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Loudoun County School Board, Specialized Programs & Centers Committee Meeting, Wednesday, March 4, 2026

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[00:00:01] good afternoon everyone my name is lauren shernoff and i am calling this wednesday march 4th 2026 specialized programs and centers committee meeting to order i am joined by my esteemed colleagues miss donahue and mr pepper thank you for being here normally we would jump into public comment but we do not have any public commenters today so we will move on to item number 3.01 which is approval of the draft minutes from the December 8th 2025 meeting are there any changes needed to the draft minutes seeing none I will entertain a motion to

[00:00:40] approve the draft minutes I move to approve the draft minutes of the December 8th 2025 meeting second it has been properly moved and seconded all those in favor of approving the draft minutes say aye aye aye all those opposed any abstentions I've stayed okay it passes two to one with Ms. Donahue abstaining sorry you didn't see that coming that's

[00:01:14] all right okay oh that makes sense that's right that makes sense okay thank you for clarifying now we will move on to item 3.02 approval of draft minutes for the February 3rd 2026 meeting are there any changes or edits to those draft meetings draft minutes all right seeing none I'll entertain a motion chair Chernoff I move to approve the draft minutes for the February 3rd 2026 meeting second excellent it has been properly moved and seconded all those in favor of approval

[00:01:51] of the draft meetings from February 3rd say aye aye aye opposed not opposed so that passes unanimously all right we will move on today we have one action item so we are revisiting from last time item 4.01 the Middleburg Community Charter School 2026-2027 calendar and here to present is Miss Elaine Lehman the director of elementary and charter schools the floor is yours thank you very much good evening everyone if you recall last month when we looked at the Middleburg calendar there was a question about there was a some some events on the calendar that were not a teacher and student days there

[00:02:30] was a breakfast with Santa listed and in calling Mr. Robinson the principal who is here with us this evening to answer questions if you need him to he shared with me that that is a Middleburg the town of Middleburg event that happened to be use utilizes the school and so they reflected on their calendar so I simply requested if you could have your calendar mirror our calendar and reflect student and teacher days which is what the Loudoun County calendar shows that would be greatly appreciated and that is what you have here is a revised calendar generally schools have many events they don't show that on the teacher and student calendar that would be more of a PTA type calendar so that's the revised

[00:03:08] calendar does anyone have any questions about the revised calendar colleagues questions or comments yes Miss Donahue thank you chair Chernoff thank you Miss Lehman and I appreciate clarifying that the question that that was raised at our last meeting about that one about that one notation on the school calendar I'm I'm curious I this didn't jump out at me at our last meeting but when I was preparing for today looking at the Middleburg calendar and the proposed Hillsborough calendar I did notice there is a smaller number of days that

[00:03:45] students are in school compared to the regular LCPS schedule then I was wondering if you could speak to that difference are you speaking specifically about MCCS or HCA because HCA we'll be talking about in just a minute and I can speak to that which one are you asking about well either you have fewer student days on your calendar I don't believe so yeah 180 student days but they do start the year prior to Loudoun County students they start earlier in August than we do and end slightly earlier thank you for clarifying are there any

[00:04:20] other questions with that if there are not any other questions or edits I will entertain a motion to adopt the calendar to send it to the full board mr.

[00:04:37] Pepper thank you chair Chernoff I move that we adopt the 2627 Middleburg Community Charter School calendar to send the full board yes second all right it has been properly moved and seconded all those in favor of moving this item to the full board say aye aye that passes three to nothing unanimous so that will move on to the full board for consideration all right thank you so much and thank you for being here all right we will move on now to our

[00:05:13] information items for the evening 5.01 is in a similar vein Hillsboro Charter Academy HCA 2026 2027 calendar Miss Lehman the floor is yours again thank you very much I think what the important things for you to consider as you're looking at this calendar our HCA follows a very similar calendar to LCPS in that the teachers start on the same day and leave the end on the same day what you will notice in the color-coded calendar all of the student holidays at Loudoun County public school students have are the same on the HCA with the

[00:05:47] addition of orange the orange squares indicate additional student holidays they have the same teacher planning days with the addition of the yellow squares which are additional teacher planning days I

did identify one error on the calendar which is the 17th and the 18th of August are not teacher planning days for lcps teachers those are student days so i did speak with mr vickers about that this afternoon and he agreed that was a that was an error the other thing to note about the hca calendar is although

[00:06:21] the dates are similar they attend additional hours 30 minutes more each day than other lcps schools so when you tally their total hours for the school year they are almost identical to our total hours for the school year and that is what enables them to have additional teacher planning days and additional student holidays if you have any questions I'll do my best to answer them or take them back to mr. Vickers colleagues mr. pepper thank you chair Chernoff a couple questions on this calendar I noticed that there are two different days February 26th or March 5 for the end of

[00:06:58] marking period 2 is there a reason that there's two different days as to when that would end I do not know the answer to that question I've asked it and not yet received an answer okay and and then the other thing I noticed are there's appear to be four movable professional development days August 10 and 11th January 4th what triggers the movement of those days I will ask that and find out not snow in August that's for sure yeah thank you for that I don't know if you know the answer to this question but I believe that we have had this through

[00:07:36] many calendar discussions it is a requirement to have the days or the hours met correct it does not have to be both correct okay I think that's Virginia code so okay any other questions all right I think we can probably get those two answers next time much like we did with Middleburg Charter so if it's okay with the committee I will ask that this be moved to an action item for our next committee meeting if you are okay with that all right so we will move that to action and we will look forward to hearing the responses to those questions thank you so much miss layman for being here and with that

[00:08:13] we will move on to item 5.02 planning for LCPS view transition Academy we are very excited for you all to be here and miss Richardson you're not presenting you're just assisting okay so I will turn it over then to our presenter which is miss Jenna aren't who's a supervisor of transition services welcome Jenna Thank you so much. Thank you for having us today. We are excited to share our update on kind of the work that we have been doing and where things are standing as of today with VUE Transition Academy.

[00:08:48] So just as a reminder, our program overview, VIEW Transition Academy is intended to be a comprehensive program for students with disabilities focusing on career and tech ed, as well as independent living skills, and the purpose is to enhance their students' workforce integration, independence, and overall quality of life.

[00:09:12] We reviewed this in our previous information items that we shared, as well as the next slide that just talks about the focus of the program, again, on vocational skill development, workplace readiness, and independent living skills.

[00:09:29] We've identified these three areas as skills that all of our students can certainly benefit from, but that our students with disabilities tend to need a little more work and time practicing. so our work thus far has kept us busy and it's been very exciting work as a team we have identified 15 career pathways that will be available for our students if they attend the view transition Academy we have worked closely with CTE to identify these pathways we've also talked a lot about

[00:10:07] flexibility, building use, and how we can support these pathways or shift and flow as the workflow and the workforce changes over time. But we have also identified that in many of these areas there will be quite a bit of sustainability and skills for our students. So these are our 15 identified pathways that we're planning to have in fall of 2028 when VIEW opens. So in May of 2025 which seems so long ago now we met as a very large group we had about

[00:10:44] 57 folks attend and participate in a roundtable discussion where we asked for feedback from a lot of different stakeholders we had folks there from LCPS we had school board members present we had folks from other divisions present we had folks from community agencies present really to try to understand from different perspectives how we could make the most of this opportunity and that how we could really build a facility that will provide opportunities to our students that maybe they can't get anywhere else and we got

[00:11:21] a lot of information from this day it was so helpful to have feedback from all of the different from all the different groups folks really collaborated together came up with some good ideas and kind of gave us our starting point for planning and for our thought processes as we've moved forward. In February of 2026 we held a staff listening session because we can sit around a table and we can make plans and we know that we are in touch with our students and our staff and what they need but they're even more in touch with what

[00:11:54] they need in a building so we brought in special educators, we brought in CTE folks, we brought in related service providers and we asked them what do you think this building needs to make it most accessible to students so they can come and participate and really excel in this building and we had our construction team was there vlk was there they brought samples even so carpet samples paint samples flooring samples so that we could talk about even how might a student respond to the

[00:12:27] different carpet on the floor and things like that so we really took copious notes and are using that now as we are moving through our design phase of the building we also have a student listening session to be rescheduled because it was postponed not once but twice due to snow so the purpose of this session though is really to bring in our students our true stakeholders in this in this building and ask them what they think they need what will make the building the most accessible for them we've identified students from across the division that have various

[00:13:06] disabilities and so they're going to come with different experiences different ideas and hopefully be able to provide us feedback again having an opportunity to look at those carpet samples and paint colors and things like that and really provide feedback for what they think they need to be most successful in the building so here is kind of where we are in the design process and i will just preface this with this is not my area Melissa Tello does a great job explaining this so I'm gonna do my best we're kind of living in between the schematic design phase and the design development phase and this is where we

[00:13:44] were eliciting that feedback where you see the star and then where you see the second star is where we hope to bring back this the folks that participate in those listening sessions and share with them okay so here was the feedback you provided us and here's where you're gonna see that in the facility so we have plans to pull those the teams in again but we are kind of living right there where that first star is from schematic design to design development and you can't really see this because it's very small but this is the current floor plan

[00:14:19] not a hundred percent set in stone every time we look at it we talk about something and we think well maybe there's a better space for this but over archingly the purple spaces are the pathways so that's where the different pathways will be housed the blue rooms are the classroom spaces and then the orange towards the front is the administration suite what I'm most excited about is the yellow section at the bottom is really gonna focus on how we're bringing folks in in our hospitality and provide our students an

[00:14:53] opportunity to present to folks for us to have roundtables and them to work with setting up the staff like setting up tables or chairs setting up equipment having folks in and it will open and like be able to be bigger it'll go beyond that yellow and out so that there will be more space so we can have more folks present and so our end goal and our what we are most excited for is through this building our our vision our purpose our hope is that the students are a part of every aspect of running the building so as we're designing it we're asking the folks to

[00:15:33] make sure that they're designing the spaces large enough that a student can shadow an employee in any position in the building because we want to have opportunity that's what this building is all about opportunities for our students to learn skills to learn workplace readiness and independence and so there's no better way to do that than to observe someone else doing it and support in that role we do have some information hubs that we are updating as we go so we have an lcps view transition academy website on the lcps website that is our use information and our updates on

[00:16:08] the process and then we also the support services team has a construction website started so both of those are live links that you can click on and then the QR code is if you have questions along the way as things are being updated you can scan the QR code and submit your question and someone will get back to you with their response thank you so much this is just one of those warm and fuzzy feeling presentations I'm so excited to one of the really exciting parts about being on

[00:16:46] this committee and I was excited to be on this now is to just watch this unfold and so I'm just so grateful to hear about it I know Miss LaBelle has been a champion of it so I know you've relinquished your seat on this committee and I hope I do you proud because I and I know you'll be with us every step of the way but I am I'm just to see this come to life to see a building layout to see that you've included people in the carpet samples and you're engaging all the stakeholders and the students I I honestly I dream of the day when that ribbon cutting happens and to be a part of that it's so exciting I thank you for your work I thank you for it being from the ground level up I know

[00:17:24] the team has been engaged far before long before we ever even put this I think into the funding and motion I think this has been a dream for a long time and to see this realized alongside the vision of the career pathways that are happening across Loudoun County Public Schools and for this to I'm good I'm not gonna get emotional but for this to be alongside of that to give access I think is just whoo maybe I am I think it's really beautiful and so I will now pass it to my colleagues I don't have any questions I just think it's so amazing anybody else yes Miss Donahue thank you chair Chernoff also very excited about

[00:18:03] the about these plans and the proposal I just had a couple of questions and I'm sorry if you address these and I and I didn't catch it but the the student feedback session has has that been rescheduled not yet we're trying to establish a date when we can get as many students here as possible and also a space in this building it's hard to come by how that goes okay and how many how many students do you

anticipate the program and the facility will be able to support so we are anticipating that it will run on an a/b schedule so students

[00:18:40] will come on a day or b day and we are hopeful that we will be able to have about 250 students a day so about 500 a year potentially would be able to come through the program and will there be since it is a transition center are there any types of or specific disabilities that may not be able to be part may not be able to participate in the program with the facility we have not identified any as of now it's going to be an IEP team decision whether or not students are appropriate or should participate there will be a criteria

[00:19:20] sheet for safety and that's something that we're working on really from the ground up trying to establish again in collaboration with some of our other the educators and related service providers the staff feedback session was so valuable because we had physical therapists talking about you know having a stander in a room so a student in a chair might be able to participate but also get the therapeutic components of their day that they require and making sure that there's space for those things so right now nothing is off the table as far as student participation that's great and how were the specific program foci

[00:19:59] determined the the pathways that you discussed so we have we went back through every year we do indicator 13 which is a state indicator for transition and one of the things that we looked at as a team is were trends in transition plans of our students with current disabilities and kind of like what areas were they looking at what areas were they exploring and we did focus more on our students who maybe weren't college-bound or who were more program related students to see what areas of interest they were expressing and then we worked with CTE because we wanted to make sure that the I the

[00:20:35] pathways that we were identifying are sustainable would be marketable today five years from now ten years from now especially given the timeframe for one we're going to open because you know we're gonna put in a lift in an automotive bay and we want to make sure that that is going to be worthwhile having right but we're always going to have to put air in a tire we're always going to have to check oil you know those kinds of things which is what we anticipate teaching the students to do so between those two the conversations in collaboration with CTE and using some of the data that currently exists that was how we really tried to identify what what those pathways would start out as

[00:21:14] and will this be specifically for high school students so the plan right now is that it will be for students who are juniors and beyond so we are looking at programming and considerations for students who are seeking a standard diploma and how their time in the Academy would look as well as our students who have maybe received an applied studies diploma and are coming for additional training and what that might look like and as we're starting to talk about curriculum how we can ensure that the curriculum we're teaching is credit-bearing for those that it needs to be credit-bearing for and perhaps not

[00:21:50] for those that it doesn't and also how we can scaffold our goal is that every student will exit with some kind of certification or credential and how can we scaffold those in the programs for example small animal care maybe some of our students who aren't a standard diploma could leave with a similar certification to what they would get at academies but some of our students maybe will leave with a credential and dog walking because that's where they land but where they can still go out and have a small business of their own and make money fantastic thank you very much mr. pepper thank you madam chair this is

[00:22:28] first of all this is amazing as someone who works at the high school level and sees the a lot of our students transit particularly those with IEPs transitioning to figure out what their next steps are I know that we have transition services and we're doing a great job with transition services but this really takes it to the next level, and that's kind of amazing.

[00:22:45] The building plan, super cool. Really excited to see what you're doing. I'm actually most curious about kind of the vision for space allocation in the school, 'cause I noticed that in the purple areas, and I know it's not up on the main screen here, but I'm looking at it on mine.

[00:23:01] The purple areas seem a lot more like, in science speak, like a wet lab or a hands-on lab, right? You have the, gotta zoom in because the font is so, so tiny. but you have like the cosmetology lab or the animal care lab, but you also have the classrooms in kind of the back right portion of the building.

[00:23:19] I'm curious as to what the envisioning of the space in the classroom versus kind of the labs is and how students might transition between those two spaces. So right now the way that we're looking at those spaces is that when the students come on an A day or a B day, half of their day will be spent in the pathway, and we're hoping for numbers that land about one CTE teacher, special education teacher and one job coach per 10 students in the pathways because we recognize that we are going to have to scaffold and split into groups and some students will move faster through curriculum and be more ready to be hands-on or perhaps even in the community than other

[00:23:53] students and those classroom spaces then for the other half of their day the students will go to the classroom spaces where they will take some classes on we've talked about kind of like Health and wellness including understanding medication management, understanding healthy relationships and things like that that our students often don't get enough of or it's not taught to them on their level. And then also understanding the basics of like taxes and things. We talked about someone who maybe has starts a small dog walking business when they exit, right? They have to understand that that's income and they have to claim it and what does that

[00:24:32] look like? So getting into some of the basics of that. So we talked about having there were four different topic areas that we were going to teach throughout the year like one per quarter during the classroom time which was when those students would flow into those blue spaces and kind of sorry kind of swap with like half a and like morning and afternoon and then in those classroom spaces we anticipate a special education teacher and a job coach also in those classes and those numbers may be going up to about 14 or 15 for that time

[00:25:02] That's very, very helpful. I appreciate that. I know we're still in the planning phase. I really would love a little bit more elaboration on what a typical student day might look like in these programs. So a student has cosmetology time in the cosmetology pathway. What does that look like? I'd love you to elaborate just a little bit on that.

[00:25:32] I am not a cosmetologist, but we anticipate that a student will come in, and when they are in that lab, we are going to meet them where they are. So some students may come in, and we may be working on those front desk skills, like welcoming someone into the establishment, scheduling appointments, answering the phone, while other students may be working more on washing someone's hair or, you know, drying their hair or some of the basics of cosmetology.

[00:26:02] all of that revolves around students having certifications and getting through certain requirements so we also will have to gauge the students and the instruction on that piece which is why we think that three to ten staffing is so important because we recognize we're going to have to group and scaffold that instruction and i would just following up on that and not anything wrong but um i feel like this will involve kind of a strong community partnership right because we're going to bring individuals in to get their hair washed or individuals in who have small animals that need care. Absolutely. And so I've already volunteered my dogs. They're not small, but they're

[00:26:37] welcome to come. I would volunteer my dog, but he's an 83 pound bruiser. Is, do we have, how are we finding those individuals or do we have a plan to attract those individuals to support ARCA? So I think in our conversations, we've talked about starting with staff in-house, right? Because they are there, they're coming, they can bring their dog for the day and take their dog home, you know, that sort of thing and then we have talked about how we're going to engage businesses and community partners because we are eventually going to want to push these students out they're gonna learn so much in these labs but when they're ready we're gonna we want them to go we want them their wings to spread

[00:27:15] into fly so we're hoping to engage some community partners and see how we can collaborate with them to have some folks maybe come in from a salon and allow us to work on their hair in the sink and wash their hair and that kind of thing Well, I volunteered my hair, but I clearly don't have any guys.

[00:27:32] No use for that. I would also say I'm sure you're going to have a wait list for the child care. No real children coming into the building. We're going to bring in animals, but we're not going to bring in children. We're going to go out for the children. That's amazing. Now, this is really helpful, and I'm just excited to see progress, so thank you so much.

[00:27:49] Absolutely. Thank you. I do have one question as a follow-on to that. Do we envision this to sort of be like you pick a pathway and stick with it, Or is there room for exploration between pathways if something's not a good fit? How does that work?

[00:28:04] Certainly. So our goal is to have the students complete some transition assessments as they're preparing to come in so that we can identify a pathway for them. Certainly, we all know once you start something, if you don't like it, you don't want to stick with it, you don't want to do it, and it makes it kind of miserable, right?

[00:28:23] So there will be some flexibility in like students being able to move or choose different pathways. Certainly it will be like an IEP team conversation, just the same as it is for them to come in because we want to ensure transparency and that everyone's on the same page.

[00:28:40] But yeah, we won't pigeonhole a student into something if it is really not making them happy and they're not able to grow and learn. Thank you. But the goal is to get them deeply entrenched in one of the pathways so that they can go and be productive in the world.

[00:28:58] And depending on age and depending on number, it wouldn't potentially be out of the possibility for a student to come and do a pathway one year and maybe come back the next year and try something else if that pathway doesn't end up being what they thought it was going to be or they don't get as far in it as they would like to.

[00:29:16] Wonderful. Anything else? All right. Thank you so much for being here. Thank you for your work on this. It'll be exciting to see it unfold in the next couple of years. and i'll look forward to hearing

about the student feedback for sure that will be very very insightful all righty we will now move on to our last information item of the evening this is 5.03 options for dual language immersion expansion and we have miss kelly james supervisor of world languages and cultures here to present and i will turn it over to you yeah so we're very excited to continue to expand dual language immersion at the two schools that we have into

[00:29:53] third grade next year as well as start a new program at leesburg elementary and i'm very happy to share with you some options for additional opportunities for expansion so as we look at some things to consider one of the things is a what program model might this expansion be by that i mean a one-way or two-way program model a one-way program model consists of mostly students who are from one language background primarily english speakers and they are learning the partner language so typically there's only about 10 of heritage speakers of the program language because

[00:30:33] it is one way meaning they're learning the partner language and that program starts in either kindergarten or first grade at this time loudoun county does not have any one-way dli program models and leesburg elementary will not be a one-way it's a two-way a two-way program is mixed up of a mix of about between 33 and 50 percent are heritage english speakers or non speakers of the partner language and 33 to 50 percent are partner language speakers so in this

[00:31:05] case spanish and in all three of our locations at least 33 percent of the students in the program are heritage speakers of spanish so that would be one thing to take into consideration as we look at ways to expand this opportunity do we continue a two-way model or do we look at a one-way model the next thing to consider would be with is this a school priority or a regional model knowing that school priority prioritizes students in the school community and that then the staffing is tied directly to the school staffing whereas a regional model

[00:31:45] is going to pull students from out of the school's attendance zone and there may be additional FTEs tied to that as we're bringing in half of the students in the program would be coming from outside of the school's attendance zone and if we're looking at a K through five that would be an additional 150 students that would be coming from outside of the school's attendance zone the third is the language considerations at this time our two current and our next year at Leesburg they were all going to be Spanish immersion but there's I know there's some questions about potential language expansion and one thing to consider is

[00:32:23] the community interest in the proposed partner language from rising kindergarten and first-grade families so in the LCPS family survey that was sent out in the fall there was a question about a dual language expansion and some other languages to consider and I have the results up there 60% of students are families who indicated they were interested in expanding said they would choose Mandarin we have French Arabic and Korean as well another thing to consider is the art program language articulation is the language that we're going to be starting in the elementary school is there a pathway already in the

[00:33:03] secondary level for these students to continue up or is there community interest or support in creating a language pathway for those students to continue into secondary once they finish fifth grade an additional consideration would be the location of this as I mentioned before having the school capacity for is it gonna be a school priority or a regional priority regional model that would that would require the school to be able to accommodate 150 students from outside of the school attendance zone so that could have an impact on the location as well as being strategic with where we're

[00:33:42] placing that we want to diversify the opportunity opportunities and the special programs that we have around the county as well as language offerings and our last consideration too is the resource considerations and this is primarily a big consideration is the availability of teachers in the partner language that has been a challenge in finding teachers who are certified in both language and have an elementary endorsement as well as the resources and

[00:34:18] curriculum resources in that target language that are appropriate development age appropriate for elementary school learners that would be something to take into consideration as some information for some comparison with other yep yes sorry sure about the resource allocation can you talk a little bit about how we support the current dual language immersion programs with Spanish and how there are resources available in Spanish and how that might compare to an Arabic DLI program.

[00:34:56] In terms of translations? Yes. Okay, so currently what we do, since it is taught, content is taught in the target language, it's not just learning Spanish, it's learning math in Spanish, which means that any curricular resources that we have in the county, we need to provide not just in English but also in Spanish.

[00:35:16] So while we do have, we've purchased hard copies of math resources, consumables for our students in terms of common assessments that are provided at the curricular level from the content office in math we need to have those lessons activities assessments those need to be translated and that is a big lift then that we have to have those translated often by these are teachers who are translating these documents and it is a big lift in doing that and the availability of doing that and considering another language the ability of teachers who are able to

[00:35:55] do that anything you want to add to that and there are some existing resources that we could purchase for there are yes like there are yes so there are existing resources that we could purchase that are available so like we have math workbooks and things in Spanish that we are and there are available in other languages but that would be a consideration in terms of the language and expansion is the availability of those resources that we can purchase to provide

[00:36:25] to our students thank you in terms of some comparison with other districts fairfax county has several two-way programs as well as one-way dual language immersion programs in those languages and then there are virginia beach has a couple of one-way dual language immersion programs at both the elementary and the secondary level Arlington does not have any one way dual language immersion programs they have two-way Spanish immersion only as

[00:37:01] well as Prince William currently only has two-way Spanish immersion programs I am happy to answer any questions that you may have thank you so much I'll pass it to my colleagues first I have a couple questions but I'll let you all go first mr. pepper thank you madam chair and thank you for the presentation super dual language is always super interesting i have a friend whose daughter is actually in dual language i believe it's a two-way program but in dc public school so um really interesting

[00:37:36] that um my friend's 10 year old knows way more spanish than i probably ever will um out of curiosity if we were to go and i saw the survey results for mandarin and french and arabic and korean um as these children if we do go with one of these programs transition into middle school what supports would be available for them to continue with those languages or what would we have to put in so it's a timely question I know we're we're thinking about that currently for our current existing DLI programs in elementary school for Spanish so with that said maybe you could share a little

[00:38:16] bit about some early considerations for middle school for Spanish and that would reflect what we want to do for other languages yes so we're in the process of I mean that would have to be like a that would be a board decision of do we have this continue into middle school into secondary but we are looking at ways that we can continue this program to support that but that would be an additional consideration of matching that to our in Spanish if we were to expand to another language we want to offer that continuation as well I have a sort of piggyback on that because I had secondary options written down to as a

[00:38:53] question do we envision I mean I would imagine if you've gone through it from K to five you're probably fairly fluent I would hope at that point is there would that if you wanted to like just continue that on your own would you have met the language requirements for secondary already and could that open up doors for other electives you know I'm always on this about electives though so because you wouldn't take a Spanish one two and three correct that would be they'll need an extent not an appropriate placement yes so would it be mandatory that you

[00:39:28] continue that's so that's something that we can look at we have they probably could be able to assess and get the meet the requirements for the language requirement for the Virginia Department of Education seal of bi-literacy which is awarded to them upon graduation but yes like some of the options if they were to continue in Spanish because the thing is is if they stop in fifth grade and then they take the next six seven years of their secondary they might lose a lot of that language progression and then they're graduating and they've lost a lot of the Spanish so we do want to look at ways that we can continue to support that okay but what that might

[00:40:07] look like is them taking potentially like a core class like a social studies class but that's offered in Spanish or a Spanish language arts class that's not Spanish one because that's not appropriate they're going to be well beyond that but looking like they're going to be like reading novels and writing essays almost like a Spanish for fluent speakers course which is available in an inter-middle school and in high school. Okay yes that's interesting and the kids that are at in the program now are moving into third grade. They will be in third grade next year. So you've got a couple years headway here to kind of figure that out. Yes. Interesting. All right back to you. And this is where we would

[00:40:46] bring information to the committee on what we would be thinking about what that might look like. Sounds great. Other questions. And I know that just kind of we're talking about program expansion. Thank you Chair Sharanoff. But how many students are currently enrolled in the program? I know we have two schools that are currently doing it. How many students do we have right now? We currently have 300 between the two schools. That's and they're all that's that's good to know. Yes. And just something kind of out there for consideration. Has there been any thought to

[00:41:20] you know as we kind of do the rezoning shuffle and seeing just having perhaps a single k5 dual immersion school has that been proposed at all can you talk a little bit more so so as we as we look at rezoning obviously if we were going to do that model would be the as a regional model right but pretty much a county-wide regional model where the entire school is a dual immersion school so every student enrolled would be in the opening up access really to more students than right now since we don't have a regional model we just have a school

[00:41:59] priority model has there been any consideration to that idea or transportation I was a huge issue I do think we do think regionally about the placement of special programs but at the secondary and

elementary level it is important that and we do have the plan the planning office we meet with them all the time when we talk to think about programs and projections and boundaries but once a decision is made about a program I think about conversations about Sanders Corners elementary school for example in the last rezoning we are

[00:42:36] committing to that space in a building and so there may be some opportunities to do a better job of projecting like what our goals are for dual language immersion so for example if we're looking at the Eastern Mountain attendance zones are we identifying a school that could house the dual language program for Eastern Loudoun and we consider that as we're adopting boundaries that may be something that we consider as we go through this process as far as a regional program that's housing all of DLI there'd be some logistical things to overcome but yeah I have some logistical concerns about a

[00:43:16] regional school don't get me wrong definitely logistical concern just want to put a bug as to you know kind of feelers as to see where the you know where this is heading is you know one of the things and I can't speak for my colleagues but I've definitely had people already asking you know when is this DLI program coming to our part of the district or so it's definitely something that I'm intrigued by and I appreciate you taking the time here to to share the expansion today so thank you guys very much any questions yes Miss Donahue thank you chair Chernoff thank you for the presentation I had a

[00:43:52] couple of questions going back to yeah so slide six with this survey I was curious about a couple of things. So first who did which families were surveyed. Was it like across all the elementary schools or was it specific to my my understanding is we already had a discussion about what the next school would be where we're expanding where we would intend to expand DLI.

[00:44:18] So I'm curious if these results are 60 percent of those families in that attendance zone or. So this survey went to all families in LCPS. So this was a survey that we did for special programs across the board and one section of that was focused on whether or not you were interested in dual language.

[00:44:41] So that's something that I would be curious about and interested in is what are the families, especially if we're going with a school priority model, I'd be curious what the families in the attendance zone for the school that we're planning to expand to.

[00:44:58] And we would break down, when we were at the point of bringing a recommendation for the next school priority, would be one of the considerations we have for placement we would look at the data for that particular school as well as other factors like capacity. And my other question about this was these the four languages that are listed here as the most popular were like what did the survey look like was it a survey that did the response have like these options presented what were the other options presented what was there a space for families to say was there like an other

[00:45:33] with the space for families to fill in like did people pick Mandarin because they wanted to see I don't know Vietnamese but Vietnamese wasn't listed as an option that's what I'm looking at dr. Blake like like can you are you able to answer that well behind you sorry there was not a place to write in a

[00:46:03] preference and how many languages were listed as possible responses Anything else?

[00:46:25] Could I note, there have been community members expressing interest in, for example, we've had conversations in the past about Hindi. We've also had conversations about Tamil. And so part of the rationale for including these, again, is we want to make recommendations that we feel we could successfully implement.

[00:46:47] Could we explore? Anything's on the table. We could explore different ideas. We want to be responsive to community feedback, but we also want to make sure when we're making a recommendation for a program that we could pull it off. Yes. And so if we were to look at a language such as Cindy, for example, we would need to be really clear with the community and the board recruitment efforts around teachers, the availability of instructional resources, what it would take to plan for it.

[00:47:13] So in this case, there's a level of confidence around these programs. They exist elsewhere in the state. And so that's why we included them on the survey. Would you add anything to that, Ms. James? Thank you. And one other question, has there been any thought or discussion about the dual language immersion potentially eventually feeding into the global linguistics?

[00:47:40] Could be as a secondary language, is that what you were saying? It could, I mean it could. I mean it certainly could, but that is, that's a secondary program that they, that all students can opt into as a lottery process.

[00:48:02] But it's certainly, that's something that we could consider. My question has to do with the one-way versus the two-way. Is there any research about which way is more effective?

[00:48:18] Are there different pros and cons to each? Is there one that we would prefer to aspire towards? So that's going to depend on a two-way. They learn a lot more like the social language because they're surrounded by peers who speak the partner language.

[00:48:35] So there's both. The two-way is often with a two-teacher model. So that would require to have you have the English side and then the partner language side with a one way you could also have a two teacher model. But again since most of the students are non speakers of the partner language usually progress with that is a little bit slower.

[00:48:57] It also depends on the makeup of the day. Are they spending 50 percent of their day in the target language and 50 percent in English. Are they spending 80 percent of their day in the target language and 20 percent in English. So those are some other considerations once we have identified the model, the school priority program, and the language that we would be considering.

[00:49:17] Okay. And then, I mean, I echo the sentiments sort of of my colleagues about rezoning. I think it's a timely conversation. I, you know, as decisions are being made, I do think different availability will become available. And, I mean, I would love to see a school priority model, wait, no, regional model, that would give more access to the county and then you know if there were different people that wanted to access it so maybe we'll see some more of that as the future comes to us and then in terms of what you mentioned about the resources so this is an interesting dynamic in terms of

[00:49:54] asking teachers to translate different materials and is that more because we want to stay consistent with the curriculum that is used for all the other students is that really yes the motivation Yes, since they are teaching content in the language, we want to make sure that the assessments and the resources are comparable.

[00:50:14] Okay. Yes. And then I guess in terms of, I mean, ultimately, if we expand, it's going to be a budget ask. So I guess would that be something that would be potentially considered in terms of as part of the budget ask package, if you will? Because I think that, like, I would love to see teachers reimbursed for those hours that they're translating.

[00:50:35] I mean, we do other hours for translating. Is that how it currently works? Can you talk about how the translation works? This isn't, we support this. Teachers are compensated for their time translating. Yes, they are. Okay, wonderful. And then additionally, if we were going to move to new resources, would that be a decision that would have to be voted on or made because it would be using an alternative curriculum?

[00:50:56] Or is that, is there boundary, barriers with that? It would be considered supplemental. Okay, it would just be supplemental. I mean, the core text would still be the core text, and then we would supplement. Okay. And then my last question is just something, as you mentioned about the resources, and I was sort of thinking about curriculum alignment with all the other students.

[00:51:14] Is this, are we seeing a high, we're not seeing a high turnover rate in terms of kids not continuing to participate? No? No, we're not. Most of the students are continuing. The students, the few students who have left the program are because, usually because they are moving out of the county.

[00:51:33] Okay. That's great news. Yes, it is great. Awesome. And I do think the team deserves a lot of credit in terms of family engagement with this program. Summer programs, outreach, so a ton of passion and heart from the central support team is given to this program, so they deserve a lot of credit, and the teachers and principals, of course, of the buildings.

[00:51:53] Wonderful. I mean, we've heard nothing but wonderful things. People are asking us about if it's going to be expanded. So, I mean, I feel like I'm the lucky one here because it's coming to Leesburg. I said that in the last meeting. So, yeah, I'm really appreciative of the work of the team and for you being here and also for presenting at CNI as well.

[00:52:11] That was nice to sort of get a front load on the topic and hear about Leesburg Elementary. So we'll be looking forward to that. Yes, Mr. Slevin? So you opened the door to budget. Okay. And so part of this is yes. So part of this is to float possibilities of interest to the board. And so if the board does continue to express an interest in expansion of dual language immersion, as we talk about the development of FY28, as we continue to plan agendas for this meeting, we could come with more specific, like, what would it look like, what could potential cost be as it gets more real as we move towards future budgets, whether it's FY28 or FY29.

[00:52:45] Yeah, I think that would probably be something that we're interested in. Let's continue the dialogue on that, for sure. Thank you. All right. We appreciate you so much being here. Any last thoughts? Yes, Mr. Pepper. Thank you, Madam Chair. The one thing that I would be very intrigued in as well is I know that our first cohort is in third grade right now and that is their first SOL year.

[00:53:06] Would love to see how their SOL performance compared to kind of typical peers compares knowing that it's a reading SOL and a lot of their learning is taking place in a different language. So just curious as we get there, we're not there yet, but it's definitely something that I would be intrigued to see as we move forward with this.

[00:53:26] So we will have a readout of the DLI program. Like you'll get an update. an end-year update from each program and we'll make note to I don't know if we'll have this little data when dual language will come but we'll have some vowels yeah I was just gonna say probably have some already excellent all right with that we will move on to item six is there any new business okay with that I will adjourn this March 4th

2026 specialized programs and centers committee meeting thank you everyone for being here we'll see you next time



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