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Loudoun County Public Schools, Student Services Committee Meeting, Thursday, October 9, 2025

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[00:00:03] afternoon everyone thank you for joining us for the October 9th 2025 meeting of the Student Services Committee this meeting is a reschedule from our September meeting which we unfortunately it was necessary to cancel at the last minute because I had some family medical issues to attend to this meeting is being audio recorded it is not being video recorded but it is being audio recorded and it will be posted for anyone to listen to after today through the LCPS website I am Anne Donahue the chair of this committee with me are Ms.

[00:00:42] Carrie LaBelle and Ms. Melinda Mansfield and we will move on to item number two on our agenda which is public comment do we have any public commenters I am told we do not have any public commenters today so we will move right along to item number three which is approval of the draft minutes from our August 21st 2025 meeting which are in the packet and we're posted on board docs hopefully my colleagues have had a chance to review the draft as I have done and if there are any Corrections or suggested edits now is the time to discuss those if there are no edits or suggested Corrections I will entertain a motion

[00:01:20] to approve the minutes That motion has been properly moved and seconded. All those in favor please raise your hand and say aye.

[00:01:37] Aye. That motion passes unanimously. Now we will move on to item number four our first information item revision of policy 8155 our perennial favorite school assignment Mr. Dolson the floor is

yours.

[00:01:53] Thank you very much Chair Donahue I am just going to walk you through some of this information you all have seen before some of it is new so we will go ahead and get started on the next slide policy 8155 what you will see before you this evening is updated special education approval historical data that came as a request from our last meeting together the draft timeline with our window closing March 30th of 2026 for all special permission requests and then we will talk about the reasons that families apply for special permission and just going to highlight two additional

[00:02:33] revisions to our red line copy that you have before you this evening. So if you recall from our meeting previously we went through our elementary middle and high school special education data and what we did is we explained to you some of the data sets that you had seen previously that were aggregate and so when I say aggregate specifically I'm talking about the fact that this school year if you were applying to a school that was over enrolled was the first year that we voided those applications

[00:03:09] because policy 8155 now says that those applications will no longer be entertained. Previously in school years applications could be voided for a multitude of reasons. So in order to keep the data pure what we really wanted to do and again with my help from my handy dandy companion over here Miss Smith she really helped us see what was considered from a special education special permission perspective so in these slides you have before you you see the total number of applicants for

[00:03:45] elementary in the school year 24 25 there were 242 students with disabilities at the elementary level once we remove those students that were voided those that were considered was a total of 212 and then a hundred and ninety of those students were approved for special permission. That is the same you see before you for middle school and then the same element for high school. What I would like to show you on slide number nine is what we did is we went through

[00:04:21] and we matched that thought process and that thinking taking out all of the voids and we recalculated the numeric values as well as the percentages to give us a more pure estimate of who what was approved based on a model that we were currently using for this school year so as you like I said as you recall we this school year this past school year was the first year that we voided applicants if they were applying to a school that was already over enrolled because policy says that we cannot entertain applicants for schools that are

[00:05:00] over-enrolled and on slide 9 what you have before you is the percentages and the numeric values that indicate those students that were considered when the voids were removed from the historical data that we've been giving you previously go ahead Ms. Mansfield I'm confused so is this voided because of capacity for overall school or is this voided because of capacity for special education could be either or it could depend both of those could be for that

[00:05:38] both of those could be true you could be applying for a you could be applied to a school that is over capacity for just the fact they're at 95 percent capacity you could also be applying for it to a school whose capacity is under 90 percent but their special education population is over 90 percent and so we don't have the numbers for that at all if you voided that out if you voided that that place that one line that I really hate which is well you know what I'm talking

[00:06:13] about additional incurring additional cost to the school system correct so but we don't have that yet so these are the numbers that were considered after the voids were removed well okay all right we

don't have the boys separated in that okay just for a clarification on the voids that we did that I did for this past year that included the students whose parents were requesting special permission to a program that they were already assigned to by our office by well Paige's office so we voided those because they were already there and they

[00:06:52] were getting transportation they didn't need to do a special permission request. So the voids for this year's data when we presented it what's on slide I'm on six right now it explains it's for over enrolled school parent error like a parent put in the wrong thing and has to void it so they can ask for a different one parent request to withdraw a request student placed in the requested program already by the Office of School of Special Education Office Special Education or we had a couple of them for preschool requests which is not part of the special permission process. So the voids that that were part of last year's data on these charts also include students that didn't need to ask for

[00:07:31] special permission because they were already going to the school that they were requesting that kind of even confuses the issue more because it's hard to tell what is over enrolled what's parent error and then what is because they're a special education student and can't go in because of the because it's over enrolled for special education so no need to apologize be ready to go forward

[00:08:10] next slide Dr. Carter thank you all right so I just wanted to share some data that I requested from my team very recently because at the elementary level we were noticing I'm going to give you a just a snippet of an example at one of our newer schools there was a new autism program when they opened and that program filled very

[00:08:41] quickly with students who many of which were not at that home school and so this year this year we had rising kindergartners whose home school was that school but there was no space for them because of all of the other students that were already enrolled in that program that happens a lot. So then we go to the next closest one to their homeschool if that program is already filled.

[00:09:10] So this graph indicates everything in blue. They are in, and when we say homeschool, I mean in their school of residence, okay? So all of the blue numbers that you see are, represent the students who are being served in the school they would attend if they did not have a disability, their neighborhood school and all of the red indicates they are being served somewhere else. So as you can see at the elementary level it's about half and half overall when you look at that. Part of

[00:09:44] that is because of the description that I just shared with you. We fill a program and then there are more students that need to go to their home school but there's no space so we go to the next one. There's also a school board policy that indicates that parents have the option to remain for consistency for their students in the school where they were first placed, even though there may be an opening at their homeschool, they can choose to stay where they are. But what this creates is the need to move all of the rising students who need that place. There's no space for them to go to their homeschool, so they have to go somewhere else. And then it just kind of

[00:10:23] grows exponentially. And with the growth and the number of programs we have now, we're sort of caught in that loop of of not being able to send a lot of students to their home school until kids that are already there age out and in rare cases they are filled with their students who would attend that school but it I think there are two or three of those across the division I can get that for you exactly but I just wanted to share this with you because of our size and the number of programs it's really starting to impact our ability to place kids in their home school as we

[00:10:59] are you know we want to do as and as is regulatory but the other piece I wanted to share with you as you'll notice it is much less at the middle school level and then the next slide please much less at the high school level because there are fewer of those schools and everyone feeds to their high school and can feed to their high school because of the way programs are aligned the only exception to that are MD programs and intensive programs they are not located at every high school but everything else is so at middle school and high school it's much easier to be placed in your

[00:11:37] home school the big impact is at elementary and it's something we're trying to resolve and I just wanted to make you all aware that this is something that is impactful and while it is not related directly always to special permission it does have the same sort of effect sometimes in that when you are not placed at your home school or when your school is full because of special you know special permission that kind of thing there's the same role that happens but with our specialized programs it really is impactful so I just wanted to share that as we grow and we will

[00:12:12] be requesting more programs next year because of the growth in special education so do you have any questions thank you madam chair my question to you is if we have a student that is not going to their regular home school, say at the middle school or even the middle elementary school level, and they have a sibling, do the siblings often ask to change to be with their brother or sister as well?

[00:12:47] Sometimes. That is a request. Is that another issue that might be contributing to the over-enrollment or the need for more enrollment? I am not sure of the frequency of that, but that has been a request that has come to my office, and I've referred them to the special permission process.

[00:13:03] So and that would be yes the answer to that is yes. Okay Ms. Mansfield Thank you chair. So I I hear what you're saying about the elementary schools.

[00:13:19] I think we didn't have a lot of them in each school. And so we're seeing that this is a problem because we didn't have them in each school. Also I know that our special programs like dual enroll the the dual language also kicked some kids out of their programs and we had to redo programs that way right and so I see what you're talking about with the elementary school but I think but so are we now at elementary school do we now have a program for each school did you just say that that we do not almost

[00:13:55] there are some schools that do not have space for every kind of program because are too small because they're too small but we do have um for example a program for students with autism and intellectual disabilities at many many of our high school i mean at our elementary schools and some of them have multiple um and the other thing that is at play here is space yeah so a lot of times i would love to put another one for example at pine brook elementary for example but maybe they don't have space so i have to go looking elsewhere which might also reroute students to another location as a result and so now when we're building well I don't

[00:14:32] know that we're gonna be building any more elementary schools but now when we're building schools are they're actually coming to special education saying look how many classrooms do you need yes that is part of the the plan now that's also part of the discussion when we're talking about rezoning to make sure that we have adequate spaces for all the programs that would need to be there so there is that natural change happening I think the only barrier that that we could reconsider for children starting to come up is a change in that in the policy so that we could reroute children to their homeschool should there be a slot the following year is something that I would begin to recommend now that we have more programs

[00:15:12] than when that policy was written. 5320. Thank you, Tedger. Okay, so as we move along, we are going to go over just a draft snapshot of the- Mr. Dolson, sorry for interrupting, but I have been advised that there is an individual who wishes to make public comment.

[00:15:37] So I would like to take a moment to do that please. I mean not like immediately in front of me.

[00:15:58] I see that we have one individual signed up for public comment.

[00:16:29] Thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process.

[00:16:59] The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted based on the number of speakers in the agenda this evening. Our one speaker will have two minutes for public comment.

[00:17:15] All audience members shall maintain civility decorum and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times. Please remain at your seat unless arriving departing speaking at the table or during a break in the meeting. Violations of civility decorum and respect include shouting heckling jeering applause or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting obstructing speakers from being able to see board members and vice versa interrupting any speakers attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair of the committee and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate disparage or distract a speaker or staff member or other meeting attendees speakers should refrain from vulgarity obscenities defend defamation profanity

[00:17:53] or other like breaches of respect nor may speakers target criticize or attack individual students and or individual division employees during public comment speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official. Board requests that comments about an individual student or employee related matter not be shared at public meetings where the disclosure could violate applicable confidentiality requirements.

[00:18:17] Speakers should face the committee members and direct their comments to us per LCPS policy 2520. Members of this committee will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period. Violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the committee chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting.

[00:18:39] Repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility may result in on the decision of the committee chair. Public comment being tabled until a later point in the meeting's agenda limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons or the public comment period ending for the evening. If you have materials for committee members they should be should hold on to them and give them to an information officer after the meeting is over.

[00:19:04] And under no circumstances may a speaker approach board members. Okay Mr. Woodes please yes sir.

[00:19:21] The meeting is being audio recorded and will be available. This right. Several people in this room probably are aware that as a parent our family went through special permissions this year a process that I found extremely difficult to follow.

[00:19:50] I think I think it might be helpful I'm sure you understand this that we do this perhaps once to try and make the right decision for you know a child and when you do something once you feel like a

guinea pig in the process so i hear a lot of the discussions and meetings about um policy um because increasingly i was trying to fight the denial of a special permission request for my son and i'm not a lawyer but i but i did read extensively policy 8155 um kindly i've met

[00:20:26] one of the staff members subsequently to coming to the official board meetings and doing our one minute presentation as a resolution of our situation having denied special permissions to Blue Ridge ultimately we moved house I don't think that's something I would wish on any other parent who goes through the process this next cycle so if in any way my experience through it can be useful to what you discuss as educational leaders, that's one of the reasons I've come

[00:21:03] today. I currently carry two mortgages. That's not a wish. And if I could go back on conversations, I wish I'd been approached more. I know there are 4,000 applicants per year, of which I know summer renewals. But obviously, you have to try and adjudicate on, I don't know, multiples of hundreds of students, I think, which must be very difficult given the complex nature of other issues you discuss.

[00:21:36] In my discovery of this, I also did employ a lawyer, Debbie Rose, not in terms of challenging the board. Is that two minutes? Oh, I'm sorry. All right. Can I ask my two questions? They're generic. Okay. Not at this time.

[00:21:52] Oh, okay. Please feel free to email us. I think you know why. Thank you for your comments. Thank you staff for rolling with the scheduled aviation.

[00:22:08] Mr. Dolson I'll go back to you. All right. So we're going to go over the current I'm sorry the draft snapshot of the committee proposed timelines. I've just drafted up some dates for you all to look at. So this is our current timeline of our process for the 25 26 school year as it exists right now.

[00:22:25] January 5th special permission will open for LCPS employees. February 3rd special permission will open up for LCPS families the portal will close on April 30th and then we will render the kindergarten notification sent in July which is pretty much what we followed this past school year as well the committee proposal timeline of the process would look like this so January 20th we would open the portal for LCPS employees it would be open approximately two weeks until the

[00:23:00] permission portal would open up for LCPS families on February 2nd everyone portal would close on March 30th and then those kindergarten notifications would also be sent on July 1st going a little bit deeper within our current and proposed timelines when you look at the what is indicated here in the red that is what is currently happening and then when you look in the orange that is what the proposal would look like so it's just another rendition of what we kind

[00:23:38] of went through on the previous screen and then the next slide gives you a sample appeal timeline which starts February 2nd if the special permission application was denied by the Office of Student Services that would be on March 4th and this is the earliest timeframe so just remember that this would be if a parent submitted an application on February 2nd it

[00:24:16] was denied March 4th that parent then would have the ability to appeal and if that appeal was submitted by the parent on March 18th a determination would need to be rendered by April 17th that then could obviously be appealed to you on May 2nd and then that appeal would have to be rendered or a decision would have to be made by the Appeals Committee by May 30th that's the earliest time frame that we would be working with the next slide the last column shows what would

[00:24:55] possibly be the latest time frame possible for a family so again the family would submit their their application on the last day the portal was open which would be March 30th and that I'm not going to read to you but you see all of the different appeals possibilities and then that would take us all the way

[00:25:18] through August first you or appropriate be to the challenges that the having a an absolute final final decision made on August first can you speak to some of the challenges that that presents to the staff so just from a logistical standpoint scheduling so if you're looking at a middle

[00:25:57] school or a high school you're working on your master schedule during really the spring and you would like to be able to have that master schedule set prior to school ending the previous school year obviously you have people that move in move out you know adjustments have to be made but that is a challenge because again you're looking at students that might have specific courses that they need from a secondary standpoint that you're struggling to find space in schedules so that would be one logistical

[00:26:34] thing to consider and obviously you know just staffing in and of itself being able to make sure that you have the appropriate staff assigned to a school for the number of students that are enrolled in the school or in in courses. I would say the same thing would occur for elementary where you've got large large elementary schools and you have one or two students can put you over.

[00:26:57] So then you're having to collapse what we would call sections but in some cases it's classes or grade levels at the elementary level and again that becomes of staffing I wouldn't say it's it's not an issue it's just a conundrum that be helpful for principal not have to deal with when you're looking at school opening and you know two weeks thank you for that do you have any information on the timing of when the special permission application like when during the cycle that the portal is open when the applications are being submitted is

[00:27:34] there I assume there's a huge rush at the beginning yes and then I don't know like a trickle throughout is there a big rush at the end I would say we have the most we have and unfortunately I don't have Miss Mason or Miss Carpenter here but we have a lot of applicants at the very beginning and that it trickles and then in the middle of this school year we had a significant amount the renewals also boost our application process so that you know we're constantly reminding administrators to remind the individuals that are in their schools if they're on

[00:28:10] special permission they need to renew but I think it's it's pretty steady and then we do get a bolster of applicants at the very end so it's it's kind of bookended if you will so 30 days is a long time do we really need those 30 days we have 30 days 30 days 30 days so like 30 days for a decision deadline 30 days for appeals deadline and 30 days for school board decision do we really need all that because that's like when do we need it we don't need it getting a

[00:28:45] appeals committee to come and that's why moving forward I would really like to be able to set some dates for those appeals committees once we have our window not a windows once we have our timeline for for public consumption and we've committed to it I myself and Miss Richardson have talked about setting forward forward dates that the appeals committee will be meeting and then we can cycle people through that much more efficiently because yes we are processing appeals admittance denials constantly in my office so there could

[00:29:22] be a smaller or a shorter window that we would abide by but policy this is what policy says policy says that we we have to allow for 30 days well until policies changed right that's correct but so that is

something that I might consider if I'm still here while we're going through all of this because I think that's I think that's adding to the problem and I think you're right if we have just days where this is appeals appeals day appeals day for a period of what four weeks or something and get through it and just make sure that the school board members

[00:29:59] have cycled through and that they have signed up for that time that can be up to the chair or whatever but um i think that's what it is now no no we have it we have it by months i think but i think that that would help with this because nobody's here in july right that's what we had a problem with nobody's here in july and by august it is too late so i think if we could get it done by june with everything else that needs to be done so i agree 100 with what you

[00:30:39] were saying however this policy is policy 8155 the policy for appeals is policy 2350. So I just want to bring that to your attention that that this policy is cross referenced in 2350 as is 2350 is cross we use that to cross reference.

[00:30:58] So I would throw out my wonder is how this would impact the appeal of administrative decisions for other branches of the school division. That would be a new issue right and so could there be different appeals timelines for different administrative decision or administrative appeals.

[00:31:26] Yes I think if if the board was in agreement though the special permissions appeal process could be pulled out of 2350 and could be added to 8155 perhaps as a regulation regulation or as part of the policy.

[00:31:44] so we it would not have to be subject to that it could be of its own its own flavor yeah 23 policy 2350 doesn't encompass all of our appeals process okay okay sorry the one thing that I do want to just point out is that the reasons

[00:32:21] when we are asking for reasons in our portal it does not impact our ability to approve or ability to deny it has no bearing on what we use this is just for data collection purposes so this slide is not new to you we've not changed this this is just historical data for you to see as is the next slide which are how we analyze the other selection and then we did limit the number of I think characters for last school year and this school year for people to type into that box because it was getting very sometimes people were putting their whole

[00:33:01] appeals reasons why why in the box so it was a little convoluted but this is it's important for us to look at and I know the committee had discussed some of the reasons for maybe expanding and or limiting reasons as to why they're applying for special permission but I do just want to remind you all that that does not weigh in on our approval process or denial process at all we are

[00:33:32] not looking at those as a part of our decision making process so to summarize we have within our revisions of this iteration of policy 8155 we have used the phrase based capacity in section A to align with the language from our planning office we have removed the phrase at any time from section B we've clarified the application requirements and other factors

[00:34:07] in section D we have added that special permissions rescinded by the office of student services are not appealable under policy 2350 which is the appeal of administrative decisions we've also made language in section D5 more concise to reflect the new processes that we have that you all adopted back in November of last school year and then specifically for this red line copy that you have it before you tonight

lines 216 to 221 we added to further define the principal's ability to warn that special permission may be rescinded and then in lines 242

[00:34:46] through 243 we removed the reference to ninth grade to align with new VHSL rules

[00:35:09] okay so I have one can well I have a couple concerns but one of them is the I I totally understand the failure to meet expectations following special permission. This would be 216 that you were just referencing.

[00:35:27] So I am wondering if there is a way to make certain that if a child is, let's say, learning disability or ED and they are in special ed permission, is there a way to make sure that they have an IEP team meeting or something like that before they're given that record that warning to make certain that we are providing the support or the resources that they need first before we move them out so I will say my office coaches anytime we have a situation like this where it's brought to our attention that a principal is considering

[00:36:06] rescinding those are conversations that we have very openly with the school the reason why we go through and we ask those specific questions actually almost to what you just said if a student has an IEP or a 504 are there accommodations that need to be considered are there accommodations that don't need to be considered same thing with attendance same thing with any disciplinary infractions that may have may have occurred so those are coaching conversations that we have with principals for the process. So I think that I would like some

[00:36:42] wording there to make it completely clear because you know as well as I do there can be inconsistencies between understandings so something like for students and we can play with the wording for students in special education a 5 of IEP or 504 meeting team meeting must be convened to determine whether their educational needs are being met before we're sending or sending a letter of special permission something like that it's kind of like a man an MDR but not

[00:37:14] really just to make certain does the does the language beginning at line 401 of the red line not address that concern any student assignment or transfer that as a result of disciplinary or safety considerations or pursuant to a court order requires notification to the superintendent and a meeting among the staff of the student's current school and receiving school to include from both schools principal or designee IEP 504 case

[00:37:49] Spanish or if applicable in school counselor and then etc etc I I don't know that I think this is more for real discipline issue for things like if you know if there's law enforcement or court or whatever I think that's different personally mr. Wilson is there are these different categories rescission on the basis of failure to comply with school rules and regulations is that different

[00:38:26] from a student assignment or transfer that is a result of disciplinary or safety considerations. No you as a principal could rescind for a multitude of reasons. This is a result of disciplinary safety considerations.

[00:38:55] This is not rescinding something. This is if we transfer someone that had a disciplinary or safety consideration. This is not what I was talking about. Like that may be a question for Ms. Cheryl Richardson.

[00:39:16] If it says any student assignment or transfer that is a result of disciplinary or safety considerations would that encompass rescission for failure to follow school policies rules and regulations or not. My initial reaction would be no that it does not that it's just about for students who are placed by LCPS not special permissions.

[00:39:52] So the previous section section two refers to all reassignments and transfers under this policy. We imported that language to part three would it then cover both categories all reassignments and transfers under this policy require which line are you referring to sorry Ms. Tedra Richardson

[00:40:21] the record is very important people who are listening later so my initial question was regarding the lines beginning at 401 of the red line version and the legal opinion seems to be that that language in paragraph three doesn't necessarily encompass rescission on the basis of failure to comply with school policy rules and regulations.

[00:40:55] And then I looked at above paragraph two and line 396 of the red line where that language starts all reassignments and transfers under this policy. — Wouldn't reassignments and transfers be something else than special permission?

[00:41:26] — Do you pose good questions. I am going to have to take your questions and do some bifurcating of this policy to see I understand what you're what you're asking now.

[00:41:50] I take the rescission conversation that we're having as different and separate from the other considerations part of this policy because there might be a situation where a student is assigned to a school for other than special permission.

[00:42:10] So I will have to get with Miss Richardson and others to find out how this applies and maybe even look the cross-referencing from where this also appears because I do think these are two separate entities but they're in the same policy and I have a feeling it's because you might have a situation where a student is on special permission at a school but is then reassigned to another school which that is a different type of placement than special permission when we look at the reason code for students

[00:42:48] that are attending a school other than their homeschool we have different codes that we use and program place is different than policy 8155 it's different than some other administrative placement so I would have to see if there is an example that I could walk through and see how this part of that pilot part of this policy might play out thank you mr. Dolson it'll be important I think to get some clarification either way instructional suitability at

[00:43:22] line 50 can we I think that that needs a little bit more clarification because I think people get confused what does that mean who does that mean I as a parent can tell you that that's not suitable instruction or whatever but that doesn't really mean what instruct that's not what we mean by instructional suitability I think there's a lot of questions on that is there any way that we could parse that out a little bit more and be more specific definition of what an

[00:43:50] instructional suitability really is a point of clarity for staff if we do indeed work through what we were just talking about a rescission versus the other considerations is it the will of the committee that you want us to draft language for that rescission paragraph if we find out that they're different and I do believe that they are to include the process for students with disabilities

[00:44:27] and those protected under ADA is that the is that the direction to staff just so we can come back next week because we meet again next Thursday. So we want to make sure that we have an updated version for the committee.

[00:44:50] Ms. Richardson could you could you summarize again. The question would be as if it's different things. Yes because your question is what is the direction of the committee regarding special education students. yes so section E starting on line 214 if indeed we do find out that the other considerations is a different process which we do believe that it is because it's administrative placements it's instructional suitability it could be disciplinary placements I think that is what the other consideration section is referring to is it the will of the committee that you would like for staff

[00:45:29] to draft language to make sure that we delineate the process in starting at line 214 to 221 to very similar to what's in lines 406 just referring schools just making sure that they either hold a special education process meeting or a 504 process meeting yes please thank you mr. Nolson in the on

[00:46:08] the very first page where we've changed from design capacity to base capacity does that have a different meaning than what it meant before it technically no but it does reflect consistency within the use of how the program the miss Tate how she references the design capacity and I shouldn't say design capacity because that's what we the ability to have the number of students in a school building and that's the request that they requested because that is it was not

[00:46:47] consistent on how they report a base capacity of a school to you all as a board thank you thank you madam chair I'd like to go back to the section instructional suitability I do believe that we need to take a closer look at this and clarify it that's one of the points that a lot of people in SEAC are concerned about they find it is a little bit vague you know who who decides the suitability why is this more suitable than another what do we do if we don't

[00:47:26] agree with that placement I think we need to go back and clarify that in some way I also know that in one of the papers they they said that we they got confused about at any time and but right and so they thought that it's still at

[00:48:02] any time honestly if if a parent comes to you guys and and you discuss instructional suitability it doesn't just have to be during that period of time instructional suitability is different than special permission correct it is outside it would be it's outside that process correct so can I ask for a point of clarification please when you are talking specifically about instructional suitability and I appreciate your references it your

[00:48:36] references to this section being vague and needing to be clarified is it the will of the committee for that to be more specific so instruction suitability is not something that is as widely considered as it might be currently or is it to be more widely considered so I have some concern with giving specific direction about that right now because I I at least have not looked into do we

[00:49:13] find do we define instructional suitability in any of our policies in any of our regulations I wouldn't want I would not want staff to make changes here that could potentially end up being inconsistent if we have set forth more specific definition of instructional suitability in other places right and I think from my perspective Miss Donahue and watching you this committee the whole board go through the revisions of policy 8155 the spirit that I was

[00:49:49] getting from you all as a committee and you all as a board is that we truly value our community schools and you as a board value students going to their community schools so that's why I would just ask for more clarification it is and I'll just speak for my own self that that's the messaging that I'm receiving from you all as a committee and you all as a board is that that's what's really important and that you are communicating that and have communicated that through the appeals processes over the past two school years to your constituents that it is important for the constituents to be attending the schools for where they are

[00:50:26] zoned so again with that being the spirit of where we've been where you all started with 8155 and where it is now I feel as though that is a consistent message that you all have been being delivered as a committee as well as a full board I guess my thing is this really is instructional suitability really is more for special education students right no it isn't could you give me more information about some some scenarios if you may sure we get

[00:51:02] requests all of the time sometimes we get families that are new to LCPS and they have moved into a certain zone and maybe they thought said school had a program that was similar to a program that their student may have had in another school division and they reach out and say, well, we now, yes, we just moved here. No, my child hasn't yet started this school, but I realized that the program or the services or the model that I thought I was going to get is at school B instead of school A. Can I please be

[00:51:40] moved? And so the process that we really look at, you don't know that the instruction is not suitable until you have attended and you have worked with your school-based team through the educational planning process. And that is for non-disabled and our students with disabilities and those protected under the ADA. We make every effort to make sure that schools are working with the families of their schools of residence before we consider instructional suitability. So typically

[00:52:12] we're looking at factors issues that may not be able to be resolved social interactions that we might not be able to help students recover from if they remained at that particular school it's not just for students with disabilities and to answer your question is Donahue the regulation letter C it does reference instructional suitability but it does not clearly provide a definition so that is something that we will have to address as staff now instructional suitability wouldn't be for

[00:52:51] programs like north star or would it um sometimes we are asked to consider north star so if i attend heritage and things aren't going well there for me as a student my parents might say is it possible that the North Star School be considered for instructional suitability we have had that happen or Robey would be another correct yes we we have had those sorts of request again we follow the same process what has what actions have been taken to support the student at their current

[00:53:27] school what are the factors surrounding your request we talk to parents on the phone we meet with them in person we meet with them virtually we follow up with our schools and then those are the factors that we consider and then we delineate for a parent in writing either why the request is going to be supported or why it will not be and then we make sure if we're saying that we're not going to support a school move under instructional suitability then we put some recommendations and supportive measures in and we file our office our department

[00:54:03] follows up with the school to make sure those things happen for the determinations about instructional suitability when we are when you are

[00:54:41] dealing with special ed students who are on an IEP or a 504 does the assessment of instructional suitability address factors outside of the requirements of the of the 504 or IEP sometimes absolutely so if I'm a student with a disability and I'm moving through my programming just fine at my home school but there could be maybe social things that are impacting me could be anxiety I

[00:55:18] could have had I maybe I'm having not a positive experience with a particular teacher I think those sorts of things can sometimes happen outside of the IEP process. Now, going back to what Mrs. Mansfield has said, truly, if you are already protected under the IDEA, the IEP team should be coming back. So my parent, right, should be reaching out to the school, my case manager, bringing these things to the awareness so that my team is coming back

[00:55:51] together to talk about what is my impact of disability part of what needs to be considered in maintaining my placement sometimes it could be determined that no we might need to consider looking at other schools it really and we take every case on a case-by-case basis we don't have a just sort of blanket approach or a standard process of this is approved and this is denied it's very nuanced we take it very seriously if we're asked to move a student after the school

[00:56:27] has gotten underway we want to make sure that we connect the current school to the receiving school we take the time to connect the principals we take time for the parents to go over and do tours and to meet with the new staff members that are going to be working with their student and then we really try to map out a timeline for that to happen so that the student can have closure at one place and then transition smoothly to the next place that's helpful thank

[00:56:56] you I had a couple of other questions so I'm looking at the red line on beginning at around line 150 under other factors for a special permission and you've removed what was previously subpart 3a related to special permission being approved on an annual basis for grades K through four if you could talk a little bit about why that's coming out so we have if you are at a school in

[00:57:35] K through four so kindergarten and then rising fifth grade your special permissions are just renewed unless you decide to rescind so instead of having to reapply we are just renewing those those applications if you will they have to renew but it's not a new application it's just a renewal thank you and on lines 278 and 279 of the red line under special permission application timeline

[00:58:12] subpart 4 you took out the phrase based at the principal's respective schools I was also curious about that so that I believe is so that any employee and LCPS for example that works like in this building would also be able to apply for

[00:58:44] their child to enter into special permission clarification notwithstanding that we obviously still have some more questions to talk through I am nevertheless inclined to ask for this would it

[00:59:12] push too hard to ask for it to come back for action next week I think the the revisions that the committee has proposed this evening I think they're pretty straightforward I think it really is the will of the committee whether or not you would like for it to come back as action so you'd still be looking at the revisions that you've asked us to consider and so so far we have starting at line 50 section B instructional suitability we're going to provide a definition and then break it out a

[00:59:50] little bit more for clarity so it's it's easily understood to the reader then we have lines 214 to 221 if indeed we find out that the other considerations and starting at lines 401 are different from a

recension we're going to add language about students with disabilities and those protected under the ADA I think that's all I had I don't want to overburden your staff but

[01:00:23] I am mindful of the calendar sure and the number and spacing out of our committee meetings and the full board meetings and the interest that we have in getting this to the full board in time for to possibly be considered for action there before the end of the calendar year I'm conflicted miss Mansfield Thank You chair I am wondering so we didn't include timelines in

[01:00:56] there redoing timelines so I don't know if that's the will of this committee to relook at those timelines and but how would we do that in combination with that other policy also too is there a regulation for this okay so that process that you were talking about for instructional suitability it's in there it's like the structure that you were talking about that you do this then we do this now do this there is a reference to instructional suitability but it doesn't delineate what we've talked about so I think that is the clarity that

[01:01:35] that we need to add so that it's clear to to everyone and also Miss Smith so you said that you had and I'll be happy to look at those numbers about like the difference between the special education because I really I really really really really really don't like really really super much from 140 to 142 without requiring additional staff or incurring additional cost to the school system

[01:02:12] really really really really don't like that because I really do feel and I understand and you've explained it to me 50 million times I still I so I would like to see the numbers to see if that's happening or not and I think and we because that might be one of my amendments that may or may not pass because it we tried and I'm still feel and I'm still getting the feedback about

[01:02:47] special education students that they are have another level to go through so but let me tell you this is so much better I really do appreciate all your work it was a lot and this has been a year and a half in the making so kudos to you guys it was a lot I think we've done really good work so thank you chair thank you chair for putting putting it and working with this to your first point about about changing the timeline Mr.

[01:03:22] Dolson did address that in his presentation but you are correct we did not discuss it amongst us I I support the what did we say like January 20th for staff and closing on March 30th I would support making that change but what about those 30 days of appeals of 30 30 30 we we didn't was that and I was gonna ask you miss Mansfield for verification because you mentioned working through the remaining edits and and the you referenced and the other policy this

[01:03:58] policy 2350 that they were talking about that we had to that in there it has 30 days there but we could possibly take it out of there but I think that goes to LA&P is that LA&P or would it be SBAT LA&P okay so that would be the hold up there to take that out of there or just craft something new here as its own little animal I don't know I have to refer to Miss Richardson the Miss

[01:04:35] Cheryl Richardson that's just what I see is the big hold up I mean that's like three months as a point of clarity you I heard the committee say when looking at lines 114 to 118 in that section you would like us to make the revision to the timeline adjusting the end date to March 30th that's the consensus of the

[01:05:13] committee yes please and starting opening the portal for staff on January 20th okay and for families on February the first business day thank you thank you so essentially what we're looking at is

making this beginning of the second semester the opening of the portal rather than January 2nd which overlaps

[01:05:45] with the first semester for for LCPS employees yes yes I if it's not too much of a strain on your staff I would like to try and consider this for action I think we're pretty comfortable with the revisions that we've discussed we will have further conversation with LCPS legal on the 30 days between the process if we can make adjustments there within this policy then we'll give it a shot to

[01:06:24] bring something back to you next Thursday just wanted to remind you again next Thursday so I think we are happy to work on this thank you very much we are a smidge over our committee meeting times but I believe we are close to the end of our agenda so I will ask my fellow committee members if you are in support of continuing with our agenda and also miss Richardson if you and your

[01:06:59] staff are able and willing to move on then to item 4.02 deletion of policy 8-19 and you know it's old if it has that instead of a four-digit number dismissal during the school day Ms. Evans Good evening and this might be less complex so 8-19 is a policy that's the last update was in 2012 since that time we have created 8140 and the 8140 regulation so much

[01:07:37] of the dismissal procedures I'll walk you through where they are in 8140 and the regulation which you should have and the waiver piece we have worked together in a multi-department work group to try to provide consistency with that waiver of full day attendance we have students who whose parents ask if they can leave for a variety of reasons so we wanted to establish a standard operating procedure pull it out of policy and then have more consistency across our division.

[01:08:08] So if you look at the very very short 8-19 if you're looking at Section A that is actually captured in both the regulation and the policy 8140 that talks about the expectation that students attend school every day for full days if you look at section B that is already referenced so the dismissals during the school day occasional dismissals that is referenced in the

[01:08:42] regulation in section C 1 and also in the policy section 5 specifically what they're what the requirements are a written excuse that's presented in advance as well as picking up your child at the school and also a school initiated telephone call so most of our schools are having the parents put things into parent view now.

[01:09:07] It's not usually a phone call. When you look at students who are 18 years of age and that next section that's captured in the regulation under Section H and then the waiver of full day attendance that's short section that talks about the approval of the division superintendent really those come to us and the principals will share the information and the rationale and we're asking for verification and employment whether it's mental health appointments that they have and we will approve those as long as their attendance and their grades are not impacted

[01:09:46] by leaving early on a set schedules. So I propose that we delete this policy because everything is already captured in AD 140 in both the reg and the policy. Thank you Ms. Evans.

[01:10:03] Ms. Mansfield. This is timely because I have been hearing from certain principles require notes other principles don't some principles say oh I want one doctor's note for every tardy and for everything for every sickness even if you just come home you know fever so and I'm wondering where that is contemplated here in policy or in regulation that you have to have a note every single time so our guidance and it is in one of the policy or the

[01:10:39] reg so I'm gonna ask my team to look for that while I speak it does say that a principal can require medical documentation and when we usually ask for that is after it's there's been two or three absences for sickness okay so that is not in some people's handbooks they have sent home to parents so I am wondering how to make that known that it's not our policy it's it's a local kind of building decision that may be well-meaning but is not necessarily realistic in some ways.

[01:11:18] DIRECTOR HARRIS: Right and I at the beginning of the school year we do push out our policy and regulation and share kind of the guidelines for attendance where it is included but oftentimes parents aren't reading those emails and like you said sometimes if there's attendance concerns administrators might be asking for a note every time there's an absence and that is part of our attendance procedures policy as far as when they've had five unexcused absences and they keep accruing and that's following that track and there are guidelines within the regulation that describe that but there are situations where you might have a principal not ask for a note

[01:11:55] after four or five absences but then another principal might ask for it after two or three. So I do think there needs to be more consistency with that but that's separate from this as far as the waiver goes. I thought you were talking about the waiver the waiver of full day attendance is really if there's going to be a consistent absence for a scheduled activity.

[01:12:17] For therapy appointments. So that is a waiver. Okay unless it's random but some are going to ABA therapy at the end of the school day some are going to work at the end of the school day and so we are giving kids the opportunity to do those things as long as their grades and their attendance outside of those times is pretty consistent so but do they need a doctor's note for each of those times no it's just a way for you this is the schedule for the

[01:12:52] therapeutic appointments now is that is that outing anybody at all no it's internal we're not sharing that with anyone okay and mrs. Evans for the record we did find so it is on the first page section B definitions if you look at 1a excused absences it does not specify a doctor's note but the last sentence such absences when justifiable are classified as excused absences for

[01:13:28] which there are no consequences however the principal or designee may request the proper documentation or an appropriate explanation to be furnished policy when do we do that policy it was fall 2023 okay because I am concerned that

[01:14:04] it's not that people are taking it too far we can talk offline too about it because if that's it's hard when it's inconsistent from high school to high school regarding the waiver when we were talking about if they have a regular medical appointment or therapy or something like that what happens is there room for if they're called last-minute and told well we can't do it today we're going to do it you know on Wednesday instead of the Monday that we

[01:14:42] regularly have there's room for that to be explained we have to absolutely if whoever the provider is has to cancel last-minute we would be flexible okay thank you it happens often right I just wanted to cover it for sure so the recommendation of staff is that we will delete this policy in its entirety so it should be very easy to perhaps have this on for action next week also so we will move on to item number five our discussion item date for October work

[01:15:18] session yes back in August the committee had discussed possibly having a scheduled work session in September and one in October we know schedules were super busy in September they remain

very busy in October so really it's a discussion amongst the committee members of is the October 30th work session still something that is desired and needed by the committee well what would we do we have a topic for discussion for a work session we planned

[01:15:58] the work session thinking that we would still be working on 8155 special permission that the committee just decided today for that to come back as action next week. Well I don't see any reason why we can't just book the date and then cancel. Oh never mind. 30th would be tricky unless we met earlier than we

[01:16:34] usually meet. No I love a good work session.

[01:17:15] I'm hoping that we won't need it if we move special permission onto the full board. And we can certainly keep this as a discussion item for next week so seeing how far we get with bringing 8155 back as an action item next Thursday you we can just carry this over and we can talk about it again and I like that idea and I will look and encourage my fellow committee members also to look at if they have other available dates if a work session is needed for when is our November meeting.

[01:17:55] DIRECTOR HARRIS: November 6th. DIRECTOR HARRIS: So if we're back to back meetings again. DIRECTOR HARRIS: If we're going to have a work session it has to be before November 6th of November.

[01:18:10] Isn't that Veterans Day. DIRECTOR HARRIS: Yes. DIRECTOR HARRIS: Board meeting on Veterans Day. DIRECTOR HARRIS: We have school on Veterans Day. DIRECTOR HARRIS: Because we have assemblies so that kids can honor their. DIRECTOR HARRIS: Exactly. DIRECTOR HARRIS: You can just bring it up with the chair.

[01:18:25] DIRECTOR HARRIS: Are we doing. DIRECTOR HARRIS: We should be doing that. DIRECTOR HARRIS: I have no opinion. Okay so yes let's have this for discussion again next week. please uh moving on to item number six new business is there any new business seeing none uh we will move on to item number seven adjournment thank you all for being here get home safely our next meeting will be october 16th next week thank you



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