



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Loudoun County Public Schools, Specialized Programs and Centers Committee Meeting, Monday, December 8, 2025

Date Monday, December 8, 2025
Place LCPS Administration Building / School Board Room, Ashburn, Virginia
Length 33m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1144714717?rel=0>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-12. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:03] afternoon everyone I'd like to call this February 8 2025 meeting of the special programs and centers committing to order my name is Dr. Rashid I am the chair of this meeting I am joined by Miss LaBelle and Mr. Streffy as the committee members of this committee and we have an agenda today I believe no one signed up for public comment as of right now and I'd like to well first we need to approve the minutes from our last meeting has everyone had a chance to review the minutes okay is there a motion to enter well is I'd like to entertain a motion to

[00:00:36] approve the minutes yes missabelle vote on approving the minutes as so moved by Miss LaBelle do I hear a second second seconded by mr. Streffi all those in favor say aye aye aye all right so the minutes have been approved all right so we'll go on with our agenda we have one action item with MCCS the amendment to charter agreement and we have the information item for special programs

[00:01:14] and academies interest survey data so I will go ahead and move on to our action item of 4.01 which is again Middleburg Community Charter School amendment to charter agreement Ms. Lehman is not present at the moment I any questions before we move on to voting for this item comments no okay all right I'll entertain a motion to approve this item of 4.01 do I have a motion yes mr.

[00:01:48] Streffy so moved moved by mr. Streffy do I hear second second seconded by Miss LaBelle all those in favor say aye aye great so that will now that amended agreement will now move on to so the intention of staff is to take this to the new board in the new year at their most likely the January 13th

meeting of the school board thank you mr. Slevin okay yeah so that will then move on to the school board meeting that we will have in January and that's it all right

[00:02:25] that's great awesome we will now move on to our information items 5.01 special programs and academies interest survey data presented by miss Katie Clark director of academic programs. Thank you Ms. Clark. Good afternoon. Thank you. Today I'll share the results of the special programs and academies interest survey which was conducted this past September. For context Loudoun County Public Schools adopted school board policy 5115 special programs and academies back in January of 2022. This policy supports the creation of programs and

[00:03:00] academies that allow students to explore their interests talents and strengths while meeting the goals of the LCPS strategic framework. At that time, the Specialized Programs and Centers subcommittee directed staff to survey LCPS parents to gauge interest in various programs and academies. This past spring, we were asked to conduct a new survey to ensure we continue gathering community input as we expand and create new opportunities for our students.

[00:03:30] Before we dive into the survey results, let me walk you through today's agenda for our presentation. So today we will cover, we'll start with an overview of the survey, then we'll review current programs and explore potential new ones. Next I'll share the top three enrollment decisions and key factors influencing them. And finally we'll discuss next steps and open the floor for your input. So the survey was initially open from September 16th to September 30th with an extended

[00:04:05] window until October 6th to allow for additional responses. For outreach, we used multiple channels to reach families and students, including emails and newsletters, principal updates. We had two special programs fair during this window on September 18th and 25th, and there were also multiple social media posts. Here's what participation looked like. For families, we had 88,025 invitations that were sent out. We had 3,613 responses, which is about 4% participation.

[00:04:43] For students, this only went to grades 6 through 12. We had 46,251 eligible students. We had 12,079 responses, which is a 26% participation rate. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those families and students who took time to participate in this survey. In total, we had over 15,000 participants. These surveys take an effort across multiple departments, and I would like to give a huge shout out to Dr. Blakelock here this afternoon with us and his team for conducting the survey and providing the graphs for today's

[00:05:18] presentation. And I'd also like to give a shout out to Dr. Arponte and our communications team for all of their support around community outreach. The first part of our survey asked parents, asked participants, both parents and students to rate their level of interest in the current specialty programs that we offer. This chart reflects the percentage of families and students who indicated they were interested in each program. Across all programs, family interest is consistently higher than student interest. You'll see here AOS and

[00:05:55] AET show the highest levels of family interest, each above 70%, followed closely by ACCESS and HAMSci. While programs such as MATA and IB continue to show strong family interest student interest remains significantly lower however keep in mind that participation rate for families was significantly lower than for students and that has an impact on these results with only interested families choosing to participate and students generally participating through a school day interaction regardless of their individual interests on the next few slides we will dive into the specific

[00:06:33] pathway expansions for our current programs that offer multiple pathways it is important to note that only survey participants who said they were interested in a specific pathway were given the following expansion questions therefore the family student participation bias that we might have seen in this general graph results do not apply on the following slides among Among participants interested or who showed interest in the AET expansion, engineering

[00:07:08] emerged as the top priority for both families at 75% and students at 69%, followed by information technology. These results show strong alignment between family and student demand and help clearly guide any future AET growth.

[00:07:26] Our next chart highlights the differing priorities between families and students regarding potential career pathway expansions under the MATA program. While both groups show strong interest in caring for communities with 76% of families and 59% of students supporting it, families consistently express higher enthusiasm across all pathways, notably pathways like IB, or sorry, like building and moving and cultivating resources show a significant gap with family support nearly double that of students.

[00:08:00] Now we're going to talk about IB. results show strong interest in expanding the IB program at the high school level nearly 80 percent of families and 77 percent of students prefer adding the IB diploma program for juniors and seniors there is moderate support for the middle years program with about 62 percent of families and 64 percent of students favoring expansion into the middle and early high school interest

[00:08:35] in the primary years program is much lower with only 27 percent of families and 15 percent of students supporting the elementary IB program. We currently have two Spanish DLI programs in LCPS. This survey asked participants who stated they were interested in expanding DLI what other language should be considered for future DLI cohorts. Survey results show that families and students have different priorities for future DLI languages. Families most strongly support Mandarin

[00:09:08] at 62% while students prefer French at 62%. Arabic and Korean also have notable interest, especially among the students. The last program with multiple options for expansion is JROTC. Among participants interested in expanding are ROTC, the Air Force received the highest level of support, with 76% of families and 58% of students favoring this branch.

[00:09:39] The Navy ranked second, followed by the Army. These results suggest that if expansion occurs, Air Force, Navy, and Army should be prioritized based on stakeholder preferences. Our next section of the survey asks participants to rate their interest in the following categories of new potential courses, programs, or academies. These questions were based on the top career clusters that were selected by our secondary students in LCPS per the School Links data pooled in March

[00:10:13] of 2025. Overall, you'll see STEM receive the highest level of interest with 82 percent of families and 49% of students indicating support. Business management and administration ranked second with 72% of families and 45% of students interested, followed closely by health sciences at 69% for families and 36% for students. Arts, audio, video, technology, and communications, as well as law, public safety, corrections, and security had lower levels of interest with less

[00:10:47] than 60 percent of families and students expressing support for participants who indicated interest in a specific program again additional questions were asked to gather more detailed feedback

which will be shared on the following slide among participants interested in stem the most popular options were engineering and computer science with strong support from both families and students next for business management finance and business intelligence were the top choices among families

[00:11:23] at 77 percent and 73 percent respectfully for students entrepreneurship and marketing were the top choices at 71 percent and 69 percent within health sciences physical therapy had the greatest interest at 82 percent of families and 67 percent of students interested followed by sports medicine and then dental for the arts pathways visual arts was the most popular with strong interest

[00:11:55] from students at 68 percent interested next for law and public safety pathways pre-law was the highest for families at 76 percent and law enforcement was the highest for students at 72 the next part of the survey asked participants about additional areas of interest based on county and regional needs identified by lcps the highest interest among families was for programs focused

[00:12:28] on energy that was 55 percent were interested the next part of the survey asked participants to identify the top three factors influencing enrollment in a special program or academy for families these were career college preparation number one student career interest number two and program location was number three for students the top factors were number one career college

[00:13:01] preparation number two student career interest and lastly number three program reputation so to conclude this survey as a reminder is just one of several factors that will inform decisions about expanding existing programs or potentially launching new ones moving forward we will continue collaborating with dr grubbs and the cte office in particular to ensure that program growth and selection align with the priorities that have been outlined in the CTE multi-year expansion plan.

[00:13:37] That concludes our presentation from the survey and we'd like to open it up for any discussion and feedback you have at this time. Thank you Ms. Clark and thank you for putting all this data together. I mean it's it's it was a lot and quite comprehensive and very helpful. I was just wondering if there was a benchmark provided for the response rates. I think it was like the second slide or the third slide about overall the family responses and the student responses do we have an aim and and you know do we have like some sort of

[00:14:12] benchmark set up if not I was just curious for my own sake the research office might be able to help but I do have from our last survey I said this survey we had over 15,000 we did include students last survey we only had 6,628 respondents if that gives you kind of and the same modalities like the same we did not that one did not go out to students that was just for families at that time yeah and I'm also curious if the percentage changes in the interest after the acceptances go out for AOL

[00:14:46] like I'm very curious to know once the well ACL once they're once you have AET and AOS I remember the percentage was the highest when it came for interest for that I'm just curious to know once those acceptances got or rejections go out if I mean for the future for next year or the following years if we know do students interest and change and say you know what now more interested in IB or ham sci or or whichever it may it may be I'm very curious about that and then I also noticed that again these are just comments like for the matter program I was I was curious about the creating

[00:15:22] experiencing part I wasn't sure what that category was about because it was it was pretty high and it was almost proportional to the one of the top two on that same graph it was on the matta slide um each of those gave some examples to families so

[00:15:53] let me just have that i have that pulled up so under um creating and experiencing under that category what was listed as examples were computer and digital animation television production and

[00:16:32] digital movie making along with graphic communication those were the the pathways very interesting very interesting i um yeah i was i was just definitely curious to know about that And then also for the interest in law or communications is what I noticed in one of the slides.

[00:16:50] Although I know some of the percentages were low for that interest, I don't want students to think it's always about STEM. And I think, Mr. Slevin, you and I had this discussion that it's always about STEM and it's always about computer science. It would be great to have some sort of law program as a pilot, of course, to a smaller degree, since there's a lower percentage of interest.

[00:17:14] And then also what was interesting to know was that agriculture, and I know Ms. LaBelle and I were looking into this, that agriculture, the percentage of interest was low. I was hoping it'd be higher considering the fact, especially out west, especially those students that are out in the east that would be interested in coming out west and, you know, making use or taking full advantage or opportunity of the land.

[00:17:41] I would just suggest that this is just one piece of data that we're looking at in the whole spectrum of decision-making around special programs. While interest in agriculture, for example, may be low, it's still something to be said that 24% of our students are interested in it.

[00:17:57] And so we probably aren't going to be suggesting an agricultural program that's going to serve 100% of our students. Frankly, we're probably not going to be able to even serve all 24% of our student body, but there is interest that's out there. So, again, when you think about student interest, parent interest, you also think about job opportunities, availability of partnerships, available in facilities.

[00:18:22] This is just one piece of information that we're going to use to make recommendations as the board and staff are having conversations about what's next as far as student offerings. Does that make sense? Because even with law, 54% of our students interested in some kind of law program is a significant amount of students that have an interest.

[00:18:40] And so if we do have the opportunity to measure all of the different programs that we have available, you know, one might argue we have many STEM opportunities, very little in terms of law pathways. And so maybe we need to balance that out. So that's one way to look at the data as well.

[00:18:58] Thank you, Mr. Slevin. And then I noticed in one of the data when it came to all the different, I think it was logistics, like transportation and all that, one of the top three, rather. It was the top three slide that career and college preparation did. that had the highest percentage and I mean it's pretty much of a no-brainer what the top three priorities were. I was surprised that demographics for transportation is not much of a factor and I was actually happy to hear that because then you can open up pilot programs in further away farther away places although we would prefer to have it close by I'm glad to know

[00:19:34] that it's not that much of a factor for it being too far and then one more thing I know I ran my mouth I think it was oh yes for the middle school when there was IB interest for middle school which was exciting to know that it was almost proportional the interest level as it was for high school do they start a language in seventh grade or do they start it in sixth grade and is IB mandated to have four years of a language at minimum I don't remember if it was because I know

[00:20:10] once you start a language you have four years I think and you're not it's not recommended to switch over to another language in the IB program yeah I know for the IB DP I believe they have to have the at least level 1 and 2 to be able to go into the IB sequence in junior and senior year as far as the middle years program I do believe language is across that program the middle years program is normally a 6 through 10 so it crosses over it doesn't have to but typically it's a six through ten program so you would start in sixth

[00:20:48] grade and then those same students would matriculate into an IB program you would have the middle year program in ninth and tenth that's when they do their final project and then that could lead into the diploma program and then would that be an option where students if they start a certain language and I'm just this is just me thinking out loud in middle school if they start a language like Spanish and then and they're in the IB program at that time if we have one for middle school I'm curious in high school if they're still part of the IB program could they switch over to another language would that be an option and they say oh you know this Spanish wasn't for me I'd like to go into French or something else yeah the IB coordinator at each

[00:21:26] school would help each student navigate that but yes there are different different routes same thing with our AGS program that is starting next year a student might have started Spanish one and two in seventh and eighth and then they're going to jump into either Mandarin or Arabic in ninth grade so it is possible to do that with IB as well because right now with IB program that we have in ninth grade you're kind of like stuck in like you can't really change it while you're in the middle of the IB program in ninth grade but it'd be nice to have that option if you started in middle school again just I don't even know if these things are possible and then I was

[00:22:04] very interesting to see the DLI expansion the energy the interest percentage was not proportional between students and parents it was such a huge discrepancy but again that was just you know good fun data I'm gonna leave it over to my colleagues if they have any questions or comments because I hogged up the panel any any questions comments yes Mr.

[00:22:30] Struffy thank you madam chair yeah thank you for for this information and it was actually I agree with chair Rashid that it was actually very interesting to go through all the data and I thank you for the reminder about the difference between students completing the survey versus the parents and that being based on their interests.

[00:22:53] I wish we could kind of force the same thing on the parents, but that's fine. I was curious about the DLI expansion. So were these the only languages that were on the survey or is this the top four? And then why, you know, weren't maybe other languages on the list if that were the case, like Hindi or some other language?

[00:23:15] - That's a great question. We partnered with Kelly James, the supervisor, And these are the four languages that she provided that we were getting feedback. So these were the only four that were mentioned. Now, we did have a thing at the very end of the survey where parents and students could add additional interest.

[00:23:33] So there could be some in the individual comments, but these were the four that we had listed as options. Okay. That helps. Now, I was just curious on some of the other languages that maybe we have high representations of ethnically within the county, say Hindi how that would have compared against some of these languages but that's that's great trying to think if I had any oh I wanted to go back to I think

she'd mentioned this already was the other areas of interest and based on County and regional needs identified by LCPS what programs are most appealing

[00:24:11] and just seeing the students say none of the above to those I think it's it's really i think we should take it like take it seriously right and the and of course there's going to be a balance of like we are trying to figure out how how this information and our programming plays into the regional needs um not putting a lot of weight i think you are also mentioning this is just a data point right it's not going to define um our programs and i think

[00:24:46] when i looked at the the title of the presentation i in my head i immediately thought more on the academies side and the special program side but when i looked at the data i think this is important for the public to know as well that this is about pathways generally speaking so it doesn't necessarily mean that we are trying to translate these into just special programs or academies that this would feed into the data broadly for cte um unless correct me if i'm wrong but that's that's that was my understanding after going through the data i think that might be helpful

[00:25:21] for parents and folks who are digging into this to to see as well um and then where i think it's also important again it took me a minute after going through the slides to really understand that where i saw a low interest in something and then we would dig into that data piece and then i'd see high interest it would have the note at the bottom that would say only participants who indicated that they were interested so again i had to recalibrate myself when I looked at the data to say well that's not the entire survey respondents right

[00:25:58] obvious stuff but I just wanted to note that as well but really helpful thank you can I respond to one of the comments by Mr. Streffy so particularly around this part of none of the above I'm going to look at Ms. LaBelle here and I'm going to put a plug in for the RISEC model and the way that we talk to our students about career and career interests I'll put another plug in for Dr. Spence's podcast he just did an interview with Ed Haldago who's been helping us talk through RISAC. And the emphasis there is less on, I want to be a plumber, I want to be an electrician, I want to be a pilot. It's more about the type of things that you're interested in, the type of people that you want to be around, the activities that really motivate you.

[00:26:38] And so it could be that students don't fully understand what a career in aviation might look like. All the jobs that are available when it comes in our agriculture sector. So it's not just about having these opportunities we also need to really think about how are we talking to our students and families about career development that's just as important as having these programs and so you'll be hearing more about that as we progress throughout our CTE or CTE pathway expansion. Yes Ms. Dawn. To follow up on what Mr. Slevin said with the RISE SEC model I think

[00:27:18] as more students get into oh now I'm starting to understand what these career pathways are will see a lot more interest in certain areas because they'll have a better understanding. But I think at that point, when I look at the responses to the surveys between families and students, I think that as an educator, and especially one that knows about RIA2 and has been working with it for the last 12 years or so, that I would put more emphasis on what students tend to want

[00:27:55] than what the parents want because the parents have expectations that may not fit with what the students want. And I think a lot of these students, especially the ones that responded none of the above, is because they haven't been showing other options.

[00:28:11] And I think that this whole thing will change as we start using more of the RIOSEC models, especially at a younger age. Yes, Mr. Strachan. Dr. Rasheed, I don't know if this is stretching a bit, But is there a way to anchor some of these assumptions around the data that we have in the surveys such that we like are I wonder how many of the student respondents selected that they were interested in health sciences and public safety or STEM and the arts or they selected all that they were interested in all of them?

[00:28:49] Would that be some could we could we see if if there are trends in the way that they're expressing their interest in the survey? I don't know how useful that is, but it might be nice to give us an indication of, like, how we are thinking about the way that they're responding in the survey at the highest level.

[00:29:10] I don't know if that – is that – do you think that's helpful? I'm looking at my friends in Razzie, and they think it would be helpful, and we could play around with that and see what trends we can identify. Thank you. Would you agree? Yeah, I would agree.

[00:29:26] And also, I think we said this is just one data point. I know Mr. Slevin said that. I said that. So we also have awesome data within our school links from our counseling team, and that is student-driven. So I think that's another resource that we can tap into, and quite a few students have participated in that more than this unique survey.

[00:29:47] So I think that's another data point that we could really dive into and look at as we continue to grow pathways and programs. I think we have some great data at our fingertips. Yes, Ms. Buck. I'd be curious to find out, excuse me, I know that Schoology, they have a section where you do career interests.

[00:30:10] Have we any way of going through that and seeing what kinds of responses there are from students when they're presented with that? Because I know they are interested in looking at career pathways, and that might be another data point based on what we're finding out. Are you referencing school links?

[00:30:28] So that's part of what Ms. Clark just mentioned. And I just acknowledge that there's continued opportunities for alignment between the conversations we're having here in school counseling, and that's work that's happening now between Dr. Grubbs and Ms. Ross and the school counseling office.

[00:30:47] Make sure we're asking the right questions using the tools that we have. Thank you. Appreciate that. Thank you so much. And now moving on, I think we are done with this item. So I wanted to, I think, did we have any new business?

[00:31:05] Anybody have any business? All right, I wanted to thank Mr. Streffi for his thoughtful and engaged participation on this committee for the past two years and your commitment, if you had any final words to say before we adjourn the meeting.

[00:31:20] No, I really want to thank staff. I think this is, I mean, we've come a long way when it comes to our special programs and all of our CTE pathways. I'm very excited about what's ahead for LCPS in this regard. And this is one of the most creative spaces that I've been able to have.

[00:31:39] I'm not going to go as far as saying it's the best committee. I'm just joking. It is one of the best committees. But I really appreciate, you know, all of everyone's dedication and hard work. And I'm sure I

will have thousands of questions that I will be able to ask my fellow school board, well, my school board members as we go on.

[00:32:02] But this is exciting. Thank you. Appreciate that. We appreciate you, Mr. Streffi. And with that note, our next meeting is not scheduled yet. Am I right Mr. Slevin. Correct we will schedule after the organizational meeting of the board go from there.

[00:32:18] And so unfortunately we cannot mark your awesome calendars right now. So if there's no business I entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting. Yes Miss LaBelle. I move to adjourn today's meeting. So moved by Miss LaBelle do I hear a second. Second. Seconded by Mr. Streffi.

[00:32:34] All right those that are in favor of adjourning say aye. Aye. Okay see you next year.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com