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Loudoun County School Board, Specialized Programs & Centers Committee Meeting, Wednesday, April 8, 2026

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[00:00:03] Good afternoon. My name is Lauren Chernoff and I am calling this April 8th, 2026 specialized programs and centers committee meeting to order. I am joined by my colleague, Mr. John Pepper and Ms. Donahue has notified us that she will be arriving late today, but we are going to proceed regardless. We have no public comments. So we are going to move to item number 3. 01 approval of the draft minutes for the March 4th, 2026 meeting. Are there any changes or additions to the minutes?

[00:00:32] Seeing none I will move for the minutes from March 4th 2026 meeting to be approved. May I have a second. Second that. All in favor. Aye. Aye. Those minutes are approved. We will now move to item number four which is our only action item tonight or this afternoon 4.01 Hillsboro Charter Academy 2026 2027 school calendar and I will pass it over to Miss Lehman who has joined us and to give any updates that are necessary thank you very much chair uh you had two questions last month when

[00:01:07] this was presented i was able to get clarity on both first was august 10th and 11th on the hca calendar are designated as flexible pd days i learned from mr vickers at hca that those days are designated to complete the required county trainings and staff at hca have the opportunity to complete those any time prior to those dates and if they come with them completed those dates they don't have to work on those two days.

[00:01:35] If they are not completed they must be completed on those two days. So that's what flexible means. Ask them to change the next question was on it used to say LCPS planning days and the reason it said when it was actually the 17th and 18th of August which are LCPS student days they were trying to designate that those are the required planning days that teachers need to have and that's when they were happening at HCA they start a little bit later than we do so I said please just reflect what's happening at HCA and so now it says HCA planning days because that's what those are so if you have any other questions I'll try to answer them I appreciate the update and the answers are there any other questions or

[00:02:13] comments from Mr. Pepper all right I don't have any either thank you so much for making those changes and so I will go ahead and make a motion to send the Hillsborough Charter Academy 2026 2027 school calendar to the full board as an information item and I second that all right it has been properly moved and seconded all those in favor aye aye and that passes unanimously 2-0 with Miss Donahue absent for the vote and that will conclude our action items so we're moving right along we have two presentations today for information we

[00:02:51] have a special programs update as well as a career and technical education expansion plan update so we will go ahead and jump right in with our special programs update and we have many many friends here tonight to present so I'm actually going to just introduce Miss Katie Clark the director of academic programs and allow her to pass the microphone off as needed the floor is yours awesome thank you so much good afternoon we are excited to give you a short update on the program planning and progress for the Academy of Global and Linguistic Studies, International Baccalaureate, both Diploma Program at Parkview and the CP

[00:03:29] Program at all three schools, and our expansion to the Army ROTC Program. This afternoon, I'm joined by Kelly James, Supervisor of World Languages and Cultures, Danielle Graham, Supervisor of Social Science and Global Studies, Grant Schaefer, Supervisor of Academic Programs, Rachel Domer, CTE Specialist, and Dr. Grubbs, Director of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

[00:03:55] - So first, I'm gonna turn it over to Kelly and Danielle to give an update on our planning for the Academy of Global and Linguistic Studies. - Thank you. So we are in the midst of our planning year for AGLS.

[00:04:12] Our wonderful program coordinator spent a lot of time in the fall meeting with all of our middle school students to inform them and recruit students. We had a lot of students who applied for the program and they're getting notified about their enrollment and they are enrolling in the program.

[00:04:28] We're in the midst of our hiring season for next year before we get ready to welcome our first cohort of ninth grade students with 100 ninth graders anticipated to begin AGLS next year.

[00:04:44] - Right, and we've had a lot going on in the past couple months. So our wonderful AGLS coordinator, Chelsea Northman, I'm gonna point her out, is here today with us. And we actually had our third meeting for our AGLS advisory committee. This committee is made up of community members, LCPS staff, students, so it's been really great to have her facilitate conversations and have them give input into the profile of an AGLS graduate, what experiences and curriculum we really want to roll out for our students, and gathering feedback on a handbook for students that are new to the program, as well as give input

[00:05:22] into a summer bridge program. In terms of community outreach, we're really in our third round of admissions and have approximately 50% of our program filled at this time, very excited about that. We will continue to offer seats through our weekly rounds until all of those possible seats are filled, and this will continue until the start of the school year.

[00:05:43] In terms of spring events, we're scheduling visits for admitted students with the coordinator. She's also hosting office hours, parent meetings to review the handbook and program expectations, and a summer engagement activity for those admitted students. And our course progression, so we have looped in counseling and started outreach for those upper level D.E.

[00:06:03] courses particularly in social science and world language. Awesome. Thank you ladies. Next up is a high level overview of the authorization process at Parkview High School where we're at and then the career related program that we are beginning the process at Loudoun Valley Heritage and Parkview as well.

[00:06:24] I'm going to turn it over to Grant Schaefer who works intimately with all three of these schools. Hi I'll start by just sharing a little bit of what we've done already here last year at this time we one of the main things we did is hired the IB coordinator for Parkview it's Darcy Malone she comes to us from Fairfax with extensive experience in IB overall we also had some trainings there as you can see with Dr. Jefferson the principal and myself this year is involved the candidacy phase again we have rising ninth graders who are in the

[00:07:01] portal right now and we're going through that lottery process for those out of zone students teachers have been spending this year doing professional development that's required as part of the process and starting to write their course outlines which is required as well. Next year will be the consultation phase and the the actual visit we have a pre visit scheduled for early June with our consultant that the IB provides for us in this process we actually have more the official visit that's going to happen in the fall of next year and then we're going to have those students through the lottery process now will

[00:07:39] be enrolling and starting in 9th grade at Parkview and getting them ready for those IB courses in junior and senior year. So that's going to be happening again out of zone in 9th and then Parkview only in 10th.

[00:07:55] One thing that is happening right now is going through and talking to current Parkview 9th graders to make them aware of IB essentially planting the seed for them to take courses in 11th grade when they are in 11th grade so they can then choose to do that in the 27 28 school year they can take courses just singleton courses or they can choose to do the full diploma program in the 27 28 school year so we're starting that now having those conversations with ninth graders so

[00:08:31] moving on to kind of more specifics there I'll highlight a couple things here one is again the the curriculum development piece that is that's actually been helpful having heritage and Valley already so we can take a lot of that and we're gonna be offering those courses similar courses so that has already been done professional development we only have two content areas left that have not received that training yet so we've we've done a good job on that and again working with the consultant and the the enrollment update of going through the

[00:09:10] lottery process right now and having those students both be offered seats and accept those seats and starting to understand more about what is what is life gonna be like a Parkview what does that

look like in ninth and tenth grade to make sure they have their video video you required courses completed but they're also ready to jump into that very full load that it takes to do the diploma program in 11th and 12th grade.

[00:09:38] And so the switching over to the career related program we wanted to to give you a little bit of background on what what is the career related program. So this is an aspect of IB right. So the way it relates to to IB is that students who choose to do the career program would take two IB courses.

[00:10:01] So let's say for example English and history right so they can they can take two of the core and then they would be focused on the career related program core which would be the personal and professional skills course.

[00:10:17] A teacher is going to be trained in that and that's a course very unique to the career program. They're going to take language development which is essentially we want to make sure that they have a language background. So a language acquisition. The reflective project and service learning kind of go hand in hand it really is about applying their knowledge in career related learning to to service and to tracking that.

[00:10:43] So it's it's similar to the IB core which has on it called community activity and service. It's essentially that but in this in the CP component. So those are things that that make the career program unique.

[00:11:00] A little bit of the timeline here finishing up a request for candidacy now and we'll hear back from that hopefully next month we have I have that scheduled for later this month. Then the candidacy phase would kick off next school year.

[00:11:16] We would be doing similar to what I shared earlier that Parkview's doing right now it would look very similar with teachers getting trained making sure that we that our policies are all aligned and that we're we're ready to to offer CP again in the 27 28 school year.

[00:11:40] Thank you Mr. Schaefer and now we'll transition into an update on our ROTC expansion for the Army brand. Shown here is the process we used in making the host school selection.

[00:11:56] This is the same process that has guided all of our other academy decisions ensuring fairness transparency and consistency across the division. We held a dedicated session with all high school principals to walk through the Army ROTC program.

[00:12:12] During that session, we covered the program goals, expectations, and what hosting would entail. High school principals then received an interest form and had until close of business on February 13th to indicate whether they wished to be considered as a host site.

[00:12:28] A committee then reviewed all submissions using a clear set of criteria. The goal was to identify the school best position to support the academy's success. The school decision was guided by a thorough assessment of four key criteria. Community alignment, ensuring the academy is placed where community interest and demographic data show strong support and relevance.

[00:12:52] Leadership commitment, confirming that school leadership not only expressed interest but demonstrated readiness to champion and sustain the program. Building capacity, verifying that the school has the space. Staffing flexibility and infrastructure to host the academy without compromising existing programs.

[00:13:12] And then lastly, transportation and accessibility, selecting a location that provides reasonable access for students across the division. With that, we are happy to announce that the school selected was Stonebridge High School. And we look forward to working with Principal Dr. Flynn on this journey of bringing this program expansion to LCPS.

[00:13:33] And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Mrs. Domer for the next slide. Thank you. So for the JROTC expansion, while it's a valuable opportunity, starting a program is really challenging. It requires federal approval, a large and sustained enrollment, and often requires a multi-year wait due to limited national capacity.

[00:13:54] A strong alternative is the National Defense Cadet Corps, or the NDCC. It offers the same focus on leadership, citizenship, and student development. but can be launched locally and much more quickly the ndcc allows us to begin serving students now while building the foundation for the future of jrhc programs in short it's a practical first step that moves us forward without delay and then over to dr gretz thank you miss domer um just a quick highlight i'm not going to read through all these bullet points but for the public there is no

[00:14:30] difference you would not notice any differences between an ndcc program and a jrhc program As Ms. Domer mentioned, you can wait upwards of 20, 30, sometimes even 40 years to get a JRHC program. The route that we are sharing, most school systems are not aware that this is an opportunity to either fast-track a JRHC program or to give one a test run.

[00:14:51] One of the main differences is really the funding mechanism. A cost-sharing opportunity, like a JRHC program, is where you split the bill with the service branch. With an NDCC, it is fully funded by the host school district.

[00:15:06] What does that mean? It means that we pay 100% of the instructor's salaries. The military still picks up the textbooks and the curriculum, but everything else is largely identical. Students get the same advanced military ranking in terms of cadet benefits.

[00:15:23] They still participate in competitive events like drill, color guard, marksmanship. One area that we try to navigate is that we are only bringing one instructor on, where if you look at the Navy program at County, there are three instructors. So you wanna just pace yourself in terms of enrollment.

[00:15:40] The hope is down the road, we would convert this program over to an official Army JROTC program where we would be eligible for a second or even a third instructor. One of the enrollment criterias for an official JROTC program is 100 cadets or a minimum of 10% of your student population.

[00:15:57] With an NDCC, we have much more flexibility to maintain and not move into probationary status for being under-enrolled. Just a quick overview of the timeline, 25/26 has been a program and budget approval stage.

[00:16:13] We put in a budget proposal of a little over \$300,000 to get the program up and running. 26/27 will be a planning year. We hope to recruit an instructor, to give that instructor an opportunity to begin recruitment, meeting with students, meeting with future cadets, and building out their program.

[00:16:32] 27/28 would be year one. We would hope to enroll our grade nine students. In 28-29, we would be welcoming our year two students for matriculation. That concludes, and we have lots of experts here for each program, so we're happy to answer any questions you might have.

[00:16:53] Thank you so much. It is very exciting to see all these things coming to fruition. I appreciate the updates on all of them. I will pass it to my colleague, Mr. Pepper, for his questions and comments first. Thank you, Madam Chair. Oh, I've got a ton of questions. So I'm going to start with the Academy of Global Linguistic Studies and then work my way through IB and then just match the presentation.

[00:17:15] So a hundred students we're looking at enrollment. How many just out of curiosity have applied for the written data see it. All right from the expert over here.

[00:17:32] I was going to pull it up but 337 have applied. And we're hoping for up to 150 in each pathway. We're approximately 25 in each pathway right now after we're in round three right now. Can I ask how are the rounds determined like what constitutes like a first round a second round so on.

[00:17:53] So it is a lottery program so in the first round it's just Monday through Thursday we give that window of time so it's a window for those students to accept or decline their offer if they don't accept by that Thursday at 11:59 p.m. then their seat expires and then the next week we move on to the next appropriate student on the wait list so we continue to do that all the way up until the programs filled or if we have a student move over the summer then we would fill that seat as well. Super interesting and I know that we're still building kind of the proof of a graduate. Do you and I don't know who this is really a question

[00:18:30] for but what what are you guys thinking in terms of a summer bridge program for this. So some of it is community building so that the students are these students are coming across the county from or from all over the county to attend Dominion High School so it's kind of getting them acclimated to that introducing them to other students in the program and building connections and then getting them excited for what's ahead in terms of kind of introductions to some of the courses and partnerships and things they'll be doing so it's really it's really we're not thinking for a lengthy one we know students have lots of commitments over the summer so we're thinking around two days is what

[00:19:08] we're thinking at this point in time and also an opportunity for them to meet some of the teachers we are still in the process of hiring some fabulous teachers or recruiting some within Dominion to run some of these courses. So I saw that I was like oh there's an engagement activity and there's also a bridge. I was wondering if it was something along the lines of making sure you know writing skills or language skills or you know to make sure these students who are applying to the program have the skills to be successful in what appears to be a pretty robust and exciting opportunity for a lot of our students. So I wasn't sure it was more academic or social but it appears to be more on the social side which is fine. Just had some some thoughts on that.

[00:19:47] I know there was some discussion I think Kelly we could speak more about the language piece too correct? Yeah I think we're still in the planning process but getting some students a little bit of exposure at least to the cultural elements just an introduction to get them again excited about learning that language but the students most of them are going to be coming in with zero background knowledge or experience with a language. Do you want to do this one by one or not? I just keep going on my list all right so I'll move on to IB so I appreciate that IB first thing I this is totally an aside but I want to give a shout out to my former colleague Darcy Malone Hood who when I heard her name I was like oh you

[00:20:25] hired somebody awesome who I've actually worked with which is absolutely fantastic. Questions for the IB program particularly at Parkview. I know you had mentioned that there are students who might attend Parkview who are not in the program but want to take a singleton maybe a kid is really

really interested in psychology and they want to take IB psych. Is that something that any student can still do or is it once the program gets really up and going is it then just limited to the students in the program I can start off we allow students currently at Heritage and Valley so it'll be the same they can take a

[00:21:02] singleton course at those two schools so it'll be the same at Parkview okay that's that's good to know how many students is the is the number that we're looking for at Parkview enrolled in so for out of zone we had allotted 30 seats for this initial to come in from out of zone and then our in zone students also applied but they have access but it just helps us keep track of who's interested in the full diploma so that we can ensure we are supporting them throughout the process. And is that going to be geographical so that for example students on the eastern end are if they want to be their Parkview and

[00:21:40] then sort of in the middle they're going to be at Heritage then on the western side is valid? Yeah so their zone so it's Potomac Falls, Dominion, Riverside, Broad Run and Parkview okay and Stonebridge and Stonebridge thank you so it's central and then Eastern yeah geographic map in my head and it wasn't wasn't being totally perfect and then question on what does the pre IB because I know you said we're gonna be pre IB as someone who's dearly familiar with IB including the CP what is the pre IB looking like I know that at least in

[00:22:20] Falls Church one of the things that we do for pre IB is that we make sure that our World History 1 course, which would normally, or World History 2, World History 1 gets shifted down to 8th grade, and then World History 2 gets shifted into 9th grade, I know you know. What is that going to look like? Yeah, you know a lot. Yeah, so it's that, it's making sure they have government as well, so it's a little bit of a switch for a few of those courses, and really academically making sure they're ready to take on the load, as you

[00:22:54] know of IB so I think that's another thing that we're doing as we're learning and we're growing IB is making sure that we're kind of developing a cohort type model so that these students can rely on each other and essentially start to build some of those executive functioning skills to make sure that they can be successful in the diploma program and using the theory of knowledge class when they get to 11th grade as sort of a de facto homeroom.

[00:23:24] let me give you a couple plugs if I can first thing that I would love to suggest for you guys I shouldn't be doing this but is when the students particularly in like the sciences for example I would recommend that it's not just the IB teachers who experience some of the IB training it's the pre IB teachers right because there's a lot of things that students kind of have to learn to speak the language and walk the walk and talk the talk as they get an IB so even little things like you know what is what does it look like to write an IB style lab reporter or what does it look like to do an independent assessment in IA so that's the big thing and then the TOK course I love the idea of using it as a

[00:24:02] homeroom that's brilliant I would also suggest strongly that the extended essay runs there if it's not already that's a huge thing as far as CP goes so we'll switch little gears to CP told you a lot of questions I know as far as CP goes for language are we looking at a requirement where the students have to take a language at the school or is it something where they can just because I know it's just it's really just a log of hours. Are they able to do something on their own like a Duolingo or a Babel. I know that in in Falls Church we introduced the CP program we allowed them to do the to just log

[00:24:40] their hours using a Duolingo. I can I can take it. I think we're still trying to work some of that out and that that was one thing I didn't really expand on is is that's a logistic that we're working out as well

as the CTE courses that each school wants to offer.

[00:24:59] So we'll we'll start to work that out through the candidacy phase. But that is thank you for that. That's helpful. And then the other thing is when you talk about the course I'm assuming you're talking about pathway the pathways we're going to offer in the CP program is that kind of where you're like what are the pathways that we're going to offer.

[00:25:15] Correct. We want to include Dr. Grubbs and the CTE team to make sure that we're both in alignment with what CTE once but also looking at you know I've already looked at some data what are the most popular CTE courses this is also a way to engage some students in IB who may have thought that IB maybe wasn't for them more accessible now a CP program is fantastic and then so that's actually my last question on the IB program is who are we allowing to enroll if there's a student who's outside perhaps one of the three schools are they can and say you know I'm really interested in this pathway I think this program might be for me is that something we're looking

[00:25:52] tours or are we going to just kind of keep it for those students who are already housed at Valley and Heritage Park? So I'll start and Grant can add in the thought is we would still bring in our IB candidates in ninth grade and in 11th grade they would have a choice of continuing on to the CP or going for the full diploma.

[00:26:13] These are big decisions for our ninth graders coming in and a lot of times some of our kids get to junior year and they realize maybe the full diploma wasn't so they would have an option there kind of like campsite where we're they pick a pathway at that point so this would be very similar we would bring them in still within the numbers of seats that we have available and students would be able to select that pathway and then students that are zoned for that school would have access to either the CP or the IB full diploma. Finally I'll move on to the J-Rod seat type program although it's not I know that we mentioned that we're gonna look

[00:26:51] first congratulations to Stonebridge but look to hiring an instructor is that a challenging position to find someone to fill yeah great question so just one step to clarify is that now that we've identified a site we now submit an official application to the army we have had discussions we feel like we have a really good justification rationale they will come out and they'll do a site visit the space over there meets the initial requirements of offering a GRTC so we're not concerned of the space once it's approved then we work very closely with them on hiring an instructor we chose army very deliberately because traditionally the other three uh grtc

[00:27:30] pathways are very challenging to hire marine corps on the east coast is a really tough program to recruit i had five marine corps programs in my previous system we closed three of them down because we couldn't have a senior military instructor we converted those to nndccs national Navy defense cadet corps so there's always a backup plan but army tends to be the ones that are easier to stand up also in the last year and a half the GRTC branches have reduced the licensure requirements to be a GRTC instructor it used to be that you would be retired military and have 20 years experience I think it's down to eight years of experience with the army or the armed service

[00:28:09] branch so we feel very confident that in this region we should have no issue finding an army instructor. Thank you very much. And Madam Chair I think that's everything. Thank you Mr. Pepper. I had a lot of the same questions about enrollment and about hiring and in that same vein. My questions really have to do with staffing. So as we're kind of transitioning into this more pathways based model and we're

starting to overlap some of these programs. I know Miss Kelly has been at all of my committee meetings talking about the various branches of different things that are going on which is very exciting. My question is and this goes across all of the three that

[00:28:46] we've talked about today is it are we seeing that staffing is an issue are we concerned about that. Is there one area more than others. What does that look like in terms of incentivizing our teachers to take on these extra things.

[00:29:01] And then my last sort of piece of that is what is the communication like to staff in terms of this transition for these schools so that they know it's coming in at those opportunities for them might exist. So I'll start and then turn it over to Dr. Grubbs or Ms. Clark in terms of thought I had one question but you stuck in a couple of them so in terms of staffing we as we have been developing these special programs we are learning and we are being thoughtful about adding some additional staffing primarily at the start of new programs so for example the AGLS program

[00:29:39] we're seeding that program with a FTE for the two language teachers that are going to start next year at Dominion We'll evaluate that over time in terms of enrollment and the needs of the school. Similarly, we learned maybe in our second or third year with IB that there were some additional supports that were needed to make sure that schools can run class sizes that initially may be small without having to take a pinch across the rest of their staffing.

[00:30:07] So as we're developing programs, we're becoming a little bit more thoughtful about seeding some initial staffing when we go to the board with the proposal. And then new ideas may come. So, like, for example, we've had conversations for HAMSci about do they need some support as they go to year three and four.

[00:30:24] Now, in terms of incentives, we've talked a little bit about this. So there are, depending on the program need, we do build in some stipends. So, for example, when we were initially developing our IV programs, each school system gets an advisor and they give you different models for what they do.

[00:30:44] You'll probably have an opinion on the advice we were given, Mr. Pepper. But, you know, do you give staffing or do you give stipends for certain roles? And so I'll ask Ms. Clark or Mr. Schaefer to talk a little bit about how we've done stipends for IB. And can you also talk a little bit about some of the curriculum development support you have for IB for teachers knowing some of the extra lift that we give, how you work with the coordinators on that?

[00:31:08] Yeah, absolutely. So we do have some funding that was part of our initial proposal for professional development and curriculum development for each school. The coordinators are responsible for divvying up those hours amongst their teachers within their school. A lot of times those are just for IB meetings that they might have to hold after hours, after their contract.

[00:31:29] And then we've worked with each curriculum office as well. They are the ones that really work on the curriculum and for IB courses as well, all courses. So they follow their SOP and their guidelines for that. but we do have those extra hours for those extra responsibilities for working with students on their extended essay that's very time-consuming and can be assigned for extra hours outside of the contract day we also have stipends we have an EE stipend a CAS stipend and a the last one TOK stipend those

[00:32:09] individual stipend positions support the coordinator with really overseeing those three parts of the core and then for example as mr. Slevin mentioned in our CP proposal there is some staffing that was

in that initial proposal that we were asking for that will be part of the budget next school year going into the following year to support the expansion of CP at all three schools and then I'll turn it over to dr. Grubbs to talk about ROTC sure I think your initial question I think staffing is always on our mind there's so much happening in a school around enrollment numbers and class sizes and i think it's something we really need to stay

[00:32:49] ahead of as a school system i think in terms of army and then our expansion plan we built into the budget the funding for this instructor so we were trying to get a little bit ahead of that if we converted over we would get support from the army moving forward jumping a little bit ahead to our expansion plan presentation some of the initial phases we're really looking at more of program conversions with existing staffing right like let's look at your enrollment year one year two you're offering four or five ct courses that are significantly under enrolled maybe a lot not a lot of student interest how do we repurpose those ftes and bring in a new program we have an

[00:33:28] example miss alpers and i just spoke to today we have a program low enrollment low interest that is an fte that we're not utilizing very deliberately we have plans to introduce an intro to health sciences program there in the next year or two that's FTE neutral and that's where we're looking really for year one and year two where I think we need to get ahead of is as we look at year three year four year five our expansion plan like bringing in an aircraft technology program we are going to need some additional FTEs because we will have been FTE neutral to that point and I know Mr. Sackett will be more than willing to take those FTEs down the road does that help

[00:34:07] Yeah I think that's a very thoughtful answer and a thoughtful approach I just I want us to be aligned with what we the vision but I also want to make sure we're being mindful of what especially as board members like what is going to be expected to build in as we expand and I correct me if I'm wrong but I think in the past like there have been some things at the academies that have been not able to go on or have been a struggle to continue because of specialized staffing and so I just want to make sure that we're not going to keep having these drop offs if we can't get the people that we need and so I'm a very appreciative and

[00:34:43] Mr. Sackett and I had a long conversation about stretching those FTEs and finding those efficiencies and so I'm really grateful for that collaboration and then just back to IB I am hearing from some teachers I'll be honest I put this on Mr. Slevin's radar I mean Heritage sits in my district so I do hear from people from time to time that you know as this program as they're getting more in depth with it they want to do more they love the program that's not the issue the issue is in order to do that the sustainability with the workload and pouring into the kids and the curriculum and specializing it for each learner and their you know different projects and things

[00:35:20] that they do it sounds like there's rumblings of you know needing some more support in terms of incentivizing teachers and that would be monetarily I mean they're not they are grateful that they have their PD paid for and I know there's additional things that they have covered but I think that as we're getting better so to speak at IB there is starting to be that is it worth it especially when some are teaching other courses as well as IB courses and having to make that pivot is a little bit of a struggle so I will I think it's timely conversation with the stipend review that's going to happen I would certainly very much like to see some of

[00:35:59] this CTE expansion and program expansion as part of that stipend conversation because I think we're going to need those incentives down the road. So not necessarily looking for an answer per se but just kind of putting that on the radar because there is excitement around the program and I would hate for us to lose that because staff get burned out.

[00:36:18] And it is you know some of these positions are pretty becoming pretty specialized. So appreciate all of you. Did you have anything else. I do I thought you might I'm just kind of piggybacking off of what you just said about stipends particularly for our IB instructors I know that when it comes to internal assessment that's really the biggest driver of what makes it difficult to teach in the IB program that and the fact that every person whether it's your first year or your you know 18th year has to get certified every certain number of years to even be qualified and make the school in compliance with IB so anything that we could do to

[00:36:56] incentivize particularly that little bit of extra work that those IB teachers have to do is really important the only other question that I had is when we start the CP program we're also going to need obviously a CP coordinator at each school so the question is and I know I see look the question is there was this something that's going to be rolled in either to the duties of the IB coordinator or perhaps added on as a stipend like the EE and the CAS and the TOK person which mr. Slep and I actually do agree with that model you were right on so right now in our proposal that we had put forward for CP it would roll

[00:37:32] into the current diploma program coordinators responsibility and then there's some stipends and things that we will ask for for CP similar to what we asked for for DP perfect thank you so much about I'm sure that is all the questions I have thank you mr. pepper and thank you again and especially the tight turn on CP you know just went through in the budget and I'm very appreciative of my colleagues for supporting that amendment that was put forward in the eleventh hour and so I think it's really exciting I think it's timely and I think it matches the vision that we are projecting forward for our students as they make meaningful contributions to the world at least

[00:38:08] that's still the statement for now all right let's move on thank you for being here we will move on to item 5.02 which is an update on CTE expansion plan and so Dr. Grubbs is am I passing it to you okay oh everybody's coming in I'll let

[00:38:27] you introduce your team the floor is yours um good afternoon we are very excited to give you a short update on the program planning and progress for our cte expansion plan i am joined here tonight with my colleagues miss jen elpers our cte supervisor and mr ryan sackett our principal

[00:39:06] for the academies of loudon and partner in this work next slide please i just want to ground us that this is i often say this is not mike grubbs's plan this is not jen elpers plan this is not mr sackett's plan this is really grounded in the work of our community and our school board and our superintendent and our current strategic plan around goal 1.2 which is expanding opportunities for multiple accessible pathways to success through diverse programming we have been doing significant amount of work to get to this point we spent a lot of time last school year revising

[00:39:40] the programs of study to expand electives and new course offerings most importantly not just based on our interests not just based on workforce demands but based on our student interests and where our students are looking to matriculate after high school so if you have been on this journey with us this is a bit of a refresh if you are just joining us we do want to share that our expansion plan really is guided by a

clear and structured timeline and we really began this last year with comprehensive research and just to make sure that we

[00:40:16] were being thoughtful and strategic in this work so this year 25-26 which is illustrated in blue is really our planning year so this includes presenting our expansion plan to the school board and continuing engaging through opportunities like our business roundtable event we look ahead to 26-27 we'll begin piloting elements of the CTE expansion plan and updating program applications which will really help prepare us for the 27-28 budget and then we anticipate

[00:40:52] full implementation of these new pathways to begin in 27-28 so we will also continue to plan for the future phases of the expansion plan in 27-28 thank you miss helpers one thing i want to revisit is that we spent a lot of time last year not talking about the what to expand but the how and we really took that work to heart it is very easy to say i want to create a dental program i want to add an aircraft program and then you look up in five or ten years and you have programs that are mismatched around the county they're not accessible they're not equitable and so last school year i just want

[00:41:32] to revisit that we really worked closely with our industry partners our career and technical education advisory council on how do we expand our programs and so through surveys community conversations we are really focusing our expansion plan on three different areas our data indicates that over 73 percent of our stakeholders believe it is a high priority to align program expansion with high demand career fields in the region secondly nearly 79 of our respondents agree that we should prioritize offering all of our career clusters somewhere in the school system

[00:42:08] one example i often highlight is that we do not currently have an ag program in this school system and so that is direct feedback from our community members let's make sure that we're focusing there before bringing in brand new innovative programs we want to close those clusters that we're not offering in the school system furthermore almost 83 percent of our participants agreed that we should emphasize the importance of aligning our curriculum and our program expansion around the seven key industries of economic development loud and economic development has identified seven key sectors for expanding not only their work in the region but also our business

[00:42:45] partners and many of the programs that we've identified aligned to those seven key sectors in some way fashion next slide so this slide shows some pictures of active collaboration and engagement at our roundtable event on February 26th I think what stands out to me the most about that night is really the level in which our partners showed up the way that they were really excited to be there and to help us focus on aligning our programs with workforce needs. The

[00:43:24] feedback that we collected through this event is really what's driving our CTE pathway build-out model and that model is a continuous feedback cycle a really great feedback loop which helps us go from industry input to collaboration to those meaningful curriculum updates that we've been talking about through this expansion plan and I mentioned right now we're focusing on some of those high growth areas like health sciences information technology manufacturing and engineering but I do want to highlight you know in agriculture and natural resources which is another area of high growth for us that we're leveraging our

[00:44:03] partnership with the Piedmont Environmental Council PEC and they're really helping us to refine both the technical and professional skills that students need to have also helped us in identifying everything from horticulture to equipment mechanics problem-solving and adaptability as areas for our

consideration as we are building this program or these programs and they also brought forward industry trends things that maybe we hadn't already considered such as the use of social media in business operations and GIS technology and land management,

[00:44:40] which we're now working to embed in this pathway. - Thank you, Jen. All right, so current progress for phase one, we just want to highlight a few examples of progress that we've made over the course of this school year and even last school year in terms of working towards our expansion plan that we have published.

[00:44:57] An initial example is administration of justice. This is a program that is currently at the Academies of Loudoun and it is a program that Jen and I have worked very closely with our home or our local high schools in terms of interest in offering that course or the beginning of that pathway in their home high school.

[00:45:14] We're pleased to report that Independence High School, who had a strong student interest in students who wanted to become lawyers in the criminal justice field, we are piloting that course at their high school beginning next school year. They're a strong student interest. That is just one example of a program that's been very, very successful at the Academies of Loudoun that we are looking to try to bring into our home high schools.

[00:45:35] Mr. Sackett will talk about a tiered system on the next slide, and I don't want to get too ahead of myself in terms of the model that we're moving towards. Another area that we are focusing on is commercial kitchen enhancements. Many of our labs are really that traditional family consumer science model, and we need to do some significant work of enhancing them with commercial-grade equipment.

[00:45:56] And some of those programs you might see, Light Ridge High School is a really example. You walk into that classroom, the same curriculum, the same outcomes are happening all over the school system, but they have an updated lab, they have updated equipment, things that are industry-recognized standards.

[00:46:13] School store renovations, I'm going to pass that off to Jen. Our school stores are an important opportunity for our community members to engage with our students on those soft skills, entrepreneurship, marketing. I'm going to pass it off to Jen to share a few of the highlights in terms of our school store renovations.

[00:46:30] Thank you. I'm so really excited to share that we have identified three schools this year for school store enhancements. And the two pictures that you see are from John Champ, which was the very first school to go through this process with us.

[00:46:47] That first picture sort of captures some of the old casework that was attached to walls. You could not reset the retail space like they do in other real-world scenarios. We pulled up the carpet. We laid new floors. We really made this aesthetically pleasing to students who are both working the store but also coming in to purchase store items.

[00:47:11] Throughout the entire process, we were engaged with the students, with the teacher, with their school-based leadership. Ms. Sargent actually helped pick out the floors, so we were really engaged with them. but it was a learning process it was student-led that here was the budget what could you you know what did you need to let go of to make other things work in your school store we are hosting a grand opening on May 4th so we'll be sure to make sure that's on your calendars thank you Jen one thing that I

want to highlight is one thing I want to highlight is it's it's it's very easy to dream big it's very easy to say we're gonna bring all these new programs in

[00:47:51] and forget about the existing programming. So what I want to highlight is that while we are thinking big, we are looking at an aircraft technology program, we are bringing an Army, we're not forgetting about the existing spaces and our teachers in the school system. So while these might not seem like big wins in terms of bringing new things in, they are huge wins for our teachers who are in spaces and labs that haven't been updated in 20 or 30 years.

[00:48:15] I'm going to skip over Army. I'm going to highlight game design, respiratory technician, Megatronics, and Advanced Computing. This is a really good example. We're taking some existing pathways and we're either sunsetting them at the Academies of Loudoun or we're converting them into new programs.

[00:48:32] Three, all four of those new programs, we met with those teachers last night. We provided them a stipend for their time. We met with them from four to six and we had a round table conversation. We debriefed the round table. We got their input. We made sure that we are getting synced so that they have a voice at the table their program expansion i have mechatronics half checked because this is a really good example that as you get into the weeds of these programs you need to consider things like facilities and space and so we're working really closely with facilities and mr sackett we have six or seven

[00:49:08] options in terms of where that lab goes and so i want to highlight that we are making really good progress but every year there's going to be things that come up you can't simply move a kitchen to the other side of a building even if the space looks great there's piping there's hvac and so we're making really great progress and we have plans to keep mechatronics moving forward but there's other considerations that come up through this process like facility needs i'm going to pass it off to mr sackett to talk about partnering and well hi everybody good afternoon my name is ryan sackett i'm the principal of the academies of loudon it's a pleasure to see you again and to

[00:49:45] meet you sir i don't know how much time i have because i could probably eat about three or four hours that was ours perfect so the one of the things that I've heard kind of consistently throughout the meeting today is the delineation and differentiation between programs to kind of keep things clean and one things I noticed when I started at the academies was that the identity of MATA had kind of shifted to a much more introductory approach and not to use too much time to talk about our schedule our students show up every other day all day they're the same classroom all day long every other day for a year for our one-year programs which is

[00:50:24] the equivalent of three credits and for our two-year programs they come for two years for equivalent six credits it's about 900 hours for our two-year programs the ability to go deep and do exceptional things in our two-year programs is very easy to do we have the time and scope to really do some exceptional things in our two-year programs but the shift was made many years ago to back to one-year programs because the way that it works out we only have one teacher And if we have a two-year program, they can only teach a level one on A day and a level two on B day.

[00:50:57] So it cuts in half the total number of graduates that can leave the program. So one of the ideas that Dr. Grubbs and I have kind of partnered on is this idea of a tiered system where if we had students covering some of the foundational content at their homeschool in some of the programs, maybe not all of them, in programs like culinary.

[00:51:16] Almost every single high school we have, Dr. Grubbs talked about moving to a culinary kitchen model, has that equipment and can provide that we already have teachers trained in that content if we had students coming to the academies with some level of content we could do a lot more in year one than we are currently doing so right now we spend all our first semester teaching kids what knives are what different knives do and all the equipment we cover all we because we are we get students who come with no knowledge it is really hard to get to the i think what could be very exceptional um end products of some of our programs so rather than make all the programs back

[00:51:52] to two year one of the ideas could be for certain programs to establish a tiered system where the students cover foundational content at their home school and then come to the come to the academies with some level of knowledge that allows them to start not from scratch but from you know the middle point of the road we can get much deeper and do fun more crazy things three minutes that was great thank you mr second i will keep this to 30 seconds or less um so just quickly next steps as i mentioned we are focusing on developing course pathways for some of those programs that we're bringing out of the gate like game design mechatronics we're meeting with those teachers

[00:52:31] we're including the business partners to keep that work moving forward some of this requires professional learning like a teacher who is teaching computer digital animation moving the game design they need to learn c plus plus how are we working with them to upskill them right We're also partnering with Educational Strategy Group.

[00:52:48] We're going to try to do some AI resilience in some of our pathways. We're starting that work in terms of how resilient are some of these pathways moving forward in terms of AI resiliency. And so that work is just starting to plant the seeds in some of that. That's more to come. And then lastly, there's still research that we have to do.

[00:53:06] For example, we're going to be doing some site visits to Aviation High School in New York. That program is four or five or six years out. This is not new work nationally. Let's go learn from some of the models that are happening. And so May 1st, myself, Mr. Slevin, a few school board members, and some additional staff members, we're going to be going to Aviation High School to do some additional research for some of our new pathways moving forward.

[00:53:33] I will open it up for Q&A. Thank you for the time to share updates, and we're looking forward to any feedback or questions that you have. Thank you so much. I find this incredibly impressive, I have to admit. Sometimes I get very overwhelmed by this CT expansion.

[00:53:50] I found this presentation to really help dig into some of the very nuts and bolts specifics and sort of give us those updates, and I'm just really appreciative of that. I love the idea of the tiered model. I know we spoke at length about that at our visit, and it makes a lot of sense.

[00:54:07] One thing that I'm noodling on, which I will save for another time because I think it will be a long answer, and Mr. Slevin this may be more CNI but I'm really I'm really curious about how this intersects with course planner because if we start sort of thinking about pre-reqs or tiered approach and all of those things down the line and I've heard some talk a little bit about we're starting to see what kids are interested in through course planner we have that as a tool now and then the bigger picture of course planner is how do we educate our families that this stuff is available and then how do we fill more seats down the line because I I think there's going to be a lot of interest

[00:54:44] as we continue to grow but it's very exciting. My one question is and then I'll pass it to Mr. Pepper and we can call it a night because we do have an important five o'clock meeting for some board members. With the piloting next year is that going to be only be offered at those schools to students that are zoned for that school and then eventually morph into a more program based model where you'll take out of zone students or is it going to be that program is for those kids at that zone forever?

[00:55:15] That's a great question. I'm going to keep this really short, and I'm going to give two really quick examples. So for the example for administration of justice, we're looking to pilot that at a few schools over the next few years regionally where it's for those zone students. Another example, and I'm really going to commend Jen Alpers on this, and this connects really well to the tiered system that Mr. Sackett spoke to, introduction to health sciences.

[00:55:41] That is our number one area of interest from our students right now, health science fields. That is a program that we would love to have an introductory level course at every single high school. And so we're making some small steps in that direction. But what I wanna note here is that our expansion plan really has two areas, special program expansion at the Academies of Loudoun, and then home high school expansion.

[00:56:03] So we're trying to balance, to your point, not bringing in too many special programs, but also trying to balance bringing more things to students within their zip code. So I hope that answered. I wanted to keep it brief. Yeah, I mean, I think what you're saying is it's kind of going to depend on the need and the desire and, you know, kind of where all that evolves.

[00:56:24] So I appreciate that. I mean, you know, as well as I do, that we have a bit of a web that we've created with special permission. And I know that that's kind of an ongoing conversation. And so I'm really wanting to lean into this as more of our avenue for those kinds of things. Really purpose-driven selection of schools versus just going to any school you want.

[00:56:45] So that's my own personal belief. I'm speaking for myself. So I'm just curious about how all that's going to kind of coincide and align. But again, I'm just, this is, it's amazing. Mr. Pepper. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll keep this super brief because I know that we are in a time crunch. A couple things.

[00:57:01] Maybe this is just kind of thinking along the same lines as Ms. Chernoff here. As we go to these kind of pilot programs, just the thought on staffing. And I and Mr. Saki have a great example of kind of the culinary that we're talking about. I'm actually a certified FACS instructor in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[00:57:19] Yeah, yeah, yeah. But I know that the first two things you do in a foods class is knife skills and safety, safety and sanitation, right? Those that so making sure that our instructors in our homeschools finding those instructors making sure that they know kind of the Expectations and linking the curriculum together. There might be a C&I conversation. That's that's a big thing So just thinking about staffing for these tierings is going to be a big undertaking and I wish you the best of luck and then The AG program I guess this is a relic of not being a rural county anymore I'm shocked to hear that we we don't have an AG program here in Loudoun County and would love to

[00:57:57] To see kind of where we can go, where we can go with that. And maybe even because it's hard to get into our academies and our kids want to go there. So I'm excited to visit Mr. Sackett, too. So I will put

it on the block. All right. So thank you guys so much. Could I clarify just one? Just for the record, Mr. Sackett looked at me and we made eye contact.

[00:58:15] We had a thought bubble. When I said that we don't have an ag program in the school system, I mean we do not have a traditional agricultural program available to our home high schools. And so at the Academies of Loudon, we technically have two, three programs that align to the ag cluster.

[00:58:31] So we have environmental science, we have biotech, and we have vet science. I was thinking like FFA, like animal husbandry. I come from Clark County High School. I know what's going on. That's what we're really talking about in terms of Western Loudon. I just wanted to clarify what I meant by that.

[00:58:46] Thank you. Makes sense. Thank you guys so much. Appreciate your time. Appreciate all the work that you're doing and the continued work. we're excited to continue to get updates with that we will move to item number six is there any new business with that i will adjourn this april 8th 2026 specialized programs and centers committee committee meeting have a great evening bye



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