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Loudoun County Public Schools, Student Services Committee Meeting, Thursday, May 15, 2025

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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1084955238?rel=0>

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[00:00:00] - Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the May 15th, 2025 meeting of the Student Services Committee. I apologize for arriving late and I appreciate your patience. I am Anne Donahue, chair of this committee. With me is Ms. Melinda Mansfield and Ms. Carrie LaBelle.

[00:00:17] That is our, this is our call to order. This meeting is being audio recorded, but it is not being video recorded or live streamed. Currently, the recording will be available anyone to review in the future on the LCPS website item number two on our agenda is public comment do we have any public commenters today I am told we do not Thank You Ms. Winslow in that case we will move on to item number three approval of the April 24th 2025 draft minutes draft minutes of the April 24th 2025 Student Services Committee meeting the minutes are in the packet hopefully

[00:00:55] we've all had the opportunity to review those so if there are any edits or corrections now is the time and if there are none I will entertain a motion to adopt the minutes Ms. LaBelle I move to adopt the minutes from our last meeting presented that motion has been properly made by Ms. LaBelle and seconded by Ms.

[00:01:25] Mansfield all those in favor please raise your hand and say aye aye that motion passes unanimously and with that we will move on to item number four our action item which I gather will not be presented by mr. Dolson despite our agenda from this Richardson Thank You chair Donahue so policy 8 1 1 5 individuals who may be admitted free is back before the committee for action again last month we

discussed the grammatical and formatting improvements that were made throughout the addition of section six, which is the admission of students

[00:02:03] who are children of certain federal employees, which directly connects to policy 8125. That was a code change that had to be added to both of these policies. We did remove any duplicated legal references, and based on the feedback of the committee, I draw your attention to line 39.

[00:02:23] we did have discussion over what does it mean to demonstrate a serious intent. So we have expanded that language based on the conversation from committee in April. It now reads demonstrate an intent to complete high school by completing a plan with a school counselor to meet graduation requirements.

[00:02:48] That was your feedback. There were no other recommendations made during the April meeting but certainly I will give you time to look over the policy if there's any questions I will I'm available to answer so I see that let's see the 2a starts on line 25 on the red line 25 starting with a individuals with disabilities in accordance with IDEA and related state

[00:03:27] regulations who will have reached the age of two years on or before September 30th and of the school year or who have not reached their 22nd birthday and who have not completed a board of education approved secondary program are eligible for free education so I had I have some language from SEAC on that that follows the regulation apparently more consistently and it says and I can give it to you whose second birthday falls on or before September 30th

[00:04:07] And who have not reached their 22nd birthday on or before September 30th, 2 to 21, inclusive, I guess that's in parentheses, in accordance with the Code of Virginia, a child with a disability whose 22nd birthday is after September 30th remains eligible for the remainder of the school year.

[00:04:27] I think that last part is kind of. That is directly taken from the SPED regulations. I mean, staff don't have any disagreement with that revision. yeah I guess I make that motion yes but we haven't done anything yet right we haven't made any we haven't made an initial motion there are no motions okay so that's gonna be my amendment and I can give that to you too but we have to

[00:05:02] hope you haven't done before before we before we get there I I have I do have a question Ms. Richardson I understand that the equity committee also suggested I understand that the equity committee suggested some language added related to immigration status that is correct so you should have a copy of the feedback in your packet again we did receive feedback from SEAC committee and then

[00:05:38] representatives or members that participate on MSAC and equity and we did have one recommendation that did sort of ask or they made a statement like the policy is silent on immigration status so that is something certainly that the committee could consider adding to the policy should it be the will of your collective interest thank you just does staff have any opinions about the proposed language I would definitely so if it's something that you would like for us to contemplate adding to the policy I would just need the opportunity to run

[00:06:15] this past our LCPS legal and see if our if we cross-reference immigration status in any other policies thank you mr. Richardson yes miss me I think that I think maybe shouldn't in this thing not just reference it but also mention that that Supreme Court decision is that something that we could you know that it doesn't deny just to make it clear perhaps I'm happy to take that

[00:06:53] recommendation to legal counsel to miss all are interested in adding that provision to our policy so my my thought about that and I I tend to be in support of adding some kind of language that clarifies that that students will

[00:07:21] be admitted regardless of immigration status um but i i am actually would not um i think i would prefer not to be referencing specific legal authority even in a footnote i mean as we do for we do for all the rest you know all the rest of the because it's not state code okay that's fine is it your is it the committee's recommendation that we consider the addition of a reference to

[00:08:01] immigration status as like a new paragraph 2 starting on line 20 so we would have to renumber the rest of the policy is that where you would like for us to insert that sort of where we go over the free admission requirements so we have the requirements then we have age of eligibility that could be a possibility then the next section section is residency so I think it fits best in that front section so you would recommend that as opposed to I believe the equity committee's

[00:08:36] Proposal was that it be either in paragraph be part of the Section they they suggested adding a new paragraph be at line 123, which is Just after

[00:08:55] Residency where does the committee feel at best fits? Yes for me for me I would be inclined to think that if it's right since we thinking Processing while talking

[00:09:33] we don't have I mean we have like the first paragraph of requirements and then the specific section on eligibility specific section on residency so I guess my inclination is to think that it should either be added under paragraph one requirements or under paragraph three residency thank you for that feedback sure Donahue that's how Mrs. Evans and I were just sort of processing

[00:10:13] as as we read the language on immigration status it does sort of fit we're sort of defining it as this is the requirements to be considered as an individual who may be admitted free into public education here in lcps we weren't necessarily connecting it to residency but certainly we will follow the direction of the committee ms labelle thank you i think it needs to be said as soon as possible in the policy because people are going to be wondering why

[00:10:49] are we doing this and they may not read as far as residency so you know like we usually put definitions first the very first paragraph would be a or the requirements section would be a very good place to put it and it would explain it and get that obstacle to thinking I guess out of the before it proceeds with anything else I think I agree with that ms LaBelle that paragraph about requirements does state proof of age and residency may be required prior to admission and in light of that statement I think that it would

[00:11:29] it could make sense to add somewhere in this paragraph that that something along the lines of the district will not require documentation of US citizenship or immigration status.

[00:11:56] Ms. Mansfield. Thank you, Chair Donahue. So we wouldn't say LCPS does not deny admission to any student based on immigration student status. I mean, I guess we should ask legal about that, honestly.

[00:12:15] What we should, I agree with all of the sentiment, though, and I think that would be a great part, that requirement area right there. Okay, so it seems to be the consensus of the committee that we should take some language or work with some language with LCPS legal counsel to add immigration status

as a reference in the requirements paragraph in section one yes please staff will do so that being said is there a timing issue for this policy are there are there timing

[00:12:54] considerations no so I if if the committee takes action as amended once you all vote it won't make it for the May 20th meeting but it would go for information in June before the full board so my my only concern with about that is if we are contemplating adding some language related to immigration status that couldn't be since we haven't seen it we would be voting on it as an

[00:13:29] action item without the language so the version that'll be posted that would be posted on board docs if we vote tonight forward this to the full board would not have that language obviously correct there are amendments that are proposed on the dais so it wouldn't be completely unheard of right but you can also keep this as an information you can also keep this as an action item for next time so that's that's why I was asking about the timing because and the full board does have a second meeting in June mm-hmm so we have time right you guys have two meetings in June June 10

[00:14:09] yes but when is our meeting here do we have a June meeting here we do it's in June 5th so then but then the board meeting the 10th and then first one is there another board meeting up there the 24th okay so it would make the two meetings afterwards if that is the if we think we can still get it to the board in June I think I would prefer to keep it in committee so that we can review and

[00:14:44] discuss the immigration language is that does that cause heartburn not at all Richardson nope not at all happy to do so should we discuss any additional your your CEC your CEC that's it it was just it was just putting it in the regulation and and she could probably put that in there too and then you could see that

[00:15:18] language all together on at the June meeting right but I think hmm correct me if I'm wrong do we have to make a motion to keep it in action since it's on action right now yes you do I think it is then I move that we keep the proposed revisions for policy 8115 in committee to reappear as an action item on our June agenda is there a second second motion has been properly moved and seconded is

[00:15:56] there any discussion all those in favor please raise your hand and say aye aye that motion passes unanimously Ms. Richardson we will look forward to seeing this again in June thank you with that we will move on to item number five on our agenda revisions proposed revisions to policy 8120 on compulsory attendance hi there good name yes so as an information item we wanted to have you review compulsory attendance 8120 there are very little changes that were

[00:16:32] made mostly just to update policy numbers that have been changed over the last years but if you look you'll see on line 22 we've just updated that policy from 8-11 to 8080 which is home instruction and we also on line 34 updated policy 8-21 to policy 4010 which is tuition fees and then on line 44 we removed the pronouns and they for consistency and then two more minor

[00:17:08] changes on line 81 the Department of Student Services not pupil services and then again 82 84 85 87 are all related to just aligning the pronouns consistently you miss Evans can you tell us a little bit about paragraph D that was added beginning at line 92 on the red line version it is exactly the same so I think it's all red because the formatting this was reviewed by division

[00:17:44] council on five nine but there are no changes in D thank you for that clarification yeah it jumps out what is this whole new edition it's not new yeah Ms. Mansfield so this this aligns with the absentee the absence the new law or guidance or whatever perhaps yes for compulsory attendance and what we do as a

[00:18:23] division with our attendance officers and who's responsible you see the parent responsibilities the exceptions from compulsory attendance so nothing has changed there and the code is still the same. So what happens if the attendance officer goes and everything else what is the consequence? It's individualized to the family situation really what the attendance officers do at the beginning of the school year is focus on the non-enrollment which is described in D those are kids that we are expecting to come to school but they're not coming

[00:18:59] right so we need to figure out what's happened have they moved so we do take a take a take time put together a list the attendance and registrar attendance administrative assistants and registers reach out to the families counselors reach out and then once they can't if they cannot find them then we have the attendance officers do post office checks to home visits to see where they may be call other school divisions because we want to make sure they're enrolled in school and then for safety reasons but when we have students who have truancy concerns or the parents are not having their kids come to school they're issued a letter I'm asking them to enroll their child within a certain

[00:19:37] number of days and if they don't they're there can be a petition to the court so this is just for non enrolled students what about enrolled students who don't want to disagree with their IEP and there's a period of time and then the attendance officer is called so typically it wouldn't be the attendance officer that's called there's usually a lot of interventions that are put in place that are more interventions like the social worker or the school psychologist or the school counselor who knows that family the best before we push the attendance officer route we try to work with the families have

[00:20:13] collaborative meetings but there is another policy 8140 that lays out the process which isn't this policy there is something in there that about that yeah so we have an attendance plan we do an attendance conference which is a multidisciplinary team meeting and then after that the attendance officer can then take families to court. Oh, they can take families to court. Under the circumstance that you described, Mrs. Mansfield, of there being a disagreement over an individualized educational

[00:20:48] plan, we don't usually view a parent withholding their student as truancy. While we are monitoring those days, every effort is made to come back to the table and work with the family, whether it's through the IEP process or making them aware of medical homebound should that be an applicable option for that particular family.

[00:21:12] By Code of Virginia, we do have the mandatory 15-day drop, so we are constantly working with families to come back to the table, to come up with a plan so that students are actively attending school. Those circumstances might happen once a year where there's a disagreement and a parent chooses keep their students out we make sure that they know that resources are available through Schoology the option of in-person services remains available even though you may disagree with them as a parent the services are still here

[00:21:48] for your student and we still remain available to come to the educational planning team table and work with you through whatever concerns you might have so a parent disagrees at the IEP meeting and says I'm gonna unilaterally place my child and there's a period of time where they have to find a new school because they haven't figured you know they haven't decided on it and during that period of time that's when a truancy officer has been called in the past so that's what I'm wondering the cases that I'm aware of we have not involved our

[00:22:26] attendance officers, the school will still be consistently reaching out. Mrs. Mansfield, it's the third day that your child hasn't been here. Is there anything that we can help with? Do we need to connect you with different resources? We really want little Johnny to come back to school. We would also be working to schedule subsequent meetings with the family to continue to work through what the concerns might be. Through that process, we are informing parents that 15 consecutive days missed does result in an unenrollment a withdrawal from lcps that doesn't

[00:23:05] mean that we stop working with the family we're still trying to come to the table because ultimately at the heart of what is going on is we need to provide the child education and while you as the parent might disagree we're going to continue to work with you and reiterate the services at your homeschool remain available and then here's all the other options that we're willing to work through okay that's how it works out I would and it doesn't feel good sometimes but that's how it works out there may be situations where

[00:23:40] there's been attendance patterns prior to a parent not agreeing to whatever the IEP recommendations are so there may have been instances where we've had an attendance office already involved because of a pattern of chronic absenteeism due to medical reasons there's a lot of situations but in those situations we're not going to file a petition and take a family to court especially when there's medical mental health or any other challenges that they're facing the goal is to try to figure out how do we make this work if it's a blatant refusal to send your kid to school then that's different but we're always going to be trying to work with the family but there might be situations

[00:24:19] where an attendance officer was already in the know and involved with the family And so when a family decides, well, we're not coming to send our child because we don't agree with this, they might have already been part of that conversation. Thank you. I have a question as well.

[00:24:39] There is another policy, 8140, that is related to attendance. Has there been any thought of combining the two policies? We have looked at that. they are both very lengthy not this one but 8140 is pretty lengthy I think it's about four pages and it also has a regulation that goes with it that walks through all the definitions and the steps and the roles and everyone that's involved in that so that is why we did not when we previously updated 8140 so

[00:25:13] the reason why I was asking is on the red line part 2b at lines 24 to 28 says any person having control or charge of any child who permits the child to remain at home and not attend school shall be subject to prosecution which sounds it's very serious but there are some exceptions or exemptions listed in 8140 a small amount of concern if a parent is looking at this language but

[00:25:49] not 8140 for there to be some confusion about yeah and that's why we do have the cross-reference at the bottom yeah right 8140 mm-hmm but that that is the parent guardian responsibility is straight from the Virginia code thank you we don't

[00:26:23] have any other questions about this policy at this time so this will come back for action in the June meeting please send it out for feedback look forward to seeing it again as action June so now we will move on to item number six new business is there any new business Miss LaBeau I'd ask miss Richardson would this be a good time or place to discuss what we discussed yesterday absolutely alrighty I will bring it up then one of the things that

[00:27:03] has concerned a lot of our special ed personnel as well as parents as well as some board members is the fact that so many of our students in special education can't quite reach the standard diploma requirements.

[00:27:23] As much as we support them, as much as we do, they can't do it in four years. And yet, the parents don't want them down getting an adaptive IEP diploma, and I can understand why, because they are so close but not quite there.

[00:27:40] We used to have a diploma called a modified diploma for students of disability, But it was taken away in 2013 and hasn't been around since. One of the things we were discussing the other day, Dr. Richardson and I, another teacher had brought up with us as well, that we need to do something about that.

[00:28:06] And the idea that we could combine a new or get the legislature to approve a new diploma option that would go along with our plan at the Transition Center to earn credentials and call it a credential diploma or some such thing and have the requirements that we used back when we had a modified diploma, combine the two and bring out a new diploma.

[00:28:38] I think that we need to talk about this as a board and see what we can do to move the idea forward. that's basically what I'd like to see us doing if we can and this would be the committee just started in be interested in hearing more about what we can do in that area certainly as as the design team has been working on the plans for the transition center we have talked about how we are going to make sure that

[00:29:13] the workforce or whatever post-secondary option our students leave and go to have sort of a verification of these are the competencies now some of our students will be able to gain the actual credentials while others will have competencies that is really what led Ms. LaBelle and some of our special educators across LCPS to say that modified standard really reflected this for some of our students it afforded them the opportunity to still have the 20 credits right with five being verified across the core content areas

[00:29:49] of English science, social sciences, math, and their electives, but also afforded them the opportunity to have some flexibility to take some courses that could count for credit that weren't for content. There were also some testing modifications that were afforded to those students that were working towards the modified standard. They removed that diploma option away, and now we only have advanced standard and applied studies. And there is a big difference between the standard diploma and an applied studies diploma. There are no verified credits required for the applied

[00:30:27] studies. And so ultimately we're saying we still need that in between ground. And so some of the conversations we've been having as we've been moving through the work of the transition center is could the board or would the board consider making this a legislative priority to work at the state level to bring this back for our students we know that we have legislative support through our senators that they are really advocating for more transition centers across the Commonwealth we know that career and technical education opportunities and experiences for our students with

[00:31:05] disabilities are very important and they do have to be differentiated to meet them where they are so that is why Ms. LaBelle is bringing this before the committee for you guys to think about look into it have some more conversation and possibly consider it as a legislative priority for next year thank you mr.

Tristan so this this is not something that the board could decide to do on its own you're saying this would have to be it would have to be a change

[00:31:35] in the Virginia code correct first okay all right this man's field means I know I do need to leave but I do want to know I can you help me remember why they got rid of it is it because of usdoe is it because of something that we weren't doing miss miss LaBelle and I tried to research that and we couldn't find the definitive reason why but we're still doing some more digging so that we can use that right to help inform our way forward to bring a similar diploma option

[00:32:13] back we just know we were informed that it was going away to it to my knowledge It certainly wasn't related to any JLARC study. It happened around the same time that they removed the VGLA for SOL option for our students and they introduced VMAST and then also removed the modified standard.

[00:32:33] But we are doing some more research to go back to prior to 2013 to see exactly what that guidance was coming from the Department of Education. - I mean, I remember all this a little bit. And I think that there was something that came down, but also it was have you all looked at the Board of Education now I'm gonna be the first one to say that video we website has changed and it is really difficult to find anything and I think they've gotten rid of a lot of stuff which is annoying but because you have all that history there including superintendent memos and all the rest of that it's all gone so I don't know if we

[00:33:09] could ask a little you know look at the have you all looked at the Board of Education and they're all of that in that time yes I've searched all of for the old soups memos and they're not available so I did go back to my old files from my previous school division and I was able to find things prior to 2013 where we were definitely training on modified standard and then the next thing I have is sort of a shift in my training to my staff then of new for 2013-14 it's the removal of modified and the introduction of the mass the

[00:33:45] removal of VGLA. So we will do some more legwork to find out why. The one thing I have not done yet is to call the VDOE. Ms. LaBelle and I just met the other day so that is on my to-do list to reach out to the new coordinator of transition services, Mrs. Morgan. I will reach out to her and see if she can give us a little bit of the history. I'm just wondering if it's in a SEAC report to somewhere we can try to look there as as well okay sorry essentially I was head of a state

[00:34:22] transition program at the time and we were all in shock when it happened we were calling the legislatures calling the DOE saying no no no no no but I also have some contacts that were actually there when it happened and I will try to reach out to them as well I've been asking teachers who are they don't know why so I think that you know trying to get back in time to people who were there at the time is also important because they know why they made the decision thank you miss LaBelle it's an interesting idea that I look

[00:35:02] forward to talking about more and as you know I'm a member of the LA and P committee that will be meeting on the 27th is there any other new business seeing none we will move on to item number seven and adjourn our next meeting will be June 5th 2025 thank you everyone for coming and safely



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