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Loudoun County Public Schools, Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting, Wednesday, August 6, 2025

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[00:00:02] good afternoon my name is Lauren Chernoff and I am calling this curriculum and instruction committee meeting on August 6 2025 to order I am the chair of this committee and I am joined by my esteemed colleagues dr. Rashid and dr. Deans we would normally start with public comment but we do not have anybody signed up for public comment today so we will move into item number three which is approval of the draft minutes from our June 4th CNI meeting is there a motion to approve the minutes make that motion to approve is there a second all in favor aye none

[00:00:41] opposed so that will pass next we move on to our information items for today we will start with item 4.01 which is math placement and acceleration update our presenters today are mr. Jeff Roundsley the director of teaching and learning and miss Nicole Agone who is a supervisor of k-12 mathematics welcome floor is yours. Thank you and I'm going to turn it over to Ms. Agoni who's going to talk about House Bill 2686 which was passed on June 30th and I think some really good work to support our

[00:01:17] schools and principals and families with communication around this and really talk through what House Bill 2686 says and what LCPS's response has been to that bill. All right thank you for the opportunity to share with you. So I wanted to start by just giving you an overview you of the house bill just so that you know what this says um so the house bill shares that our local school divisions are going to develop a policy that's going to outline how we accelerate students in mathematics it's for grades five through eight um and in there it says that all

[00:01:53] students that score in the top 25 percent um in the state so not in our our district um in the state would um be automatically accelerated parents have the opportunity to opt out of this acceleration and it is for students who are in grade level courses. So any student in grade level that scores in the top 25% would need to be automatically enrolled in accelerated math.

[00:02:16] And then at the end of each year, we would need to report to the VDOE data on this, how many parents or families opted out and how many were accelerated. As Ms. Roundsley said, this guidance came out on June 30th. So we had some webinars where the information was shared. And then on the the 30th of June they said that the the cut scores were published and gave us the information on House Bill 2686 they shared to begin implementation and we started a plan at that at that time you'll notice that the scores that are

[00:02:53] listed there those were the scores for the state and they are for just this school year moving into the school year it is important to know that on the 11th of July the VDOE backed off a little bit and said you don't need to fully implement this, you can have an extension and you can start to do it some, and at that point we had already developed an implementation plan and sent out communication to almost 1300 families, so we did not take advantage of that extension.

[00:03:26] There was a lot that went into our implementation plan and so I just put a reference, this is the document, you can see the whole document and I'll just highlight some parts of that. we worked closely with communications office and shared out district level communication this went out to all the families that were the 1300 families I shared in an email and a text message so they received that and then following that we worked with DDI to be able to record parents opting out this was a way to get the legal signature of parents saying that they were not interested in

[00:04:00] this and then schools were doing the communication from there we worked with research office to get the list of the students that needed this acceleration and then our level office to communicate with our school leaders we had some communication with them online and talked with them about how to implement and then this change is still going through so at this point we are 700 or 976 responses recorded it is important to say that even though the house bill came out we do have a

[00:04:38] process in place in loud in loudon we have a math course selection process i did reference that document and attach that document as well our process does consider multiple data points not just the state's top 25 sol score there are teacher recommendations student goals and as well as testing that's included we offer opportunities for our students to accelerate throughout grade 6 through grade 12 there are multiple opportunities for students to accelerate at any point and we provide lots of opportunities for kids to access algebra 1 in middle

[00:05:13] school in sixth grade seventh grade and in eighth grade so some of our next steps with this house bill is we want to make sure we're evaluating our current process that we have and looking for ways to align it with the and anticipate the top 25 percent and accelerating our students so that we aren't having to reach out to 1300 students next summer that was a huge lift for our schools to have to manage those schedule changes and so that's something we want to not have happen again we want to make sure we're exploring how we can support those students earlier and then adding additional resources for our

[00:05:52] teachers so when students are automatically accelerated into a upper level math course they're often skipping courses and so we have already added curriculum supports for our teachers so they have some supports for students that are accelerated but we'll continue to enhance those as well so that we have

supports for the teachers as well as some professional learning on how to work with our students in multiple levels in the classrooms and that is all thank you so much for that presentation and for all your work this summer

[00:06:27] to get that out I'm sorry about video II but not surprised um and that is for the record but do my colleagues have any questions or comments sure thank you I and thank you for this presentation brought a lot of clarity I just was curious about transfers so people that transfer from another area another district or maybe even from a private school in the area how does that fit in And I'm assuming they take some sort of assessment.

[00:07:01] - So when a student is transferring in, we start by looking at what data that we have. So if they come from a state school, Fairfax County, Prince William, somewhere like that, we look at what courses they were enrolled in and what data that we have. We don't go automatically to assess them if we don't need to give them an assessment.

[00:07:19] So we do have an assessment we can give to students over the summer, and sometimes we do that, especially our middle schools will work with, they have students transferring in from a private school they'll give them an assessment but as far as the change for schedule that audit that we would pull for the scores of the students would happen in august so we would lean on our research department to pull anyone that was newly enrolled in and make sure that they're in the correct course thank you for that and also if a student

[00:07:56] falls behind they take an assessment they don't do so great i'm assuming is there a catch-up time or do they just go in the lower level of math are you saying if they if they fall behind in while they're in the course I guess if they take the assessment they don't do as great as even like a normal for example a normal seventh grader that's transferring in would they go in a sixth grade math class what would be what would be the next steps for that okay so we our current process does not we have lots of opportunities for kids to go into multiple courses so there's not just one assessment that would get them into

[00:08:34] this course with the house bill and the sol score so if they didn't score in the top 25 percent they wouldn't be automatically enrolled but they could possibly choose to enroll so we have the option for students who are in math 6 who complete math 6 and want to take pre-algebra the math 8 the next year they still can enroll in that that course and if they were struggling in that then they could choose to not do that not enroll or sometimes they drop back or they have other supports we don't enroll a kid that is in grade level we keep them on grade level so a seventh grader would never be enrolled in a math six course they would be enrolled in math seven and

[00:09:12] i i just want to add on to that i do think it's worth noting that lcps has a much smaller number of students impacted by this and meet some of our surrounding jurisdictions and a lot of that has to do with the really solid work that has been happening for years around thoughtful math acceleration using multiple data points putting students in the right courses and so i think that that just speaks to the good work that the math office has been doing. This is not, this particular process of relying so heavily on the SOL is new, but the idea that we need to accelerate students who need it in mathematics and, you know, make sure that they're placed in the right location

[00:09:48] is definitely not a new idea, and it's really supported by lots of robust data to make sure we put students in the right place, and I think that just speaks to some thoughtful work that's happened for a long time. Dr. Deans, anything? No. I have a couple clarifying questions just about logistics i i know you guys

got the cut scores like pretty late into like the kids were already in summer correct you said um so are they going to set up a rotation every year where you're going to have a known date that those cut scores will be delivered do we think they're going to be sort of within the same range we're going to kind of go with that like what's your thinking and strategy

[00:10:26] around having that information as soon as we can to our family yeah so um july 1st is the date they'll publish them by is what they've shared so June 30th it came out this year so I would anticipate it's going to be around the same time that it comes out again and I think that's part of why I wrote that bullet the second bullet on the last slide about exploring how we identify and support these students earlier I think that the big surprising piece and the part that was hardest for some of our schools was that the cut score is quite low if you look at math 7 425 is

[00:11:00] pretty low to be in the top 25% so that's where our largest group of students that we were missing were if you look at the number of students that scored above a 475 we were already doing a good job with that because that's kind of where our data has been pulling from so we need to think about that and anticipate but the part that i i want to think more deeply about is that it changes each year so if you look at the group that was in sixth grade this year they had a a 440 and the fifth graders had a 466 so it it becomes challenging to figure out and anticipate

[00:11:36] what that will be so the I would say that I think that the information will come out around the same time and my goal is to try to figure out how to support and align this as best as possible so that we don't have as many schedule changes because I know that's hard for schools too and families to get the communication so late thank you for that that sounds very reasonable go ahead Dr. Dean you had 976 responses do you suppose those other 300 and so actually saw your

[00:12:12] communication and will they be given last-minute decision-making ability yes so we will honor the schedule changes we I mean as they come in schools are working with those families so I am sure that they have seen it we've they've received phone calls we have really great school leaders we've been where I've been working really closely with the principals assistant principals and some counselors have been working on this a lot of counselors have been working on this and they're calling all the families they're talking to them answering questions we received a number of let's talks that are about this like

[00:12:52] well help me understand what happens here so I do think that they have seen it some of the families that chose not to fill it out knew that they were already accelerated so they only have to opt out they don't have to opt in for this house bill so some of them chose okay I'm already in I'm not gonna fill out your permission click so I think that might be part of it but we are working closely with the schools to make sure all families have been contacted my next question is about staffing and budget do you think that this will eventually have I mean you have scheduling impacts but there are certain

[00:13:29] class size regulations and different things so do we foresee that this will have budgetary impact down the road where we need to move different teachers around or is that gonna impact building to building how do we anticipate those challenges do we have them this year so we don't have any budget issues this year and I'll let mr. runs I speak after I start by saying that I think the biggest piece that will that is a concern is about the number of teachers in a middle school that are certified to teach a high school course so last year prior to this not knowing about this the math department started a course

[00:14:08] to help our middle school teachers pass their praxis and to teach the high school courses. So we offered that course online. We purchased the books for them to practice, practice, practice, practice,

books, and then reimburse them for taking that praxis.

[00:14:28] So we'll continue to do that in an effort to get more teachers certified, but that would be the part I think that I would anticipate would be the biggest thing we can run into especially with students that might take algebra in 7th grade and then geometry needs to be earlier as well and I don't know if I missed anything on budget wise. Yeah I don't you know there's a staffing implication in terms of how many sections of math 6 you might teach or math 7 but every student in middle school is taking math so you might be shifting around numbers of sections but we're probably not adding new sections of math that didn't exist before

[00:15:08] but I would agree with Miss Agoni that the struggle might be when we get into some of those higher seventh or eighth grade classes where we need teachers who can who are certified to teach algebra or geometry there could potentially be an issue in the future around that although many schools teach large sections of those classes already and so we'll kind of have to see how that goes but we do offer some support to help teachers gain the certification they need to do that. Interesting all right I appreciate that and then my next question is more for us in terms of the committee and the policy work do we have like a projected

[00:15:44] timeline for next steps and policy development and then just a follow-up question before you jump in Mr. Slevin is do we envision adding you spoke a lot about other structures to accelerate right that we already have in place those processes is this an opportunity for us to codify those in policy or put them in a regulation to make things clearer for parents I know I've had parents reaching out asking questions at these different times about how they can accelerate or even taking other tests to skip different things or taking virtual classes in the summer so that they can skip other classes so I know all of that's kind of swirling around this issue it's not specific to it but I'm wondering if we could tuck all of that in together to be more efficient with our

[00:16:24] policy process so yes we will be developing a new policy in terms of timeline usually when things like this come from the General Assembly or the BDOE we look for some level of guidance or model policy either whether it's from the video we other school just divisions possibly the VSBA so we're working with division council on where we're at with policies every every year it's normal that we get recommendations from council on here's what we need to be thinking about policies so in the middle of that right now I do think this will

[00:17:02] be a policy that we tackle in the fall so we should have it you know my goal would be to have it in place by November, December timeframe, depending on some of those factors. We have discussed internally, Mr. Roundsley referenced all the great processes that we have in place. Since we do have a policy, would it make sense to move some of those into regulation?

[00:17:26] I'd be hesitant to get too much into the weeds in policy because of the every year we shift and we have other, the nature of assessment has changed so much over the past couple years within the Commonwealth of Virginia so if it's in the regulation we're more able to adapt sooner where the policy could have some items that are really important the board as well as some philosophy behind it but we'll navigate those conversations together. Sounds like the right approach. Colleagues anything else before we move on. All right thank you so much Miss Agone for your work for your

[00:18:03] team for being right there with it and being ahead of the curve I appreciate that and thank you to our school leaders who are helping as well to get the ball rolling we with that we will move on to item

4.02 curriculum development update and i believe mr roundsley is staying in the hot seat and joining him are a bunch of friends miss amanda it's a seat sounds so it's a seat um joining him is miss amanda kim supervisor of instructional design and innovation and miss danielle graham supervisor of social studies and global studies and Dr. Michelle Picard, Supervisor of Secondary English and Reading.

[00:18:43] Thank you guys for being here, and the floor is yours. Thank you, and while this team is sitting up here, there's lots of people in the audience here who did some really great work this summer around curriculum and the work that we do to support our teachers each year and provide them with the guidance and resources they need to have an effective school year.

[00:19:02] So on the next slide, a couple of things we want to talk about here today is to review our curriculum audit I shared some information from our curriculum audit in February of 2025 with the school board and we want to follow up with some really good work that has happened since that time to also provide an update on the work that happened over the summer and then to share how we embed teacher voices and teacher leadership in the work that we do and really create some really good alignment and collaboration among our different offices that we hope supports teachers, students, and schools, and finally share our next

[00:19:41] steps and some future enhancements around the resources that we're providing to our teachers. So in February, I shared on the next slide a graphic from our 2024 curriculum audit, which kind of laid out some of the big recommendations that came from that process and some things that we've been working to guide our work on. So the first one was some clarity, some good definitions and around what we mean when we talk about curriculum and to make sure that we provide some consistency to our teachers in terms of what they can expect from us and the format that it's provided in.

[00:20:17] How we curate and organize our curriculum resources to make them easily accessible to our teachers, but also to our school leaders and to families so they have a good idea of the work that's happening in their schools every day. Collaboration among our different offices and with our teacher leaders to make sure they have an understanding of the resources that we provide And finally, good communication to our school leaders around what our curriculum is, what's there, and how they can use it to enhance and support the work that happens in their schools each day.

[00:20:46] So we're going to focus on three big buckets here first that we made some accomplishments around, the first three. And on the next slide, the sense of clarity. We did adopt a consistent definition of what curriculum is among all of our offices. and everyone here in this room had a hand in providing that and providing their input to make sure this was expressive of their work.

[00:21:07] One thing we wanted to really emphasize here was that our curriculum is not just resources that we provide to teachers, but also a real sense of professional learning around best practices in that area and that those things are embedded in the work that happens for teachers every day and also how we're assessing and measuring student progress that we're providing teachers with the resources they need to have vetted high quality assessments so that they have a good sense of how our students are learning and progressing in our schools.

[00:21:34] We adopted a consistent common template based on our instructional framework that highlights the areas of design, engage, assess, and student-centeredness. So this will be applicable to all content areas, especially in our elementary schools. One of the things we hear most frequently is that

some of the templates look different, and when you're a teacher who's accessing all of them, as our elementary school teachers are doing, it can be really confusing to find the information you need.

[00:21:56] So we are standardizing around a consistent template. with some clear guidelines around what should be guaranteed in all of our curriculum resources and finally we'll talk a little bit more about this at the end we have adopted power school curriculum and instruction as our curriculum management system which will streamline and organize everything in one place and make it accessible and viewable in schoology and other resources that our teachers use each day we think it'll make it more visible and more usable and accessible for our teachers and our school leaders importantly so that they are better able to

[00:22:30] monitor um the work and the pacing that's happening in classrooms so i'm going to turn it over to amanda kim our supervisor for instructional design and innovation to to highlight some of the work that's happened around um curriculum in the summer of 2025 that's also supportive of those priorities that i just shared so much um so i do have the privilege and the pleasure to highlight and celebrate teachers and a lot of our curriculum leaders and the work that they did this summer the next slide here so this summer over 225

[00:23:09] elementary and secondary teachers from a wide range of subject areas worked directly with our content offices in the effort to develop some curricular materials that other lcps teachers will use next school year they developed both unit plans they developed instructional materials that all connected content standards they connected our textbook materials and course scope and sequences.

[00:23:36] As Mr. Roundesley just mentioned a few moments ago, curriculum development really is so much more than just resource creation. It is an integrated process that includes professional learning about instructional best practices and content specific priorities.

[00:23:55] There's a great deal of collaboration and reflection and ongoing feedback around the materials that are developed. And this is a really powerful opportunity for community building between teachers from across school buildings and our central office leaders.

[00:24:12] So while the last slide highlighted that June 23rd through the 27th was a week where many of the offices did meet to hold some in-person learning and some in-person sessions, it's really important to note that the work that took place this summer went beyond just those seven days.

[00:24:32] Teachers worked consistently through July in the development of those resources, which should really be commended when many of these teachers could choose to enjoy a much needed and deserved summer vacation, and yet they decided to commit themselves to supporting other colleagues and our division.

[00:24:53] This slide that you see here on the screen highlights some intentionality in the alignment between our curriculum development the instructional framework the instructional framework was embedded this summer both in the design of curriculum and also the resources that were created teachers use a common many of the teachers from these subject areas use the common template that mr. Roundesley spoke about and that template specifically calls out the four four key components of the instructional framework this is also bringing consistency across our subject areas to

[00:25:32] address some of that feedback that we received during the audit two last final points here the our content offices also embedded some specific professional learning around the instructional framework during curriculum development this both empowers our teachers to deepen their

understanding of those instructional practices and then also to embed that into the materials that they're designing our ultimate goal here is to ensure that alignment with our framework and consistencies across content areas are really going to have a great support when we

[00:26:07] implement the framework the school year and i think i also next have the pleasure to why i was able to give kind of a wide overview of what happened this summer we'd like to provide some specific examples from our social studies office and secondary english and reading and i think i'm handing it to miss graham next i just wanted to say briefly sorry uh that we there were so many good things to celebrate and we really tried to kind of pull back and think about a few we wanted to highlight for you and Daniel Graham and the social studies and social science and global studies office really did an exceptional job of helping us to

[00:26:45] promote some consistency and some collaboration and Dr. Picard's going to talk about the role of teacher voice these are both two best practices in curriculum development that we saw throughout all of our offices and just two spokespeople for the really good work that happened for many teachers this summer so next slide please our planning for this usually begins pretty early on in January and one of the things we really sought to do in this process was scaffold the migration over to the new template for teachers some of our items definitely had to be shifted or changed a little

[00:27:21] but the other piece that was very important to us was for them to understand that we're not working with brand new things this is these are things that have been embedded in best practices for social science instruction for a while and so one of the things we did our office has done a lot with project zero thinking routines and so we curated a set of thinking routines that we thought were particularly powerful and use that along with kind of a structure to support teachers as they were building out the engage section not only that embedded in the professional development we modeled the practices those specific thinking routines for teachers so they

[00:27:56] could see them in action. And then we also shared this approach. We actually kind of came up with these ideas honestly with the instructional design and innovation meetings that we have and then brought that to other supervisors and specialists. We share pretty regularly at our collaborative meetings what we're doing for different events and so we shared that approach at the supervisor and specialist meetings and this was adopted across a lot of other content offices that were working within the common template hello I am ecstatic to be able to share one of

[00:28:34] the highlights and as mr. Roundsley said teacher voice Heidi Walsh who is here today she's an instructional facilitator for middle school she has shepherded curriculum development for the last three to five years and the reason I bring this up is because she's been able to call the best and the brightest across every single school and and when you build those relationships you have a a great deal more buy-in so this year we did something unique that we're getting to highlight which is that Heidi pulled together an advanced curriculum team you may remember I'm sure you do

[00:29:09] that we adopted very late in the year we adopted an entirely new middle school program I believe it was May 6th on May 8th Heidi pulled together nine bright minds across schools and we called them an advanced curriculum team. She spent two full in-person days with them establishing the groundwork, talking about the engagement strategies, talking about the instructional framework. And again, because of the three to five years prior, she really knew where their expertise was. So she wasn't starting from ground zero. That curriculum team continued to work and

[00:29:46] they delivered the very first unit to our teachers on June 16th. I'm not the math supervisor, but that is a very quick turnaround well this led to a new practice that I think we will continue which is that Heidi brought together over 50 teachers across every middle school different librarians reading teachers special education teachers EL teachers and most commonly classroom teachers and she put them into 12 units because we had to write an entire year of curriculum but what I am highlighting is the advanced curriculum team became advisors so there was

[00:30:21] an advisor to every team so those advisors that were in the advanced curriculum team they were crystal clear on what had to be in every unit and I'm proud to to work with Heidi and my entire team I want you to know that they wrote and again it was not just that one week it was it was months of work but they literally wrote 202 lesson plans and those lesson plans each have a a corresponding if I know Heidi color-coded slide decks and instructional

[00:30:56] resources in the new and incredible program so I get to highlight just for English but for others that this is a great protocol to have sort of your best and brightest and clearest to advise and coach and lastly I'll just say that having 50 people come together around a three-year curriculum is pretty tremendous, and I think it speaks to the work of all of teaching and learning.

[00:31:25] I think we have just a couple pictures, too, of the teachers that are working that I think highlights that this is not just teachers behind a computer writing lesson plans, but there's a lot of professional learning and collaboration and discussion that's involved in making sure that all voices and perspectives are heard, that we create something that's really supportive of all of our educators.

[00:31:50] So in this final part, we just want to talk about our next steps, and I want to highlight our work towards transitioning towards the curriculum and instruction module so we have a high level timeline on the next slide of some of the things that we're doing so as we mentioned here teachers this summer and continue to build out some of these resources that will begin migrating into our curriculum and instruction module around November some of our instructional technology facilitators and instructional coaches will start teaching our teachers how to gain access to the system so that in March and our county-wide staff development day we are ready for teachers to see

[00:32:28] the resources that are provided to them so they could start thinking about what next year might look like and by the summer of 2026 we'll migrate all of our core instructional resources so these are not our electives that will be kind of a phase two but the the main courses the required courses that each content area teaches will move into the system and we think it will really help complete that curriculum audit to give our teachers and school leaders a streamlined accessible place where they find vetted and approved resources and hopefully we see high levels of consistency

[00:33:02] and alignment with our instructional framework as a result of that. So that's all we have. I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you so much. Wow this is incredible. I think the cross collaboration and just the consistency and all the different pieces and the hard hard work that went into place.

[00:33:23] I actually have a friend that was on the math team that was working on this, and she and I had coffee this summer, and she was just, like, I mean, jazzed about the work that's going out, and they can't wait for the teachers to see it and to give feedback, and so I know this is working in on that side of the table before.

[00:33:40] This is a huge lift, and it's going to bless so many teachers and their students because this takes the work out of it a little bit in terms of focusing. Now they can focus on individual needs. So huge, huge kudos to you all and your team, and it's exciting, and it feels like it's been a long time coming, but it's in progress now.

[00:33:58] So this is so exciting. Colleagues, do you have anything? All right. Well, with that, again, we just thank you for your work. Yes. All right.

[00:34:14] While these friends leave us, we will move to item number 4.03, which is our literacy update. Mr. Brownsley, you get to stay. Again, I have been corrected. So does Dr. Picard. And we will also welcome Ms. Catherine Neal, the supervisor of early literacy and elementary reading and writing.

[00:34:35] Welcome. The floor is yours. Thank you. So just like with math, we're navigating some changes from the VDOE for next year. And I know that we've heard about, obviously we know about the Virginia Literacy Act and the VALS assessment that comes with it and how our expansion to grades four through eight for next year.

[00:34:54] And so Ms. Neal and Dr. Picard are here to talk about that and to share some of the resources we're doing to support schools and hopefully ease some of the requirements that come with this new requirement from the state. So I'll turn it over to Ms. Neal and Dr. Picard. All right, so we, since we last met and talked about our VALS 4 to 8, we have some updates as far as what the assessment entails.

[00:35:25] So today we'd like to provide some of that assessment information and then also share with you some preparations for the fall testing window. And then we will end with an update on our policy 5440. So for our VOWS 4 to 8, so the purpose and testing windows, we wanted to kind of give a brief overview around what we can expect.

[00:35:51] So obviously the Virginia Literacy Act is extending all the way through grade 8, and the VOWS is part of that. The assessment will be administered in the fall and mid-year, and there will not be a spring window for this assessment.

[00:36:10] As far as the purpose of the assessment, it aims to identify those strengths and weaknesses for our students with their literacy skills, and then it helps to understand those reading comprehension difficulties. So student eligibility, you can see on this slide, basically if you fail the standards of learning or if you pass the standards of learning in English reading and used an audio accommodation, both of those groups will take the VALs.

[00:36:47] I will quickly say, you'll notice there's no guidance on English language learners. There are no exceptions for how long you've been here. That's a significant change for different kinds of testing. I'll also point out here, I think, I hope I'm not jumping ahead.

[00:37:05] No, please do. But one of the differences between the VALs 4 through 8 and K through 3 is that a reading plan is triggered by a student's performance on the VALs test in K through 3. In 4 through 8, it is based on the SOL. So if you fail the SOL, you will receive a reading plan. The purpose of the VALS is to provide data and some guidance to schools to measure student growth over the course of the year, but it is not passing the SOL. That is what causes a student to receive a student reading plan, not their performance on the VALS. That's a distinction from K to 3 and 4 to 8. It's an important distinction. So the subtest types,

[00:37:44] And these are for the four to eight. Similar to K3, there's an oral reading fluency. And then there are, as they suggest, morphology and sentence comprehension. These are both subtests that are read to the students. And the students answer a multiple choice question.

[00:38:01] One has to do with morphemes and one has to do with grammar. But either way, they are listening comprehension. The last part, the last bullet, talks about if you struggle on an oral reading fluency, which just for common understanding, you essentially give a passage to a student and you say, I want you to do your best reading about Bob the Builder and I'm going to stop you after a minute.

[00:38:25] I want you to read so that it makes sense. You time them and then you monitor how well they do. If they do very poorly, perhaps their rate is slow or too quick or there are multiple mistakes, That would then trigger a conditional subtest.

[00:38:46] So there are two conditional subtests at the four to eight level. So if you don't do well on the oral reading fluency, then you have a word decoding test, which is just literally a list of words, bump, sweep, and the child reads them, and they get more and more complex, more and more difficult.

[00:39:05] The other conditional test is a nonsense word reading, which looks at your understanding of structure. So blif, B-L-I-F, is not a real word, but we would all read it exactly the same because we understand short vowels are surrounded by consonants.

[00:39:23] So those are the major required subtests on the 4 to 8. The optional subtests really dip down into K3. There's phoneme segmenting and letter sounds.

[00:39:39] There is an optional passage comprehension, but it is written at a single level. Did you want to talk about the phoneme segmenting and letter sounds, aren't they on the K3? Yes, some of these subtests are also similar to what students receive on the K3 assessment as well.

[00:39:59] So for scoring and mastery levels, what we can expect when students are scored on the vows 4 to 8, we can expect that they'll receive a level of well below approaching or adequate for those subtests.

[00:40:17] so if you remember like the k-3 has those high risk bands or the bands of risk so it's high risk moderate risk or low risk we won't see that for the vows four to eight raw scores and likelihood of mastery will be provided in some of the reports by per each subtest so we'll have some of that information we do expect that they will flag for well below scores and low oral reading fluency score so we'll have we'll be able to kind of see where the students fall and then also percentile

[00:40:49] ranges for those oral reading fluency scores so we wanted to provide just some just an idea of some of the supports that we're putting into place that we've tried to anticipate as we move into this year i will say for elementary it's a little bit more of a kind of they they're used to this you know for this structure so we do have and at the elementary level for fourth and fifth schools do have their testing teams in place to help to support students and teachers as needed

[00:41:26] it may look a little different at each building but they do have those supports ready for them in our master schedule there is a daily intervention time that is devoted to ela and so that can also be used during these testing windows to be able to help support that testing because you know there are components that are one-on-one that the teacher will administer and then we also have monthly meetings with our reading contacts at each of our elementary schools and we also provide them with some weekly

communication so as we get those updates from the VLP office we're able to make sure that they have that important information so to

[00:42:05] kind of give out to their teachers so at the six to eight level I know you will remember when we visited before this is a much more significant lift middle school teachers are not used to one-on-one assessments are certainly not at this scale I'll remind you that last year in the spring we were very proactive and we had an hour-long workshop for all of the administrators to see what was coming what it might look like how we might meet the needs we also produced a video for teachers saying this is what it is this is what we know this is what we don't know and then most recently we presented at lead loud in because now we

[00:42:41] have almost every bit of information almost and so schools are working diligently to form their testing teams and to figure out the scheduling so when we went through the tutorials that are now available there are nine sub tests and the tutorials very good it gives you a literally gives you a video of each subtest only four are required at the four to eight level two are conditional as we just spoke about but what's really been a game-changer is three of the four required subtests are group administered so that is going to be an easier lift

[00:43:18] for the middle schools than we previously thought we thought oh my goodness it's going to be four subtests or five or six and it's going to be one on one all the time it's going to be three that are all group administered some small some large and then that oral reading fluency is going to be one on one so in order to not only to support the schools we have put together two weeks of support where 30 central office members like myself will be going to the schools they are taking the tutorial and they will go and they'll be in a central location and they're going to help do that one-on-one testing I also

[00:43:56] found out today that 30 diagnosticians across our division are joining that group so we will have 60 people willing to give some of their time to students in the middle school we hope that we we expect that we are over prepared but I would much prefer to be over prepared than under prepared and then we'll revisit the schedule of support in the mid-year just want to underscore again It doesn't matter how well you perform on VALS, you will be in an intervention and that you will all be retested in the mid-year.

[00:44:32] There's no spring window like there is for K-3, and I assume that's because of the standards of learning. And then lastly, in terms of preparation, I neglected to put a bullet. but most of the, most all of the middle schools have been very, very proactive in scheduling kids that they anticipate are going to need intervention into intervention settings.

[00:44:55] And we have a variety of intervention settings. So we have been working with our communication office to make sure that there is a communication plan in place for our families.

[00:45:15] so you can see there kind of the timeline in august and september there will be some email communications leading up to that fall testing window there'll be some information in the division newsletter in september we will also have an announcement provided to principals so that they can add that language to their school newsletters we have some suggested suggested messaging for our front office staff if parents were to call in and ask some questions they have a kind of some messaging that they can provide and then we also have an faq document that is accessible that kind

[00:45:49] of asks or answers some of those frequently asked questions okay so the next section we're kind of switching gears a little bit but we're just wanted to provide an update about around policy 5440.

[00:46:09] so just to provide an update we're in the process of revising that draft that was shared in May 2025 and we will bring we plan to bring an updated draft back on September 3rd for school board consideration and potential action that's the parental notification policy correct no that's the division literacy that's the literacy plan okay are we doing anything with the policy for parental notification because of middle school being added sorry to jump in there it is up for

[00:46:42] its five-year review this year so yes you will see that and I believe that is the end so we're happy happy to answer any questions you might have um colleagues you have any questions please i do want to say that you alleviated my when you said that central office people and others will be helping the teachers because my question was who is administering all these tests and you you you

[00:47:15] answered that before i could answer it but it just sounds like a perfect perfect feed-in to make it happen and make it happen with the least stress on the teacher the classroom teacher as possible I was afraid the classroom teacher had to do a lot of it so that's good I agree I have two quick questions one is so in elementary you can test in like because the SOL doesn't dictate for K through three you can move in and out of tiers in the winter correct which would affect you

[00:47:55] intervention status. Are middle schoolers or four through eight now locked into a year of intervention because it's tied to the SOL? So just to clarify, at K to three, they can move to a different band of risk in the mid-year, but their intervention plan still stays in place for the whole year. So we can make adjustments to the frequency of the intervention. For example, if the student is making great progress we might take them from and daily intervention to maybe three days a week right that kind of thing so those kinds

[00:48:32] of adjustments can be made the goals and objectives can be switched and things like that but the intervention plan still stays in place and that's what it will be for the upper grades as well the difference with the upper grades is simply what the types of intervention so for example we have a block of time and students are scheduled into that block of time but they would not need necessarily some kids will need that block of time all year but there are lots of kids that will not need that block of time all year and they will be getting intervention in different formats because we adopted Lexia power-up which

[00:49:11] is a hybrid which is time on the computer as you know and then in person instruction which is what we are driving they are the drivers of the intervention i see you smiling um so um unlike k-3 k-3 literally provides a time amount that you have to have kids in intervention and it gives more guidance we have a lot more flexibility at the secondary level which i'm very grateful for because a lot of differentiation remediation intervention pick your word is happening in the classroom in the resource block and in el special

[00:49:48] ed and reading classes. So we have that flexibility, which is fantastic, but we will, as Ms. Neal pointed out, keep the plan for a year. I just want to clarify, like, the reason why there's a time requirement at K-3 is not because of the Virginia Literacy Act, it's because of the Early Intervention Reading Initiative, the ERE that's been in place for so many years. So that's where the 30 minutes a day comes into place thank you and then I just wanted to get a clarification spend a minute since I've been administering reading assessments but where are we with fast

[00:50:27] bridge then because this sounds for four through eight this sounds an awful lot like the fast bridge passages that we give so are we still giving fast bridge or is that fading out with this how does that work so fast bridge is used on a case-by-case basis I believe special education uses it heavily. I know some of my reading teachers often use the fluency portion of it.

[00:50:50] So it's one of the tools in our toolbox, but it is not a universal screening. And one of the benefits to having the VALS, despite its strengths and potential weaknesses, is that we're going to have K-8 data that will be very visible. Sometimes it's easy to look at the 50,000 foot view and look the sols and think everything is fine when some kids it's it's below that we need to dig down deeper to see what the needs are so i think that's going to have a really powerful effect and i think we're ready we're ready to meet that challenge i'll just say for the elementary grades

[00:51:29] k-3 we're moving into we're using the vows progress monitoring suite to help with some of that progress monitoring so trying to fast bridge is still there it's still an option that can be used if needed but because we have that option with the vows progress monitoring that's what we're going to lean into we have been told we were told by the vlp office that we would have a four to eight progress monitoring suite of tools to use but they have said that they they don't have it ready at this time it's still it's a little gray whether when or or if we will actually get

[00:52:07] those that support so for that reason I think we still need to have fast bridge for that progress monitoring piece of it not a universal screener okay that's all for me that's good all right thank you guys so much for the update and thank you for your work and we'll look forward to hearing how it rolls out I will move to item number five is there any new business seeing none we will adjourn our our August 6th curriculum and instruction meeting.

[00:52:42] Thank you for being here.



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