to say Ms. Ray, Ms. Tate, Mr. Lewis, thank you so much for, you know, really organizing or helping to organize and conduct the committee meeting for the Mercer Middle School.

[03:48:27] I attended it. I didn't attend the Francis Hazel Reed one, but I wanted to say you had great composure. I wanted to say it was very well organized, and I'm a firm believer that changing the name really welcomes our students.

[03:48:43] really puts things in perspective and it welcomes the students especially those students that have ancestry that have suffered and changing that name allows those students to feel that they are part of something much more bigger and I can't help but commend you enough thank you yes miss Chandler thank you madam chair and thank you to each of you for the work that you've put into this effort, it is not lost on me how hard it is. And to some extent, in reflecting on

[03:49:21] the process, I think we might have been wiser to look at the policy before jumping into this process. There are some things about the policy that I have concerns about in terms of prolonging the conversation, offering. I think it's It's very hard to put into words, and I'm definitely struggling with this idea, but I think it's been divisive when there are probably ways that we could do it that would be unifying.

[03:50:00] That said, there have been a lot of words thrown around tonight, and I prefer myself not to be labeled. One of the things that matters to me is what's good for our students.

[03:50:17] And if I were going to label myself, I would say I'm an egalitarian, right? There are lots of different types of government. But for me, I want everybody to be treated the same. When I say the Pledge of Allegiance, I want it to be true. And it's not easy.

[03:50:36] I can acknowledge I am as Southern as anybody could be. I've done my family history. I understand what roles my own ancestors played in American history.

[03:50:51] maybe that's part of the reason why I hope for our future to be different I hope for our future to be different and I think when it comes to school names they are aspirational it's about being a good ancestor not necessarily being a good descendant so I'm thinking about what's good for our children and when we started this conversation I went and looked at the research

[03:51:24] and one of the things that studies have shown is that symbols and images have a direct impact on students' self-esteem and their motivation. So when an underrepresented group is faced with symbols that are derogatory towards them, it impacts their motivation and makes it less likely that they can succeed. Our job is to make sure that students have the tools they need to succeed. And then there was a study in 2019 conducted by Greg Suzanne Ferguson, which was

[03:52:00] entitled The Perceptions and Effects of School Names on Black Professional Educators and Their Students. The author notes that there are disproportionate effects that exist for black students and educators forced to confront painful contradictions at schools named after white supremacists. Educational systems that regard these concerns risk creating inequitable professional experiences for employees and for students. There's also a study that was done by Laurel R.

[03:52:30] Davis Delano and Joseph P. Gaughan and Stephanie Freiberg in 2020 on the psychosocial effects of Native American mascots and the comprehensive review of empirical research findings, race, ethnicity, and education. The mascots reflect and reinforce stereotypes, involve offensive appropriation

and mimicry and harm Native American people. I think what stands out for me is our need to listen to the voices of students and teachers of color who not only in our district

[03:53:07] but also in other areas in one of our neighboring jurisdictions. They changed the names. The school board changed. They changed the names back. They were sued. This is, it's complex. We have an obligation to address and create learning environments that allow everyone to succeed.

[03:53:33] And I have a hard time with the idea when we're committed to teaching authentic history and what we've seen in the last couple of years is an expansion of perspectives. We're including more voices. I can't say I'm an expert on Frances Hazel Reed, but when I consider her involvement in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, it is problematic for me because the purpose of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and this is from the National Park Service, was to perpetuate the lost cause myth,

[03:54:09] which is propaganda and not authentic history. And the idea was after the Civil War and after emancipated formerly enslaved people were gaining rights was to suppress their rights and to also spin what had happened and make it not about the economic system that stole the labor from people who were enslaved and stole the freedom

[03:54:46] from people who were enslaved and to rebrand, for lack of a better word, the people who participated in the confederacy we have to decide what's right for our community and our students and i like studies and i like history and i want to make sure that we are making evidence-based best practice decisions that are beneficial for all of our students and so with that it's a difficult conversation thank you for all the work that you did we will continue to have to think over this

[03:55:23] on the last couple weeks but it's not in a vacuum it does impact people and our first responsibility is to our students thank you thank you miss chandler okay this is we're focused on mercer middle school right now so any other discussion no thank you so much and uh we will continue

[03:55:50] on to our next uh our next item which is 14.11 uh francis hazel reed thank you miss mansfield so So the comments for Francis Hazel Reed process are very similar to what I shared with the Mercer process.

[03:56:13] We appreciate the insight of the board. I will share that the differences for the Francis Hazel Reed item versus the Mercer item is you see in item 14.11, that the choices that have been brought by the committee led by Mr. Rader were that the first name or the preferred name would be Loving Elementary School.

[03:56:36] The second choice or first alternate would be to maintain the current name of Francis Hazel Reed Elementary School. And then the third choice, second alternate would be to name the school Limestone Elementary School.

[03:56:53] And then as you see, we also have provided a fourth draft recommendation that the board could plug in their own recommendation for that as well. So with that, Mr. Rader and Mrs. Tate and I are happy to take any questions you may have have about the process for Frances Hazel Reed.

[03:57:14] - Board members, do we have any? - Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. - Thank you, Madam Chair. This is pure cancel culture. FHR of Frances Hazel Reed is being canceled. The school opened in 2003.

[03:57:30] Didn't we do the research then? Why now? Per Ms. Chandler, we do need to update the policy. And also, I love history too. That's why I read her book. I have it right here, and it goes through her time at

the Loudoun Times Mirror and all her writing, and it's just simply superb.

[03:57:55] It's wonderful. So, Ms. Chandler, if you're interested, I'll lend you the book to take a look. But Frances Hazel Reed seems to have been a lovely woman, and just in her writing, it was strictly about the news and what was going on in Loudoun County. She dedicated her life to Loudoun County and the Loudoun County Times Mirror for over 70 years.

[03:58:16] But we now take issue with her and want to take her name down. No one has been able to find anything negative except for perceived associations. It has become about pure virtue signaling and cancel culture. I have read her book. She gave her 70 years to Loudoun Times Mirror.

[03:58:38] But, I mean, we are looking at changing the name of a school because of her perceived associations. Most of the county does not want their tax money wasted on renaming schools. They want money to go to renovating schools.

[03:58:54] The renaming of any schools are misplaced priorities. As a taxpayer, I do not agree with the cost of \$100,000 to \$200,000 per school, which is nine schools. I'll just reiterate that. Ask yourself, does any taxpayer really believe money should go to renaming of schools and not our students?

[03:59:14] Purely cosmetic? If a small fraction of the county wants name changes, I believe this is due to misinformation. These schools were not named with any ill intent or any bias, although we had bias and bipartisanship during the committee meetings.

[03:59:33] This board may vote to rename Mercer and Frances Hazel Reed. I would like the public to know this is not reasonable. This is not reasonable spending. \$100,000 to \$200,000 to change the names of these schools is highly controversial and unpopular.

[03:59:50] Please explain to the Title I schools why they are not getting their much-needed renovations they have asked for. Lately, I've asked the people of Loudoun, if you're unhappy with the final vote, There are several current school board members up for re-election in November.

[04:00:10] Please remember who voted for the name changes at the ballot box. Others are up in a couple of years. I ask that the people of Loudoun County re-evaluate if this was a priority for our students at the ballot box. Frances Hazel Reed's book, I suggest you read it.

[04:00:27] She was a lovely woman. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Mrs. Sherrill. Thank you, Madam Chair. I've spent considerable time over the last few months reflecting on this issue, particularly because it affects the community that I represent.

[04:00:51] When it comes to renaming schools, there are two key perspectives I considered. The broader philosophical implications of the process, which have been mentioned here, and then the specific case of Frances Hazel Reed. I think both are important. It's my understanding that the idea of renaming schools did not originate from our school communities expressing concern, but that the previous school board initiated it.

[04:01:15] Listening to some of the initial discussions, it feels as though renaming is being proposed as one type of solution to a deeply complex historical issue. Renaming as a solution to the past atrocities feels somewhat arbitrary to me in a sense. I believe there are more constructive ways to address systemic issues without placing these complexities on our children.

[04:01:38] This approach did not feel like it fostered a culture of understanding or seeing the good in one another. and I'm concerned about what message that could send to our students. This process is also costly, and that's not something we can overlook. Resources are finite, and we should be thoughtful about how we allocate funds, especially in light of budget uncertainty, such as possibility of absorbing nearly \$46 million in federal funding should they be lost.

[04:02:06] I want to prioritize spending that directly benefits student achievement and supports our teachers, Whether that means playgrounds, teacher pay and benefits, or countless other essential resources that could better achieve this goal and help move us forward as a division.

[04:02:24] Now, specifically regarding Frances Hazel Reed, it's important to acknowledge that she meets the criteria set forth in our current policy, which states that schools may be named after individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community, provided they have been deceased for at least five years.

[04:02:41] Based on the evidence available and from my conversations with my community and the survey results, I sincerely believe the majority of this community support retaining her name. Additionally, there is one more thing I must address, and that is the proposal to rename the school after Richard and Mildred Loving.

[04:03:02] While the suggestion is to use Loving Elementary on the building, that name is closely associated with the individuals themselves. During my recent visit to Francis Hazel Reed Elementary, several staff members raised a concern that students have made the connection with a common nickname for the name Richard and as it is paired with the last name.

[04:03:30] I'll let you figure that out, which will lead to unintended consequences no matter what if that is chosen. Though I am certain that that was not the intention and they seem like lovely people, This association cannot be overlooked in this conversation as it relates to putting a name on a building for children, some as young as five years old.

[04:03:56] For those reasons, I cannot support the name Loving Elementary for any school. Lastly, I believe that the current name of Frances Hazel Reed Elementary School should be retained. There are more productive and developmentally appropriate ways to address historical issues with students and in our school communities, while prioritizing living forward for a better future for our students, educators, and the larger Loudoun County.

[04:04:23] I appreciate your consideration of these points. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. DelBell. I also have students in my district that go to Frances Hazel Reed Elementary School.

[04:04:44] And I can tell you right now, it's not just the faculty and the students at that school that are aware of the unfortunate nickname paired with the last name. Middle school children understand it.

[04:05:04] And if you have middle school children, you know what they're like. And they are very busy tossing around the term. The Dick Loving Elementary School isn't that wonderful. That is not something I want to have on one of our school buildings or even associated with that.

[04:05:28] I had somebody ask me, so what are you going to call their new mascot? Okay, Ms. LaBelle. Want to stop? Ms. LaBelle, stop. Okay, moving on. Any other discussion?

[04:05:48] I think you had, if it's going to piggyback on that, no. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:06:04] The Lovings, I don't believe, had any relation to Loudoun County. They were a different part of Virginia. There is no reason to name the school ed for them just because they didn't even live here in Loudoun County. Frances Hazel Reed did, and she worked for the Loudoun Times Mirror for 70 years.

[04:06:23] Thank you. Any other discussion? All right. We are going to move on. Thank you so much for being here, and we will bring both those items to action for the April 22nd school board meeting.

[04:06:57] All right, we'll move on to item 15, board member comment and committee reports. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:07:13] On March 24th, the SBAC committee met and went over the policy for, I believe it was corporal punishment. We sent it forward for committee review, and it should be coming up in the next month or so.

[04:07:36] Thank you. Dr. Rasheed. Thank you, Chair. The MSAC Equity Celebration is coming up on Saturday, May 3rd, and you can get the details about the event on lcps.org/msaac.

[04:07:53] Also, in May, because of high school graduations and school board meetings rescheduling, the Specialized Program and Centers Committee will not meet on the regular first Tuesday. Instead, we're going to meet on Tuesday, May 13th at 3:45. Mark your calendars, you know you're dying to come, thanks.

[04:08:14] - I sure know. - Thank you, Madam Chair. At our Curriculum Instruction Committee meeting last week, we discussed four information items. We had a lengthy conversation about the policy 5430, which is a new policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence.

[04:08:30] We discussed the feedback from our advisory committees as well as the public feedback. We are going to possibly get that to the full board. We'll be working on it as action. So we took the extra meeting to review it since this is a new policy, and we wanted to make sure we got all those changes incorporated we also talked about the Virginia assessment of language and literacy better known as vowels that will be introduced for grades four through eight next year the elementary and middle school English and language departments are forming testing teams establishing procedures and preparing for professional learning on its administration and using the data to target instruction while the video he

[04:09:09] has not yet provided full details on the criteria for who will take the assessment lcps is preparing for various scenarios policy 5440 the literacy plan is a new policy that is required by the state as a literacy plan will be submitted annual annually for approval we already have our literacy plan approved and then we talked about policy 5070 field trips it's up for its five-year review suggestions were made by the committee to tighten up the language on safety and discipline on field trips as well as the suggestion to add a section outlining inclement weather procedures for field trips in the regulation.

[04:09:43] Due to the number of suggestions, we are going to review this policy as information again next meeting. Thank you. Mr. Straffi. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just very briefly, next week's Finance and Operations Committee meeting is canceled due to spring break.

[04:10:01] So the next time the committee will meet will be on April 29th. We'll also be convening the Performance Monitoring Committee on April 29th as well on the same day. And so that is it. We heard a bunch of the items that came out of the last F&O committee meeting this evening.

[04:10:19] So nothing else to report. Vice Chair Donohue. Thank you, Madam Chair. The Student Services Committee meeting for this month, because of spring break, is going to be on Thursday, April 24th at 4

p.m. So that is a different day and time than when we usually meet.

[04:10:39] Loudoun Education Foundation's Outstanding Educator Banquet is going to be on Friday, May 30th. So everybody look out for information for that event. It's going to be fantastic. And just a reminder, the Loudoun Education Foundation works on their Fueled program every Tuesday evening to pack meal bags to send to families in need in our community.

[04:11:04] So anyone who is interested in signing up to volunteer to help pack bags or to do a supply drive, you can sign up for those opportunities at loudeneducationfoundation.org. Thank you. Thank you, Vice Chair Donohue. I went to a step-up competition, and I was a judge, and it was amazing.

[04:11:25] There were four winners, actually. I mean, everybody was a winner there. they all got a hundred dollars but the top award was a thousand dollar prize for financial fortitude a a team of rockwitch high school students in stone mill middle school and what they did is they provided they were talking about formal money management projects and they made a video game and they made an e-book and they also taught at some elementary schools it was quite fantastic i think Miss Chernoff actually helped to the first round and then the second place went to breathe track

[04:12:01] which was from TJ high school they developed an air quality monitor can you imagine that and that could be used in neighborhoods and parks and to alert you of conditions outside and that was pretty amazing there was a tie for third place and both teams got \$500 and one was a seventh grader at Blue Ridge Middle School and he developed a wrist risk to talk about PFAS and Ms. Chernoff is not wearing the appropriate yes yeah so PFAS is those forever chemicals and I'm so happy that they're

[04:12:39] thinking about that at this young age and then the second the second team who also were tied for third place was lemonades which was from Belmont Ridge Middle School and they talked about the microplastics that are like in you know the cascade uh dishwashing things that we're adding to our microplastics and so what they did is they um did an alternate alternate laundry pod and then covered it in um in a uh in a fungus uh kind of a no that one was a in a gelatin a different kind of gelatin so it was pretty amazing and um inspiring because they were all about the

[04:13:18] environment and bettering our community. So that's me. All right, Dr. Deans. We had a very robust equity committee meeting last Thursday, and we had a member of the committee and a member of the community to actually organize and conduct that committee meeting. And Mr. Saeed and his wife put

[04:13:52] together a panel where he had a professor to talk about the history and then a parent and a student to talk about their experiences. And that student's experiences had been very, very positive in Loudoun County Public Schools to the point that he had even written a poem. We're in the process of getting his mom's permission to publish his poem in our newsletter and it was just it was

[04:14:24] and it was also facilitated by Mr. Saeed the the the committee member. As a report to the committee I gave the report of the two subcommittees the subcommittee that actually has begun their work in reviewing policies and adding to their review form the equity committee rather than their individual names. And then the other subcommittee submitted their results and their results were

[04:14:59] that they did not feel that we should go forward with programming, I'm sorry, with committee meetings because they feel that the DEIA Department can do what it was that the equity committee was initially scheduled to do. However, I told them as a subcommittee they didn't have the right to to cancel a

committee and we as a committee didn't have the right to cancel a committee so I told them that their report of course will be turned in to the senior staff and we will decide

[04:15:37] how we would progress from here in terms of a committee. However May is Jewish Heritage Month and I've asked Mrs. Griffith if she would head that that program and that would be on the first Thursday of May and so we're going to leave her to pull that off for us but we will continue to meet because no subcommittee can tell us that we can't meet anymore I'm sorry this is gonna be

[04:16:11] out of protocol mr. Allen did you hear that how do we were you listening to miss it to dr. Dean's about what did you say that a subcommittee can't I'll be glad to talk to Wes about it in in one-on-one but I told them that the subcommittee couldn't tell us that we couldn't meet anymore the subcommittee can make recommendations to the big committee, but in the committee meeting, there was not a quorum, so we couldn't vote on their thoughts, but I told them that they couldn't tell us

[04:16:50] that we could not meet any further during this school year or next school year, and so I've already engaged Mrs. Griffith to do our programming for the month of May, and And I'll talk to the attorney about where we go from here.

[04:17:10] But I know that a subcommittee can't tell me that I can't meet. Okay. Thank you, Dr. Deans. Just give me a little red flag. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. The LAMP committee will meet a little bit later this month.

[04:17:27] Our next meeting is on Tuesday, April 29th at 5 o'clock. Of course, pushed back a little bit because of spring break and accommodating our other meetings. I had the opportunity today to attend the chamber learning series on affordable housing, which I found to be very interesting as we've had some preliminary conversations about perhaps using some of our resources to offer more affordable housing.

[04:17:55] I found it to be a very enriching conversation. Lots of fear in the community about how some of the instability in the current markets could impact our ability to make headway.

[04:18:12] But in general, people planning to continue pushing forward. So it was a great opportunity. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chandler. Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Dr. Deans. I'm working with the JCRC for the next equity committee meeting so they can do a presentation.

[04:18:33] Just to shift, we already went through a lot of stuff that was discussed at committee. I make no secret that I love the arts. I thoroughly enjoyed attending the Trailside Middle School production of Alice in Wonderland. The costumes were just amazing, and I was told that two parents, two mothers, had gone and made a lot of those costumes.

[04:18:57] I was so happy to attend the wonderful Stonebridge Cluster Concert as well. The Stonebridge production of Fiddler on the Roof. I have to tell you, I had tears at Fiddler. It was such a wonderful show. I can't even express in words how great all of these shows were.

[04:19:14] We have talented students in our arts programs. Now is the season for all these great shows. I ask everybody to please get out there to their local schools to support the theater and the arts. Thank you very much. All right. So with that, we do, is there any, we'll move on to new business. Is there any new business? Seeing none. We will, the April 8th, 2025 Loudoun County School Board meeting is now adjourned. Please drive safely home.



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