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Loudoun County School Board, Student Behavior and Accountability Committee, Monday, April 27, 2026

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Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1186069438?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-11. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:09] afternoon this committee meeting of the student behavior and accountability committee will start it is 4:04 present today or myself Carrie LaBelle and mr.

[00:00:24] Ross Svensson with miss and Donahue absent for the meeting having no public comment we shall proceed forward we have the meeting the minutes from the last meeting yes I move to approve the March 23rd 2026 meeting minutes second thank

[00:01:02] you very much all in favor say aye aye it is approved let's move on then we have no action item today so we're going to move on to policy 8265 student search and seizures would you like to present for us Ms. Scanlon I would be happy to thank you so there are a number of recommended revisions to this policy that said I would say there's not much really if there's not much here at all that has changed substantively the vast majority of the revisions were made to

[00:01:40] improve the clarity of the document the clarity of the instruction and the definitions and to reduce redundancy in the document. Some information was removed from the policy or significantly condensed in the policy because it was really information better suited to a training of school officials rather than to a policy itself.

[00:02:06] And some information was removed from the policy to the regulation because it was better suited to be sitting in the regulation rather than in the policy. Other than those changes however there were two topics that I added to the policy.

[00:02:27] One I added a section on the use of weapons detection systems so that we're giving our students and our families full notice of the fact that a student or you know even a family member honestly might enter a school building might enter a school sponsored activity and be subject to these weapons detection systems.

[00:02:50] Those could be walking through a metal detector for example. It would also cover some new technologies that are coming out where a camera can identify in a school hallway for example an object that looks like a weapon.

[00:03:06] So that's really in the interest of transparency to make sure that there is notice that those systems may be used in our schools or at our activities. I also added added a provision again for the purpose of notice to clarify that if there were a special program that a student wished to enroll in and a condition of enrollment was a drug screening that LCPS officials would not be doing that drug screening but that would be contracted out to a third party.

[00:03:47] Does that specify that we LCPS will pick up the cost of that contracting. DIRECTOR HARRIS: I don't think that is specified. Honestly I did not contemplate the issue of cost.

[00:04:06] So that is something that I could look into for you. Again it was for the purpose of giving notice that a student may be required as a condition of enrollment for certain programs. very specialized programs to submit negative screens.

[00:04:25] But it does not address the issue of cost. Which honestly I don't think the issue of cost would have to be addressed in a search policy. But I can certainly look into that. That might be something that parents will bring up or we thought I'd get in ahead of it.

[00:04:41] Yes. So those are the primary changes to the policy. I would be happy to take any questions that you have. Benson. Benson, sorry.

[00:04:57] Thank you Madam Chair. On the on that third party provision that was added in is that just for clarification is that does that mean that LCPS does not receive the results of that test or analysis that sense off.

[00:05:13] No as LCPS would receive the results. So that again is only for a program where a student is seeking admission to a certain specialized program and as a condition of admission or the ability to remain in the program there might be a drug screening requirement and then um another question i had was whether the authorized lcps officials are specified in regulation 8265 yes um so there

[00:05:49] were associated revisions to the regulation um those revisions would not be posted unless the policy passes but i can tell you who those folks would be that would be great thank you principals assistant principals school security officers athletic directors assistant athletic directors and deans.

[00:06:16] And that is not a change from the current policy. One thing we did add however to the regulation as a change for student safety is a provision that in any situation in which there is no authorized LCPS official present or available to conduct a search involving one or more students another LCPS official may be designated to perform the search to ensure the safety of students and others.

[00:06:43] That sometimes happens on a field trip and sometimes on a field trip that's where they're out of town. There might not be one of those authorized administrators or security officials present but we know that the search has to be conducted for student safety and we just wanted to close that loop to make sure there were no associated liabilities to the staff that were tapped to do that.

[00:07:09] Then another question I had was on automobile searches. I saw in the red line that was struck out, and I just wanted to, for clarity, understand if that's something that was moved to the regulation or still covered in the policy.

[00:07:32] So automobile searches are covered in both places. So it's probably just moved around but it's definitely still in the policy. Let me see if I can find. So for example it's mentioned on page 1 of the clean version line 24 when it talks about observation of items that are in plain view including items that are in a vehicle that are observable from outside the vehicle.

[00:08:02] That would be something that doesn't constitute a search. Then we also have in Section G searches of students personal belongings.

[00:08:21] It lists pocketbook wallet backpack electronic device and/or vehicle which is parked on LCPS property or in the designated parking area for an LCPS sponsored activity. And then it goes on to indicate when the search of such property would be permissible.

[00:08:40] You mentioned as an electronic method protecting weapons or so forth, wand, was that included in there? Yes, it does mention that in the section where it talks about the search of students or students' belongings, that such a search would be permissible under certain circumstances with reasonable suspicion or with consent, and that the search could be done via electronic means, which would include a wand.

[00:09:17] Okay, so automatically. Yes. I know that you mentioned the two substantive changes in the policy, but in terms of the regulation, I was curious if there were any updates being made to pace with technology.

[00:09:48] I know the weapons system is one, but is there anything like with electronic devices or something to that effect where there's been any changes? No, the only one that's specific to us keeping up with technology is the weapons detection systems. I will say that I did share the drafts of both the policy and the regulation with John Clark so that he could look at that from a security lens and he did not come back with feedback related to any other kinds of technology which I'm which may exist but I'm not aware of.

[00:10:21] Speaker 2: Questions about this policy. We have a motion.

[00:10:40] Do we need a motion to send it on forward. Speaker 2: Yes we would need a motion to send it out for public comment and advisory committee comment. Speaker 2: Madam Chair I move that we distribute policy 82 65 to public comment and that we move it to action item following public comment for the next meeting and I second that all those in favor say aye aye hearing no opposition this will be moved forward thank you and now we're going to move on to policy 82 70 which we've all been awaiting with bated breath

[00:11:18] I'm sure of it yes I you stole my line I was gonna say now the policy you've all been waiting for. Policy 8270. I would like just to say in the spirit of full disclosure I do not in my position interact with the

dress code in any way shape or form. It is not something that rises to the attention of my office as a student violation because it's not kind of violation that can engender a long-term suspension reassignment or expulsion.

[00:11:56] So because of that I thought it was very important to reach out to our school based administrators. They are the ones who are interacting with that policy not me. So I started by sending out a survey to all school based administrators that includes our principals assistant principals and deans and invited them to share their thoughts via that survey related to the dress code.

[00:12:23] I received 54 responses that were pretty pretty evenly balanced between elementary middle and high school and also balanced in the roles. We got several from principals assistant principals and deans. In looking at the results of that initial survey only 28 percent of the 54 respondents thought that the current policy is quote fine as written and the bulk of that 28 percent comes at the elementary school level so 56 percent of those respondents at the elementary level thought that the policy

[00:13:01] was fine as written. Only 15 percent of middle school administrator respondents thought that the policy was fine as written and only 11 percent of our high school administrators who responded to that survey. And in the survey respondents were able to suggest revisions to the policy. So what I did next the survey asked if the respondents would be interested or willing to serve on a focus group related to the dress code.

[00:13:33] So 28 of the 54 respondents indicated that they would. So I invited all 28 of them to participate in a focus group. Of the 28 invitees 22 administrators attended.

[00:13:48] And again it was pretty well balanced. We had representation from all levels although 75 percent of those who attended were secondary school administrators only 25 percent from the elementary which tracks because our elementary administrators appear to be somewhat satisfied with the dress code.

[00:14:07] And there was also again pretty good representation across principals assistant principals and deans. So in the focus group what I did is I shared the overall results of the first survey and then I systematically worked through the various suggestions that their peers had made for possible revisions.

[00:14:29] And we talked about each one of those suggestions and then at the end of the focus group they got a second survey where they could go through each one of those suggestions after having heard and participated in that discussion and indicate whether they supported that suggested revision or they didn't support that suggested revision.

[00:14:53] And I will say that what I emphasized with them and every single survey question was prefaced with the idea that as you think about making revisions to the dress code you really need to focus on what is that enforcement going to look like.

[00:15:10] What is that going to be like every day for your staff and for you if we go in the direction of enforcing higher expectations for student dress after five years of more relaxed norms?

[00:15:27] Because I really wanted them to think about that. And the results of that survey showed that 83% of respondents believed that we should be defining what a top is. 83 percent of respondents believed that we should be defining what a bottom is 83 percent of respondents believed that hoods should be down in the building there was a debate about hats and they compromised on hoods there were some administrators who went in thinking we shouldn't

[00:16:03] be allowing hats there was a very robust discussion and that was a compromise that Hats okay we can live with hats but those hoods have really got to be down. And there were two main reasons that came up related to the hoods. One was there's just a sense that some students will disengage from instruction with that hood up.

[00:16:25] It makes it a little easier to maybe sleep to cover your head with your head on the desk etc. And then there was also concerns related to the personal electronic device policy and how hard that is to enforce when students have hoods on.

[00:16:42] Interestingly the current policy also prohibits hoods from being worn up. So I thought that was interesting that there was so much talk about hoods have to be down but the current policy also says that hoods have to be down. So what they kind of landed where the current policy already is on that.

[00:17:00] 92 percent of respondents wanted to specifically address P.E. and the fact that whatever is worn for P.E. does need to meet the definition of the top and the bottom. And 100 percent of respondents endorsed the idea that if jewelry and accessories have to be removed during PE for safety reasons that that would be an expectation that the student would comply with that directive.

[00:17:29] There was also a compromise on pajamas. Some administrators came in thinking it's just not appropriate to wear pajamas to school period end of story. There was a robust discussion about that and where they landed was as long as the pajama top and the pajama bottom meets the definition of a top and a bottom that that's OK.

[00:17:55] But please no robes and this was new to me no wearing blankets as clothing which took me a little off guard because I didn't realize that people were coming to school wearing a blanket as an item of clothing.

[00:18:14] but apparently that is a thing. So they did you hear anything more about slippers. We talked about slippers you and I. So there was a lot of discussion about slippers particularly at the middle school level because apparently one of our administrators even said this morning there is a girl wearing a pair of slippers that are immense.

[00:18:37] There are these huge hamburgers and that it was unsafe for that student and for other students because of how large these slippers were that they were a tripping hazard. There was a lot of interesting discussion that seemed very middle school.

[00:18:57] Things that are a problem at the middle school are not necessarily seen as a problem at the high school and are not a problem at the elementary school. Which gets me to one of the other changes that the principals endorsed. And that was this idea that if there is a tire that may be causing problems at a certain school that isn't addressed in the dress code with the concurrence of the level director and with appropriate advance notice to the community a principal would have the discretion to prohibit some other item of clothing something that we're not thinking about right now.

[00:19:35] For example the wearing of blankets as clothing which are causing consternation at both levels. But I I certainly wasn't aware of that even being on the radar until I had that discussion. So those changes that were heavily endorsed by the administrators do find their way into the revised policy.

[00:20:02] The revised policy does define a top and it defines a bottom. There was an effort to make those definitions reasonable and not draconian. I was not here five years ago when the dress code was rewritten

so I'm not sure what those discussions were.

[00:20:23] But I went back to the dress code from twenty seventeen through twenty twenty two just to make sure that this policy wasn't just a completely reverse the clock backwards because I presume there was a reason we came away from that.

[00:20:40] And I do feel like the revisions the current revisions recommended revisions are reasonable without being very difficult to enforce for example nobody's gonna have to get out their ruler and measure a strap. Nobody's gonna have to say any sliver from your the bottom of your top to the top of your bottom any sliver any gap is a violation.

[00:21:11] So those changes were made. In addition there was an amendment that I worked with division counsel on related to slogans and visuals on for example t-shirts. Our current policy goes a little bit into areas that would not be legally defensible. For example impolite civic discourse. I think we can all aspire to the idea that our students will not be impolite will not engage

[00:21:49] in offensive conversation that is outside of the definition of what it means to be profane but some of that language in the current policy number one I think creates confusion in our schools and as they try to enforce that impolite discourse offensive discourse I think it leaves us open to some liability if that were to be challenged Division counsel agreed so we tightened that language up to language that would be absolutely defensible in court.

[00:22:31] The only other change then that I made was there is a provision in the Code of Virginia that sets forth what has to be in a student dress code and we had checked all of those boxes but it looks like we missed one last time around and that was that no employee shall make direct physical contact with students or student's attire as they are addressing the dress code.

[00:22:56] So we did include that to be fully compliant with the code. If there are any questions, I would be happy to answer them.

[00:23:16] I have a question about the description of a bottom. And it says full coverage of the lower torso and buttocks.

[00:23:32] That is just exactly where the legs begin. And if a young lady has something covering that part and moves or bends over, that becomes an issue. I think that needs to lower the line if we could.

[00:23:52] Although what we'd say about that and how to measure that, I don't know. Well, I think you're getting at kind of the difficulty to find the right line. So first of all, I will say that when I restructured the way that this policy was written, I restructured it in a way that I think is very easy to amend, such that things can be added taken away definitions and criteria can be changed without having to rewrite major sections of the policy and I did that because you may wish

[00:24:29] to amend it the full board may wish to amend it so I wanted it to be easy to amend but I think that what you're pointing out is exactly the challenge in these definitions is what is the right place we don't our administrators and I don't think we as a school system want to go back to stand up and let's do the fingertip rule or let me get out a ruler and make sure that the gap between your knee and the bottom of your shorts is a certain number of inches.

[00:24:59] I'm hopeful that we can all agree that the buttocks should be covered and that the lower abdomen should be covered. So I really did strive to set standards that I think I hope we can all agree are

appropriate.

[00:25:18] I also looked at model policies to see how other districts were defining these terms here and there here and there but it was a challenge.

[00:25:37] We could specify that bottoms should be worn or skirt skirt lanes should be worn so that in a crouch I don't want to say crouching my problem is when they bend over the whole thing comes up so how do we say that in a decent way well I I

[00:26:16] think as currently written it says full coverage so maybe you could say full coverage at all times or something like that you know just makes clear that this I think some of the things I heard from board members is that they are upset about kids having to wear hats unless it's a spirit day.

[00:26:51] They're upset that kids are having to wear hats or that they're permitting so there were some robust discussion about that with the focus group because there are there's a contingent certainly that do not believe that student should or anybody should be wearing hats inside the building that it's impolite.

[00:27:20] There was another contingent that thought we can let a hat go that you don't want to be arguing with us to like pick your battles almost that they didn't see the problem with the hat except for the old school tradition that it's impolite to wear a hat indoors.

[00:27:45] So that, again, I think is something for the board to consider and decide if you want to make hats impermissible. I will say that the conversation with the focus group of administrators where they got was, okay, we'll give you hats, but we were standing firm on hoods, and they seemed to be able to live with that.

[00:28:09] The other question that I had gotten comments about was the wearing of pajamas except perhaps for spirit days. There was also a robust discussion about that. And I think what it finally came down to is if a student can wear sweatpants and a student can wear athleisure there's not much difference between sweatpants athleisure and flannel for example pajama bottoms or some other pajama bottom.

[00:28:43] and so where they landed was I mean if the if it meets the definition of a bottom and it meets the definition of a top I think in the in the vein of pick your battles is it really that bad one principal made the point for goodness sakes we sell pajama bottoms in our school store as emblazoned with our logo so then to say but you're not allowed to wear them at school sounds a little strange. So it was you know again a compromise position.

[00:29:18] But it's something certainly the board could consider. Thinking about what is the role of the school system in teaching young people how we move about a professional environment.

[00:29:35] Because certainly at work I can't imagine there are many professions where you're allowed to wear pajamas at work. Again it's this idea of for so many who's going to enforce it picking the battles and for the last five years some of this was explicitly permitted with no real guardrails or definitions.

[00:30:04] And so as we try to reestablish some higher expectations how far do we want to go with that as it will be a change for our students and our staff and our parents.

[00:30:19] Personally, I find the argument that they could do it for the last five years kind of superfluous. If we are trying, as you said, to teach students to move forward into a professional position, the job market, et cetera, they have to know what is and what isn't approved of in those positions in the corporate world.

[00:30:50] so I think as we send this out we're probably going to hear a lot more from public comment and also the board is probably going to have something to say about all of this but do you feel like we can send it forward the way it is yes I just I think so and I think that we'll have the opportunity for potential amendments at the next the next phase and I just wanted to say I really appreciate the thorough work that you all did in speaking to the principals and taking in that

[00:31:27] feedback and conducting the survey. And I also appreciate you all speaking with division council about the symbols and like written content on and tightening up that link. Okay. Is there anything else we want to discuss about policy 8270? Seeing no more discussion, is there a motion? Yes, Madam Chair I have a motion.

[00:31:56] Thank you Mr. Svensson. I move that we submit policy 8270 for public feedback and move it as to an action item for our next regularly scheduled committee meeting. I second that motion. All in favor say aye. Aye. All opposed. Hearing no opposition the motion passes and we shall be sending this forward to the public for comment and to our committees for review.

[00:32:30] now we need to go to new business any new business in that case we're going to adjourn this meeting of the Student Behavior and Accountability Committee at 435 thank you



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