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Loudoun County School Board, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting, Wednesday, March 4, 2026

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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1167951224?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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[00:04:33] Good evening, everyone. If we could get started. Two.

[00:05:19] Hello, everyone. Welcome to our March meeting. My goodness, this year is just flying by. We're going to begin today with our connection activity with this Nikia Pranel will kick us off with that.

[00:05:41] Good evening, and welcome to the March SEAC meeting. So you guys know that for the connections thus far we've been really focusing on the division priority of belonging. So we're going to pivot tonight and move on to another division priority.

[00:06:01] So today's activity is entitled Pathways in Action: From Vision to Reality. And the purpose of today's activity will be able to connect our SEAC members to the division priority of helping students see the pathway to their imagined future.

[00:06:17] and we'll gather some feedback on implementation to strengthen our shared ownership of the transition process across the division. So I know you guys will have a lot to say about this. So just for some background, when we break out, you can either do it by level of your student.

[00:06:33] If you have multiples, you can pick. If you don't currently have any children in the division, then you can just pick. But we have high school here on this wall, elementary here on this wall, and

middle is in the back. And the three questions that you are going to engage in are, one, what should students experience at this stage to help them imagine their future?

[00:06:59] So if you're thinking about an elementary schooler, a middle schooler, high schooler, at that particular stage, so be thinking about things like early CTE exposure, maybe shadowing opportunities, job fairs, or when people come in to talk about their careers.

[00:07:14] So maybe those things would be appropriate for elementary. And then the second question you wanna ask in that group. So everybody's gonna stay at the group. There's gonna be sticky notes for you to put all of the information on because we wanna capture that. You know, we always type up the notes so we can synthesize them to see what our trends are.

[00:07:34] So what barriers? So thinking about what you propose should happen. Well, what barriers might be present at that level? So let's say career day. Might a barrier for career day be that Maybe we require visitors to fill out a form ahead of time and go through a waiting process and that delays and that could be a barrier.

[00:07:57] I don't know that it is, but be thinking about barriers to the ideas that you are proposing. And then third, what is a concrete action that LCPS and more specifically the Department of Student Services and Office of Special Education can do to strengthen the opportunities at that particular stage that you're at?

[00:08:20] So three questions, I'm gonna leave them here because you can refer back to them as you're working. So do we need any clarification on what the task at hand is? All right, good to go. We're gonna take about seven minutes.

[00:08:39] I'll see where we are in about seven minutes. But if everybody could break up and go to either the elementary, middle, or high, sticky notes, markers, and pins are at the back of the room on the table where the badges are. ourselves out just to support the conversations at each of those areas.

[00:12:56] Can you guys show me how much more time you need?

[00:16:19] Fist being zero, five being five minutes or in between. Okay, about five more minutes. Okay.

[00:17:40] Okay, we're going to get ready to share out elementary.

[00:20:32] Was that enough time to wrap up? I feel like maybe you guys got a little off task, maybe. Okay, okay. So I'm going to go backwards, and I'm going to start with high school. so high school if you guys can please identify I don't I can't flash the lights in here and I don't want to say if you can hear me clap three times because I don't typically adhere to those kinds of group contingencies but let's all gather ourselves so we can go ahead and move forward with

[00:21:07] the end of the activity so if you want to choose one of the areas that you came up with and then talk to us about what the barrier was that you identified and then what is something concrete we could do right now at the high school level it looks like there is a recurrence of job shadowing here greater access to vocational opportunities that's for the most part there on number one and then okay so let me ask job shadowing was something that students should be experiencing

[00:21:46] And the barrier to job shadowing is? Some indication here about just being unaware of opportunities. Okay. And also like willing participants.

[00:22:05] There's not always willing participants. And if there are, just not enough. Okay. And so what can we do this year to help strengthen that opportunity? Well, I guess we can expand our partnerships. Okay. And maybe increase our communication.

[00:22:24] Yeah, one of the things here was be more communicative in promoting what the county already is offering in this. Awesome, to ensure that we're connecting with all stakeholders. Right. Thank you, high school group. Middle school?

[00:22:41] I promise I had more partners in my group. They all left. They all left. one of our things that we felt middle schoolers should experience I'm going to combine them is a choice level of exposure through different electives as well as appropriate course acceleration for academics if that is of interest to a particular student one of the barriers to that is inconsistent course offerings across various middle schools in our school division as well as the occasional need to drop an elective to focus on foundational academic skills

[00:23:18] such as reading or math. It's close to my heart. And then one of our solutions to that that we could take action on is to ensure that course offerings and structures are equitable or consistent across the school division at middle school instead of being varied based on what school you happen to be enrolled in. Perfect. Thank you. Middle school group, elementary school group, and you guys had a lovely conversation, but I'm not sure that the entire conversation

[00:23:45] is reflected on your sticky note, but who's going to share out? So we had two things that kind of dominated our conversation, but we didn't really organize ourselves. One was RIASEC. Yeah, I know, we're still elementary school. One was RIASEC, which is a program to expose kids and parents

[00:24:20] to different career paths. Was that, did I understand that correctly? Did you want to?

[00:24:35] Awesome. Okay. So partnering with CTE to do some parent outreach and PD. Okay. And what might that barrier be that might prevent us from being able to do that? Liz Crowdy promised me that you guys were definitely on task the entire time. By the way, she's abandoned you all. She's over here.

[00:25:10] I would guess a barrier would be cooperation at the individual school level and just time at the school level time and capacity to bring in new programs yeah and creating opportunities that are that are available for everyone based on the various schedules of people's work schedules and across different parts of the division that can be quite varied based on the population so that could be a barrier so that's a good one and what is something that we could do this year I think I feel like you I'm gonna give you the win I feel like you incorporated that in the number one,

[00:25:48] that we could partner with CTE and try to get something on the calendar before the end of the year to expose parents to the opportunities through RIOSEC. - There you go. - I love it, great collaboration. Thank you for your participation and engagement.

[00:26:04] Everybody can go back to their seats and I am going to introduce the next trio. Okay, go ahead. Shanaz is gonna add something and then we'll introduce the next trio. - So one of the things that I have always felt that between our elementary, middle, and high schools that could connect and have a nice kind of train of thought going through is using our community, our CII, our community, what?

[00:26:34] I don't go to CDI, what is it? Community Instruction, Independent. Independent Instruction. And so using that opportunity at our elementary, middle, and high schools to actually not only, just one of

the big benefits we used to have is having our students be able to go out into the community.

[00:26:55] So what are they learning? They're learning how to get on and off the bus. They're learning how to go into a store. They're learning into how to make a list, how to do, so all of those kind of things. I think that's one of the areas that we-- - And I promise, but this is Shanaz's fault that I have one more thing to say, FYI.

[00:27:12] So I had the pleasure of being able to witness one of our special education designees defend her dissertation today. In talking about her research, she shared that an activity she had done as a new teacher was to ask her children to draw pictures of what a scientist looks like.

[00:27:37] And when she gathered all of the pictures back from the students, there was no representation. No one drew a scientist that looked like any of them or like her. So I do think aside from taking those opportunities to go out on CII, it is really creating opportunities for children to see themselves in these pathways and understanding that they too can.

[00:28:06] Because coming from a child, if they can't even see themselves as it in a drawing, then we've got work to do. So I think that was really a connection that I didn't even make to something that just happened earlier today with what you just said.

[00:28:22] There is one more question, I promise, and then I will introduce the trio. I'm going to just steal this one. No, I think that we talked about representation a lot as well. One of the things, though, that I think we miss sometimes is we typically go into the workforce right outside of the school system.

[00:28:42] And my son, right, my son has dyslexia. He knows all about Charles Schwab, but these are all like amorphous people, right, and things theoretically. He had at his middle school a teacher who opened up and shared that he also had dyslexia. And that meaningful connection, because it's someone that my son respects, someone that he sees.

[00:29:02] You think of a teacher as someone who's good at school and good at all these things. He could never imagine that they would be a teacher, but have, right, like these disabilities like them. I think that, too, is something that we have right here at our fingertips. and could be really powerful for our students in middle school and high school, things like that.

[00:29:20] - I love that. So even sharing our own experiences to create that connection also helped our students see their imagined future, even through our experiences. So I think that is really positive. Okay, and as promised, now we will have an overview of learning language with augmentative and alternative communication, the lovely Tammy Javis, the handsome Chris Bouguet, and the amazing and eccentric Cameron Shendow.

[00:29:49] Come on down. Beautiful. Well, boy, we have a lot to live up to now after that introduction. So thank you so much. We are so excited. We are the trio that has been spoken about this evening.

[00:30:06] Again, I'm Tammy Davis. I am the Special Education Supervisor for Related Services, Speech, OT, PT, Music Therapy, Assisted Technology is kind of in my little group. And I have my wonderful specialist, Cameron Shendo, who helps me with the speech pathologist. She's our SLP specialist. Chris Bouguet, assistive technology specialist.

[00:30:24] Chris and I, fun fact, actually came into the division 27 years ago this year together as speech pathologists. We don't look it. At all. Especially me, because I was the beautiful one. So that being said,

again, we are so excited to present this amazing initiative that we started seven years ago in the division.

[00:30:46] And, you know, Chris, Cameron, and I have the opportunity to meet all sorts of leaders in our areas across the state, across the country, and sometimes across the world. And we can say that this program that we've developed and been running is very unique. We don't get to hear about this often.

[00:31:01] So we're going to give you an overview of how we're addressing AAC in our division. Fun fact. Okay, the slides are here, but you can also scan the code here. Fun fact before we get started, 10th year in the position for me this year.

[00:31:17] Ten years ago, I was told I had to come present to SEAC the first few months of my job, and I was a little nervous, not going to lie. This time, I asked to present, and that's how far I think we've come in our relationship, and I'm very excited for you to hear all this information. So we're going to start off by just giving you this slide.

[00:31:34] These are our amazing CIFATS, Specialized Instructional Facilitators for Assistive Technology. There is a link there that you can link and find out who your CIFIT is at your school. They really help run this program along with our speech pathologists and teams, our school teams at every school. Okay, so I'm going to turn it over to Chris.

[00:31:53] If you have not seen Chris present, it's interactive. If he knows you, he will call on you. Just let me know. All right. And if I look familiar, it's because I presented at SEAC not too long ago with Mike Hendrickson about genitive AI. He's like, oh, that's that guy.

[00:32:10] So let's talk about the role of the specialized instructional facilitator for assistive technology. I said there's a team of nine of them, and then I'm the specialist that supports them. And what their primary role is to train and coach educators on assistive technology and beyond.

[00:32:26] They provide assistance to teams. That's school-based teams. It includes you. And what we're going to talk about today is how they assist teams in the selection and implementation of augmentative alternative communication devices. And then we're often finding a theme with our work is that, in fact, one of the transition specialists said it today, she's like, Chris, I remember you saying, like, why don't we just do that for everybody?

[00:32:49] And that's sort of the theme of what we do is conversation over and over again is what if we just designed it that way? Rather than a sort of a specialized thing for one or two students, what if we designed it with those students in mind so it works for everybody? Cool, all right, let's specifically talk about alternative and augmentative communication.

[00:33:10] So what the AAC stands for, those two A's, is alternative and an augmentative. So alternative, let's talk, what does that mean? It means if you're not speaking with your mouth words, you might need some sort of alternative way to express yourself.

[00:33:27] Probably the most famous AAC user ever is, yeah, Stephen Hawking, right? Stephen Hawking was a person that could not speak with mouth words, so used an alternative form of expression. Augmentative is where things get confusing because what augmentative means is, well, I might be using my mouth words sometimes, but it's not always successful or reliable.

[00:33:52] So I might need something else to help me occasionally. Sometimes that can be 2% of the time, like 98% of the time I'm gonna use my mouth words, but for some reason, whatever the reason is today,

I'm not feeling it, I might need to use my assistive technology.

[00:34:08] Our autistic population often shares that. Sometimes it's that my intelligibility is not good, so I get some words across, and my mom and dad know what I'm saying, but the rest of the people don't, and so I might need to use my device sometimes. So that's often confusing because sometimes in the world of augmentative and alternative communication, when we talk about it, some people will say, well, that kid talks.

[00:34:32] Well, yeah, they talk, so they don't need a device. Well, maybe, but just because they're talking doesn't mean they might not need advice because a lot of people use it to augment their speech. Fair? Okay. And just to give you, we're going to give you here an example.

[00:34:49] One of the things you should know is that so many parents have a fear, and some teachers too, but mostly we hear it from parents, that, well, if my child is not currently talking or they're not using their mouth words.

[00:35:05] If I gave them some sort of device, would that stop them from talking? Or won't they rely on that device? And the answer is no. All the research, all the evidence, all the AAC users that exist that are adults that have gone through this already, like, give me the device earlier, faster.

[00:35:25] All the research on it shows that the device itself never, ever hurts. It only ever helps. So, and I guess the other thing that I think is a philosophy here in Loudoun is that there's no prerequisites. There's no hoop you have to jump through.

[00:35:41] You have to meet some sort of minimum standard or criteria to have a conversation about getting one of these tools in your students' hands. And I feel that was an old way of thinking. That definitely, when we first started, that was the way that AAC rolled. And now it's not refining.

[00:35:57] And I like to think that Loudoun had a hand in changing it for the country, but yeah. So, with that in mind, just to give you a picture of what we're talking about, some of you know. You're like, hey, my own child uses an AAC device, or you know somebody uses an AAC device.

[00:36:13] Cameron is going to show you just an example of one. Hello. Oh, I have dwell time on. You can see how it works for kids with access, too.

[00:36:29] You have to hold it. Hello. It's on something called dwell time, so it's waiting. You have to hold it for a certain amount of time. But generally, what you get the idea is that there's a grid. Most systems are set up in a grid that have pictures.

[00:36:47] And then when you touch a picture, a word is, a word, or a sequence of pictures, a word is spoken aloud. I say touch with your fingers, but it doesn't have to be with your fingers. You could, some students use their eyes. Some students use a series of switches. There's all sorts of access methods.

[00:37:05] Nice. See you all. Nice to see you all. Good. Getting an idea? Okay, for those of you that don't know. Like you said, something with it, a philosophy has changed over the last 12 to 15 years.

[00:37:25] has been there was an emphasis on the word communication. I mean, it's AAC, right? That's what the C stands for. And we have sort of shifted that to be more on learning language. And so what's the difference between communication and language? What do you think is the difference between communication and language?

[00:37:45] We often use those words synonymously, right? And we think about that. But speech is another thing, right? Speech is like what comes out of here, right? That's why it's not communication.

[00:38:01] - Language is not all communication, but communication. - What do you communicate? - That you are unhappy. Or you wanted a mic drop. - Exactly, exactly, but language is not that, right?

[00:38:21] Language is words. And so we've been focusing on words and how you use words and the little parts of words and how you put words together and putting those words together means something and putting them in a different order means something different and focusing on that, like building vocabulary, but then also how you use it how you put it in different order. Good? Not just to communicate, but to really express yourself with an end game in mind. You want to talk about the end game? Love to, because the end game is my favorite part. We want our students, when they leave LCPS, to be able to say whatever they want, whenever they want, however they want, to whomever they want. So we refer to it as snug,

[00:39:01] so spontaneous novel utterance generation, but we don't want them to just be able to say, I feel happy, or hello, right? We want them to be able to tell us all of their feelings, of their opinions all of their ideas right so that's our ultimate goal for our students is to give them that robust vocabulary so they can say whatever they want to whoever and it's beyond just the requesting I want goldfish I want water it's beyond that this concept of snug what does that mean for example it was coined it's a phrase coined by dr. Katja Hill out of the University of Pittsburgh and what it really means is you think about it right now when you just did that experience when you went around and we were talking to each other

[00:39:38] around the opening activity, you didn't know what word was going to come next out of your mouth as you were talking. When you leave today and you are talking with your shoulder buddy about what this experience is like, you don't know what the next word is going to be. You don't have a pre-scripted phrases in your mind.

[00:39:56] We do occasionally, hey, how you doing? See, that's a pre-scripted phrase. We do that all the time. But that's not the majority of what we talk about. You and I just had a conversation and we're brainstorming words all the time. It's just the next word comes after the next word comes after the next word. That's spontaneously generating new, that's what novel means, new utterances.

[00:40:17] Good? So Endgame really raises the bar for most students is that we're not just saying, oh, you can say one or two things or just get your needs met. Or like Tammy said, I can make a request and say I want goldfish.

[00:40:33] It's I can comment about goldfish and say I'm allergic to goldfish and that I want to pet goldfish. Like goldfish. Exactly. Exactly. Anything. Cool? Now, we know we're not going to get there with every single student, but that's where we're shooting for, right? Because anything else, we'd be selling them short.

[00:40:50] All right. So, we clearly know whose job this is because we're here with the related services supervisor. So, clearly, this job is for the, yes, everyone. Exactly. Right? It's all of us together working together.

[00:41:05] It's not the speech therapist job alone. they are often organizers of the of the work and often provide great insights into the work because they have a lot of expertise in the language piece but it's an all-hands-on-deck everybody on board sort of situation including parents and family members and

siblings good right so good we so we see AAC is a good thing these devices are a good thing how do we choose something for a student how do we make sure we made the right choice for for the student that we're working with Um, so, the first thing you know, if it doesn't hurt anybody, you could start the conversation right now.

[00:41:43] Like, hey, we don't, we're not using this, could, should we be, should, can we go back and talk to our case manager, should, what do we think, we just saw Chris and Cameron and Tammy talk about AAC, should we, they're going to know us, um, should we be talking about that? You can have that conversation right now. Um, they're going to contact the CIFAT, that's Specialized Instructional Facilitator for Assistive Technology, who will quickly contact the speech therapist and will start to put a team together to start have this conversation, which includes you as the parents and the family members.

[00:42:15] And then we're going to collaboratively go through an experience to decide together. This is also new thinking. This is not the way it used to be even 10 years ago. We've, again, sort of redefined how this selection process should work because how it used to work is, hey, we think this kid might need AAC.

[00:42:36] Let's call somebody out who has some experience in that, like me. They would call me out, and I would go, and I would do an evaluation, and I would then go to the team of people and say, "I think it should be this." And I think we helped some people that way, but it wasn't ideal because what we often find is that the parents didn't really have a say.

[00:43:00] They were just sort of like, "Well, I guess he's the expert, sure, we'll agree with what he has to say." the teachers felt that way. I guess he knows what he's talking about. It's just so that that specialist knows what they're talking about, so let's just do it that way. And no one ever owned it afterwards. Not no one, but it didn't work as effectively as it does now. I often find that, and it was very common, not unique to Loudon, that the device, the system, whatever that person selected would often be sitting in a backpack or on a shelf waiting for the speech pathologist to come in and take it and then work with the student. So we definitely had to develop a process

[00:43:36] that was just more all-inclusive, so everyone had buy-in and wanted to use this device with the student. Yeah. When you have a choice about anything, you're more invested in then making that choice happen and come to fruition. So we switched to a new model, which is a more collaborative model, right? And so we don't come out, the facilitators and myself don't come out and tell you what to do. Instead, we facilitate a conversation to help you come up with a decision as your own as a team.

[00:44:09] Just a quick analogy here. This is kind of like choosing a birthday present for a kid. You don't just open up Amazon and hope you find something, and through the billions of things that are on there, you're going to land on something. Instead, you think about, well, okay, this kid is nine years old, clearly a Disney fan, wearing a Frozen shirt.

[00:44:28] Disney fan, nine years old, probably likes, you know, Star Wars and maybe likes building things. This kid, you know, I know, likes Legos. Why don't we get some sort of, like, Lego that flies around a spaceship or something like that because he's a Disney fan, right? You think about who the student is, what they like, and then you go pick the present, right?

[00:44:47] Same idea here is that the facilitators get together as a team and says, tell us about your student. What are their abilities like? What about the environment? What's going on in the environment? Like at home, what languages do you speak at home?

[00:45:02] Oh, you speak English and Spanish at home? So I guess we need to be finding something that has English and Spanish on it. Fair? Yeah, looking at the student's strengths and needs, right? So there's a system out there for everybody. It's just what system works best for the student and the strengths and their needs and their access, right?

[00:45:21] So trying to use this system to get all the stakeholders' opinions. So once we fill out that first column, all those sorts of considerations go in the first column, Then the ensuing columns are looking at different options that exist here in Loudon and beyond sometimes that we could provide.

[00:45:40] So an app on an iPad or a particular device. And this is just the form has three. Sometimes we can change that form to have, we've had some as long as nine out to the side trying to figure out what would be the right match for the student. People then in the team leave having decided we think option, whichever one it is, Meets the most needs.

[00:46:05] It's the least restrictive for the student. So do we all agree that we want to implement this thing? And then we implement it. And then we have a little guide that helps you understand how to implement it. Like whose responsibility is it to charge the device? Spoiler alert, it's everybody.

[00:46:20] So we charge it at school and then you charge it at home if you're a parent. But all these sorts of things. What happens if it breaks? Whose responsibility is that? We go through this and kind of decide whose responsibility is it to implement it? Again, spoiler alert, all of us, but we use this as a guide to help fill that out and, again, leave with a shared mentality of implementation through this selection and implementation process.

[00:46:48] Okay, just hammer it home. We do not try to make decisions by ourselves. We make them as a team. It's much, much better, okay? All right, well, we've been doing this for a while. we've helped people make selections and make selections over time and that led to how can we better implement these devices once we've made a selection and this leads us to this what we call the LWAC initiative learning language with AAC initiative and this is really about building a culture in a school district for implementing these devices so that they're they're just part of the culture in the school and that we understand that what these devices are and how

[00:47:26] they're used and that kid other kids know like hey you're gonna have friends in here that use these devices here's how you can be a good friend with them and the teachers know what to do it's just an all expansive culture that we're trying to build which has its barriers but we're we've been doing this for like I said you we launched it seven years seven or eight years ago now so we've learned a bunch of things along the way and one of those things is that it ain't easy. Implementing an AAC device, learning how to use one. It's sort of like learning how to play the piano. It takes effort. It takes time. And trying to get learning a second language is a

[00:48:05] great example. And there's a bunch of little individual skills that can build up over time to learn how, like, I got to learn how to sit at the piano. I got to learn what the different notes are. I got to learn how to stretch my fingers. All these little individual things. But we found that there's one that comes out of the top the most like if we could teach people this one thing we'll move the needle the farthest the fastest okay Cameron so uh when you this is probably my favorite part because I'm big on analogies so when you think about your children as child you know

[00:48:42] right when they're developing language as an infant we're talking to them non-stop whether right we're doing it subconsciously or consciously exposing them to language all the time right and And so this idea, this concept of aided language simulation is this idea that we have AAC users who are being talked to and modeled with their right mouth words, but nobody is modeling or showing them how to communicate using the device, right?

[00:49:09] So we're modeling words and mouth words, and then we're expecting them to communicate back to us and output on a device, but that's a mix match of input and output, right? So it's not going to be as effective. It's not going to work that well in teaching a language system, right?

[00:49:27] So what we would do instead, what we're shifting to, right, is that aided language simulation. That's what we're teaching our staff, our providers, is if we want our students to be able to communicate effectively with these devices, we need to be modeling with them, right? So we need to be exposing them to it just like we do with our students when they're starting out.

[00:49:47] first learning as babies, right? We're talking all the time, so we need to do the same thing with the device as we're teaching them this language system. So it's hard to learn something if you're not exposed to it, right? Okay, and like I said, that's not easy. We wouldn't have to do, have a giant initiative to do this if everyone just knew how to do it, right? So we focus on this concept of aided language stimulation, and we recognize in order to actually teach people how to do this. Again, there's more to it, but do this. We needed a four-prong approach. If you wanted to teach somebody how to use a device, then you need a device to teach them. People would

[00:50:26] often say, you think that kid needs an iPad? No, they need two. One for the teacher and one for the student, right? So that the teacher can model on it. That's what Cameron's got right here, is a device to model with the kids. So that's the tools piece. Then you need to know how to do it.

[00:50:43] So someone has to train you how to model on that device and what that means, like how you provide enough wait time and how you, when a student does say something, how you might expand on what they've said. So there's techniques that you can learn how to do that.

[00:51:00] And then we learned that wasn't enough. We learned that one of the biggest barriers was the mindset, was the belief that these kids are too low, they'll never learn how to use it. You see all those buttons on there? come on, how are they going to learn how to do that? And so we helped them realize that that's sort of a limiting belief, limiting mindset, and that if you have a different mindset, that, hey, actually, with the right instruction and the right tools and enough time, there is no limits. They could say anything they want to say. They could eventually get to snug. So we had to help people get that mindset. And then the other piece that has been missing is that we taught people what to

[00:51:37] do. We came to classrooms and said, here, this is what you do, model on the device. And they were still we're not implementing it so if we recognize there was a piece missing and that was coaching you need somebody to help you learn how to implement these techniques we're going to talk just briefly about what that means so this led what the coaching looks like so this started back in 2019 2020 we did three days of training with speech therapists and classroom teachers going through these different skills but primarily focusing on what we call aided language stimulation or modeling on the device. I'm not going to read this slide to you. We're not going

[00:52:14] to take the time to go to it bullet by bullet, but it's just a summary of where we started. And you might be thinking, well, Chris, why are you talking about 2019, 2020? Well, what happened that year? Do you remember when we launched that year? Anyone remember? Look at the smile on your face. You remember? Yeah, exactly. So COVID hit and we had to pivot. And what we created was an online experience. All these new platforms are coming out. There was Apple Plus and Paramount Plus and Disney Plus. So we created our own called LWAC Plus, which was our Schoology courses. So teachers could go

[00:52:49] into Schoology and take our online on-demand courses that taught people how to do this when we couldn't be there in person, right? Where that lives now is that that has evolved into we've We've truncated it down to one, so we still have the LWAC+, people can go to Schoology and take those courses.

[00:53:08] But now we have a full day experience, we have about 12 of them a year with 25 people per session, one is tomorrow by the way, and it's full, and we have three sessions left for the end of the year, and they're all full, meaning a lot of people are excited about these sessions.

[00:53:26] Anyway, so full day sessions, since that's happened, we've got like over 500 people have participated, and it's open to anybody. So we've had English language teachers, we've had librarians, we've had any staff members willing to come, is open to come. We've had many transition teachers, general ed teachers, and so just know that that's how we do the training now, and that's our district-wide training. We also deploy iPads to the program teachers, so everyone gets at least one iPad in the programs and the speech language pathologists get an iPad.

[00:54:04] All right, like I said, coaching. It's not enough to just do the training. If you come to that one day of training, you won't leave being able to actually implement the device. You'll leave with a lot of knowledge, but... That's right. The implementation...

[00:54:19] You'll have a concept, but you won't actually have practice. You won't have the minutes of actually practicing. So here's what we... When they leave, they actually get six sessions of coaching with one of our CIFATs. and the specialized instructional facilitators for assistive technology.

[00:54:34] So here's what the six sessions are. Session one, we come, we record you for the teacher for about three to five minutes, actually implementing the techniques we practiced in the training. Second session is we review that short video together.

[00:54:52] Nobody else sees it, it's just the teacher and the coach to get your skills better at modeling on that device. Session three and session four is job-embedded happening in the class. I'm just gonna watch it for a few minutes, Shanaz. We're gonna see how it goes. All right, come here.

[00:55:07] But they always end the same. How do you think that went? And then we just reflect for two or three minutes with the teacher off to the side. What would you do differently? In your mind, you thought that was gonna go a certain way. What would you do differently? Or did it go the way it went, or how you thought it was gonna go?

[00:55:24] And then session five and session six are exactly the same as session one and session two. We record again, and then we review the video again. and guess what happens you get better exactly you get better at it exactly so we've got lots of feedback from teachers over the years on how this works again we're not going to read this to you but um basically it's like picard there when people leave the coaching sessions they feel supported um they they know have more knowledge about what to do and they feel successful all

[00:55:57] right we're going to wrap it up here so that's not all um we also do uh school-based trainings where we go out and do trainings for staff. More than ever, we've been taking out a box of trainer iPads and bringing them to general ed classrooms where we do little mini lessons with the general ed peers and say, you're going to have a friend in here.

[00:56:19] Here's what these devices are so you know what they look like and how you can be a good friend. We have a website that we maintain that has different strategies and we maintain the inclusive design blog. So if you're not even subscribed to the blog, I invite you to subscribe to the blog that has a specific tag where we share a lot of these stories and techniques on a kind of a weekly basis.

[00:56:41] We've been doing that for a while, so there's lots of blog posts that you can go back and read. We are working actively on a project by figuring out every single student that has a disability, every single student in special education, what is their primary form of expression to try and make sure that any kid that should be using AAC is using AAC, that we are having those conversations.

[00:57:02] Back in May, a new law was passed about AAC here in the state of Virginia. We just do some awareness training about that law. It just basically says that training is required. Many of our speech therapists have gone above and beyond to do coffee talks.

[00:57:18] Hey, you're coming and you're going to drop off your kids in the morning. Just stay for 30 minutes. We're going to do a quick little training on what to give you coffee, have a donut, and we'll tell you some more about AAC. We've been working with our transition teachers to come up with a flow chart. It exists right now, but it's always in different iterations because things constantly change.

[00:57:36] But what happens when you leave LCPS and you've been using one of those devices? So what does that transition plan look like? And then we take our opportunities where we get them. We have March 19th. Kim and Margaret have been super busy organizing the professional learning that's going to happen that day.

[00:57:52] That day that, you know, you guys are like, what are the teachers doing that day? We're busy teaching people about AAC. When we get to invite it to staff meetings, when we get opportunities to do stuff like this. And then the last slide is, here's where we need your help. We actually are going to leave with a little action item for you to do for homework.

[00:58:10] And that is, Ms. LaBelle, you listening to this? Fairfax already has adopted that the school board recognized AAC acceptance month already. So we're behind them.

[00:58:26] We can do that here. It's October. For the last 12 years, we've been static at nine CIFATs. We've had more than 40 programs open this year. More schools than ever.

[00:58:42] So what can we do to get more coaches? We're up to close to 750 kids on devices, where 12 years ago we had like 10. PADS, that doesn't count things like eye gazes and other devices that are out there.

[00:58:57] Totally. And then we said all the classroom program teachers get one iPad. What if we move to a two iPad model? Because what about the paraprofessionals that also be modeling? The occupational therapists, physical therapists, they do not have an iPad right now. And they should be modeling on the devices.

[00:59:13] And they are. Every time I go see one of my OTs or PTs, they've got the iPad and they are modeling. They're modeling in the classroom one. In the classroom one. Not the one that they have. Our

adaptive PE teachers don't have one. General ed teachers don't have one. How many librarians have said, can we get an iPad that we can model when we're doing our lessons in library?

[00:59:32] And our English language learners, like I said, it hurts nobody, helps everyone. So there's lots of work that could still be done to change our model and get more tools in the teacher's hands and teach them how to use it. And so that's where we leave with this last little link for you. This will take you to a Google form where we could use your help with your ideas.

[00:59:52] When we launched the ELWAC initiative back in 2019-2020, we worked with Leanne Kidwell to offer many sessions for parents. And we had a lot of parents sign up and very few show up. And so we pivoted away from that and did more coffee talks.

[01:00:08] But the ideas that we could do to get more parent trainings, what ideas do you have for us? We'll take all ideas into consideration because, again, it's not a moment, it's a movement. It's all hands on deck, and we invite you to be a part of it.

[01:00:26] Cool. I had a quick question. One of the things you said earlier was about how everyone's involved in learning and helping people with the AIC devices.

[01:00:44] But one of the things I saw missing, and I think it's probably tied to your last slide, was that the parents. Like, I didn't see anything about providing an AIC device for the parents, the family at home. So, like, around the dinner table, they could model that. Like, when they're ready, like, I mean, you talked about parents modeling language for children.

[01:01:04] I think that would be something helpful. Is that something that we've thought of and just don't have the funding to do, or yes? Well, let's say this. Like I said, we have approximately 750 kids, and we're constantly adding more as we're having these discussions more. So what you'd be talking about there is doubling that.

[01:01:22] Delightful. And then I'll just leave it at that. Let's go, Carrie. You guys? The coaching aspect as well. Training, but then coaching the parents, because...

[01:01:38] And we do that. Yeah, we absolutely coach the parents. speech pass school teams it's not designated just a one role it's that team approach at the school that parents do come in and have the coaching um and and our staff are at their disposal anytime they have questions they can reach out so i'll give you some real-time feedback too because as you were talking i was messaging with a family that i've been working with over the years and their special needs student and asked about their aac device and how that's going and so forth i i said, the three people here I can beat, I mean, ask for support are here, and what can I tell them?

[01:02:16] So he actually came back and said, no, it's been really great. Our teacher is really well-trained, too, which helps, and she actually calls us regularly to make sure we're practicing at home, and that he really likes the fact that the charger iPad notice goes to their phones and so forth as well to make sure that that device is always up and running.

[01:02:36] Awesome. It is working. Yeah. Great feedback. Happy to answer more questions, but just to piggyback on that, just got a Facebook message yesterday from a former, well, it's a parent, but from a former student that just graduated last year who's in college, and she just gave her first speech using her AAC device in her class, talking about how she uses her AAC device.

[01:02:55] And I was like, that was very heartwarming that it's working. Any last questions because our time is running thin, but we'll answer the questions you have. Wait one second. Hello, how are you?

[01:03:22] So just general feedback, and I don't want mine to come out of the cross, is not positive, but just also realistic, maybe for perhaps the age of my child who currently does use an AAC device. The one that LCPS had first suggested did not work for him, so he does use TD SNAP, which is a different system.

[01:03:40] That brings other difficulties in towards the classroom because it is not the same motor plan that a lot of the other students are using or what is up on the whiteboard that the teachers are putting up there. Even with the immense amount of time that we are practicing at home, his private speech therapist, the speech therapist in school.

[01:04:00] He is mobile. He has a lot of cognitive and motor issues and physical ones. Wearing the shoe is very difficult for him. I do wish, and it's a constant thing that I'm bringing up, that we were not solely focused on the AAC device.

[01:04:16] They were bringing other modalities of communication more consistently into the learning process also, so that when it is difficult and there is this long learning curve with it. We weren't just focused on this one thing. One of his biggest strengths, playing on the playground, direct eye contact, social engagement, that is a very limiting feature to be constantly thrown onto him to try to run around with it.

[01:04:40] And the slow pace of communication, I've seen a lot of adults as they do age, and a lot of it is the text to speech. So a lot of the speeches are pre-programmed there is a lot of difficulty trying to have our students my student in particular be a part of nor the regular socialization with the other students so to bring in those other forms of communication and push them to will also help them to feel more included in things it is a very isolating feature at times too and I'm not saying that to be negative I'm saying it's that when

[01:05:19] we're planning and considering these things I love your energy it makes me feel so happy to see, but to still consider that with these trainings, with these other things, we should also be pushing other things into the conversation, too. Thank you. I was just going to say you're right. And, you know, this was an overview. And during the larger training, we do say, you know, AAC doesn't just encompass the device. You're 100% right. It encompasses all forms of alternative communication. We call it a system.

[01:05:48] a system called a system it could be dream wish too yeah dream wish have uh more classrooms that are just focused like if you were a um a sign language learner or deaf or hard of hearing where you would have a more uh school that was focused more on that it it might be great also if we did eventually someday move towards um schools or classrooms that were focused more on that especially if children do have motor planning type issues it's not it takes longer

[01:06:17] for them to learn how to use it too thanks everybody thank you guys you're ready to okay so we're just going to move in real quick now to um again thank you guys so much for coming and presenting it was a really great presentation um nikia pernell will be presenting our special

[01:06:46] education annual plan i'm back for more connecting so i want to start by just saying that the annual plan is going to be very similar to the annual plan that we presented last year just because again the amounts in the grants don't typically change very much and the money doesn't usually increase it typically decreases so I just wanted to preface the conversation with that. So we're

[01:07:24] going to go ahead and jump right in. So the purpose of the special education annual plan Part B flow through application identifies the following things we're required to submit the application for funds to support special education and related services for students with disabilities in the division it is a formal agreement between LCPS and VDOE for implementing regulations governing these services and the funding is contingent upon approval of this plan so we do have to submit it and it has to be approved after it is reviewed by the the board, the assistant superintendent, the superintendent, and then VDOE has to approve it.

[01:08:02] So, and to give a bit of background, just in case this is your first time hearing this presentation or you've not done much studying on annual plans in local school divisions in Virginia, the Title VIB funds that we are applying for are federal funds that support only students with disabilities in school divisions. And the annual plan just serves as an agreement that says we are going to utilize those funds to provide those services to students holistically with disabilities.

[01:08:35] And the funding is, again, contingent upon approval. So moving on to the components. So there are multiple components of the plan. There are assurances and certifications, interagency agreements with our local and regional jails, maintenance of effort, which is MOE, which I have coined money over everything because it really is and proportion is set aside and title 6b is broken up into two parts 611 grant and the 619 grant so we provide those assurances and certifications that again we will implement

[01:09:11] special education and related services to qualified students with disabilities in our lea and we do acknowledge that we work on education in the local and regional jails which a lot of people were surprised about, but we do hold all of the same compliance opportunities, eligibilities, screenings, annual IEPs, amendments. All of those things are still required for those who have not obtained a standard or advanced diploma prior to finding themselves incarcerated in our local or regional jails. So the

[01:09:47] information that we have to provide on maintenance of effort, again that means that every school division must spend the same or more of local and state funds on the provision of special education services to students with disabilities we can't spend less we have to spend the same or more which is why i just told you i called that money over everything and believe me we do we don't have a problem spending money on students with disabilities because we spend quite a bit every day i sign those purchase orders so i know what we're spending proportion is set aside

[01:10:23] is the amount of money that we have to set aside for those students who are homeschooled or perennially placed in private schools so we will also talk through those amounts and the annual plan application requires that we outline what we will be spending those funds on so i know that that part is very important to you guys so guess what it's on the next slide so you will see that our total K-12 budget proposed or projected based on what we are projected to get using the calculations that we typically use every year. So again, these are projections, but they are

[01:11:00] projections based on a structured program that we use to guesstimate how much funds we will receive. So that is at about almost \$16 million. We'll round that, right? But you see the full number there. And so this year we've decided, and you'll remember last year, and this is how you can tell the money has decreased because last year that top line was 130 special education teachers and you will see now that it will be funding 105 FTEs special education teacher FTEs two specialists

[01:11:33] one financial analyst two supervisors one program assistant and one teacher assistant in previous years if you go back and look you will see that we had additional funds set aside for things like curriculum and materials but again based on the fact that this number has been decreasing we will have to utilize other local funds to cover some of those additional materials that we had been able to cover in previous years. So for an additional breakdown of what will also be covered

[01:12:09] in the annual plan so historically remember and SEAC was a big part of this we talked about expanding the opportunities through the annual plan of what it would be what it would cover so we are still going to be supporting transition planning for students 14 to 21 and of course that would include those coordinated activities those opportunities to connect with community agencies and outside agencies outside of LCPS opportunities to create propose implement and track those post-secondary goals, so under transition we will continue to support that

[01:12:47] through the ISP process. We will also continue to support those direct instructional services. Thank you again CIAC, I know you guys have been advocating for direct instructional services for quite some time that are aligned with students needs as they are identified in a student's ISP.

[01:13:04] Now those direct services can be provided on any LCPS property or we are also offering virtual opportunities for those services and then third we will continue as we always have to offer those consultative services that provide that collaboration between either the private school or home school students of the family or the private school staff on strategies and interventions based on those identified needs in the isps so we will continue to cover those three areas with the funds that have been set aside and as you can see right now again a guesstimate but i think a good one of that

[01:13:40] amount is about eighty one thousand seven hundred and thirty dollars and six cents to be exact so for the second part of the funding the title 6b 619 so that was 611 and this is the 619 portion of that we will be funding two ecsc teachers because this is the grant that is for preschool age students three to five as you can see there's about 245 or so thousand that will be grant funded. As you can see, that's a much smaller number from the other grant, which

[01:14:14] it typically is. And that proportion is set aside amount. You can see it's \$709.76. So of note, last year, I know Paige shared with you guys that since its inception, before I was born, back in 1975, we were promised that about 45% of the funding that we require for local school divisions would be provided. Up until this point, that has not happened. Typically, it is somewhere around 25% and hasn't really exceeded that in past years. So you can see, after I've given you

[01:14:51] all of these totals, this grant combined only makes up about 5% of the total Office of Special Education budget for the school year. So while, yes, it is money that we require, money that we will gladly take, I want you to understand that is a very small percentage of our total budget for the year. So the impact on the budget. So the funds do come from IDEA, currently funded at approximately 15% of the cost of special education. And again, like I said, we've never

[01:15:27] reached that 45% threshold. So if somebody has a way to help us get that extra 20%, we'd be happy to support your advocacy in that the majority of special education is again still funded by those state and local dollars and in lcps you can see here that our grant total again estimated is at about 16 million for fy 27 and that is approximately 5.2 percent of our 312 million dollar budget. So again, while we do utilize those funds and we need them and we

[01:16:04] welcome them, it is a very small portion of the budget that we utilize to support all of the needs and the provision of special education and related services in the division. So now it is time for questions. Yes, Mr. Metz, coming on up. He beat you. He beat you to it. I knew you guys so thank you for presenting your slides we have not been presented the annual plan that is not the annual plan and the regulations do require that we review the annual plan prior to submission

[01:16:42] to the video e so when will the annual plan be submitted to us so we i do believe we are required to present to the school board as well and so i know that that is coming up but um outside of that I mean, obviously there are always opportunities for us to meet, to go over the annual plan.

[01:17:03] Everything that I just shared in the slides is what is currently in the annual plan that is proposed, but obviously it has not been submitted and will not be submitted until it has been reviewed and approved by everyone that is required to review and approve it.

[01:17:20] So we are not quite ready for submission today, and we've not done that yet. There is another question. I mean, I did not hear an answer in the form of a date, so I'm concerned about that.

[01:17:39] I don't have the date right here with me. Do you have the date of the school board meeting with you? I don't have that with me right here standing at the podium, but I can get it for you in just a second. It's April. It's a school board meeting in April, but I do have the exact date that I can get to you in just a second. Yeah, I think it's the 14th.

[01:17:57] But perhaps I am misunderstanding and I don't want to misunderstand. You are telling us that you are going to present it to the school board. you're going to have the school board vote on it to adopt it. After the school board has voted to adopt it, then you will allow us to review it. Is that what you are telling us? Yes, that is the plan. I have presented it here for questions and comments. Should there be questions and comments that require some level of additions, then we are happy to discuss that. So the first is to you all,

[01:18:37] which it always is. The first is to SEAC, again, for your feedback and inclusion, as a lot of the updates that have already been made are based on the feedback that we do receive from this group. So should there be any of that that we'd like to discuss, that is what today's opportunity is for.

[01:18:54] And then, yes, it will be presented at the school board meeting for approval. So is there any feedback or any additions or any considerations that you'd like the Office of Special Education to make, because that's why we come here to communicate with the stakeholders, so I've not presented you with a final plan, because you are a part of the stakeholder group, and we are here to present with you what we have, and then to receive your feedback, so that is what this opportunity is for.

[01:19:22] Okay, I will, so here, what I think Craig is trying to express is that in the past, we have actually had an opportunity we've you know to come together and have I think it was like before COVID we were we were given the annual plan as a draft for us to review and then we had an opportunity to sit down and discuss some of the features of the annual plan before you presented it to the school board and if that is the question I think that we're asking because I

[01:19:58] believe the first question was when will you plan but if the question is is there an opportunity to? I'm always happy to create opportunities to collaborate with SEAC if that is something that you are asking. And I do believe Tedra had a comment or a question.

[01:20:15] Thank you, Nikia. Yes. So the obligation is that it is shared with SEAC by regulation. And so tonight we have done that. And we certainly want to have an opportunity for you all to provide us feedback. We won't have a final plan until we have your feedback, we've answered your questions, we've considered your your your input and then it is presented to the school board the school board actually does not vote on the annual plan it is presented to them they they then also have an opportunity to ask questions and to

[01:20:50] provide feedback and input the final approval is the signature of the superintendent so then the answer to the initial question in the form that it was asked is yes there is always an opportunity for collaboration and review and feedback but again it would never be final until we've received that school board review and then superintendent approval so happy to create an opportunity for that offline outside of this meeting we can schedule an opportunity for that review okay and then also can we also get a copy of the

[01:21:30] draft to maybe the ec like we send it out to the ec and then we can sit and review i think we can talk about how we can share that in a way that it maintains the integrity of the document absolutely so so i may have missed it in your in your slide but the set aside funds how are they being earmarked this year oh for what purposes for special education for students who are not attending lcps so again to cover transitional opportunities direct instruction in the areas of need that have

[01:22:09] been identified in the iep and that's the isp so that could be anything social skills yeah it could whatever the needs are of the students so i was very vague in that because it is based on the individual needs of the student who has the isp and so then those related services and um so related services, transitional services, and direct instructional services. Those are the same three that are in the current plan that we are under right now. That has not been adjusted or decreased or minimized in any way. So again, if there is feedback of other areas that you all would like to see covered, that is where the feedback would come from. But I do think we worked really hard

[01:22:49] to beef it up to where it is now. But if there is additional feedback, that is what this opportunity is for that we are engaging in right now you need the mic jen i do all right i want to just confirm i don't know because that wasn't the plan that was like an overview of the plan did you guys say you're going to get us yeah well i won't be so it would not be appropriate to have presented and streamed something that is incomplete the plan has not been approved so that is not the plan but the information on every single slide was lifted directly from the plan to give an overview for

[01:23:29] those who don't even understand what the plan is and then what would be included so if we go back I can tell you that this is a slide it looks just like this the numbers have been taken directly from the slide this is also a slide I copied and pasted from the box and put it on this slide so each part of the plan is tabbed and includes the information that I've created here so I turned each tab of the plan into a slide so there is no information in the plan that you haven't heard today through this presentation. But this is not the format of the plan. It is in an Excel document

[01:24:03] that is sent to us by VDOE, and it is in a different format. But the information is the same. Yeah, but did we already, we're getting a draft of it, right? I mean, the requirement is to... That is what Shanaj just asked, and I said we would create an opportunity to find a way to share a draft in a way that does not obviously mess with the integrity of the document, because I cannot share a VDOE document out with

other members so I will have to come up with a way to share this plan without it being able to be edited or changed in any way and create an opportunity

[01:24:40] so that's fine it can be a non-editable but the requirement for us to review it is from the VDOE so I just want to make sure we're going to get a track yes for us to share it with you I'm not sure that the language says to review no it's to review okay yes we have to review it well that is the opportunity shana's was just asking about that we said we would be scheduling i just didn't hear that so that's what i just wanted to confirm so we'll get okay that's it yeah yeah i just i was thinking that maybe we're just getting caught on semantics a little bit so it is that we do have to review the document prior to submission to the school board and what we saw

[01:25:16] as a summary tonight which is awesome um and so we can see and i don't want to look at the line by line right the second so i am grateful for the summary yes and that would not be appropriate for this particular audience but the audience you all are speaking about yes that would be appropriate so review prior to is that yes prior to april yes it is on page 72 of the regulations prior to submission to the virginia department of education the annual plan shall be reviewed by the local school division's local advisory committee and approved by the local school board state operated

[01:25:55] programs and the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Stanton shall submit their annual plan to the state special education advisory committee for review prior to submission to the Virginia Department of Education. So I understand that you all want to see the actual document that will be submitted. Right now it's in an Excel format, so we'll have to drop that into a PDF so that you can see it. But I can certainly confirm everything that is captured on these slides is exactly what

[01:26:31] is entered into the tabs that are on the Excel document from which we have to work that's provided by the state. Okay. Now I got a couple here before everyone. We have in the past gotten that Excel sheet just so you do know. But she just mentioned that in the past they had received the Excel sheet.

[01:26:54] Again, that is a form that is sent directly only to directors from VDOE. So I would not be at liberty to share that. So I will plan to share it in a PDF form to you all for review and to schedule a time to actually meet to discuss any questions or feedback during said review.

[01:27:14] I just wanted to ask a question since I have you here. If we go back to the slide where we had this special education. Is this one? Yeah, could you please clarify again how we went from 130 to 105 and then we lost? Well, it's based on the funding.

[01:27:31] It's based on the funding projections coming. So again, these are all guesstimates. But for students with disabilities, we've gone up, right? So while our child count for special education has increased, Loudoun County's local composite index has also increased, which increases our capacity as a locality to pay for more of our own expenses.

[01:28:02] So that's why our annual plan funds will be adjusted because our LCI, our ability to pay as a locality, has been determined to increase at the state level. Ha! A little bit of both.

[01:28:19] It's basically the data center's fault. That's the answer to all questions. Yeah, and I do, and I think it was important to note that if that continues, we will continue to see a decrease. But again, we always run out of funding and we always cover that overage in local funds because typically for the last three or so months of the year, we're typically covering those FTEs with local funds anyway. So we've never gone an entire school year with just the funds that are provided. So I think it's important to know

[01:28:56] that we do cover quite a bit with local funds outside of this annually anyway, and we will continue to have to cover more as this number continues to decrease. So basically, when we had the behavioral specialist in the previous, that one now moves to local funding.

[01:29:14] Anything, yes. So if you want to side-by-side them, and again, like when we meet to review, if that is an exercise you guys want to go through, you can basically determine or predetermine that if we removed it, it was because we are really guesstimating. And sometimes there is overage, like these particular positions, FTEs, might not come up to that exact amount. So any overage, if there was, let's just say, would then be utilized for supplies, resources, materials for students with disabilities in that area. But there's likely

[01:29:53] no overage but if there were that is how that would be adjusted so that's what happens we kind of guesstimate based on the salaries of these positions how many we can get into what we believe the funding will be and then if we're off we just fund it through local funds i guess the reason why i brought it up was i was a little concerned because we did ask for a number of program classes last year and then a number this year and so we're going to have a lot of but is that all going to come from that local funding?

[01:30:25] So that, I guess, the provision of new programs, obviously, yes, is covered, because that's why that goes through our local budgeting process. So a lot of those new programs and FTEs that come with new programs are covered in those local funds. We just identify very specific, because that is the way you have to basically inventory or tag which things are being connected to the grant, because there is specific reporting that's required. So we will choose a very specific 105 teachers at very specific locations to keep

[01:31:00] that information more siloed so that it's not collecting data from all across the division. And so we have edited our process a bit for FY27 because before we might have had 105 special education teachers at let's say 50 school locations. Well now we're trying to make that process a little more structured, more neat, more easy to follow, more easy to track. And so we are now going to silo those 105 teachers into very specific schools. That will make it easier for us to follow. But we chose these positions based on the amount, and that is benefits and salaries

[01:31:37] together, and to fit in the grant as much as we could possibly fit, and spreading it across different FTEs. And that is something we could discuss if you guys had feedback on that. But either way whether it is funded through the grant or locally it is funded i think that is the point everything will be funded we are we are not losing anyone i i guess again my question would be that if we're asking for less won't we get less next year well we're not asking for less if we could just ask we'd ask for more but that's the plan right that when you're putting the plan together

[01:32:17] No, no, no, no. So again, based on, again, as Tedra just mentioned, based on that local index, the state will determine. Yes. And so business and finance uses that formula to guesstimate what we would be receiving. So this is not what we are asking for. This is what we are required to receive. If we could ask, we'd certainly jack it up. Yeah, we'd never decrease it.

[01:32:45] Yeah, it's not an ask and you shall receive situation. Because I thought you said at the beginning you were saying that this is the same amount or more of what. So that is for maintenance of effort. The maintenance of effort. That is for MOE. Yes, we have to spend in local and state funds.

[01:33:01] So remember, that is a combination of local and state funds. We have to spend more annually than we did the year before. I'm getting that. But that is one of the components of the annual plan is the

maintenance of effort tab. Any additional questions or feedback or information you'd like us to consider?

[01:33:22] I know that Shanaz will create an opportunity for you all to provide feedback to her prior to said collaboration, but if anyone had any additional questions, please ask them now. I would just like to make an observation.

[01:33:40] SEAC, the Local Advisory Committee, is a public body subject to Virginia's Freedom of Information Act, FOIA. Business of the public body, which since the regulation says this is explicitly something we have to do, this is business of the public body, must be done in a properly convened public meeting.

[01:34:02] SEAC has bylaws that state, among other things, that we have to publish our meeting schedule in advance starting in about, I believe, August or September. So our next meeting is first week of April.

[01:34:19] We have not been prevented with the plan. And you will be. That's great. But the next time that we can review it is in that open meeting in April. You can create discussion work sessions. That's great. That's helpful.

[01:34:34] Thank you. But at the end of the day, the actual business of the public body has to be done by a vote in a meeting, which will be in April. And when it's April SEAC meeting and the school board meeting is, so we will have plenty of time for you all to meet.

[01:34:51] and review, and then for us to present to the school board. I think it's a perfect timeline. Okay. So I think that that works for everyone, but I just want to make sure that we understand that. Broadly, I'm just going to be super honest with you. I just don't feel like we're getting the openness and transparency that people talk about here. I mean, some of the discussion here just kind of doesn't make me feel very comfortable. In the past, we've simply been given the plan from the get-go. And it is totally okay to summarize it into his slides because it is absolutely correct that the VDOE forms do have a bunch of technical details, and sometimes

[01:35:31] summarizing it to a higher level is going to help understanding because it gets us away from the nitty-gritty. But I am really disappointed that we did not tonight see a draft of the actual document. And I do apologize that you're disappointed and that you feel like there's a level of transparency that is maybe decreasing, but I do believe that we've created an opportunity here for you all to ask any and every question that you'd like to ask for an ability for us to be transparent.

[01:36:02] So there is not a question that is off the table. I don't believe there is a question that we haven't been willing to ask. So if there are additional questions or information that you'd like to have, all of the numbers as published by business and finance are there for you. There is no secret all of the positions that we are planning to fund are there.

[01:36:19] There is no secret. Are there other opportunities that SEAC would like us to respond to in this very public forum for means of transparency? Okay, well, I wanna go ahead and give you all time for your business meeting.

[01:36:35] Should you have any additional questions, please just send them to my email. Thank you. - We will take a little break, but before we, I just wanted to mention, Laura has made amazing treats.

[01:36:54] I really tried very hard to have half a Rice Krispie treat. It didn't work. So please go ahead, enjoy, and we will come back. I would say let's do five minutes because we do have a big policy we need to

talk about.

[01:47:07] We're going to go ahead and get started because we do have a couple policies, and one is a big policy, so I do want to get us started real quick. If everyone could take a moment and scan the QR code.

[01:47:27] Also, if anyone wanted to make a public comment, it is in the back. Are we good with the QR code? So I'll just quickly have you guys look over the agenda real quick.

[01:47:53] Okay, and I think everyone knows that SEAC is mandated by Virginia, so I'm just going to skip over this one real quick. Okay, I'm going to go ahead and introduce our officers. I'm Shanaz Khan.

[01:48:09] I'm the SEAC chair. To my left, we have Catherine Moran, our vice chair of planning. We have Tom Ketchum, our vice chair of membership. We have Liz Crotty, our CI Pass Chair. We have Aaron Rizalpo, our Vice Chair of Communications.

[01:48:26] And we are missing our school board liaison is Carrie LaBelle. She's coming back. And we have Nakia Purnell coming in here as our Assistant Special Ed Director. Okay, so we're going to take a moment to admit our virtual attendees.

[01:48:53] Can I have a motion? Second. All those in favor? Say aye. Any nays? Okay. Welcome, Carrie and Carly. Is that Carly on there? Carly, are you on?

[01:49:17] Okay. Well, Carly had a baby, so congratulations to Carly. So we can understand she might not have made it on. We are going to go ahead. I did send out the January and February meeting minutes. Did anyone have any questions? Were they all good?

[01:49:36] Go ahead and approve those. Public comment. Do we know if we have any public comments? We don't. Okay. But do you want to do roll call now or a little later? Okay. And then let me know the number, please. Gary Adams.

[01:49:54] Here. Elizabeth Crotty. Jen DiDonato. Marsha Kelly, who is in the hallway, I believe. Tom Ketchum present.

[01:50:11] Shanaz Khan. Rosina Katak. Laura Colossi. Mary McClintock. Alicia McFadden, Craig Metz, Stephen Meyer, Catherine Moran, Kelly Ralston, Erin Rizal-Poe, Catherine Rosenbrook, not here, Carly Sabatino, Carla Sol, Carla Sola, I'm sorry, Carla,

[01:50:44] Carla, she's not here, but still, Sharon Trompf, Sharon, yeah, Sharon is here, Melissa Waugh, and Sakina Zarboche, yeah, I know, I saw you before, we were at 62%, yes.

[01:51:10] Now we will have Leanne from Family Resource Services. Good evening, everyone.

[01:51:27] I am Leanne Kidwell from Family Resource Services. And I just want to tell you that we are wrapping up our workshops for the year. The last three workshops are going to be in March. So if you haven't been to a workshop, please put it on your calendar.

[01:51:44] The next one we're going to have is March 12th. It's Parenting the Anxious Child. it will be here in person in the evening from 6 30 to 8 then we are having our big summer resource fair so this is a open house you can drop by anytime between 9 a.m and 12 p.m on saturday the 14th and we have about 25 different vendors that are disability specific or not we have some karate Studios coming, the Girl Scouts are going to be there, some camps, so lots of different activities

[01:52:22] for you to come and peruse with your little ones, bring them to. Just a side note, we will be entering from the West End just like you do for SEAC. And then the last thing that we have is diploma options, and that is the 26th, and that will be virtual from 12 to 1. We've had tremendous success with our virtual meetings at noon so not only will we have it at noon it will be recorded and I try to post it the same day on our website so if you have to miss it the recording

[01:52:58] of the presentation will be on our website this is my information and have a great evening any questions fantastic and now Tedra Richardson good evening and thank you all for being here appreciate that happenings across the dss we did host on february 21st our 8th annual mental health

[01:53:35] and wellness conference at heritage high school from 9 to 1 we had about 650 people to attend it was a wonderful opportunity certainly want to make sure that you keep that in mind for next year we did get some feedback that maybe we should consider a warmer month and a month months that aren't um competing with athletics so we might do a little bit of a shift we started on like always hosting in january we moved it to february this year still got some some feedback but just want you to know that that was a successful experience for our community we did have some presentations

[01:54:14] to our school board from the dss we did a report out from our student health advisory board that meets on a quarterly basis and then we also provided the annual report on restraint and and seclusion. We have a very exciting experience coming up. We have been able to partner with HealthWorks, and we have applied for a grant through the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health, and we have been awarded a grant that will provide us two school-based mobile health clinics, one fully dedicated to medical services and the other for dental and vision. We are

[01:54:53] very very excited so we will continue to give you updates on that opportunity as we move forward this week is school social work week so please make sure you celebrate your school social workers it is also educational diagnostician week so please celebrate your educational diagnosticians the next screen here next slide I have a request so we have been we do have new school board members as you are aware, and they are moving through the process of going through board meetings and sitting in committee meetings.

[01:55:29] One of the main feedback points is they would like to see consistency across how they receive community feedback on policies that are pushed out, okay? So here's the ask, and I'm not sure how SEAC would like to manage it.

[01:55:47] Most of our advisories to the board sort of do that standalone write-up. See, you have your cover sheet and your summary. You break down your concerns and your recommendations. We're trying to centralize that all in one place, but before we make that shift, we want you to be able to give us feedback on what might be needed to enhance this link so that it fully captures all of your feedback. And so let's go to Supporting Pregnant Students. That's

[01:56:24] an active policy that is out for feedback. You click the link. It takes you to this form. Currently, this form has these two boxes. And so we would like the policy subcommittee to look at this link, look at this form, and give us some feedback. We're asking this of all of our advisory committees to give us some feedback so we can standardize this process so that when board members in committee and on the dais are presented with community feedback, that it's all in the same

[01:56:59] format. Is that an okay ask? I do not believe so, but certainly if that's a point of concern, please note that in your feedback. Yes. And so we definitely want your feedback on what additional boxes need to be added what additional drop downs might need to be added to make this form fully functional for all of our board advisories like even including the capability of adding an attachment so that i could you know then we could just certainly a report right here yes and that

[01:57:34] we do ask that they don't close the form until we are able we did say that we would like to keep this link open and active at all times okay perfect yes so that would be great if they have a capability of letting us just upload our attachment I think that would okay okay thank

[01:57:51] you they are right mm-hmm that is what they would like mr.

[01:58:17] Ketchum so I just have a question because I've been giving individual feedback on policy which you can always do for some time I know yes this looks exactly the same form that it's always been it is what's new which is why we're bringing it back to committee so our board members just brought it to our attention that they would like more more uniformity and how they receive the feedback so we have been asked new it's just the process of using it correct i see okay correct and then so we want to make sure that it meets the

[01:58:50] needs of all of the advisories to the board so we want your feedback so we won't make any changes until we have your feedback absolutely yeah because as it stands now the feedback so if you enter feedback into this form then it does print out into a chart format for board members and that's what they like is seeing that chart format if not then staff have to take that feedback and put it into a chart which we are able to do but if we could get the functionality of this form to

[01:59:28] be what works best for everyone then that is what that is the direction that the board would like to move awesome thank you is there a specific time when they want that if we could get it at least by the end of this month okay thank you did i mess up something no i think that's it i hope i didn't

[01:59:57] mess anything up there we go all right now i'll hand it over to ms labelle report but every time we tried to hold a committee meeting we got snowed out i think you know the feeling uh we had some

[02:00:34] wonderful presentations just before i came in here today on the progress of the transition School, the View Academy, and I think it's wonderful. Lauren was almost crying. She was so thrilled with what was going on. And Dr. Richardson was telling me how exciting it was to not just be able to walk through and work on the design of the meeting, but to actually get to see, feel, stomp on whatever, the carpeting, look at the paint swatches and make decisions about that. So things are going along well.

[02:01:11] They also tried to have a meeting with students to get student feedback on what kinds of programs they want to see there, but they were snowed out too, twice, just like my committee. So I understand that feeling, but I think that things are going along well.

[02:01:27] I know there is some concern about, and I'll bring this up right now so we can get it out of the way, the meeting Thursday night, tomorrow night, regarding SROs in elementary schools.

[02:01:43] We're getting a lot of yes, a lot of no, a lot of mail, but one of the things that concerns me, and I know concerns all of you, are how the sheriff's SRO will interact with special ed students. And if we decide that we do want SROs in elementary schools, we can renegotiate the MOU and require certain things, trainings, when they may be present, when they don't need to be present in the process.

[02:02:15] So I will be keeping a close eye on that and be making those suggestions. I don't know what everybody in this room feels. I'm not going to express how I feel. but I will be watching for the special ed students needs and protection so that's about all I have today thank you so there were a number of us who did

[02:02:52] attend the town hall meeting that the sheriff had arranged and we were there and we had some good conversations I think we had we met with lieutenant sawyer but there's lieutenant colonel sawyer and um sheriff chapman so we hit we had some really good discussions and i think our our concern still is is that anyone working with our students always has proper training when you know and that is the that is the feedback we gave to both of them and

[02:03:32] and it was very well received and they're working collaboratively with with us so so anyone who wants to come it is tomorrow night at the school board meeting where they will be discussing all right and I think we're going to not do the did you know today and then we're going to move on to the SEAC chair report Tom do you have numbers sorry so good feedback from the audit process we went from less than a well less than a third of confirmed reps to well over half the schools now

[02:04:10] have confirmed reps so we've reached out to the rest of the schools to ensure that we do have reps across the board but that has cleaned up considerably we still have 21 voting members all of the voting members will be receiving an email from me regarding ongoing in next year and commitments and time and so forth so look for that in your email box and that's all I have a membership right now do you want me to cover the other items as well so non-membership related next meeting of GIAC will be on March 12th where we'll be discussing the fusion program as well as the

[02:04:49] impact of AI on gifted students or anybody who is dealing with twice exceptional students and all of the challenges that we face with students that have both sets of issues and challenges in front of them that'll be well worth attending the next meeting on the strategic committee is on March 18th and we're continuing to look at some of the basic principles and values of the school system as we move forward tomorrow is the next meeting of the equity committee which is now actually called the equity council it's a little bit different form than it was previously but the good news

[02:05:28] it is is that it has restarted and we'll be discussing some things around the instructional framework and how to discuss that through the equity lens and final note would be our next meaningful inclusion subcommittee meeting is going to be on March 25th and we have gotten good response so far on folks signing up to do some of these little video sort of how you how you are did you know type videos that we're putting together and if you haven't received an email about that we would like to participate please let me know and I can add you to

[02:06:03] the list our executive committee meeting will be meeting right after this meeting at Clyde's and it's open the public so anyone can come and join our policy and compliance subcommittee we are going to discuss the policies in a few minutes after I go through every other slide here our nominating committee we have Carla and Liz, any updates? We've sent out emails to see if the current executive

[02:06:39] committee which positions will be returning. Very shortly we will send out a large comprehensive email with all of the roles of the executive committee to all of our members to open it up and we would love it if you would express interest in the open positions. They are, it's a great, great time on the executive committee and so we encourage everyone to throw their hat in and say I want to do a

little bit more we have a great team we we we always have and and that makes such a difference for our committee so please if you feel like you

[02:07:19] have the capacity to give a little bit more let us know thank you and now we're we are in the thick of the SEAC award planning Laura sure Laura and Liz so you You both can do it together.

[02:07:42] Yes, we're the dream team. Can't wait. Yeah, so we just sent out the nomination form. Feel free to send that out to anybody you know. Send it with your schools. That should go, was it, it goes, it gets sent out to the parents too, right?

[02:07:58] The peach, peach. It will be sent out, I think, at the end of this week. It's going to be sent out to all the families through the LCPS email. Yeah, it's also on our website too. So if you want to send that out to your schools or whatever, if you want to nominate somebody, that'd be great.

[02:08:18] I believe it closes March 27th, I believe. And then after that, we're going to get into the swing of planning and everything. If you want to come join us, help out, we'd love to take you. So I'm going to change that to you all need to keep June 3rd written down and blocked off.

[02:08:37] And please come and help us. Light Ridge High School on June 3rd. You guys, this year we would really, really like every single one of our SEAC members to be in attendance at the SEAC awards. It is a lot of work.

[02:08:54] We had a great turnout last year, and I think we all had a lot of fun. So please put that on your calendar. Plan to be there. This is in place of our June meeting, so it does count towards attendance. Okay, but I think Tom gave us already our update on meaningful inclusion.

[02:09:20] And you said the next meeting is March 25th? Okay. Erin and Alicia, specialized reading. So we did a little bit more conversation around FHIR, some of our other interventions, and this little topic keeps rearing its head of MTSS, how that works, how it ties into interventions.

[02:09:48] This is a topic that keeps coming up. And so we had a little bit of discussion about this, and then we figured, you know what, let's make it a larger discussion. So next week at our work session slash subcommittee meeting, because we're kind of blending the two of them.

[02:10:04] So it's going to be March 12th at 10 a.m. We are actually bringing MTSS to our subcommittee. We're also going to be bringing Kelly Barba, who is one of our head of our supervisors for eligibility. And that way we can kind of help answer some of these questions that keep coming up in terms of, okay, my kiddo was flagged for this MTSS plan but is not receiving a reading intervention, but yet I don't know this MTSS plan exists, so what do I do?

[02:10:38] And what if our kiddo is in a program and is not making progress after six to eight weeks, then what? So our goal is to bring the experts to our subcommittee meetings so we can get a lot of this clarified and also kind of strategize next steps for your own children.

[02:10:55] And their next meeting will be on March 12th in person at 10 a.m. Transition, Stephen. Thank you.

[02:11:14] We had our transition meeting this week, and it was here in admin with Jenna Arndt and her staff. In addition to what Ms. LaBelle said, there has been a listening session with special ed teachers and reps from CTE in order to determine various aspects of the building and that they're currently looking for vendors for independent living labs.

[02:11:45] And they made the obvious statements that the apartment setting that they construct has to be, the furniture has to be appropriate, It has to be the type of thing you can clean easily. They have to have safety precautions and health requirements that they can be cleaned.

[02:12:05] We went on and they briefed us on the CAST and Project SEARCH programs. They currently have 34 CAST applicants and 10 SEARCH applicants, and numbers of young adults are leaving the program and they're hoping to accept 15 to 20 new students which is good news the cast one pilot project which is ending this year which is coming to a conclusion as a project they're emphasizing workplace

[02:12:42] readiness skills and soft skills so that those students are ready to go into the actual other programs so soft skills are being able to go out in the community communicate with people feeling comfortable not vulnerable the type of things that will help them when they go into the actual cast programs and I I want to thank this the admin staff so our our transition admin staff have been going to schools each all three of them they've been covering schools this year

[02:13:20] and working with sped teachers to discuss in more detail how to complete meaningful transition sections of the IEPs and they've reported that it's been very successful they also mentioned interestingly that they're collaborating with Portland State University in a program being conducted at Tuscarora High School on improving transition assessments and that at the end of this process those probably will be assessments that we will be adopting

[02:13:55] so I think that's very exciting and in general this staff has been traveling the country when they're allowed to to give presentations because of the type of work that we're doing here in Loudoun. So I want to thank them for that. They will be giving a May presentation here, in other words, on the transition center, which will also include feedback from you and parents in the special ed community. And I think that's very important that we get the word out. Also,

[02:14:31] I am the SEAC representative to SeaTac. On last Thursday, I attended the CTE Expansion Roundtable held in this room. There were 12 different roundtables. I attended the Skilled Trades Roundtable, and that was run by Arnaz Dotevala, who is also the president-elect of the Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education.

[02:15:02] So she is a leading member of Dr. Grubb's staff, and it was very, very useful. It basically, in the roundtable I was in, I would say five of the ten people had come from working in the, I guess it's the nonprofit sector, preparing students who were behind in math and English to prepare for apprenticeships.

[02:15:34] And these were individuals included in the electrical trades, the building trades. And the woman who hires people at Dulles Airport was one of these people.

[02:15:50] And she explained she has tons of jobs. They go from unskilled jobs, which are custodians, all the way to skilled tradesmen who keep the airport running. And all of these people, the idea was to get feedback from all of these people as to what our program should include that prepares students for these apprenticeships and going out into the job market.

[02:16:17] And what they all said was the biggest thing that's lacking is not their understanding of the skill that they've learned, but their readiness skills, their skills of how to communicate.

[02:16:33] how to act respectful, how to dress, all of these types of things are of major importance. And then the other thing they, all of these people had was they have had use of different modules in order to

train students.

[02:16:52] And they came up with ideas of modules that they had been using that were successful. So I thought it was a very, very good dialogue. And in general, there's going to be one or two more of these sessions this year, and I know one of them includes the service industry, professionals from the service industry, and that affects a lot of our special ed students who go into those industries.

[02:17:16] So I think it was an excellent way of bringing the business community to actually work with us on these programs. And I just wanna say, I have basically talked to Ms. Dodevala at length about supporting special ed students in these projects.

[02:17:37] It's very much in your wheelhouse, and I'm very confident as these programs go on that we'll be accomplishing what's necessary to support our students.

[02:17:53] - And we won't have another transition meeting till May 5th. Okay, our next meeting, Catherine, did you wanna talk about our student panel?

[02:18:09] Yeah, can you, yeah. We have Kendall Schwartzman-Ruber coming from the I'm Determined Center. It's been a project for 19 years. It's now a center. It's pretty amazing. If you're not familiar, get a little familiar.

[02:18:24] Look at their website, imdetermined.org, before you come and have questions ready. He'll give us a brief update on what is happening with the center, and he will be facilitating a student panel. And I'm excited because we, I just got a confirmation yesterday that one of our students is a football player who is currently using virtual Loudon and has an IEP and is excited to share his experiences.

[02:18:59] And we haven't had that representation. So very excited about that. And we have other students as well. I just happened to think of him. But come ready to hear some amazing, from some amazing students.

[02:19:18] And Kendall, it's always a treat to have time with him and to hear what the project is, or the center is doing. Thanks, Catherine. Okay, and now we will move into our policies. You need to come up here.

[02:19:39] Hello, everyone. Let's start with the easy one. Office of the Auditor General. This is, I think, where we're just. So I believe, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but there were two policies that came out here, 2310, which is the next one we're going to go over, is the committees of the school board.

[02:20:06] And in that policy, the changes that were going to be made was, one of the committees of the school board is the legislative audit and policy committee. They're removing the audit portion and formulating, forming a new committee.

[02:20:25] And so this also, this policy was attached to that, but we didn't have any recommendations on this policy. And then here we go. 20, no, yeah, this is it. So this is 2310. Right, so 3410 is just changing the names of the committees to name this one.

[02:20:43] We had no issue with that, unless anyone has any otherwise. don't we just adopt that would someone like to make a motion that we adopt that there are no recommendations second moved and seconded the motion is that we adopt that there we had the recommendation to 3410 to make no recommendations is there any discussion hearing none all those in favor please raise your hand say aye aye opposed nay are there any abstentions virtual

[02:21:18] Carrie Adams. Aye. Do we have any others? I don't think Carly's here. Motion carries unanimously. Well I just went over that. Yeah this is merely an editorial. So we overall we didn't have any recommendations but then we did come across one area that actually probably needs to be addressed and the concern was there's a substantive error on page 6 paragraph 7a.

[02:21:52] the final sentence is not clear and doesn't accurately reflect the governing regulation so it should read the last sentence to say to the special education committee and I'm sorry I don't have a community so I don't have the full thing but it was the way it was worded it was kind of cut off and so we just thought grammatically this is the way to go for that so that was our only

[02:22:18] recommendation here yes that's what it was yeah community do we have a motion to adopt the recommended changes second moved and seconded the motion is to adopt the recommend change recommended changes to policy 2310 is there any further discussion hearing none all those in favor please raise your hand and say aye aye opposed nay are there any abstentions carrie

[02:22:57] adams aye motion carries unanimously then we went to policy 8455 supporting pregnant students There was a little bit of discussion because there is some confusion as to whether pregnancy is a disability or when disability concerns come into play.

[02:23:19] Pregnancy, in and of itself, is not a disability under Section 504 or the IDEA. The wording of the draft that we had had a reference to FAPE. FAPE is a Section 504 and IDEA legal term.

[02:23:37] These are the only federal laws that we know of that use those terms, FAPE. Now, there is Title IX. Title IX protects pregnant and parenting students from discrimination, but they don't use the term or require FAPE in the IDEA 504 sense.

[02:23:56] So FAPE is a legal disability term of art, and we want to make sure that we're using it correctly because there is some confusion about what FAPE is and isn't, and we don't want there to be confusion. So the recommendation that this all comes down to is simply removing free, appropriate, where they talk about you have the right to a public education or pregnant students have the right to a public education.

[02:24:28] So is there a motion to adopt the concerns and recommendations? Second. Moved and seconded. The motion is to adopt the proposed concern and recommendations to policy 8455.

[02:24:45] Is there any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. Opposed, nay. Sharon, are you, uh, just being precise. So I know. Any abstentions? Carrie, are you going to, one, one abstention? Okay. Um, Carrie Adams? Aye.

[02:25:16] Motion carries with one abstention. Now, policy 5330, which I believe was eligibility, is being proposed to be merged into policy 5310, which is titled just special education, to create one single comprehensive special education policy.

[02:25:37] So there's... No, no, go ahead. We have a number of concerns regarding this policy and recommendations. The first concern is that there's confusion for parents and teens but exactly what ages 2 through 21 inclusive means and that's basically that is the age range for which you have IDEA eligibility or defining when it ends yeah and it's a question that we get all the time and staff get all the time and so we wanted to make sure the definition is legally

[02:26:14] precise and accessible so the recommendation is to add the following 2 to 21 inclusive means students who have not reached age 22 by September 30th will continue to receive services until the end of

that school year. The second concern is simply a terminology update. LCPS used to use the term child study, now they use multi-purpose referral team, and so we are recommending that that change be implemented in the policy just to bring it into consistency with how staff refer to

[02:26:49] that now. So for the third one, there's a block in your IEP, in the IEP form, that says parent input for the child's education. And that's, it's required by the regulation that that be part of it. And over the years, we've received a number of reports that IEP teams have, some IEP teams, you give them, you know, reasonable something to put in and they just cut and paste it. Other IEPs, parents have been told they are not allowed to put your parent input words into the parent input section. And yet

[02:27:28] someone picks that document up and reads it, it says parent input, but it's not what you wrote, it's some staff summary of what you wrote, which might or might not accurately reflect what you intended. We've been told more recently that that shouldn't be a problem anymore. This is one that there's just no reason for this to be a problem. We can, by policy, just say we're just going to not have this problem anymore. We're just going to cut and paste. So the recommendation is to add to this policy, parents' concerns submitted in writing shall be copied into the parent concern

[02:28:02] section of the IEP in full and with no limitations. Parents may submit their concerns in their native language. Now, so this is continuing along the same thread. SEAC is concerned that some parents are unaware that they can do that. And we noticed that Fairfax County Public Schools, as part of the forms that they give you when you're having an IEP meeting actually has a parent input form as part of the notice package asking for you to submit your input. And that seemed like a pretty good

[02:28:40] model to copy. So the recommendation is LCPS should solicit parent concerns via multiple means when the IEP meeting notice is sent to the parents. So now we're not merely permitting it, we're proactively letting you know you can do this and asking. This is something we've discussed before. This is something we voted on before, but I think the policy didn't get adopted since the last time we actually voted on this. So this is reaffirming a previous discussion. This is

[02:29:16] amending the IEP without a meeting. So we have in the past, I think most recently when we considered this a few meetings ago, we voted to support, to recommend allowing an amendment without a meeting but there's some changes that we are recommending now just to make sure that the changes are relatively minor in scope and so the recommendation is to add and may not be used

[02:29:48] to amend services or placement in the IEP so like an editorial change an accommodation would be relatively minor and could be done without a meeting but when we are changing services and changing placements that is significant enough that the team really does need to meet that's in the regs that's in virginia regs and our understanding is that that's actually going to be required and by the virginia regulations concern six we have received reports over the

[02:30:24] years of some parents getting the prior written notice after they're being asked to consent to things and that's what the prior and prior written notice is all about and so just to be completely clear for everyone changing at the same time to prior to requesting parental consent and also the PWN shall be provided to the parent in the parent's native language or other mode of communication. So if they are not an English speaker or if they need some sort of assistive

[02:30:56] communication technology or whatever works for the parent. Finally so we were three hours into working on this policy. And there was a high level discussion. Years ago, there was a guideline

guidance document from the VDOE that said you should have a special education policy and about here's what should be in it. And we did not find that guidance anymore. So it appears now for better or for worse, we get to choose what should and shouldn't be in it. And there was some really good

[02:31:35] discussions about what should and should be in this policy, what should be in other documents in other places, and why. And I think a lot of this was based on concerns we've received over the years, reports of, you know, one team says something is no problem, another team says we're not allowed to, or, you know, the guidance changed, and now you can't do something, or now you have to do it a certain way. And since we were not able to come to a great consensus in the subcommittee, And also because this is something that needs to be a collaborative discussion.

[02:32:11] The conclusion that we came to is that this is the sort of thing that should be in a work session. And I think what we were looking at is that policy 5330 is going to be removed. But a portion, so we have in 5310, we have child find, but we're missing a lot of the eligibility information from 5310.

[02:32:34] And we're wondering, should we bring that over here? But then we bring that over there, then there was this list of, well, what do we do with all of this? Do we bring this into the policy as well? And that went on, and none of, I mean, we were just, this is all missing.

[02:32:54] And to start with, the special education policy needs a definition of what special education is and what is specially designed instruction, evaluations, eligibility, all of that needs to be put into a special education policy so we thought it might be a better idea is if we have a work session where we can kind of get an idea of what's the um the focus on this policy and how we should put this together so so i know that's a lot seven concerns

[02:33:33] and recommendations do we want to start with is there any kind of open motion yes may i have a motion to adopt and second move and seconded the motion is to adopt the policy 5310 recommendations is there any discussion let's hey team um i'm just going to keep this i uh i wanted to talk as someone who has experienced being told that you are not allowed to put in your parental

[02:34:13] concerns into the parental concerns section which we got fixed and then another time them saying well we'll just add this or I'll rewrite it and to which I said I think I'm very capable of communicating my responsibilities myself I wanted to take a look at that language I thought it was really good but I wanted to potentially talk about in full without any limitations with with no additions or modifications right because again they were good now they were going to copy it but then they were going to say well I'll just summarize what you mean below and I'm like well please don't, please don't touch what I say, right? That's my concern and not what you summarize

[02:34:50] below. So the thought was if we use that and then just add in like the, with no additions or modifications or some language like that to not only that you're copying it, but you're not changing, like don't change anything in there and don't add your own thing to my parental concerns section.

[02:35:08] You got the whole rest of the document that you can add stuff to. That's it. i would just like to share you have one talking to that i would just if i can repeat the question the point of information was the point of order point of order was is we're voting on all of them together correct the motion on the the motion currently before us is to vote for all of them

[02:35:44] you can call to separate you know we can make a motion to separate thank you i would just like to share that our guidance to staff because I will be very honest with you some parents give us a paragraph

worth of feedback some give us eight to ten pages and so to just simply copy and paste that and put that in the parent concern section is not feasible nor do I believe that the text box would hold that amount of content so our compromise when we get multiple sheets of parent input which

[02:36:23] we welcome is to simply ask them to provide it to us in writing. We print it out and we add it to the file. And then we would work with you as the parent to summarize those high level concerns to be captured in that section of the IEP and then reference the fact that the full printout from the parent is included within the educational record. So I think that's great. The problem is I don't think that's communicated because what I put in there is very easy to copy and paste, right? It's like two, three paragraphs fits in the character limit, all of that, right? And that's what I had asked.

[02:37:03] I said, hey, can you just give me a character limit? I'll fit within it, right? And that's so I think I understand if you get eight to ten pages, right, like it is what it is. You could even put in a reference like, here's a summary, please see the full thing at the end. Great. That makes sense, but I just think that instruction has gotten kind of muddled in transit and that's not how it's being handled in the IEP meeting. Again, when I was pretty forceful on, no, no, no, you're going to copy and paste this, then all of a sudden, and the administrator, they were great, and they

[02:37:35] said, yes, we're so sorry, of course, but it, right, like, had I not known my rights and what I can ask for, I, or if I just wasn't so annoying, right, like, people, people would have just said, sure, whatever, you know? So, Tedra, I'd love to follow up with you on that particular thing, because there some emerging tech and some things tools around being able to summarize things without changing meaning and i think that's really important to to jen's point um so just uh three very quick things for the sake of time one is absolutely i think we need to have some kind of work session because

[02:38:14] this is not just a edit feedback this is a big sort of shift and change it's not just a set of edits but on that point of edits um and this may just be a drafting issue but on recommendation five I can't believe we used the word may and not shall.

[02:38:31] I don't know how that happened, but perhaps that should be the word shall instead of may. It's straight from Virginia Rags. Oh, it's Virginia Rags. Okay, got it. And the other question was on REC 6, being able to communicate with them in their parents, in the parents' native language, that could create a burden potentially.

[02:38:52] It is? It is in the Rags? Okay. That's the answer to my questions. We cited them, yeah. Guys, I did have one more comment based on Jen's comment. I believe, and please don't let me misquote you. Come and grab the mic and let me know if I do.

[02:39:10] But I did want to comment because I believe that you stated I don't want anyone adjusting or editing my words. So while, again, we've talked about this summary, I do want to make sure that everyone understands that while this information is solicited prior to the IEP meeting so that it can be included in the draft throughout an IEP meeting, staff are continuing to add to the box. So by definition, they would be editing what you submitted because what you submitted might not be reflective of what is happening in the meeting. So I just

[02:39:49] wanted to be very clear that that box isn't just for what a parent has submitted, but should other additional concerns of the parent come up during the convening of an IEP meeting, that information will continue to be added to the box as well as that is how we've trained staff to include

information in that box because certainly during a meeting other concerns come up that a parent might not have thought about when they provided their additional input so we will be editing that box I guess is what I just wanted to be clear that we will continue to do that throughout the

[02:40:24] meeting and certainly you will then receive the draft at the end with those edits and your consent or feedback is still required. Well, and that's what it's fine to say during it. Hey, I heard you think, add these things. I'd like to write, like, should we add these to the parental concerns?

[02:40:40] But still, you're not, that's not a section to say, this is what I'm hearing the parent. That's a parental concern section. And unless I say that's my parental concern, it's not my parental concern, right? So this happened where I did send it beforehand, but I said, I will follow up with you with an amended version of my own. And they said, well, we'll keep what we have. And I said, no. Right. But so like I get, there has to be that transparency, but at the end of the day, it's the parental concern. And that's something that should be within full discretion of the

[02:41:15] parent to say what their parental concern is. If they so choose. I'm sure too, you probably get a ton of people who don't want to put anything there and they're just happy you're summarizing. so I also acknowledge that so I have a couple of things may not be super popular but um well one positive one I I would love for us to maybe partner with Leanne Kidwell and provide an opportunity of learning around um what you know how we look at consideration for because it says

[02:41:48] verbatim the concerns of the parent parents for enhancing the education of their child so it's very clear what it's meant to be. And as a parent having written concerns, I've had to delete, delete, delete, delete when I said, well, I don't like X. Does X enhance my child's learning? Yes or no? Yes, leave it in. No, take it out, right? So that's something we can do in partnership is to identify those gaps in information. But I think the other thing and the bigger thing that's not

[02:42:25] always super popular and I'm all in for hand smacks because it's been a long week we have an IEP that is to access general curriculum right or sorry we are at general curriculum the IEP says hey there's a gap between where the student is currently and where they need to be to reach general curriculum not superseded right so the IEP is that gap filler so that's another piece to the puzzle of informing parents and practitioners both that we're not trying to

[02:43:03] whoop over general curriculum. We're trying to meet and enhance those needs, but there have to be boundaries as well. So that's my two cents on that one. Hold on one second. Let me, do you have a question? My question is, Kendra, you mentioned that we could summarize it and put it in the file.

[02:43:38] Sometimes the file feels like this remote place that nobody's ever going to go and see. So my question would be, is it possible to append that to the IEP document?

[02:43:54] So whenever that document is presented in full, that would always be there? So not to the actual document itself in Virginia IEP, but the document, the parent concern printout could be uploaded into Virginia IEP.

[02:44:09] So, then when a parent would go to get it virtually, they could then pull it down also? Yes. Okay.

[02:44:25] We have a question in the back. Thank you, Sharon.

[02:44:40] I just want to add something that I remember that section where we write the parent concern. I think the one who designed the IEP, this is my own interpretation, is that section, It should be, we should

not interpret what the parent or summarize or make any, not our wordings.

[02:45:05] We just exactly write down what the parent want us to know or say. But if it's like we have three, four pages, we may be in that section, we should say refer to that. This is what the parents say.

[02:45:20] It's not about summarizing. It's exactly what we should write, what the parent want us to share.

[02:45:38] So we were having a very passionate conversation back here about something that we didn't think about when we were in subcommittee, which is inappropriate information or talking about teachers or using profanity or, you know, something inappropriate being contained in the parental statement.

[02:45:56] Do you think we could maybe amend our recommendation to add something like that, to give a little bit of leeway to submit it back, turn it back over to the parent, give the parent the opportunity to edit any information that is inflammatory what did you said inflammatory like racist profane whatever I don't know what wording we'd want to use and I'm not saying that's ever occurred but well I'm not I'm not trying to to name anyone in particular um and something because you know you

[02:46:30] you're looking at what a good like what a good parent concern would be or parental input we're looking at what good IEP teams would do, you know, we're solving for the extreme cases or now we're talking about the extreme cases. In subcommittee, we were trying to talk about, like, the majority of the situations. But I think that's a valid point. If I, as the parent, submitted 10 pages and it's inappropriate or inflammatory or it's raging about this teacher, how is that beneficial to my kid's IEP? So we should, I think it makes sense to add something in there. And I think that's where

[02:47:06] that parent input form would be really great is like if they when they're retrieving input from us and they submit you know ask us to you know they send out a form during the meeting notice and they are explicit on there that you know these are you know please stay to you know adding all that information in there i think that would be a great add to margaret's point though if it if we leave the policy recommend like if the policy is written the way it's written that they are required to copy-paste it in, then I, the teacher or case manager, am required to copy-paste whatever

[02:47:44] inflammatory language this parent submitted. I don't have the option to turn it back to the parent, to edit it, to say no. I think one of the problems is then who determines what's inflammatory, what's a problem, particularly when you start getting into language translation issues.

[02:48:03] I completely agree with you morally, but I don't know how we possibly draft that in a policy in a way that's fair and can be applied in an equitable kind of way. Can we use the public comment blurb?

[02:48:19] But aren't there, but that's different from a public comment. But there's also already policies to protect personal information. Like we already have policies like that at LCPS that would govern what, where personal information can be used, what it can be put in, all of this sort of stuff.

[02:48:34] I don't know that we need to put it in here because I think there's other policies that cover you in that scenario. And that, to be fair, maybe that's a situation. That's not really what was happening in my scenario at two different schools with multiple different teams.

[02:48:50] I do think it is important, though, to remember when we come to SEAC, everyone has their own unique experience. But when we make recommendations just based on our own unique experiences, you guys are typically unaware of all of the experiences that we are aware of.

[02:49:09] And so, again, to the point that the back table was making, if we go through and we say, we will be copying and pasting and respecting the integrity of parents and copying and pasting their exact, well, then that handcuffs us into situations where we do receive, well, eight to ten page documents or documents naming staff, making assertions or accusation, utilizing language that is inappropriate.

[02:49:34] So we can't have it both ways. There has to be a caveat and there has to be a way to give that discretion and discernment to the professionals that are a part of the process. And so I appreciate the integrity of a parent's input because I am a parent of a child with a disability.

[02:49:53] And you guys know me well enough and you know that I am going to be very assertive in the rights of parents, especially my own. However, I do know that everyone is not submitting something that, as Catherine just read to us, that is for the enhancement of their child's education.

[02:50:10] It is every complaint they've had from the time their child started school until the grade that they're in now, and they would like us to include that every year, henceforth, and forevermore. And so I do think there has to be an in-between. There has to be a compromise, a way that makes sense for everyone and that allows for everyone's rights to be adhered to in the process.

[02:50:38] Okay. Okay, let her go. Really quick, and this just kind of came to mind just because I've had a situation recently where there was discussion around ensuring that teams were really, like, testing as it related to the IEP.

[02:50:55] And so the collaboration was that we noted that the testing was obviously in the robust form in Virginia IEP, and teachers can reference it there. So I also had the thought, is there a way if a parent does submit a lengthy parental statement of six to eight pages?

[02:51:17] You know, we summarize it to the best of the ability, but then we document in the PWN that the full document can be also located in Virginia IEP. Yeah, that is actually the guidance of how we actually do our training.

[02:51:33] So I think what this really reflects is you all have great concerns, and it's good feedback for us because that's showing another training point for us because everybody's not experiencing the same thing as families because what you said is actually how we train. We document the prior written notice, document in the parental consent section, and put it in the student's record.

[02:51:56] So all of what you all are saying is the expectation of us as a division, so we just need to ensure we have more consistent practices. So what is being proposed, at least in my mind, we have a policy, and the policy is talking about what you are allowed to do.

[02:52:15] Those are those hard limits. And then we're going to solicit feedback, and that would be the perfect time to have guidelines outlining what we think you should do. From this discussion, certainly what I was hearing was that there's even a lot of differences of understanding of what should even be in this section.

[02:52:36] So I think getting everyone to a common understanding would be really helpful. And when we talk about things like length, when we talk about things like content, absolutely, just like public comment guidelines, putting it in a guideline and say, hey, these are the do's and don'ts, so everyone's on the same page.

[02:52:52] When we come down to what have we received reports from parents and families over the years about, it has been that they are not allowed to put their words in and that staff have been aggressively rewriting their words to things that are not their intention or what they say and that their voice is being taken away.

[02:53:14] So that is a problem that we have received reports of over and over again. We have not received reports that parents are trying to submit highly inappropriate things at all. So lengthwise, I think the guidelines will help.

[02:53:31] I mean, I think if some people think this is the forum for an 8-10 pager, hopefully putting guidelines in front of them will discourage that. I would like to note that the Virginia IEP system is not fixed in stone, that any length limit that might exist within the system can be changed.

[02:53:48] So there's no technological reason why whatever we decide is right and wrong can't be done. I would argue, as a parent, when you get to 8 or 10 pages, you've diluted your voice. That gets back to the guidelines. Part of what we might want to do is help people understand, this is your moment to advocate for your child, and here's better and worse ways to do that.

[02:54:12] But at the end of the day, I'm concerned, and we've received all these concerns over the years, that fundamentally trying to censor, edit, change the parent's voice is almost never, at least in the parent's perspective, for the benefit of their child.

[02:54:28] And so I want to start from the perspective of trying to trust the parents. And certainly none of these policies are set in stone. If we find that it is a problem, we can come back and add restrictions. But why don't we start by doing what we believe is the right thing and see if there's a problem before refusing, you know, not being wanting to do the right thing because there might be a problem that to our reports has not been.

[02:54:55] And Catherine, what was the wording that you said? It is, you're supposed to put it in and it. I have to pull it back up for verbatim, but enhancing the child's education. So couldn't we make an amendment here and just say into the parent concerns section of the IEP in full and then Catherine's wording and with no limitations so that we capture that portion, but that is our, as a SEAC, that is our recommendation, that we just capture that portion.

[02:55:30] And again, I just forgot it. She just said it and I forgot it, but enhancement of your education. For enhancing the education of their child. So section of the IEP. It's consideration number four, the concerns of the parent, parenthesis, parents, for enhancing the education of their child.

[02:55:53] For enhancing the educational section of the IEP. Right here, I would think, after the word IEP. Or right before the word submitted, parent concerns for. Yeah, that's fine, too. While you guys are getting Sharon the mic, based on what you just said, Shanaz, I don't think it addresses the very real concerns that the back table and that I just spoke about.

[02:56:26] When you still keep in full with no limitations, I guess if you added the language to enhance the student's education in full with no limitations, then you are leaving it to the discretion for the team to determine which part of this is to enhance the student's education.

[02:56:43] because again if it is not appropriate and it is eight to ten pages like we do receive I can tell you in a week's time we receive parent input that is longer than two to three pages almost daily this is not like a

rare occurrence this is a regular occurrence so in full is the part that still does not leave the discretion or discernment when things are written in that parent input that is not for the enhancement of their child's education, and that is inappropriate for a document.

[02:57:18] So in full, I don't believe is something that is going to demonstrate what needs to happen in real time. I was just going to say, either way, right, it's leaving some discretion to the team to decide what goes in there. So if we're saying it's in full so long as it applies to the enhancement of the child's education, yeah, yeah, either way it's going to be discernment.

[02:57:46] Of course. I apologize then the conflict would be less about you not accepting my entire but you've determined what I believe is for the enhancement of my child and you don't believe it is so then that turns into a different type of argument so I do think this is very nuanced and I don't know if we will be able to solve it here tonight I think we go ahead and move forward whatever whatever your all's recommendations are but I just want to be clear on the implementation um issues that might

[02:58:22] be caused by creating language that we already know is going to run into roadblocks or additional contentious conversations with teams. As it is nine o'clock, I will observe that one of the recommendations is a work session to flush out some details on this policy. So there is an opportunity that we can discuss and address these things further. But if people feel very strongly,

[02:58:50] we certainly can entertain a motion to amend. Do you want to make a motion to amend?

[02:59:08] I'd like to make a motion to amend could yes I'd like to make what is the amendment well I don't have to tell you the exact language though right yeah you do okay then come on Craig them's the rules um so could the recommendation be that we defer so I think that so my question just a clarifying question could the recommendation be that we defer recommendation three to a working

[02:59:46] group could we also um we could remove the recommendation and just leave the concern remove the recommendation but leave the concern and then defer the recommendation to the working group sure okay yeah you have the so I make a motion to remove recommendation three and move

[03:00:23] wait just remove recommendation three okay yes we do we have a second second moved and seconded the motion is to amend the base motion by removing recommendation three is there any further discussion hearing none all those favor all those in favor please raise your hand and say aye aye opposed nay one nay and do we have any abstentions one abstention Carrie Adams aye motion carries

[03:01:03] with one nay and one abstention now we're returning to the base motion which is to adopt the recommendations to Policy 5310 as amended with the removal of Recommendation 3. Is there any further motions or discussion?

[03:01:25] No. Don't give her the mic. Hide the mic. Hearing none. All those in favor, please raise your hand and say aye.

[03:01:40] Aye. Opposed, nay. Are there any abstentions? One abstention. Carrie Adams. motion carries with one abstention thank you any questions or just yes Marcia how does the working session work what do we um that is one of our recommendations so once this has been submitted

[03:02:17] and they take a look at it they if the school board approves it then they'll call us for a work session to come together okay yeah that's usually so um we do have a work session on um Liz I'm blankie

out what are we meeting oh yeah so i do want to mention that i'm sorry guys but this is part of my discussion right here so with the there is a policy that is being proposed a draft for

[03:02:52] removal policy so we had you know with restraint and seclusion we had seclusion removed well there's another policy that's been formulated where one of the areas that we've been really focusing on is that parent reporting piece. You know, how is it getting documented and how is it being, how are any of these incidences being reported to the parents? So that is what that policy, we're kind of going to take a look at it. So when we looked at it initially, there's just a lot in there, again, that needs to be addressed. So we do have a work session. Both Liz

[03:03:29] and I are going to attend both of the work sessions and as we you know meet and we discuss I'll bring it back to the full SEAC to to share what we have been discussing and the other thing is both Tom and Marsha are on the committee for the strategic plan so if anyone has any input for them as to because they're formulating new strategic plan for the future so please go ahead then reach out to Tom or Marsha for that.

[03:04:02] And I am going to say thank you all for coming, and thank you for staying this late, and we'll see you in April.



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