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Loudoun County Public Schools, Specialized Programs & Centers Committee Meeting, Tuesday, June 3, 2025

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[00:00:00] Okay. Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to call this June 3rd Special Programs and Centers Committee meeting to order. My name is Dr. Samar Rashid. I'm the chair of this committee, and I appreciate your presence here today. And the purpose of today's meeting is to, I guess, do a couple of things.

[00:00:16] To review the minutes, approve the minutes, look at one of our action items, which is the Transition Center proposal, to review two information items which is the review of policy 5095 that's the participation in the Thomas Jefferson High School for science and technology and of course the special programs update nobody has signed up for public comment so we'll move on to one of our items which is approving of the minutes and that is 3.02 has everyone had a chance to review the minutes and are

[00:00:50] there any corrections or additions? Okay. So if there's no corrections or additions, I'd like to entertain a motion to approve the minutes from May 13th. Yes, Ms. LaBelle. I move to approve the minutes from May 13th as written. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Do I hear a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Streffi. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed say nay. Okay, the minutes have been approved. So let's go ahead and review the agenda, which I kind of already did, but we're just going have an action item which is we're going to be making a decision on the transition center proposal

[00:01:28] and then two information items with 5095 and the special programs update okay going to 4.01 i'll turn it over to miss tedra richardson the assistant superintendent just to if you had any information

regarding 4.01 the transition center proposal thank you dr rashid i'm also joined by is Jenna Art our supervisor for transition services as as you may

[00:02:06] recall the Department of Student Services came to present to specialized programs and centers committee last month and we gave you a high-level overview of our four-year plan for implementation for our transition center you do have a copy of the full proposal it's also attached to your agenda currently as a division we're serving about 3,700 students that are transition age. We know that the initial cost in year one for our transition center we anticipate about 4.4 million and by the time we roll out to year four with the expansion of programs we're up to about 9.1 million. We have

[00:02:46] successfully as a school division hosted a roundtable about our transition center with lots of community partners. SEAC was also present and we've gotten gotten lots of ideas and feedback on our goals and our vision and our mission for our transition center. So at this time it is the recommendation of the Department of Student Services that the Specialized Programs and Centers Committee accepts the transition center proposal and move it forward to the full board as an information item. We do remain available for any questions. Thank you, Ms. Richardson. Okay, open the floor for discussion. Now this is an action item. So members of the

[00:03:25] committee do you have any questions or comments about this item yes Miss LaBelle I have good afternoon I have received several questions from constituents that are very very excited about it and wanted to know if there'd be any room for volunteers we would absolutely be open to volunteers that's a fantastic addition to the transition center I shall send that on thank you

[00:03:56] Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Anybody else? Yes, Mr. Streffy. Thank you. Thank you all very much. I know we've had these discussions for the recovery school. Was it ever contemplated that we would take students from outside the county for our transition center?

[00:04:15] We have certainly had that conversation for our recovery school program. We have not had similar discussions around our transition center. The focus has been on students in LCPS that we're currently serving and will be serving within the future. Now, should it be the will of the board for us to have that as a consideration?

[00:04:34] That's certainly something that we could look into with other school systems across Region 4. Mr. Streffi, if there's no further questions, I'll entertain a motion to approve this item to then go ahead and go on to the full board.

[00:04:51] Do I have a motion? Yes, Ms. LeBell. I move that we send the information about the Transition Center forward for approval to the full board. Thank you, Ms. LeBell. Do I hear a second? Thank you, Mr. Streffi. That's been seconded.

[00:05:10] And then all those in favor say aye. Aye. Aye. All those opposed say nay. And that will then go on to the full board at our next school board meeting, I believe. And I think that's the one on June 10th or maybe even later after that. Okay. Any final thoughts on this agenda item before we move on to the next one?

[00:05:28] Just for the committee's awareness, we do plan on providing the same presentation we provided to the committee to the full board. So the full board has an understanding of the scope of this proposal. And we appreciate the Department of Student Services partnered with us.

[00:05:45] Awesome. Awesome. Thanks. All right, good. So let's go on to our next item, which is an information item, and that's 5.01, Review of Policy 5095, Participation of TJ for Science and Technology.

[00:06:01] I'll turn it over to Mr. Slevin, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. The only thing that I would like to mention is at our last board meeting, there was a question from Mr. Estreffi about the impact of returning TJ buses to the LCPS fleet.

[00:06:19] We have responded to Mr. Streffy, but I want to share with the full committee that we did check in with transportation. And the indication was that there would be little to no impact, especially because we're no longer experiencing a driver shortage. That has been the real challenge, not necessarily the number of buses the impact would be.

[00:06:39] So at this point, we had discussed bringing this back as an information item because there was some interest expressed in a possible motion related to the section on transportation. And staff's interpretation of the committee's will was they wanted to make that motion prior to sending it out to public comment.

[00:06:59] So I would defer to you, Dr. Rasheed, if there is a motion to be made. Thank you, Mr. Slevin. I did have something to add to it. And once I add to this policy, just for clarification, it then moves on.

[00:07:15] Do we take a vote after that, since we only had one small thing to do? So you have an amendment to propose, and we included a copy of that in the committee's packets. And so if the committee, you would make a motion to amend the policy with that language.

[00:07:33] We, staff, would then incorporate that into the policy, and we would send it out for feedback, and it would come back in August to the committee for action. And then you would have the feedback to consider, with the feedback to consider, before sending it to the full board. Okay, so there's no voting today? Except for the motion for your amendment.

[00:07:51] Okay. Anybody have any other questions? So when you look at, as I mentioned before, in policy 1595 in the red line copy, in line 1718, I brought this up at the last meeting.

[00:08:09] So right at the end of line 18, you have an insert in your packet, and it says, to the extent transportation is provided by LCPS, the terms of transportation will be outlined in the contract that the school board has with Fairfax County School Board, which the Loudoun County School Board will review on an annual basis.

[00:08:27] So I, as I mentioned before last time, I just wanted this to be reviewed literally on an annual basis. And that's the reason why I'd like to add, I guess you could say an addendum to it. But that was my motion for an amendment to this policy 1595.

[00:08:43] I just wanted to open it up to discussion. Does anybody have anything to say or any comments? Yes, Mr. Struffy. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. So I am looking for that language in the 1718s. Oh, or were you proposing adding that language? So to the extent, you said? Adding it, and it's in your, because it was kind of late on my behalf, it's a paper in your packet that Ms. Wolfhunk provided.

[00:09:05] Okay, got it. And it's like, it's in italics. Dr. C, a clarifying question. Is your intent to strike the current language and replace it with your amendment? Initially it was to add, but let me just double check. Okay, I'm sorry, a correction, and thank you, Mr. Seven.

[00:09:22] I would strike, Loudoun County Public Schools will provide transportation to LCPS students attending TJ. I would strike that and then add my italics in the paragraph to the extent, dot, dot, dot. Thank you, Mr. Sun.

[00:09:38] Sorry, I'm just getting caught up again. Sorry, I was looking for the question. No, no, no, I mixed things up. No, so I was going to see, so what part are you striking? Line 17 to 18. Keep the header transportation, of course, and add in my italics. Yes.

[00:09:57] Any questions or information needed? Thank you very much, Dr. Rasheed. this is pretty clear um i i just want to ask if do we have any other places like this where we've kind of we're kind of reviewing availability of a resource like transportation on a yearly basis within the within a policy or i do i do understand the logic here i think it's just to make sure that

[00:10:30] we have enough drivers to then i i i get i think um it's very reasonable um is there any reason any Is there any hesitation from staff around this, or is there anything that we should consider in relation to this amendment?

[00:10:49] So, from staff's perspective, this would simply become part of the annual conversation around the contract that we have in the springtime. We would continue to have a deliberate conversation about our intention, taking it through the Special Programs Committee as information in action, and then to the full board for approval.

[00:11:12] And so it would not be necessarily a quick decision. It would also enable us with the timing to inform not only the preparation of the superintendent's estimate of needs, but also communicate to the community what will be available if they so choose to apply to the TJ.

[00:11:32] So there are no significant concerns with the assumption that we're able to operate within that timeline. And as I'm processing this, it's making more sense to me as well. So this would just basically be put into that annual contract process that we approve at the full board level anyway.

[00:11:50] So this would inform those conversations. I will just say, though, that transportation to TJ is included as part of the base budget, the operating budget. And so just stating that as a fact is something to consider when you think about bringing it up each year and the impact that that may have on families making decisions about what programs they go to so by the time that they've applied the previous year we're

[00:12:23] approving transportation in the following year about when just to line up the sequencing can you ask your question again sorry just trying to sequence the events that students and families would apply for tj get accepted yeah um they'd make a decision or inform tj and then when would

[00:12:58] we in that process would we determine whether they get transportation or not so the it would Before we advertise. The underlying assumption would be, though, once you have committed to a cohort of students that you're providing transportation, it is through their...

[00:13:14] That makes sense. That's not articulated in the current. There's no language that says that. That's an understanding that we wouldn't want families to accept their offer to TJ for 9th grade, but then be worried about losing the transportation in 10th grade, and they would have to change schools.

[00:13:33] Okay. That's helpful. The challenge is, though, the budget is approved around the same time that students are accepting offers. So I guess, and I'll speak for myself, not for all of staff, that the annual

conversation about transportation is something that makes me uncomfortable.

[00:13:51] I think having a conversation is absolutely fine and well within the board's preview, but making an annual decision doesn't really seem, I think that would be challenging for families. appreciate the inputs thank you thank you um again i just wanted heightened awareness um but i do i i do recognize it's a little bit of a catch-22 when the budget is on but i still wanted a constant conversation every year that's that's why i think it's important not to just um you know just to

[00:14:28] kind of dismiss it i just think it's just important to keep it on the radar any other questions or comments and then mr slevin sorry i know you repeat yourself um because i'm gonna ask you again so do I move on to this or so you the next item or so you want to make so we want you we need the amendment to be approved by the committee this is a board amendment so you would make a motion to make your amendment we would then send it to out for feedback before approving it to send it to the board

[00:14:59] understood mr. straffy did you have a question no I got it now so I so I just That is my interpretation of our last meeting, that you want it, before we send it out for public comment, we want it to...

[00:15:15] Yeah, my light bulb oil. Yeah, you want the full motion. Okay. Yeah, that makes sense to me now. I apologize. So just to add to the discussion before we then go, we're making a motion, so I'll speak to it during the motion then. Okay. All right. So I'd like to make a motion to...

[00:15:33] Yes. Oh, yeah. I'd like... Okay. Can I make a motion on my own? Okay, I'd like to make a motion to strike line 17 to 18, but under the heading transportation, add in to the extent transportation is provided by LCPS.

[00:15:52] The terms of transportation will be outlined in the contract that the school board has with Fairfax County School Board, which the Loudoun County School Board will review on an annual basis. Second. Right here, second. Yeah, thank you, Mr. Streffy.

[00:16:07] All those in favor, say aye. Aye. Oh, I'm just going to activate this. I'm so sorry. Oh, yes, yes, Mr. Streffy. so I wanted to speak to the motion I will probably not support with although I do appreciate the the reasoning I just don't know that adding it to the but just based on the sequencing not all of the the sequencing is not clear to me and just the fact that this also gets discussed in the yearly budget process I don't know that we would I don't have enough clarity on how this would work with

[00:16:40] families just yet. So I would probably not support it, but do understand the logic. Mr. Streffi, do you support the motion? I will not. You will not support the motion? I haven't voted yet, but okay. Just giving my reasoning. Okay. All right. Okay. So yes, Ms. LaBelle. I'm reading this and it says that the terms of transportation will be outlined that we provide to Fairfax County Board and that we will review it. It's not committing us to do anything with it, just that we review it.

[00:17:17] Is that correct? That is correct to my understanding. I'd like to verify that with Mr. Slevin. So I would remind the board you are moving. The motion is essentially changing the commitment to transportation on an annual basis to a review of transportation on an annual basis.

[00:17:35] Because right now the policy is saying we will provide transportation. We're not saying that we wouldn't. Yeah, we will. You're just saying you will review it on an annual basis. Yes. I think the intent, Dr.

Rasheek, to speak to it, is to give the board flexibility. Okay. Yes. Thank you. Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Slevin. Yes, Mr. Streffi.

[00:17:50] No, that helps. Okay, yeah, I will support this, and we'll put it out for public feedback, give it a chance to get that feedback in, and then I'll get some additional clarity from staff in the interim, and we'll have one more go at this when it comes to action.

[00:18:12] So I'll definitely support it. Okay, thank you, Mr. Streffi. Any other comments, discussion? Okay, I'm going to have to redo the vote. No. Okay, yes.

[00:18:28] so a motion has been made for this amendment has been approved today so all those in favor say aye aye all those opposed say nay and then and this has been approved the amendment has been approved to be sent out to the public for feedback so we will send the policy out as amended for feedback and bring it back in august as an action yes it will return for feedback um it'll come back in

[00:18:53] August thank you mr. Slevin okay and now we will move on to item number 5.02 and I will now turn it over to miss Katie Clark director of academic programs to present thank you all right good afternoon we are back with some of our

[00:19:30] additional programs. Last month we did approximately half of them and today we have with us representatives from Academies of Loudoun which houses Academy of Engineering, AET, Academy of Science, AOS, and the Monroe Advanced Technical Academy, MATA. We also have with us a representative from the Accelerated College and Employability Skills Access Academy and we'll just be providing a quick update on our progress with that program. So now I will turn it over to

[00:20:02] Academy of Engineering and Technology to start us off. Good afternoon Dr. Rashid, Mr. Shrafi, and Ms. LaBelle. It is a privilege to be here with you to share a little bit about the Academies of Loudoun. The Academies of Loudoun's mission is to empower students to explore, research, collaborate, innovate, and make meaningful contributions in the fields of STEM. Each of my colleagues are excited share some data about their programs, our student retention, our achievements, and to inform you a little bit about what goes on at the academies. So the Academy of Engineering Technology, which

[00:20:41] includes a four-year pathway and two-year pathways in advanced AET, is unique in that there's multiple entry points for students into the curricular program. Students have one of three pathways in the four-year program: entrepreneurship, engineering, and computer science. Students of advanced AET who who enter as juniors have access to two pathways in engineering and information technology and computer science. The pictures on the left kind of represent how we live out our mission, where students, again, are empowered to be thinkers, creators. They collaborate together. They conduct

[00:21:17] research. If we think about one of the through lines of each of our curricular programs, research really undergirds everything we do. Up next, we're going to look at some program data. AET retention data from the last three years is projected. You'll see in each of the last three years, we have over a 98% retention of students within the school year. So I do want to provide that distinction. This data is from the research office. It shows retention within the school year. So from the start of school through the end of the year does not show retention between school years and does not differentiate

[00:21:54] between the three pathways in AET. Each of our pathways has different culminating experiences. In AET's entrepreneurship pathway, students spend the first two years preparing for their final pitch where they share their own businesses and their own products with what we affectionately call

the Shark Tank, which is AET's Entrepreneurship Advisory Board. Students in the computer science and engineering pathways that are there for four years culminate with conducting junior and senior research which can lead to participation in different jury competitions including the Regional Science and Engineering Fair in Loudoun County. Entrepreneurship is a bit

[00:22:34] unique in that it is two years of entrepreneurship and then students have the opportunity after their sophomore year to go into computer science or engineering classes or return to their home school. So it's a bit different than our other pathways. We offer a variety of AP courses and to give you insight our students perform very well. One thing that is unique about AET relative to its parallel sister program AOS is that every single junior takes AP Physics and so our participation numbers in the AP Physics College Board exam are very high make up substantial proportion of the test offered in the state. Students score

[00:23:14] well and above the national averages and the state averages in each of those AP courses. Additionally we offer advanced mathematics courses including a post AP course multi-variable calculus. If you look at our SAT scores and our ACT scores you can see that students perform very well throughout the AAT curricular program and the vast majority of them matriculate to four-year colleges or two-year courses of study. In the past school year students have accomplished a remarkable number of things. One of the unique things about AETA is we offer a challenge day right before winter break

[00:23:53] where students engage in different constructionism activities. What we mean by that is we have this belief that students learn best when they create something and share it with something else. And students get to choose the different challenges they will engage in and have an opportunity to share what they're making with their peers and it's a great way to span right before winter break because students are engaged in these very fun things they're collaborating with students that might be their peers in classes but could be from the other pathways in aet and it's always a good time aet engineering week which coincides with the national engineering week across the country we had over 20 community members and organizations that are subject matter experts come and share

[00:24:34] their experiences as business owners, as entry-level engineers, and everything in between with our students. Again, student voice and choice is honored. Students indicate the sessions they would prefer to go to and we schedule them all uniquely to ensure that they're attending sessions that correspond with their personal interests. We also include MATA's CIED pathway in that for the last two years. This year our freshmen engaged in an integrated research project. This is the third year of this initiative as we try to prepare our students and build the skills that they're going to need to be successful independent researchers as juniors and seniors and we had 51 collaborative

[00:25:13] projects for our 150 freshmen in the program the entrepreneurship pitch just happened as i mentioned earlier that's in front of our shark tank we had 12 different student projects compete and six made it to the final pitch phase in may and presented to our board where one was selected for entry into Uncharted Learning's national pitch competition. So we'll wish them luck and hopefully they'll qualify for the big stage in Chicago in July. A long-standing tradition at AET has also been a high-altitude balloon launch. This is a collaboration between our engineering students who design and

[00:25:47] build the sensors that will collect a variety of atmospheric and weather data to simulate or to understand near-earth or near-space environments. And they collaborate with biology students in both AOS and AET who conduct living experiments. Each year we have successfully recovered our balloon,

sometimes without tribulation, to get data back and we even have some schools in our community that are interested in partnering with that which would be a great collaboration to go forward.

[00:26:18] And I also want to call out one of our student organizations that is closely tied to our pathway, Computer Science Honor Society. This program of nearly a hundred students puts on a significant outreach event with Hour of Code. They support over 500 level up and propel students in getting a meaningful STEM experience in December and they have the long-running hackathon each May where we have hundreds of students, LCPS middle and high schools, that come into the academies and have a chance to participate in different activities of their choice. Again, it's all about connecting. We see ourselves as an innovation hub in Loudoun County and connecting to the rest of LCPS. It's

[00:26:55] one of those opportunities. Another way that we connect to the world quite literally is we have international research collaborations set up. One of these is with Hohenstaufen Gymnasium in Germany. It is a research partnership that is open to students in all three of the academy's curricular programs. So we have AET, AOS, and MATA students who have participated and we're preparing to leave with our next cohort on June 14th to take 14 students for their final presentation in Germany.

[00:27:27] new to AET, and we're starting next year, is a research partnership with HTL Pinkafeld in Austria. It will be a computer science and engineering research. We'll have juniors engaging in year-long research. This will be the crux of their class with our partners across the pond in Austria, and we're excited to see where this partnership goes. It's in its inaugural year, and it was inspired by, as Ms. Chang will talk about, the Singapore partnership that AOS engages.

[00:27:59] Well, I wasn't sure if you all wanted to ask questions after each one or if you wanted us to just... I think we'll ask in the end. At the end, okay, perfect. Thank you. Perfect. A lot of information, different programs. So, I'm Jennifer Chang. I'm the director for the Academy of Science program.

[00:28:16] And the Academy of Science program is a four-year pathway of study for students. Students enter in ninth grade. For all of the programs, they attend the academies on alternate days with their home high school.

[00:28:34] Unlike the multitude of MATA pathways and the three AET pathways, the Academy of Science is one pathway focused on science research. When it was developed in 2005, the idea or what we had heard from the community is that students wanted authentic research experiences.

[00:28:58] students could find placement in research labs over the summer or other special experiences but they found that you know it was lacking they were either just washing glassware or they weren't really engaging in the process of science they were just doing someone else's work so the curriculum for ALS really is developed is centered around developing students thinking skills to ask questions to develop their own course of study that they carry out in

[00:29:32] their junior and senior year. So in the ninth grade year students take birth science chemistry and physics as an integrated science introduction and then in 10th grade year they start their research with a sophomore research project where they develop their own unique pathway and so I can talk a little bit more about those and the different avenues so the differentiator for students in AOS is where they choose to take the curriculum program for math

[00:30:08] and science is sort of built to create a foundation in some inquiry skills for the students and then the students personalize that and then ask their questions and we guide them to their research so

that's sort of our overview So our program data, again, this is the retention data.

[00:30:31] Mr. Markley mentioned how this just reflects retention data within a school year. And we'll note that in the 22-23 year, there was an alarming number of students that dropped within the school year.

[00:30:49] Last year, we started to reverse that trend. And this year, the year isn't completed, so we don't have this year's data. But at this time last year, 30 of our 9th grade students had left the program. Currently, only 10 have left.

[00:31:07] So we're anticipating next year's data will be reduced even further, but we have reduced the trend. We believe that the reason for that drop is that students, through COVID, had some different expectations in terms of mathematics and some mathematics recovery.

[00:31:28] And also, some students, when they're interviewed when they leave, weren't, they were excited about applying for the program, but they didn't really know what it meant. They weren't really sure, what is the Academy of Science? I like science, what am I going to be engaging in?

[00:31:47] So this year, we really made sure that for admitted students' information, as well as for our welcoming and transition programs, that we highlighted the supports that students have and the exciting work that they could engage in.

[00:32:03] We also changed some of our curriculum supports in mathematics so that if there are any gaps that are lingering from COVID years, that we're able to recover them. So we're anticipating that that retention trend will be reversed back to the COVID.

[00:32:25] As Mr. Markley mentioned, we are sort of analogous programs, engineering and technology, focus on science, and so our courses are very similar in AP courses that we offer. The common AP course for AOS students is AP biology.

[00:32:45] so they take an introductory or science chemistry and physics and then during junior year they all take as sort of their common ap during their senior year they have a variety of ap courses we have a variety of ap mathematics courses as well as a post high school multivariable course that's available to students we have mean sat scores and also post high school clean so a

[00:33:23] couple of highlights from this year. Again, AOS scientific research is sort of our focus, so our freshmen engage in explorer vision research projects where they anticipate a future technology that could solve an existing problem.

[00:33:43] Umbrella Day is a day where we have our 10th grade students explore all the different fields of scientific research and get sort of a taste of each field so that they can find what they're interested in, what questions they may have. Those same 10th grade students then at the end of the year have a project proposal day where they present their project ideas to a panel of research mentors, teachers at the academies of Loudoun and get feedback so that in junior year they are well suited to begin their research. So for this year

[00:34:22] in junior and senior science research we have students who have completed projects in a wide variety of sciences also areas that sort of intersect sciences so your question may not firmly fit into a sort of chemistry category but applications to environmental science our students are very concerned about making the world a better place as mr. Markley mentioned our students participate in the high-altitude balloon launch and we're very proud that 13

[00:34:58] students have been able to publish their research. Every year at the end of senior science research students prepare a manuscript that could be suitable for publication. Whether they submit it to be published is up to them and so some choose not to but the manuscript is ready should they choose that option. We do have several international research partnerships.

[00:35:27] One is with Wachong Institution in Singapore, and that has been a very long-standing partnership. This August, 10 students will be joining their partners in Singapore for their culminating research presentation.

[00:35:43] Mr. Markley had mentioned the academies-wide partnership with our German partners, and so AOS students will be joining that as well. And then for the coming year, we have a new research partnership with Seeds of Change, which is a research facility in Costa Rica where tropical research is the focus.

[00:36:05] We have data from our research competitions and how students are working. Good afternoon, thank you for joining us this evening. We really appreciate being here to be able to share the wonderful things that we're doing at the academies.

[00:36:23] So I'm Matt Wilburn, I'm the director of the Monroe Advanced Technical Academy. We abbreviate it MATA there. So MATA is a Virginia Governor's STEM Academy. It's comprised of 25 different CTE pathways. And I'll point out that 24 of those pathways are singletons. They do not have a match.

[00:36:39] We do have one class that has two identical sections. That would be cosmetology. Pathways include programs within the CTE. Different pathways are in the different categories of trade and industry, tech ed, ag ed, and health and medical science.

[00:36:56] Our goal is the same goal as CTE on a state level, and that is to prepare students to move into the workforce as well-trained, industry-certified employees. Our capacity is a little over 1,000 students. Across 17 of our pathways are one-year, and eight additional ones are two-year pathways.

[00:37:15] We also have 13 of our pathways, which are dual-enrolled with Northern Virginia Community College with students receiving college credit and able to move on to higher degrees when they go there. Just like the data for AOS and AET, there's our program retention.

[00:37:35] Historically, we lose between 3 1/2 and 4 1/2% of students each year. Historically, those are students who get into the classes and since it's a full day with very intense in the same category, most of them are students that get in and discover that their career choices are not aligned with exactly what they're doing there.

[00:37:55] And so those are voluntary separations either in the first couple weeks of school or at the semester break when they when they move on we have this year or actually from the class this is from last year but these are numbers are very comparable to this year because we didn't have our updated numbers for 2025 at the time of the presentation we had 769 student completers last year those are students that completed a pathway and are considered completers by the CTE office or VDOE CTE office we gave out over or students earned over 3,000 different industry credentials and if you look our

[00:38:32] three-year trend we've been trying to add as many of those as possible and we're up that's up over a thousand credentials that students have earned from three years ago also our industry pass rates we've also done a great job improving those we're up to a 92% pass rate and that's up 10 points from where

we were three years ago coming out of COVID so we've seen a lot of academic progress is on through. One of the most exciting things with MATA is its practical application of knowledge, this learning class. The best place for us to see that is we do over 5,000 hours of work-based learning and clinical externships. Most of those or all of those

[00:39:12] are in our HMS pathways at this time, which are, they have required externships to do with their clinical nurse aide class or certified nurse aide class, their EMT class, as well pharmacy technology or technicians class. Ten of our pathways require certifications above and beyond the VDOE certifications or the minimum standards that VDOE have and those are examples such as for auto collision and auto service they would be examples like ASE certifications for the mechanics or auto technicians there. They would be things like State Board of Nursing for

[00:39:47] CNA, State Board of Pharmacy for Pharmacy Tech and different aspects of that. Our students are very active in their in their CTSO's as a student organizations tied to CTE classes have over almost 450 students to participate interactive members there and we had close to 200 participants at our state and national competitions very highly respected within the state within those categories both SkillsUSA and I didn't include it here but but HOSA is the Health and Medical Science CTSO we have two state officers in both of those organizations

[00:40:22] as well as multiple state champions and going on to national competitions there just like we talked about research is also a very strong across all pathways that are there but across all divisions research is a big thing there a lot of people don't realize it or don't know that our students also participate in RCEF and some other categories we had 20 participants this year in RCEF two first place finishes three aspiring science scientist awards and and we were those were for all from projects that were conducted inside of Mata pathways so

[00:40:59] last couple things I just mentioned I didn't get a chance to put here I will invite you on weird Street and in Leesburg is our house build project come by and see there it's a combination of our building construction class our HVAC class and our masonry class it's on South Weir Street so the side I guess basically almost across from the food line in in there if you go back in there you'll see a house being built you see a big sign with it with our names on it but that's a project we've been working on and we should complete it at the end of next year and that's a rotation we're already in the process of looking for a new lot to start the new building process again and we take it from

[00:41:35] beginning to end with all student labor across the board that does that we're the oldest Academy I say it was Academy but we originally the original Monroe Tech Center was located in Leesburg and that opened up in the late 70s and then we were fortunate enough to to join together and join the academies at the new building seven years ago and just want to give a chance or opportunity to you and say to anyone who would ever want to come by we're an open book there and we would enjoy having you there come by and see the great things that we're doing so thank you and we again appreciate the opportunity for us to be

[00:42:11] able to share with you the great things we're doing so thank you so we do have an update from the Access Academy, but did you want to wait for the whole presentation, or do you want to talk to the programs at the... Members of the committee, do you have any questions, or did you want us to move on?

[00:42:31] Yes, yes, please, Ms. LeBell. Sure, go ahead. That's up to you. Go ahead, you can turn on your mic. I was wondering, how much room do we have for expansion at AOL? In other words, can any of these

programs be made larger, handle more students?

[00:42:55] I can speak to the MATA programs. Like, the MATA programs in the rooms that we have in the labs that we have dedicated to MATA are at 100% capacity. I mean, we have talked about expanding programs and the possibility of if we were to expand what that might look like in a model of an academy's model, such as HAMSCI and other things that are expanding and doing that.

[00:43:17] But as far as square footage and lab space that has been dedicated to MATA at this point, we're at 100% capacity in the MATA classes there. And for both AET and AOS, both programs are fully enrolled within the existing footprint of the building?

[00:43:33] all of them are 100% and we would have to find another way to expand sorry thank you I do think that there is an opportunity to have so there are certain requirements for class size particularly when you get into some of the MATA courses around OSHA requirements it's 20 or 25 class size limits regardless of the size of the of the room they're in I do think there is opportunity to look at class sizes in AOS and AET, but I do think that would require a collaborative

[00:44:12] conversation with academics and school leadership and facilities. So those conversations, we're kind of waiting for the new principal to get on board to begin those conversations. Additionally, I will say that Mr. Slevin and Dr. Grubbs have said before, we continue to look at ways to provide similar programming at home high schools. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Yes Mr.

[00:44:42] Estreffi. Thank you Dr. Rishi. Thank you all for being here. This is a lot of information but really excited to go through it with you. Just a few questions. I'm trying to understand how much we focus on credentialing in MATA and so like based on the numbers you provided when a student goes through a MATA program on average do they get one credential three credentials what's how should we be thinking about that that's a great question so and it isn't an easy answer so that's going to vary tremendously with the pathway so there are certain pathways that bring with them

[00:45:20] very few actual credentials in other words like I'm going to use AOJ administration of justice the only the only credential that the state has aligned with that is our is the general Workplace Readiness Exam so we we administer the the the Workplace Readiness Exam which is the overall CTE notice we administer that to all first year MATA students when they're there then above and beyond that we ask for staff to identify a industry credential that the state has aligned with their class where usually each program will have a list of credentials that are

[00:46:00] state approved exams we then also will talk with our business partners and industry experts to ask and find out which one of those exams carries the most weight in industry and which one is going to be beneficial to a student to walk in and put on a resume or to walk into a job site to to apply for a job so for example the ASC certifications that's going to be much more important than a NOCTE test that is checking for general knowledge on something So you also have others such as HVAC, and you have the most important ones there are your EPA certifications.

[00:46:37] So in the EPA, so they have and they actually take, it's seven different industry credentials there. So that's an example there where you have AOJ that takes only one, but you have HVAC that's going to take seven. And also the ones in HVAC are going to be, like you, to be a certified HVAC technician, that that EPA certification is what you need in order to handle and purchase and and and work with the the

coolants and things they have there so it's going to vary greatly again like the in the in auto service auto technician classes you have a multitude of over a two-year span they can have the potential to get

[00:47:14] seven or eight of those ASC certifications whereas then in auto collision there's only four certifications in auto collision so it's going to vary greatly and some of them definitely carry more weight or have more weight like the national exams for pharmacy tech that is the actual to get certified as a pharmacy tech you need that to pass that exam same thing with the national exam for CNA or nurse aide EMT is another one that when our students come out that industry credential is the exact same industry credential as a student that goes to Loudoun County Fire and Rescue as an adult so like I said it's going to vary and we have a list in its conversations

[00:47:52] that dr. Grubbs and I have all the time but mainly we want to make sure that students are getting the ones that are paying the biggest dividends or things that are going to be put them above and beyond in that industry when they go into that industry in the future thank you and then the other question I had was around the international partnerships and the experiences that we offer I know our students will go overseas how are those experiences funded or what that what is that process these international experiences I know are amazing and they're so formative for our students and they get them really excited about

[00:48:27] that pathway but just curious how they're funded there's funded by student activity fund so the students who participate in the programs pay for their travel it is a true exchange so all of our partner schools visit us in the fall and so as a exchange they stay with our students families and so when we visit their schools then we stay in their homes or at their boarding so the cost primarily is for the flight and students and students families pay for

[00:49:03] that since it's a co-curricular and curricular embedded process and students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, there's some assistance that's available. Understood. Thank you.

[00:49:19] That's super helpful. And then the last question I have, probably have more, but the last question I will ask is around how much do we intentionally focus on community Loudoun-based, Northern Virginia-based projects, and maybe do we, across the different programs in IT or engineering, There's so much you can do around sensors now and IOT and noise pollution or environmental stuff.

[00:49:48] And there are so many things going on in Loudoun and the rest of the region. Are there active projects that students participate in that are community-oriented as well? I know that could be a really long answer, but yes.

[00:50:06] I'll try to be concise, but maybe a little bit more detail than yes. So students work with a variety of community organizations and members on research projects. Some of them have, in addition to their research venture at the academies, have a qualified scientist in the industry of who they're partnering with.

[00:50:25] Additionally, we have all the community engagement efforts that we have through our engineering. A main one is our research symposium, and it is always gratifying to hear when we bring in these community members who are subject matter experts in their field, who are participating across a wide swath of industries in Loudoun County, in Northern Virginia, in the D.C. area, who are impressed and then maintain relationships with the academies because they see the work that's happening there.

[00:50:51] And so the short answer, again, is yes. And we are always eager to partner with additional organizations and individuals. Thank you. And I'll add in that, so in addition to the county at the CTAE office, they have a business partners or they have an advisory board that's there.

[00:51:11] Inside of MATA, for each of those programs that I described and talked as having an additional, either national, mainly or national certifications that are required to be there, those are also required to have an advisory committee that's made up of your local business partners and your local industry experts.

[00:51:31] And so they meet a minimum of twice a year. An example would be an auto technician for ASE. They bring in dealerships and they bring in people from industry to talk and advise us on what the skills are that they need. Also, in addition to the clinical experiences that we talked about earlier, there's a completely other side of it, which is placing students in work positions and also placing students in internships.

[00:51:56] And so a large, large number of our students, our placement coordinator, she works directly with them to do internships, especially in two-year pathways as they get in. We have several of our auto technician students right now that are working at the Chevrolet dealership and other places and getting that experience right now.

[00:52:14] So we're very tied to the community there, and then we also host two skilled trades fairs a year, bringing in all of our community partners, and then they hire straight from our students and from our staff there. Probably the number one thing we get from them is that they constantly want more employees, and so they're constantly asking us for more students than we have available to give them.

[00:52:37] Did we have more additional information to put up? We have one more update from the Access Academy, and I believe, do we have FNAF following this? Okay, Ms. LaBelle, yes.

[00:52:55] I just have a quick question. I heard, I believe it was Madam, mentioned something about a governor's school. Could you tell us a little bit more about that? Sure, that was a process that was started at the Monroe Tech Center. I believe, I want to say, because we're in the process right now of renewing that designation or renewing that title.

[00:53:18] I believe it occurred in, I'm looking to Dr. Grubbs there, I believe it was 2016 is the first time they went through there. It was a very rigorous review process where you had to talk about the different pathways you have. You had to tie in where several of those things were in alignment with the state and the governor's STEM vision and different credentials and things like that, but also tie it into dual enrollment credits with your local community colleges and other things there.

[00:53:46] So we are in the process. This is the first time that I've gone through it. We were actually able to expand because there are pathways. Not all pathways in MATA are designated as that. It was originally under the ones that originally went through the review. We now are in the process of updating that, and we've been able to add some additional classes in to designate because we have new and dual enrollment classes now that we did not have back in 2016.

[00:54:12] I will be blunt and honest. I will tell you that when it first originally started, I heard rumors that it was originally tied to governor's grants that were providing funding for instructors for the class and things like that.

[00:54:29] But from what my understanding was, it was intended to get the program up and running, and then the local jurisdictions were to take over those things. Now, I'm going to say again, like, that's just what I've heard through sort of the rumor mill that's gone through. I don't know where that is, but I know that right now it's just in the matter of us putting an application out, applying, and waiting to hear back now from the governor's office that we are able to continue with that.

[00:54:52] Can I just add really quick that I just want to be clear on record that it's a governor's STEM academy, not a governor's school. Governor's STEM. And you haven't seen any of the new material that they're sending out on governor's schools.

[00:55:07] I don't know if they're sending it out on STEM. Have you heard anything? Anyone? Okay. I have that information if anybody's interested. Thank you. I have questions, but I'll wait because I know we're pressed on time.

[00:55:24] But we'll go. So we will go through Access, and then hopefully we may have time. Good afternoon. My name is Jeremy Sugar. I'm the program coordinator for the Access Academy. And I wanted to give just a brief update since we're, I guess, kind of in year zero.

[00:55:43] We're getting everything up and running. We don't have any students at this point in time. The last time I was here and I spoke about the program, the target was to open up an application process or a student interest process with a lottery approach for each of the four grade levels.

[00:56:03] We actually did start at that place. Unfortunately, we did not have enough qualified individuals to be able to fill out classes at the sophomore, junior, and senior level. So we're not going to move forward this year with a sophomore, junior, or senior class. Due to that, we decided to go ahead and expand the freshman opportunity.

[00:56:22] So we moved from a 30-student population to a 45-student. We're still in the process of getting the students. We're going through our wait list and going through that process to get a completed class. That will stay open throughout the summer or until we completely fill the program at the 45-point.

[00:56:42] At this point in time, we're really about focusing on creating that synergy from 9th grade through the four years and really focusing in on what those students are going to get in 9th grade as they progress through each of those years and kind of build the courses going from 9th grade class in terms of laying that foundation at Potomac Falls, additionally in 10th grade prior to moving to the Fuse Center at Mason Square in Arlington for their final two years.

[00:57:14] There are some dual enrollment classes, as was mentioned, at the academies and MATA that we'll have for our students as well as they go through. But ultimately, one of the things that was going to be offered for our juniors and seniors was a transition class over the summer, which is a NOVA three-credit class.

[00:57:35] IT 152 happens to be the class. That was pulled because we're not having that junior and senior class. And Mason is actually going to offer three week-long summer camps that's open to all students. Certainly we'll share that information with students who expressed interest in the Access Academy, but it would be open to other students as well.

[00:57:58] And at that point in time, you know, open it up to any questions that you may have for the program as we currently stand. Well, thank you so much. I had some questions for some, but I'm going to

go kind of backwards just really quick.

[00:58:14] For AOS, is there a, I know you had mentioned some sort of assistance, is there a scrub cost? And if so, is there, like for their uniform, and if so, is there some sort of assistance for that? So for the AOS program, students just have a lab coat. They don't have scrubs in those materials.

[00:58:32] And many of them out of pathways, they do. So the, I apologize, I'm trying to think, Claude Moore, the Claude Moore Foundation provides, through a grant that they do, They provide the scrubs, one set of scrubs to each of our HMS students as they come through.

[00:58:53] The only other class or pathways that have any kind of uniform, EMT has a uniform, Culinary Arts has a uniform. I might be forgetting one, but those are them. Historically, those have been a fee that's been associated with students as they come in that we put in the program of study.

[00:59:14] In talking with Dr. Grubbs this year, we're looking to eliminate those fees moving forward. can I just put up in that yes so I want to be more we're we're eliminating we're not looking okay so the school board eliminated fees for CTE courses including the academies and matter in the last budget and so we intend to be really proactive working with mr. Wilburn and the principal the academies to eliminate that fee as well as that was the intention of the board's action with

[00:59:46] budget I saw that there was a retention data on AOS I and I know that they felt that it wasn't for them is what you had mentioned but do you know where they went after was there any type of follow-up what program did they pursue um so um each family that departed i had sort of an exit interview with and so they just went back to their home high school so our students um spend every other day at the academies and the other day at their home high school and so if they depart the academies they just then stay at their home high school so instead of taking

[01:00:26] science, mathematics, and research or special programming. They just take science and mathematics and then other electives. And speaking of collaboration, we were talking about coalescing programs. I'm just curious, is there any potential, since AOS deals with the sciences, and I know that the curriculum is very different, but any potential for collaborating HAMSIGHT programs in the future with AOS just a project or something like that has there been have there been any talks on that so not with HAMSci specifically but within the academies of Loudoun we greatly

[01:01:06] encourage collaboration amongst different programs and pathways and so we have lots of examples of projects in the building where students in different programs have worked together so that would be another point and I'll just add in that's so across when you when you say the ham sci and the matter programs and things like that I will echo that that that our students across all three of the divisions work very closely with each other it's very common to see students from a UT doing a prototype or something that sort and they're down in the welding room where they're down with Mason class and and doing different projects that they're

[01:01:44] building and doing there oh that's great that's great collaborative any other questions on this side okay so we'll continue um thank you so much i appreciate it very helpful and i can't wait to see you know the outcome of these students what they become how they flourish thank you for all you do all right so moving on so our next meeting is scheduled for august 5th and now we're going into august august 5th 3 30 mark your calendars any new business okay um so no further business i

[01:02:21] entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting yes miss lebel i move to adjourn the meeting and i second so all those in favor of adjourning say aye aye okay and the meeting is adjourned thanks guys for coming out have a great summer thank you so much



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