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Loudoun County Public Schools, Joint Committee of the Loudoun County School Board (LCSB) and Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (BOS), Monday, September 15, 2025

Date Monday, September 15, 2025
Place LCPS Administration Building / School Board Room, Ashburn, Virginia
Length 1h 23m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1117626799?rel=0>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-13. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:14] Good afternoon, this is April Chandler calling to order the September 15th, 2025 Joint Committee of the Loudoun County School Board and Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. We normally start with public comment, but seeing as we have not had anyone sign up to speak tonight, we will move on.

[00:00:34] We'll start tonight with the co-chairs report. I have the honor of serving as co-chair with Supervisor Glass as Chair Mansfield is absent tonight. I hope everyone had a lovely summer. LCPS welcomed back our students to the classroom on Thursday, August 21st. As of August 6, 2025, LCPS had hired 626 new licensed personnel for the 2025-2026 school year, of which 59.7% hold a master's degree and 2.1% hold doctoral degrees.

[00:01:14] Also, of those 626, 237 are brand new teachers to the profession. As of August 13, 2025, LCPS has a fill rate very close to 99% of all school-based licensed positions.

[00:01:32] This is slightly higher at this time of year than in previous years. LCPS opened two new programs this year, the Loudon Recovery Academy and the Access Academy. The Recovery Academy is designed for students who are in early recovery from substance abuse or substance use disorders.

[00:01:51] The Accelerated College and Employability Skills Program, or ACCESS Academy, is a collaborative program with the Loudoun County Public Schools, George Mason University, and Northern Virginia Community College. ACCESS Academy supports students in developing hands-on experience and industry-aligned skills in information technology.

[00:02:13] earning college credit, and gaining career experience while still in high school. As for school board activity, since the previous meeting, the school board has taken action on the Dominion Energy Golden to Mars Transmission Line Project. At the August 12, 2025 school board meeting, the board voted to join the State Corporation Commission, proceeding joining the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors and the Loudoun Valley Estates HOA in this effort.

[00:02:40] Next, we'll share some good news about LCPS students and schools. 44 students from LCPS traveled to Anaheim, California to compete at the Future Business Leaders of America National Leadership Conference, and 17 made it to the stage, an incredible accomplishment for LCPS and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:03:02] Qualifying for nationals is an outstanding achievement, and many of our students advanced to the finals in their events, placing among the top 15 in the nation. Taking the stage was simply the icing on the cake. These incredible students showcase not only their skills, but also their leadership, kindness, and LCPS pride.

[00:03:22] 17 LCPS schools were recognized for their participation in the No Place for Hate program during the 2024-2025 school year by the Anti-Defamation League. These 17 schools are among 194 schools in the Washington, D.C. region that were recognized for their participation in the No Place for Hate program last school year.

[00:03:43] No Place for Hate is a framework that encourages schools to speak up against bias by creating projects that promote respect and inclusion. Through the support of students, staff, and families, No Place for Hate schools gather input from all invested parties to make changes in their school communities, helping to ensure that there are places that encourage learning without interference from bias.

[00:04:07] And on that positive note, I will end my remarks because we do have a very full and important agenda today. And now I'll invite co-chair Glass to provide her report. Thank you, co-chair Chandler. As this is our first meeting since the beginning of the school year, I want to take the opportunity to welcome students, staff, faculty, and parents back to school. As many of you know, I am an employee of LCPS, and I am looking forward to another great school year for our community.

[00:04:38] Since our last meeting in June, the Board of Supervisors approved a minor special exception application for the renovation expansion of Banneker Elementary School in St. Louis. Approval of the minor special exception will allow for the addition of five classrooms and a multi-purpose room and allow the school to be served by on-site sewer and water systems. In July the Board of Supervisors approved the eight priority pilot locations identified under the Safe Passages to Schools Pilot Program. This program began in the joint committee and focuses on identifying

[00:05:17] solutions to community concerns about pedestrian safety around schools, including missing crosswalks. The board will include funding discussions on the pilot locations in our next capital improvement program, budget deliberations for consideration and prioritization. We are also developing a

process to create a community request crosswalk program to allow for easier studying and construction of crosswalks throughout the county. Finally, the Board of Supervisors

[00:05:50] continues to monitor the current federal funding and policy changes that could affect the amount of money that is sent to Loudoun, including to Loudoun County Public Schools. Co-Chair Chandler, that is my report um thank you for that report uh co-chair glass we'll move on now to our action items starting with item 4.01 transition center which will be presented by ms tedra richardson lcps student services the purpose of this item is for loudon county public school staff to provide an update on the status of the project and building and program planning for the transition

[00:06:30] Center. Ms. Richardson, the floor is yours. Thank you and good afternoon. Next slide, please. The LCPS Transition Center is a vital program designed to support students with disabilities as they prepare for life after high school. The program will focus on building career and technical education skills and developing the independent living skills students need to thrive in the workplace and in their communities. It will serve high school students who are working toward or

[00:07:05] have earned an applied studies diploma or an extended standard diploma as determined by their educational planning teams. To support early transition planning, the center will also provide vocational evaluations for high school students and career exploration opportunities for our middle schoolers. The program will be led by a dedicated multidisciplinary team, including credentialed career and technical education and special education teachers, vocational evaluators,

[00:07:43] job coaches, behavioral assistants, related service providers, and support staff. Together, this team will work to ensure students gain the skills and confidence that they need to live more independently, successfully enter the workforce, and improve their overall quality of life.

[00:08:02] Next slide. Students with disabilities often face significant challenges. While many are capable of learning trade skills, they may struggle to fully participate in traditional CTE programs or meet the certification requirements. According to the 2023-24 Special Education Advisory Council Parent Survey, satisfaction areas such as vocational skills, independent living labs,

[00:08:35] and access to skills profiles remains below 60%. The LCPS Transition Center will be designed to address these gaps. It will provide essential skills and hands-on career training to support workforce integration, expand employment opportunities, and enhance their quality of life. The center will promote inclusivity by bridging the gap between school and employment, empower students with practical CTE skills, and support their personal growth through targeted

[00:09:14] resources and staff support. Next slide. The Transition Academy is moving forward with great progress. Our goals have been refreshed to reflect the valuable feedback of our invested partners ensuring the program truly meets student and community needs. Staffing needs have been carefully revised to align with the career and technical education pathways, further strengthening support for our students' success. We are excited to share that a location for the academy has been

[00:09:52] identified, and LCPS has officially begun concept planning and design, bringing the vision of the Transition Academy one step closer to reality. Next slide. Our academy will be aligned to the advanced career and technical pathways. These programs ensure students gain practical skills, workplace readiness, and exposure to high-demand industries. And you can see that we have pathways

[00:10:26] outlined for building and moving, creating and experiencing, caring for communities, cultivating resources, and connecting and supporting success. Through these pathways, the Transition Academy will prepare students for both independent living and successful entry into the workforce and post-secondary training. Next slide. In addition to our career and technical pathways, we will also offer course offerings. This is a focus on essential skills that are

[00:11:05] needed for independence, career readiness, and lifelong success. Students will engage in personal finance management, emergency response training, personal health, and customer service. Together, these courses provide our students with foundational skills needed, again, for independent living in engagement in our community and future employment.

[00:11:35] Next slide. This is the most exciting part. The proposed name of our academy is the LCPS VIEW Transition Academy. VIEW stands for vocation, independence, employment, and work readiness.

[00:11:54] This proposed naming is slated to go before the board on the consent agenda on September 30th. That concludes the end of my time with you all, but I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you so much, Ms. Richardson. I know I, for one, am so excited to see this coming forward into fruition because our students really do deserve all of our students to have the best opportunities, and I'm so grateful that we'll have the opportunity to expand this into our community.

[00:12:24] Are there any questions or comments? Supervisor Brissman? Thank you, and thank you for the presentation. This is exciting. I'm really proud of us and happy that this is happening. A couple questions. When do we think the academy will open?

[00:12:41] And then secondly, I should know if there were any budgetary or resource requests in the 2026 budget, and I don't remember. And then my second question along those lines would be, are we expecting resource requests in the 27 budget for this or an increase in the school's budget request to staff?

[00:13:02] - Those are great questions, absolutely. So we are slated to open fall of 2028. So there were no resources requested in FY26. We're still working through whether or not resources will be requested in FY27.

[00:13:20] - Okay, thank you. - Co-Chair Glass. - Thank you, I don't have any questions actually. Supervisor Riskman had asked one of my questions but I am just really excited about this.

[00:13:36] This is just wonderful news. As a certified special education teacher, we see the need for our students to have that transition and that education. And when you talked about the different career pathways, that is very exciting.

[00:13:53] It's not just one thing. There's a number of things that they can get involved in. So thank you all for their work. I really appreciate it. Thank you. Are there any other questions? I guess I could ask a real quick one, just because I'm excited about this, too. I think the students and parents, especially from SEAC, you know, they've been working hard on this.

[00:14:15] So give a shout-out to Liz Crody and her team. But the Transition Center Roundtable, did you include students in that roundtable just to see kind of what their needs were? We did extend an invitation to five students.

[00:14:32] Two were former students. Three were present students. Unfortunately, they weren't able to participate. So we have worked with our transition teachers to get feedback from our students. Wonderful.

And I look forward to this opening. And I know the location. I think it's a great location.

[00:14:48] Thank you. We're very excited. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Chacroni. Any other questions? No, me either. All right. Well, thank you. With that, we'll move on to our next item, 4.02 update on the LCPS student activities.

[00:15:06] Fees for extracurricular activities presented by Ms. Sharon Willoughby. LCPS business and financial services the purpose of this item is for the Loudoun County Public School staff to provide an update on the progress to date in reducing and or eliminating student fees as well as the ongoing work in the in this area I'm with that Miss Willoughby the floor is yours thank you and good afternoon so over the past five years the school board and the board of supervisors has supported our work related to student fees in ensuring that each student has an

[00:15:40] equitable access to programs and offerings as well as an equitable student experience. The last update that I had provided was at the September 2023 joint committee meeting. Since then we have enacted several fee reductions, fee eliminations, and offered other supports for schools and students.

[00:16:00] First though I just wanted to share that we categorize the student fees into two groups district-wide and school-based. The district-wide fees are covered under policy 4020 student fees and charges. They provide additional structure and guidance for our school-based fees and continues to be a focus of our work. For the school-based fees, the students at each school drive the clubs and extracurricular activities, so it's more difficult to have uniformity as our schools each have their own unique features and characteristics. We have focused again on the philosophy of removing

[00:16:34] participation barriers and also that each school having a base level of programming support. Some schools may fundraise or still elevate their program above the space level, but we would like to ensure that if the student body would like a new club, for example, that LCPS is able to support this without the students and families bearing the financial burden. Simply put, our focus has been to not have a pay-to-play or pay-to-participate environment. On the next side, you'll see our progress in this area, but first I just wanted to bring up a common question that generally comes

[00:17:10] up during this presentation is about a general student activity fee. Each time this question comes up, we double check with our schools and are assured that they are not assessing a student activity fee, as this is not something that LCPS supports. So this slide shows the work related to this going back to FY19. The column in the middle are the direct reduction or elimination of student fees, and in the last column are some other indirect supports that could impact families as well.

[00:17:42] I'll just highlight a few of them. In FY20, you can see where we had initially reduced athletic participation fees. And if you jump down to FY24, where that fee was ultimately entirely eliminated. We also, in FY22, began covering up to four AP tests per student.

[00:18:04] Other highlights are we eliminated the student parking fee in FY23. And that last year, we introduced our new activity allotment to offset student fees or dues for non-athletic, co- or extracurricular activities. On the other indirect support, some highlights there are our popular teacher classroom supply allotment that we introduced in FY22.

[00:18:28] And then also in FY25, we had what we were calling our universal paper initiative, where we provided schools with facial tissue so that this is something that teachers could remove off of their wish

list or student list, as well as we changed how we provide copy paper so that schools could more easily access that without having to use their own instructional allotment.

[00:18:52] Going forward, we continue to review the student classroom consumable items at the district level. As you can see for FY26 on the slide, we did eliminate fees for the supplemental CTE materials. And so this area of the consumables continues to be our focus.

[00:19:10] We are also analyzing data from the last school year, especially for FY25, to see the impact from providing the activity allotments to schools that was provided to them to offset them charging fees and dues for those non-athletic co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Results from that analysis may help inform our work on developing the FY27 budget.

[00:19:34] And with that, that is my brief update, and I'd be happy to take any questions you may have. Thank you, Ms. Willoughby. Are there any questions from the committee? Supervisor Brissman? Thank you, and thank you so much for that update. It's been a longish road since we started this process in 2020.

[00:19:55] It was one of my key initiatives when I came into office. A little hiccup in 22 when the money got used for AP testing fees, but that's a good thing as well, right? I mean, we shouldn't have barriers for kids to be able to take advantage of those AP classes that can reduce the cost of college.

[00:20:13] I had a couple questions. You mentioned the FY27 budget might be informed by some future analysis. And then I also saw a fine arts allotment or something like that. Does that cover marching band yet?

[00:20:31] Are we covering marching band yet? Because it's my understanding that's like \$250 per student. So we do have a music allotment per school and a performing arts allotment per school.

[00:20:52] I would need to look more specifically how that is carved out at the discretion of the schools and how that supports perhaps those particular arts programs like the marching band versus choir versus other performing arts.

[00:21:07] When you say allotment, does that mean that a student has to go and ask for a waiver like they had to before, or is it just an allotment to cover? That's a little different than the word elimination, so I'm a little confused of how that works.

[00:21:23] No, that's a great question. The allotments are what the district provides the schools, and it can be either a general. also, for example, the music allotment for a high school, each high school receives \$9,600 from the school operating fund to help manage their programs for music. There could be additional per-pupil allotments that the schools receive as well, all of these to help manage those specific programs. What we are trying to do as we look at these programs, especially with the fine arts

[00:22:01] over the last couple years because you do correctly recall on one of the slides, we increased the fine arts allotment and we also added some additional stipends as well to help provide the teaching support for those programs.

[00:22:17] There you go, thank you. Okay, okay, so I guess I'm not hearing that the marching band fee has been eliminated. I guess maybe we can get an answer offline if families are still being asked to pay the marching band fee. And I will say I was out with my political hat on this weekend knocking doors and I ran into the drum major from Jiminyan High School and a buddy and they were doing their tag.

[00:22:43] I think they call it a tag sale or tag day and they were trying to raise money. And so that kind of sent some bells off for me. And, you know, I'm of two minds sometimes about seeing that because I think that, you know, I had kids that sold Girl Scout cookies and I had kids that sold Boy Scout popcorn.

[00:23:05] And it's a good lesson, right? It's a good training for them to have to knock the door of a stranger and try to sell something and raise money. And it gives them certain satisfaction and agency when they are able to do that. But, you know, on the flip side, I don't want anyone to feel like they have to raise money or they don't get to participate in an activity at school.

[00:23:29] And, oh, by the way, the DHS new marching band uniforms are fantastic. So those are all my questions. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Brisbane. Our co-chair Glass. Thank you. Is there a focus on, I'm thinking of like the National Honor Society and the future business leaders of America.

[00:23:51] Are there fees for them as well, or has there been a focus on maybe reducing those? So those would be the at-the-school-level assessed fees, and that was our intent with the introduction last year of the activity allotment.

[00:24:10] So for schools to use those funds to support their clubs versus charging students. So those two examples you gave are more club-oriented, I believe, And, again, rather than charging a student to participate in those, this activity allotment was provided to help offset that.

[00:24:35] Okay, thank you. I do actually have a few questions. This is something I have been hearing a little bit from my community recently. And as I've dug into it a little bit, I've had just some interesting perspectives, and I would like to learn some more about how it works.

[00:24:53] And that may be a conversation for offline. but I would love to understand if we have universal regulations across the county that allocate or that define how these allocations work and one of the reasons why I asked that question is I have been having a band conversation in my community and I hear from the parents that their fee is about four hundred dollars to participate and that's not including what they do in terms of band boosters um and and it's so interesting to look at the parts of the band

[00:25:32] budget that the boosters are paying for because some of the things that they're paying for including moving the instruments across the county um seem like they would be instrumental for lack of a better word no pun intended but um to the actual process of performing in marching band. And then I've heard that at different schools, they have a completely different allocation that's set at the school level. So it's one of those things where I would really like to understand more about how it works. And with the student fees, I know

[00:26:06] my daughter participates in Educators Rising, and she has paid a fee for that. So who at the school is making the determination about how those fees are assigned and allocated and does it apply to all types of student activities? I'm very supportive of this effort and I appreciate the gains that we've made. I would just love to understand it a little better so we can continue on this good work. I've definitely made note of the the first question and we have heard similarly and continue to look at what the high schools in particular are charging

[00:26:46] and trying to work with the schools of not having that occur. And related to your second question, again, the activity allotment that was introduced last year really was provided to the principal so that they could use that to support all the clubs that they may have at their school.

[00:27:07] Because it was our first year, there was a lot of questions in terms of what was eligible, It was not eligible. I think similar to back in FY22 when we rolled out the teacher classroom supply allotment, it took a couple years for teachers even to be fully aware it was available, even though we really did a lot of outreach.

[00:27:28] So I'm thinking it's something similar with the activity allotment that with our 100 schools working with all the principals, trying to make sure we're giving them the clear guidance as well as expectations because they're provided at the school level for the principal to oversee and administer and I believe while I don't have the numbers in front of me that not all the schools utilize all of their funds which is a first indicator that you know we need we have some work to do. Thank you for that clarity that was very helpful. Yes Ms. Chernoff. Thank you Chair Chandler. I wanted to piggyback on this a second because first of all I wholeheartedly

[00:28:08] agree with this effort as well and I know we've had lots of discussions throughout the budget each year about what we can take on and what we can't, but I fully support seeing some of that data as well. I don't know what we do in terms of collecting that information each year, year to year, where those allotments go. Do we have any requirements for schools reporting back to us about what they do with those different allotments? I don't know if you need multiple board members to support to get that data request, but that's something that I think would be really useful going into the budget session, much like we've asked for comprehensive stipend overview and understanding the requirements for that. I sort of feel like this is sort of a secondary wheel that's

[00:28:44] turning underneath the stipend conversation as well, so I would support that. I just wanted to shed light a little bit on the fine arts discussion that's been going on in curriculum and instruction, because we were kind of headed down this path in our conversation as well about weighing what boosters pay for versus the allotment, but what we realized is there are basic instructional materials in arts classes and music classes that are also being charged to students just to access their general ed curriculum and so then we figured we would tackle that first as a sort of right sizing for an equity issue for all students before we even went on to extracurricular so we took that on in committee for several meetings and I know that

[00:29:22] that's being worked up for this year's budget process as a potential proposal but I just wanted to like highlight also that there's other gen ed fees that we're not even covering yet either so So I need to understand, I think, as well, the whole scope of this, and I realize that it's very large, and I know we have 100 schools, and I know we have almost 83,000 students, so that's a lot of different fees, but that was really eye-opening to me, that, you know, that that was something we needed to right-size first before we could even have the extracurricular conversation.

[00:29:51] So just kind of adding some thoughts there. So thank you for your questions, Ms. Chandler, because that brought those up. Thank you. Thank you very much, Ms. Chernoff. Any further questions? Seeing none, we'll move on to our next item on the agenda, the Loudoun County Update on Youth Substance Abuse.

[00:30:09] We have several visitors this evening. Please come and join us. The purpose of this item is to inform the Joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Committee of the services that are available to prevent and respond to youth substance use in Loudoun County. I would like to invite all of the members of the panel to please introduce themselves.

[00:30:33] - I'm Evan Braff, I'm the Opiate Response Coordinator for Loudoun County. - And I'm Jennifer Evans, I'm the Director of Student Mental Health Services. - Good afternoon and thank you members of the Board of Supervisors and School Board for the opportunity to be here today.

[00:30:49] My name is Evan Braff and I serve as the Loudoun County Opiate Response Coordinator. While the title may suggest a narrow focus, my role extends well beyond opiates alone. It is about helping Loudoun County take a coordinated approach to the broader challenges of opiates, alcohol, vaping, or other substances.

[00:31:12] The work is about prevention, treatment, recovery, and ultimately strengthening the systems that protect the health and wellbeing of youth and families. Next slide, please. Youth substance use disorders is a pressing concern for all of us.

[00:31:28] It affects not only the health and future of our young people, but also the safety and strength of the entire community. Addressing it requires a shared commitment, Family, school, government, and community partners all play essential roles in the solution.

[00:31:43] In Loudoun County, the Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Developmental Services, MHSADS, takes the lead in coordinating prevention, intervention, and treatment efforts. No single agency can solve this challenge on its own.

[00:32:00] That is why collaboration is so important. By working across systems, we ensure resources are used effectively, services are aligned, and young people and families experience a seamless continuum of care from prevention and early intervention through treatment, crisis stabilization, and recovery.

[00:32:21] Next slide. Prevention is one of the most powerful tools we have in protecting our youth. By reaching young people early and equipping the adults around them with knowledge and skills, we can reduce risks before problems even start.

[00:32:37] Our approach is twofold, building awareness and building capacity. Revive training gives community members the ability to identify the signs of an overdose and to save a life with Narcan. But prevention just isn't about emergencies. It's about understanding the underlying factors that can lead to substance use.

[00:32:59] That's where programs like Mental Health First Aid and Adverse Childhood Experiences training come in. They give parents, teachers, coaches, and neighbors the tools to recognize challenges, supporting healthy coping strategies, and intervene early before a crisis occurs.

[00:33:18] Investing in prevention works because it strengthens the protective factors that help youth make positive choices, fosters resilience in families and communities, and may reduce the need for more intensive treatment later. In short, prevention saves lives, strengthens communities, and ensures young people have the foundation to thrive.

[00:33:40] Next slide, please. MHACS leads the Raising Education Achievement and Leadership programs through Club Real and Camp Real, ensuring that prevention and life skills are delivered effectively to students from elementary through high school.

[00:33:58] In the past year alone, 687 youth participated, and 87 percent improved or maintained their prevention skills, immeasurable success. A key element of these programs is that the focus on youth who have been identified as needing additional support.

[00:34:17] By intentionally connecting with these students who may be at higher risk, we can provide targeted guidance, mentorship, and resources that address specific challenges they are facing. This early and focused support is crucial because it helps prevent small issues from becoming larger problems, strengthens resilience, and gives these young people a better chance to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

[00:34:45] The MHADS prevention team does not do this alone. LCPS counselors and the Sheriff's Office are partners in the success of these programs. Next slide. Prevention is critical, but we also know that some youth and families need more intensive help.

[00:35:05] MHSADS provides a wide range of treatment and intervention services, including assessment and referral, case management, crisis stabilization, psychiatric services, and early intervention that begins as young as infancy.

[00:35:22] Treatment and intervention are essential because prevention alone cannot reach every child or family experiencing challenges. These services ensure those who are struggling receive timely individual support to address underlying issues, build coping skills, and prevent escalation.

[00:35:43] By providing a spectrum of care from early intervention to crisis support, the department not only helps families navigate difficult moments, but also strengthens their long-term resilience and recovery. Our goal is to surround families with the supports they need, not only at a moment of crisis, but throughout the journey of recovery.

[00:36:05] Next slide. A critical part of our work is partnering with community-based organizations. These organizations are deeply embedded in the neighborhoods they serve and often have longstanding relationships with youth and families.

[00:36:20] They bring cultural knowledge, trust, and specialized programs that can meet unique community needs. By collaborating with CBOs, we expand access to prevention, intervention, and recovery, support reduced barriers for families, and build a stronger, more inclusive network that effectively supports youth in making healthy choices.

[00:36:43] Next slide. Looking forward, Loudoun County is working on several important initiatives. We are expanding psychiatric services that for children, adolescents, and individuals with substance use disorders have access to specialized evidence care.

[00:37:02] we are undertaking a comprehensive opiate needs assessment and strategic plan to guide our priorities and our resource allocation in years ahead. And regionally, we are partnering to create a Northern Virginia Youth Detox and Crisis Stabilization Center, which will fill a critical gap in services for young people and families who need intensive and short-term support.

[00:37:29] Last slide. In closing, Loudon's approach is balanced. We are committed to prevention, providing high-quality treatment, and supporting long-term recovery. Equally important is our focus on continuing to enhance a recovery community, creating a supportive environment where individuals and families feel connected, understood, and empowered to sustain their recovery. Building this community is essential because recovery is just not an individual journey. And I want to repeat that. It's not an individual journey. It thrives when supported

[00:38:08] by support, resources, and shared understanding. Our opportunity is to continue joint planning and alignment of resources so that every young person in Loudoun County has the chance to grow up Healthy, resilient, and safe. Thank you.

[00:38:24] Thank you. Good afternoon. Again, I'm Jen Evans, Director of Student Mental Health Services for LCPS. Next slide, please. As we gather to discuss the strategies and pathways to addressing youth substance use, I want to frame it around our strategic action, which is empowering students, exemplary staff, an enriched division, and an engaged community.

[00:38:52] Empowered students are the heart of our work, and we believe that all students, including those impacted by substance use deserve the opportunity to succeed, grow, and reach their potential. Our exemplary staff are the backbone of this vision. They are the mentors, teachers, social workers, counselors, and advocates who build trust and foster resiliency to our students.

[00:39:11] An enriched division that speaks to our commitment, our innovation, our inclusivity, and our excellence. Our schools are designed to support students, and we must offer robust academic programs while also addressing the unique challenges that some of our students face. Together, we can build a division that enriches the lives of every student, especially those overcoming adversity.

[00:39:33] Lastly, we know that none of this can happen without our community. The success of our students, particularly those impacted by substance use, relies on our strong partnerships and among our families, schools, local organizations, and mental health professionals. Together, we can ensure that the wraparound services and support and the systems are in place to help our students stay resilient and focus on the future.

[00:39:56] Next slide. Which brings me to the importance of collaborative planning, which is the key, which Mr. Braff already spoke about, but I want to highlight some of the partners that we've had in this work. Some have been withstanding for years, Loudoun County Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services, our law enforcement partners, the Williams Center, Sandstone Care, Insight Recovery Centers. It takes a village to address the opioid epidemic and the substance use concerns that we have here in Loudoun and in the nation. Next slide, please.

[00:40:28] As I mentioned, we've been partners with Loudoun County Mental Health for way beyond I even came to LCPS. So when I joined LCPS in 2014, the partnership was already in place with the life skills groups co-facilitated with our social workers and school counselors to the after-school program, Camp Reel, Club Reel.

[00:40:48] In addition, they support our students who are in sources of strength and our peer program, which you'll learn about later, with their school-based initiatives, which are all about promoting hope, help, and strength, and resiliency, and those protective factors. In 2022-2023, we really came together to bring a message to the community about fentanyl awareness, as well as other opioids and synthetic illicit drugs that we were seeing. So that includes Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Leesburg Police Department behind me, impacted family members who have reached out through our presentations and share their own stories, as well as our staff

[00:41:25] and prevention and intervention who have trained our community members, including parents and even students. Next slide. I do want to highlight some of the educational initiatives that have been in place for a while. Naloxone training, I looked at the last numbers. We have trained over 1,500 staff

members with the support of Loudoun County's prevention and intervention team and our student health services. So we have plenty of kits in all of our schools, and recently we We just provided additional kits for those that have expired, just to be prepared.

[00:41:59] Our student assistance services, we've expanded from 19 of our staff to 30 of our staff, which gives us about one to every secondary school. And what they do is provide individual and group counseling presentations to students through Health and PE.

[00:42:14] Every time a student violates, they have to meet with the student assistance specialists, and we make referrals and recommendations to the community. And then we've increased our community partnerships to include parent guidance, which is an opportunity for every parent at no cost to get a coach.

[00:42:31] You can access this person once a week. You can ask them about how to handle bullying. You can ask them how to talk to your child about vaping. They'll walk you through that side by side. And that's an unlimited resource to our parents. And CareSolus is a navigation system that helps you find providers.

[00:42:46] Many people have said that they experience wait lists. don't take my insurance. There's a six-month wait list. This helps find someone nationwide. It may be telehealth, which might not be ideal, but at least it's someone to get that relationship started. Next slide. This is just a sampling of some of the events that we've had in the community with all of our partners. Next weekend, I'm going to do a shout out. We have our shatterproof run and walk, and that's at Mormon Park with all of our partners. The Recovery Fest was just this past weekend. We had our first international overdose awareness vigil two weeks ago, the Serenity House 5k is something we all are part of and our mental health and wellness conference which will be in

[00:43:26] february is something that brings all of our community partners together so any place that we can be with our community partners sharing the same message we want to be there next slide just a little bit more about what our student assistant specialists do they are all mental health master's level often licensed specialists who've been in the clinical field but are now in our schools committed to their prevention and intervention.

[00:43:51] We've expanded the number of presentations you will see that they're doing. They're in sixth grade, seventh grade, eighth grade, and ninth grade with law enforcement, speaking to students about substance use trends. That's all of the trends, not just fentanyl, not just opioids, to help them know what's out there.

[00:44:07] What are the protective factors? What are the risk factors? What's the disease of addiction? Helping kids to have those conversations. We also do parent and staff community events outside of the community organized. presentations that we've been doing at the local schools.

[00:44:22] So they'll often do parent coffees or evenings to just come in and learn about who the SAS is and what are we seeing. They also are getting ready to develop an elementary school presentation, which is unfortunate but also necessary, to start teaching kids about vaping in fifth grade.

[00:44:40] There is a layer of education about drugs and alcohol and pills and what's a safe pill through FLE and Health and PE, but we feel like it's important them to know who the SAS is at the fifth grade level so when they transition they know who that person is in the middle school and again they do a lot of interventions so when students are caught with a substance at school they have to complete nicotine

education if they get caught with a drug or alcohol they have to complete the substance use education class we do individual counseling ongoing case management referral to the providers in the community we are not a replacement for

[00:45:15] treatment, which is why the treatment providers are essential. And we do pre-recovery groups, recovery groups, and child of addiction groups when those students are identified. Next slide. A little bit more about some of our prevention programming that aligns with the building of resiliency and creating students who have the protective factors in place. Sources of Strength, I think you've probably all heard of that. It's an upstream prevention program that addresses bullying prevention, suicide prevention, as well as bullying prevention and substance use as well.

[00:45:48] And it takes students, it makes them the leaders. They get trained in the skills. They are supported by the adults in the building, and they share positive messages about hope, help, and strength through their entire school community. And then we also have the peer program in all of our high schools, and that's students who are trained to help other students. When we have students sharing the message, that's often heard differently than when the adults share the message.

[00:46:11] So PEER will do programs around healthy relationships, substance use prevention, suicide prevention, mental health awareness. They often do wellness weeks. But again, the prevention team has been very, very supportive of all the efforts of these student leaders.

[00:46:28] Next slide, please. And as you heard, LCPS opened the doors to our recovery school. The name that is proposed that will go to the school board is the RISE Academy Recovery inspiration strength and empowerment this is a program for high school students that will provide the supports bring those supports into the school setting make a safe setting for them to continue working their recovery program but also to progress towards their high school diploma prior to transitioning back to the home school we often hear students who go to treatment aren't ready to go back to a traditional high school setting with the numbers and the people

[00:47:06] places and things where they were using so this is a step-down program Students may stay for one marking period, a semester, or the entire year they may graduate from there. Next slide. Fifteen partners have been part of building this.

[00:47:22] So everyone in this room, along with many others, who are bringing specific skills and workshops and educational opportunities to our parents and our students. And it has been just an amazing community effort to make this happen. So we're very excited to have it here.

[00:47:39] I also want to point out, a lot of people have asked how, what is the population of students who might be eligible for this? Well, it's hard because they have to be willing to make this step and to take this journey. And if you look at the statistics, I want to share that in 2023, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health showed that 8.5% of youth between the ages of 12 and 17 have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder.

[00:48:06] So you translate that to our LCPS population, we have about 46,000 secondary students. That's about 3,900 students who are in LCPS that probably have a substance use disorder. So we know they're there. Some of the students have multiple violations, but some students present well and they don't get caught.

[00:48:26] So we're trying to identify them and also get them to that place of readiness. Next slide, please. This is just a little bit of what it looks like. They're concurrently enrolled with their homeschool. The education is actually from their homeschool, but we have teachers at the school who will work through and help them pace and stay on track with their homeschool academics.

[00:48:47] We get individualized instruction to meet their needs. They will have daily practices, including restorative practices, wellness time, what individuals need, which could be individual or group or our peer recovery specialists coming in to work with the students, and partnering with the parents is essential.

[00:49:04] They will be exposed to post-secondary recovery communities through Serenity House, the Chris Atwood Foundation. GMU is partnering with us to offer opportunities there with mentoring. And so I think you have a snapshot of what that program looks like, but we're very excited.

[00:49:23] Next slide. And that concludes my talking points. Thank you. Thank you so much. Before we move on to the next session of the presentation, are there any questions? Supervisor Chacroni. Yeah, thank you. Chair Chandler.

[00:49:39] So thank you so much for that information. I'm really excited to see all the partnerships and collaboration to, you know, keep our kids healthy and to do prevention. I think prevention is really important. Where is the recovery school?

[00:49:58] So right now it is at the North Star School in Leesburg, and we have parished a separate wing from the other programs there. So there's three programs in one building. Okay. Is that where it's going to stay, do you think? Yes, for at least a few years. My hope is for it to be a standalone building.

[00:50:14] But for now, that's where we are, and we've made it a completely safe, separate building, a separate wing, and the transportation and all the interactions with the other students are eliminated. That's wonderful. Do you think, so I heard about the wait list and the issues with insurance, you know, getting some of that care.

[00:50:31] And I know that is a big issue nationwide. Do you think we need more psychiatrists? I saw that the county was offering some psychiatrists. I mean, do you think it makes sense to have in-house, more in-house psychiatrists and psychologists and counselors to help our students?

[00:50:50] I think additional child psychiatry is always going to be needed. It's just a balance of, and there's a lot of variables that go into play with private psychiatrists and what insurance companies pay the private psychiatrists. They're better off going with a self-pay fee because the insurance companies don't pay enough so I think that's what we run into a lot and then people can't afford the private psychiatrist so I'm so excited that we're having a child psychiatrist added added yeah I'm just wondering if it might make sense to add more yeah I hear you because telemedicine's not great and that's with mental health it's better to have that one-on-one connection um so yeah I just please

[00:51:29] reach out if you think you need more um because I didn't even know we were adding that was that added during the 26 budget or do you know Mr. Hemstreet or oh thank you there's Margaret hey Margaret she's hiding in the back yeah thanks Margaret Graham I am Margaret Graham I'm the director of the department of mental health substance abuse and developmental services and January of 25 we came forward with the request for FTE authority and we've been recruiting, and we have some

[00:52:08] interviews lined up. You'll let us know if you think you might need more in that area? Yes, you actually approved us to add a child and adolescent and an addiction certified, so we are recruiting for two. Excellent. And there is a shortage of psychiatrists, so we are in recruit and out there looking. Okay, thank you for that update. You're welcome.

[00:52:34] Provisor Brisbane? Thank you, and thank you for the presentation, and And really glad to hear all this great work is happening. My daughter was a peer in the Sources of Strength when she was in high school and actually has carried on getting her master's in counseling right now.

[00:52:53] So it can help a lot of people. I had two questions. Number one, how does someone get into the real camp? Is it a referral or is it, how does that happen? I believe the process is collaborative between MHSADS's Prevention and Intervention Program and Loudoun County Public Schools to identify the high-risk students who would participate and benefit.

[00:53:20] So is it kind of just a conversation they have, and then it's suggested that they enroll as a referral, pretty much? Yeah, so school counselors, social workers work together with the prevention and intervention staff to see, like who are returning students, who have we worked with at this school that might be transitioning to the higher level school. And then it also is, there's some indicators, whether it's attendance, academic concerns, behavioral concerns that might be bubbling. They would be appropriate referrals. You talk to the students, see if they're interested, and then make sure we get parent permission for them to participate. Gotcha. Okay. That really sounds like a great program.

[00:53:58] And then the Youth Crisis Stabilization Center for NOVA that is separate and distinct from the crisis receiving center that the county is almost finished building. I think correct Yes, so the county is building an adult crisis receiving and stabilization center and the five community services board of which Loudoun County Department of Mental Health Substance and Developmental Services is one collaborated to create a youth assessment and detox stabilization facility.

[00:54:35] And the bid has been awarded. The provider is developing and the doors should open in the next six months or so. Okay. It's a regional center. So Alexandria, City of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun will refer to it.

[00:54:54] Okay, lovely. And who's paying for it? It's a collaborative. The five counties contributed. And we got a grant from the Opioid Abatement Authority. Oh, fantastic. But is it also similar to our crisis receiving center in that the state operates it and the state should be paying for it but isn't?

[00:55:16] Is it similar to that? Our crisis receiving and stabilization center will be operated by a contractor funded through Loudoun and it will be regional and we are in negotiations with the Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services. This was very specifically funded for kids based on the need for substance use disorder treatment and access in the region and up until now I believe we've had to send most of the young people out of state to get detox and treatment.

[00:55:48] Is it the case then that only Northern Virginia people can go to this one or is it the case that the state can assign take beds for example so in the case of regional services anyone I'm going to say it in my language if you muster up the courage to come to a health care facility yeah we're not going to tell you to go away because you're from a different county than one of the five in northern Virginia because you came in for behavioral health reasons and we have an obligation to provide you some level of service and then move you to wherever you need to get to much like if you have a car crash

[00:56:27] on your way to North Carolina and you end up in a hospital in North Carolina they're not going to tell you to go back to Fairfax I use that as an example to parallel the two okay fantastic thank you thank you very much Chair Chandler any further questions? thank you I'm really pleased to hear about the wraparound approach that we have for our students and all the things that we have to help our students become better people and help them in their need.

[00:57:02] There was one thing that you had talked about, the Narcan kits. So how long does a Narcan kit last? And if a person hasn't used it and it expires, what does a person do to dispose of them?

[00:57:19] So Narcan lasts traditionally about three years. And so, I mean, the studies show that you really, it's something that when you're done with it, You can just get rid of it. It's not going to cause any harm or anything else like that.

[00:57:36] I think in Loudoun, we've done a really good job of the way people can access Narcan. So they can either watch one of our trainings online. We can mail it to them. They can come up or pick it up. Or they can come to some of the trainings that we offer in person.

[00:57:53] And during the training, we remind folks of what those life shelves are and making sure that people can come back in and get those when they need them. Thank you. Thank you so much.

[00:58:10] That was very informative. I believe we have one more part of the presentation. I'd like to invite our guests to please come to the table. Thank you for being here.

[00:58:25] I'll just ask that you please introduce yourself to the room. Absolutely. Thank you so much for having us. My name is Lieutenant Colonel Chris Sawyer. I oversee the Field Operations Bureau for Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. With me, I have Lieutenant Mike Safford.

[00:58:43] I'll give a shout out to Mike. Mike has been the second lieutenant of our SRO program for a couple years now. He is recently promoted, and so he is the outgoing second lieutenant of schools. Behind me is Lieutenant Kevin O'Brien. He's the incoming lieutenant of schools for the sheriff's office.

[00:59:00] I also have representation from Leesburg PD, Lieutenant Chris Mangaluzzo. And then behind is also Sergeant Marcus Whitfield, who's the supervisor of our K-9 program. and i've got major greg allman over this shoulder as well who oversees the operational support division so that is the contingency from the sheriff's office here for this presentation i'm very excited to bring this presentation as anytime we are talking about prevention we get excited because anything we can prevent is something that doesn't become a statistic of any sort here in uh in loudon county so i'm excited about that if i could do a quick plug as well based on your last question about narcan disposal all of our stations and the county

[00:59:39] their county facilities as well have drug disposal boxes. We also do drug take back events and things like that. A significant way that prescription drugs, legitimately prescribed prescription drugs end up in the hands of children and those that should not have them is through inappropriate disposal or just holding on to medication too long beyond when it's needed.

[01:00:04] So if I can give a plug to drug destruction and appropriate disposal, I would like to do that. So if you can go ahead and begin the presentation here, I'll talk through this. So really what I wanted to start with was talking about our SRO program just real briefly. So we, and when I say collective we, that includes the Leesburg Police Department, we have incredible school resource officer programs here.

[01:00:25] I realize that I may sound biased in that, but we have been given awards nationally for our programs here because of what we do. We follow the National Association of School Resource Officers, what they call the triad model, which is that there's three critical roles of an SRO.

[01:00:41] We are not just in the schools for enforcement. We are there for education, to assist with public safety education, and to act as informal counselors and mentors. We take all of those roles very, very seriously, much more than just enforcing criminal laws. In fact, if you were to look at a breakdown of the time that we spend in schools, the fraction of our time is actually doing the enforcement angle.

[01:01:03] We are very heavy on education, and then being counselors, mentors, and really plugging into the school environment, getting to know, we encourage all the SROs, get engaged with your school administration. You should be very tight with the principals, the assistant principals, and all the staff that's there as part of the team there.

[01:01:21] You can go ahead and move on to the next slide. A lot of these education programs have been covered because so much of what we do is in collaboration with the school system and with Loudoun County MHS ADS. But just to list some of these, obviously we have our D.A.R.E. program.

[01:01:40] Virginia Rules is the program that we do in middle school and that covers a lot of different law enforcement public safety topics. We do a ninth grade opioid awareness presentation as well. And that's on top of the different substance abuse awareness events that we do across the county.

[01:01:55] And really I just give plugs 'cause we are so interconnected as organizations here. So we do sheriff's office hosted events that MHS-ADS and LCPS supports. MHS-ADS does their own events that the schools and the sheriff's office supports. And then the schools does their own events that MHS-ADS and the sheriff's office support.

[01:02:14] So we are really working together to try to get as much education out into the community as we can. A lot of what we talk about is just what I talked about, drug destruction, things like that. Also just giving a simple message that what we continue to see in Loudoun County when it comes to fentanyl and opioids rates is the blue fake Percocet pills. So that is the message that we see. They are typically stamped with M on one side, 30 on the other. They're called Perc 30s or M30s or anything like that. But fake prescription Percocet is the number one opiate that we see in Loudoun County. And our

[01:02:48] message is we try to be as clear and concise as possible that if you did not get it from a pharmacist from a licensed doctor from a pharmacist yourself if you cannot attest to where it came from do not put it in your body if you follow that simple rule your odds of overdosing is very slim we we work very very hard to get that message out into the community from a law enforcement standpoint in addition to that like i said that includes you know parent seminar student seminars some hands-on things as well and then we also participate with sources of strength camp real and of course the canine scam program that we began which you can move on to the next

[01:03:25] slide. So back in December 2023, we started conversations with LCPS about canine scans in schools. Of course, 2023 was on the heels of a couple of years of opioid overdoses in juveniles heading in the wrong direction. They significantly spiked through 22 and 2023, especially the end of 2023. So we look to see what could we do to help make sure our schools remain safe environments, specifically from opioids.

[01:03:57] We started canine scans in schools in spring of 2024, and that includes all Loudoun County High Schools, all Loudoun County Public School High Schools in a randomized order, and with the goal of having a minimal disruption to the learning environment.

[01:04:13] So it is done well, while class is currently in session in a block of instruction, so that this scan begins and ends while students are in classrooms and not work in the hallways. So our overall objective with the canine scans is deterrence and overdose prevention.

[01:04:32] When we scan schools and we have no detection, then that is a win, that is our goal. Our goal is not enforcement for these canine scans, it is prevention. We wanna make sure that we are keeping the dangerous substances out of the schools.

[01:04:47] So as you can see in the pictures, actually if you can go back on that, I do wanna give a plug to our canine handlers that do this. Sergeant Whitfield is one of them. he has a black lab. It doesn't really show very well in this picture, but that is Jet in the top corner. And then we have Deputy First Class Steinforth, who has Mia, yellow lab there. And then Leesburg PD has a canine handler with Iris. They're all labs. We're doing our best to, I guess, keep the Labrador breeders in service. So those are our dogs that we are using for canine scans.

[01:05:18] They're all adorable. They do a ton of community events. They're very well known across Loudoun county you can go on to the next one and this is what i really want to show so um this i don't just want to stop on this for a second because i think just looking at this chart um is is pretty significant and this really can't be understated um when you look at this is what you're looking at is you're looking at juvenile opioid related overdose data over the past you know handful of years and usually we go back to 2019 to kind of show pre-covid that's generally across all of our stats to give a baseline of where were we pre-COVID although the interesting thing with

[01:05:55] fentanyl is obviously we've seen it gain in when I say popularity I mean that in the negative sense we've seen it gain popularity over the past you know several years and yeah I'll just leave it as that we've seen it gain 2022-2023 were not good years we started you know seeing spikes And really, again, this is what spurred the conversations about we need to do something about opioids in our community.

[01:06:25] And the takeaway from this, at least one of the takeaways that I want to give is this is not for the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office or law enforcement to solely take a victory lap on these numbers, because this is not just us. There are so many people working in this space.

[01:06:41] We've got phenomenal detectives that do drug and gang investigations. Obviously, we're doing things like education and canine scans and things like that. But during this same time, Loudoun County MHS-ADS had really kicked up their community engagement as well.

[01:06:58] So has LCPS. There are so many people, a lot of nonprofit organizations are doing great work in this space to bring awareness to opioids, the dangers of opioids, prevention, you know, and all those types of things. And what I can say is collectively, and for me, when I look at this chart, the takeaway for me is that what we're doing is working.

[01:07:23] Our work is not done. We would like to see zeros across the board. You know, unfortunately, we did have a fatal overdose of a juvenile this year. that case is absolutely tragic. And, um, and that came back on, if anybody's watched the news on, on how opioids keep evolving, um, that case appears to be linked to pyro, um, which is another analog, um, of, of opioids that's significantly more potent than fentanyl. Um,

so the, you know, the, the chemists, the people that are making this poison, if I can use that word, the people that are making this poison continue to try to make it better, more potent, things like that.

[01:08:03] our work is not done. We need to continue doing the things that we are doing. And when I say we, I mean the collective we, everyone who is working in this space to continue getting the message out and everything that we can do to prevent overdoses, period, but especially in our children. With that, I'll be happy to take any questions. Thank you very much. That was very insightful. And now open the floor to questions from the committee. Supervisor Chacroni.

[01:08:36] Thank you, Lieutenant Colonel Sawyer. God, I want to make sure. That's okay. No, you have so many levels, so I have to get that. So thank you for all of that information. Do you think, that is amazing that it's gone, it's just reduced so much.

[01:08:57] Do you think you have the resources you need to get it to zero? Are there other resources that we should be looking at? like you've it sounds you've made success here but is there something else that you need to get it to zero so I think um one of the things that we are all continuing to do and and I give a shout out to the county the county is currently doing a strength and needs assessment um my my colleague Mr. Braff talked about that a little bit talking looking specifically at what is Loudoun County holistically doing about this and then what do we need to continue doing so to get a full answer to that if I'm going to give a bit of a non-answer that report's not done yet so we are hoping to

[01:09:37] have that report i believe this fall is the the timeline that that we are on um to be able to have a kind of a holistic report on that i do think when it comes to essentially saturation of the messaging getting the message out and ensuring that every segment of the community has it has the information knows what you know the things we're talking about as far as prevention but also has access to you know the resources for rehabilitation and things like that those are critical components so i do not think that law enforcement is the sole tool to eradicate this

[01:10:13] we play a very important role we prioritize distribute distributors if you are distributing this stuff especially fentanyl but any narcotic we still deal with cocaine and all these other things in loudon county if you are distributing this in loudon county we will 100 hold you accountable and we work those investigations very tirelessly so from a law enforcement perspective we will do our part but this is not something we can just enforce our way out of we need to to deal with it holistically and fortunately we've got great collaboration and great partners to help

[01:10:48] with that. Thank you and I do want to put a plug out for Deputy Rudolph and Deputy Gentry they do more patrolling they're not SROs but I think one thing I've learned from them is about the importance of developing relationships with the kids and really community policing.

[01:11:07] They've gotten the kids to wear helmets on their e-bikes that they ride to school or their e-dirt bikes. They are out there talking to the kids. And so I think it is important, I think, for the relationship of law enforcement with these kids and just being a trusted source so that they can feel like they can talk to someone from law enforcement, so I really appreciate it.

[01:11:34] It sounds like the SROs are really way beyond just, you know, policing. It's more getting to know the kids and educating. Yes, absolutely. We are way beyond the enforcement angle. Like I said, enforcement is actually the fraction of the minority of what SROs do with their time.

[01:11:51] Yeah. Thank you so much for all that you do. Governor Brissman? Thank you. I don't know how this keeps happening, but I think we need to put it in our rules of order, both for the board of supervisors and lcps that if we are going to be talking about dogs they need to come so i actually asked that question yes because that always just makes things so much better um anyway i i asked that question uh sergeant whitfield's dog jet um is super playful and i don't think we would be able to have order

[01:12:29] in this room. Couldn't have him in the room. If Jett was sitting in here. I do appreciate the data. This is really a great, really a success story that we're showing right here. Just to clarify, this means that so far in 2025, we've had an overdose that was a fatality, but otherwise have not had overdoses that have been reported in juveniles. Yes. That's really amazing.

[01:12:59] On this chart as well, I just want to clarify, this chart indicates juvenile overdoses throughout the county, not just on school property or in our school system? Yes, correct. Okay, okay, thank you. And who are the distributors?

[01:13:17] Is it a kid in school who thinks they need to make a little bit of money? Is it someone that's coming from outside of the county? So it can take many forms. The majority of the fentanyl that's coming to the county is coming from outside the county. It is coming from metropolitan areas, which is then coming from south of the border where it's being produced.

[01:13:38] So the trafficking angle at a very high level, that's kind of the general route. Why someone distributes, though, is a broader spectrum. so you have you know user distributors essentially people who are distributing to support their own usage habits they're not really trying to get rich off of it they're just trying to support their own usage habits uh you have you know folks that are truly just trying to make money you also have gang involvement and things like that there's multiple there's multiple reasons of why someone would sell this um okay okay thank you um while i love this chart i do feel

[01:14:18] like we're a little light on data here and if we want to talk about the canine program I would like to know you know how many hits did you have just in aggregate you know maybe in 2024 2025 how many kids were you know how many referrals or how many disciplinary actions we had with kids in our schools just from a from the standpoint of trying to judge the success of the program and would it be

[01:14:55] can we get that data without you know obviously we don't want to target a particular school or particular child or anything like that but in aggregate I think it would be helpful for for the committee and the schools and the board to know sort of the success of the program sure and I can understand that question I think we're all trying to do the same thing and make the best decisions on on what you know we do for substance abuse prevention we do not publish or put out the specific results of the canine scans themselves specifically because it is a prevention program and we do not want to say what we did or did not find in a particular school or things like that

[01:15:34] regarding aggregate data the number of children who are charged in a Loudoun County public school with any type of criminal offense is extremely extremely low okay um so this past school year um i can speak to um so this would have been school year 24 25 um across all offenses um there were 39 students that were charged with offenses the vast majority of those to the tune of like 70 percent are assault and battery assault by mob uh threats against other students threats against

[01:16:12] to school bringing weapons to school property um so when you look at those numbers in an aggregate um the the vast majority of what we deal with in the schools is not drug related okay um so again

i don't get into the specifics as far as the canines and what they have specifically you know found or not found but even trying to draw conclusions off of you know 39 students in a in a school population of you know of 80,000 you know kids and you know I say even 80,000 because when you look at our calls for service across elementary middle and high schools we have over

[01:16:52] 4,000 calls for service so 4,000 incidents that our SROs respond to the ones that we're even we're involved to for some level less than one percent of those results in anyone being charged okay um And then when you look at, you know, across all the students, we're less than one-tenth of one percent of students charged with anything in, you know, Loudoun County schools.

[01:17:15] So we work, and that's why I tout our SRO program. Our SRO program is phenomenal. Anyone, you know, you hear places talk about school-to-prison pipeline, things like that. That is absolutely nonexistent here in Loudoun County. We work hand-in-hand with the schools, with administrators.

[01:17:31] The vast majority of what we do deal with gets referred back to the school for school-handled discipline. We also have a phenomenal county youth program. They've got a diversion or accountability program through the Youth and Family Resource Center. We've got phenomenal resources here, and we use them to try to ensure that whatever we're dealing with, it gets handled in the most appropriate manner for that student.

[01:17:54] That's all really good news. Just one last question, if the chair will oblige. Have you received any complaints about the dogs in the schools? Not that I recall. We have gotten a lot of recommendations from staff and other things that we should be doing more of them and in more places.

[01:18:14] We're always evaluating. But honestly, the goal of everything that we do is to help kids, give them the information, educate them so that they can make good decisions on everything, not just substance abuse, but in all walks of life, violence, prevention, all kinds of things, how to make good decisions, and then also have in place just enough of that thought that, hey, I really shouldn't bring something to school.

[01:18:40] If I was thinking about bringing something, I shouldn't, because today might be that day. Very fair points. And Lieutenant Colonel Sawyer, I just want to thank you so much for your candor and your willingness to always pick up the phone and have conversations with me about things that we're concerned about.

[01:18:56] Thank you. Thank you, Chair. Any further questions? With that, we've come to the end of our agenda items. Is there any new business? Supervisor Glass? Yes, Chair Chandler.

[01:19:12] I would like to add a presentation and discussion of the memorandum of understanding between the Loudoun County Public Schools and Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to be discussed at our November meeting.

[01:19:28] I have a motion to that effect, and that should be at everyone's seat. Thank you, Co-Chair Glass. Could I ask you, please, to read the motion? Okay, I move that the Joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Committee recommend that the Board of Supervisors and School Board at the Loudoun County Public Schools and Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Memorandum of understanding as an item to the Joint Committee's work plan to be presented at the November 2025 Joint Committee meeting

[01:20:14] Okay, thank you Since the Board of Supervisors fund both Loudoun County Public Schools and Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, I had a discussion with Co-Chair Mansfield as well.

[01:20:30] We feel this is an appropriate place to have a presentation and question time at our November meeting. We had a similar item presented in April 2023, and I hope my fellow committee members will support this inclusion in the work plan. Thank you so much. Supervisor Brisbane?

[01:20:48] Thank you. - Thank you so much for bringing this motion. I definitely agree that these two boards fund, our board funds both the departments and I look forward to discussing it.

[01:21:05] I know that last term when this came in front of us, we had added a couple of things to the MOU and I think at least for me, I wanna make sure those things are still in the MOU.

[01:21:20] For example, trauma-informed training for any SRO that is age appropriate for the population that they are working with at the schools. Additionally, I think that we had a little bit of an issue with parent notification when a student was getting questioned and interviewed.

[01:21:39] And I think that we had settled on that there would be parent or guardian notification unless it was a critical emergency of some sort, that that would be part of the process. So I'm very interested in reviewing the MOU.

[01:21:55] Thank you very much for bringing it forward, Chair Glass. - Thank you so much. I also feel very supportive of this initiative. I'm happy to entertain the motion.

[01:22:11] I would like to point out, as it was pointed out by LCPS staff today, We have five items on the agenda in November and might want to consider whether or not we would like to move some things off the agenda or add an additional hour of time to that particular meeting so that we can address all of the work.

[01:22:32] Whatever you think is best as chairs, yeah. Do we have to make that decision right now? Because if the meeting is full, then co-chair Mansfield wouldn't mind.

[01:22:48] What would be the next meeting that we would have? Be in January. No, the next meeting is November 17th. We're discussing adding an agenda item to the November 17th meeting. When is the next meeting after November?

[01:23:05] Oh, it's March. Okay. Yeah, I wouldn't mind adding more time if that's needed. All right, great. Well, the motion has been made by Co-Chair Glass and seconded by Supervisor Chacroni.

[01:23:21] All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Seeing none opposed and with co-chair Mansfield and Ms. Chernoff absent for the vote, the motion passes with all committee members present. And with that, is there any further new business?

[01:23:38] The meeting is adjourned. Thank you so much for your hard work today and have a pleasant evening.



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