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Loudoun County School Board, Specialized Programs & Centers Committee Meeting, Wednesday, May 6, 2026

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[00:00:00] good afternoon my name is lauren schernoff and i am calling this may 6 2026 specialized programs and centers committee meeting to order i am joined tonight by my colleague mr john pepper and miss donahue is absent tonight we are going to get started with item 0.2.01 which is public comment we have one speaker tonight i'll give you three minutes and mr paul vickers you may begin in when you're ready. Thank you, Mr. Chernoff. I thought I only had one minute, so I really practiced this and was going to be talking really fast. So I'm going to take a little

[00:00:40] relaxation break here and just, you know, start by saying I'm the principal of Hillsborough Charter Academy, Paul Vickers, and I had a very good conversation this morning with Justin Donovan from DDI, and I came to him, you know, with appreciation for our relationship with DDI over the last decade, as long as we've been a charter school.

[00:01:05] And one of the things that I think, obviously, Mr. Pepper, you and Ms. Chernoff are aware, as a charter school, we pay \$20,000 a year for our agreement with DDI.

[00:01:20] And it covers tech repair, some purchasing, but really, honestly, DDI has been, Very, very favorable to work with for many years, and I'm sure they will continue to be.

[00:01:36] And we're obviously very interested in maintaining our agreement with LCPS for the \$20,000 that we spend. But we are a bit confused with some of the changes that are being proposed in the tech agreement as it pertains to our school and Middleburg Community Charter School as well.

[00:01:59] The two schools have some similar needs and some differing needs, but we both do pay the \$20,000. And one of the things that I was talking to Justin about is within the proposed revisions of that tech agreement, it's not very specific.

[00:02:22] It doesn't really identify which pieces of technology will continue to be serviced and which would not. And so we've asked Justin if we could please have an itemized list of that so that we can make better sense of it, truthfully.

[00:02:43] And furthermore, in the conversation that I had with Justin this morning, he was talking about the intercom system that was worked on over at Middleburg. And that concerned me because, obviously, an intercom and some of the safety and security technology that is essential at every school should certainly be considered essential at our schools as well.

[00:03:16] You know, certainly all 144 of our scholars are LCPS students. Our teachers are all LCPS teachers. You know, we wouldn't want, obviously, I don't think anybody in the school district, certainly not the school board would want any of the children to be less safe than children at other schools that's your time okay well my three minutes were well used thank you thank you mr. Vickers for being here and advocating and I will look forward to that discussion all right we will now move on to item number three point oh one approval of the draft minutes from our

[00:03:54] April 8th 2026 meeting have you had a chance to review them mr. pepper and do have any edits or changes i have had a chance to review them chair shirnoff and i do not have any edits or changes so with that i will move that we approve the draft minutes from our april 8th 2026 meeting do i have a second i will second that all in favor aye that passes so the minutes are approved all right now we will move into our topic about charter schools so um we are on our first information item 4.01 charter school annual technical and support services agreements and miss elaine layman the director of elementary and charter schools will kick us off and introduce

[00:04:33] the others that are joining us today thank you miss layman the floor is yours thank you mrs sure enough uh we have two agreements these are both annual renewals for those who haven't been with us before uh support services uh contract you will see no changes to that contract it's simply an annual renewal and what changes each year in that contract are the rates uh the hourly rates which come to us at some point during the summer months so there have been no no proposed changes to that agreement it's just something that needs to be signed each year but if you turn your attention to the tech support contract you'll see that there are some red line changes and to print a description and explanation of those changes i'm going to turn this over to

[00:05:12] justin donovan from the department of digital innovation to explain those changes thank you very much um so first i thought i would start with a sort of a high level overview of the intent behind these changes um as you know these charter schools were formed a decade or so or more ago and at the time when the charter schools were formed the board at that time made a decision that it was just more financially responsible for the school district to stop operationally spending on these buildings in these schools and that's when the charter schools were formed charter the

[00:05:52] charter community came in and said hey we would like to run a school here through those agreements And through that process, the technology equipment inside of those schools was purchased by the charter schools. And since then, they've been in a technology services contract with us where we support that equipment.

[00:06:11] We help them maintain it. And when it breaks, we help them resolve the challenges and get it back to working again. As time has gone on, the technology in those buildings has kind of grown in age. And we're starting to see areas in which this technology that was purchased by the charter schools is getting to a point to where it might not be possible to continue repairing it.

[00:06:38] We would need to do a full replacement. And the example I gave in my conversation with Paul earlier was, for example, the PA system. So in reviewing the contract for this year, we found that there was some ambiguity in the contract on whose responsibility it was financially to replace the equipment the charter schools purchased.

[00:07:00] So the intent behind these changes was simply to get rid of that ambiguity, make sure that everyone understood whose responsibility it was financially to replace those pieces of technology. Even though they have a services for repair contract with us, we wanted to make that distinction between a replacement and a repair.

[00:07:23] So that's the intent and a little bit of the history on why those changes were made. The other changes you'll see in the agreement are related to name changes for where we've stopped using a piece of technology and we've substituted it with the new piece of technology, the software.

[00:07:40] So with that being said, did you want me to stop and let you ask questions, or do we want to go line by line and go over each of the red lines? Just have a quick question, if that's all possible. This is maybe more for my understanding of the finance and operations piece.

[00:07:56] Where does – and this could be actually a question. I know we have some charter school principals here who might enlighten us a little bit. Where does the \$20,000 they're spending come from? Is it a separate budget that they have? Per the agreement, it is, I think it's four equal payments of \$5,000 that are transferred from the charter school to LCPS.

[00:08:16] That is a shared conversation probably, but that money is then paid for the services annually per this contract. So I believe all of that is spelled out in the contract, the funding that's required. And so that has been \$20,000 pretty much. When we first started, there was an a la carte contract where you could pick and choose what you wanted, and that became very cumbersome to manage the time and materials contract.

[00:08:39] So it became a single services contract. And just to kind of level set what that \$20,000 covers, it covers internet connectivity, which is about \$1,000 a month for resilient dark fiber connectivity and data center connectivity and our front-facing internet connectivity. So out of the gate, \$12,000 of that \$20,000 goes to internet connectivity.

[00:08:58] So it leaves about \$8,000 to cover Xerox lease, phone services, other contractual maintenance services plus technician time for when we have to send a technician to the school to do it. So that's what's included in that \$20,000 contract. So really it's just a services contract, not a system equipment replacement refresh contract. And it's \$20,000 regardless of whether or not they use \$20,000 worth of

services or they go over \$20,000 worth of services. Correct. It's \$20,000. I believe the first year, that's one of the reasons we had this ebb and flow. So we just

[00:09:32] agreed on like what we'd see typical break fix for the for a student device how many times we would do that and we kind of built an average and that's where the twenty thousand dollars kind of came from um again most of that goes toward just paying direct services for xerox phones and internet connected can i back this out to a slightly higher level if possible just for my edification as someone relatively new on the board who's worked in the public sphere not as much in the charter sphere where does that pool of money that then the charter schools are allocating the \$20,000 come from is it a situation where we're giving them money and then

[00:10:08] they're giving it back I appreciate you guys be yeah thank you yes to kind of answer your question and Paul can also chime in as well so quarterly like you said as well that we get a per pupil allotment that we receive per per scholar and so from that so we get a quarterly check that you take out staff benefits that salaries and we get those quarterly so from that five thousand dollars per quarter it comes from the per pupil allotment so it's just kind of like a pool of money is take out money off of those things and you know so to

[00:10:46] answer your question yeah it's kind of like it's from the it's from this cut from the students we have at our school yeah that's where it comes from okay that's really appreciative so maybe this is more I'm looking at this from the operates I also serve on finance operations looking at this from a finance and operations purview and this is maybe a larger question for just us to think about and debate does this contract make so in doing some just research about level setting spend per student so in the FY 27 C on the per pupil cost is of twenty five thousand four ninety and there's a there's a specific call out where that's broken down and it's about nine hundred and

[00:11:26] three dollars per student that's dedicated to technology so out of that if you take the twenty thousand dollars and you divide it by the hundred and forty four scholars we're at about a hundred and thirty eight dollars per student that technology so services of what they're paying for versus what the complete what LCPS pays for now my understanding is that that per pupil allotment is given to schools to make that decision about how they want to spend that so LCPS is choosing \$900 per student and that covers everything from system repair equipment all of our refresh cycles for everything that we do across the division and so there is a disparity there but the \$20,000 is

[00:12:03] really it was really intended just to cover a services contract to provide to keep existing things up and running I appreciate that clarification that really kind of sets that's a really good level set frame this discussion I really appreciate that and thank you mr. pepper one thing that is important to know is that as a charter school we do pay for our own computers our own Promethean boards and so when they're being refreshed I think the computers are every four years and I believe Promethean boards are every seven years

[00:12:42] that's our responsibility to pay for that so you know the \$109 or whatever the number was I can't quite remember it doesn't necessarily include everything that the other schools would be receiving for their students that's very helpful knowledge and thank you for sharing that as well so I think we can move on just sort of giving the the highlights of I don't need to go through the entire thing but just where the red line is if we could just kind of summarize what that change specifically means especially with the questions I know that we had from public comment and that I

[00:13:18] received from M CCS too about just the clarity about what's included and is how does all that fall under here would be a good clarification so Mr. Donovan or Mr. Smith well I would just I think that there's a lot of just restructuring so I don't think that there's any intention that anything's different it's just clarifying removing some legacy terminology so if you go to technology services for section two it really is pulling out there's no obligation to refresh and replace computers laptops and that really is added as a specific item there so it's not buried under one item so that is actually moved to for a

[00:13:56] six where it says there's no obligation to replace technology so there's not any sort of intent to shift that it's just again realigning the language so it's easier to find and clear it more clearly spelled out the next change is really add-on services we no longer use blackboard we use apto g so just changing to whatever the modern tool is the next is really just grouping computer desktop laptop other to just technology equipment as those shifts and evolve and then the last item is just highlighting that replacement of hardware we are not

[00:14:33] obligated especially as we get into some of this equipment keep in mind that when the charter schools took ownership of the facility that equipment was already five or ten years old and it hasn't been replaced or refreshed like we would typically have a standard refresh process that would replace network equipment every seven years so those type of refresh cycles we do for an existing facility aren't aren't part of ddi's responsibility to do that for these so that's just why that language is there we are not budgeting we are not allocated

[00:15:07] funding to do those typical refresh cycle replacements i appreciate that um mr pepper did Do you have any other thoughts or questions? The only one I would have, Madam Chair, would be, I see that in 4A, the original what was 6 about AV devices and their connectivity, excluding Promethean boards, that section was redacted.

[00:15:39] Is there just reasoning behind the redaction of the connectivity of AV devices? That was a repeat of, what does it say, I think 1. Yeah, it's also in 1. So it was just – it was repetitive, so I removed that. Appreciate that.

[00:15:56] It just seemed weirdly out of place, but that's okay. Yeah, I don't – I don't – I am very appreciative of you walking us through this and the changes. And, you know, I've been on the board for a little bit now, so I'm feeling like I'm starting to sort of understand a lot of the way that things work.

[00:16:19] Something that – and this is no – this really isn't DDI specific, so I'm kind of going to go off-grid here a little bit. And I will work on this, and I will consult, and we can work on if there's anything that needs to be changed or included. I thought these changes were more substantive than what you're saying, so I think that that is good.

[00:16:36] But I also – I always – and I'm just going to be candid. I always sense tension here when talking about the charter schools. And I feel like we're having the same conversation over and over again with the same arguments over and over again.

[00:16:53] And maybe that's just me and my perception. I'm new to special programs this year, so I wasn't sitting in on the conversations at the ground level with the charter schools, but I did get a lot of feedback at the full board, and I've been out to the charter schools, and I've seen the kids and been part of that.

[00:17:11] I talked to staff when we were looking at this to plan for the meeting, and it feels like everything is in these little bits and pieces, but we're having the same conversation. And so for me, what I

would really like to do, kind of to your point, is like, is this needed?

[00:17:27] I think it is. I mean, I think there's purpose here to these contracts and what we have with the charter schools, absolutely, in terms of that accountability and how that ebbs and flows. And, you know, we talk a lot about what the original vision was, and then we move into where we are now and that things are – it feels like it's getting more difficult to sustain those things at this phase of where I'm at in this process with the school board.

[00:17:48] That's just how I feel about it. But what I would really like to see us move towards in the future is a way to get sort of all of these things on the same timeline so that we're having a fulsome conversation across these different contracts and entities, whether that's the calendar or about being in the CIP or the technology agreement or facilities.

[00:18:11] I feel like all I feel like that's why we're having these same sort of philosophical conversations that keep arising out of these little technical changes and I don't know that that's always necessary and I think we could probably find a nice package deal that more fulsomely explores where we do stand with the charters because every time these little technical changes happen we're all of a sudden opening this door of these are our kids they're LCPS kids they're LCPS schools. And like, I don't know that that's a super healthy thing for us to keep hashing out.

[00:18:47] I personally do see them as our LCPS kids. I think there's some incredible programs happening at our schools. We're talking here all the time about new programs and new things to model after. We're going to see other schools that have other programs. So we have two right in our backyard that are doing amazing things. And so what I would like to see is just a consistent model through this committee that sort of tightens this up a little bit really analyzes what is needed and what is not and maybe reframe the conversation we're way further down the road in terms of the age of these buildings and the age of these devices and the age of these schools they're also further down the road and what they've done with their curriculum and their students and their

[00:19:25] lottery process and I I would rather have that conversation all at once because it's just keeps kicking up the dust on this and honestly if I had a kid there that would be making me feel kind of bad um because we just keep going there and so if we're going to go there I guess we need to go there and have that tension conversation but I would much rather us just get on the same page get on a good cycle and move forward with where we're at with the charters because for me I just hate to have to keep doing this tug of war and I know that there

[00:20:01] is a lot that needs to be worked out but so that's my soapbox for tonight um you're welcome but I I really feel like it needed to be said. I think it sort of hit ahead for me at this time because now I feel like I have had this conversation over the years so many times. So I appreciate you listening.

[00:20:16] I don't really have any questions, except that maybe is that possible for us to try and align some of these things so that we can really get a more fulsome picture? So I would just say that the technology services contract is really a roll-up contract to the overall charter agreement contract, which is not a direct purview of DDI.

[00:20:34] So we're facilitating technology services based off of that kind of master agreement. So whatever that master agreement, whatever the board decides to do, would drive what these contracts do and what would be included and not included. So I think that this is just a subset of that larger discussion,

which we are more than happy to listen to, but really not our purview about those kind of master agreements.

[00:20:57] No, I appreciate that context. And like I said, it wasn't really DDI directed. It's just sort of an overall feeling that I've had. So I appreciate that, and that is good feedback for us as a board to really start there maybe and then work our way down. So I will hope to continue some of those conversations.

[00:21:12] Like I said, I will do some thinking about this and some more understanding before we bring it back, but I think we can bring it back for action next time. So we'll plan to do that. All righty. Thank you guys so much for being here. I appreciate it. Thank you to the principals who are here. Appreciate your presence as always, and we will move on to item 4.02 special programs update and there are lots of friends joining us today so I will pass it over to miss katie clark when she gets settled the director of academic programs to introduce all the friends at the table and we'll take a minute here to transition

[00:22:10] good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to share our special programs yearly overview This will be part one. Today's update will highlight select special programs with additional programs and academies planned for the meeting in June.

[00:22:26] I'm joined this afternoon by several colleagues who will introduce themselves as they share updates on their respective programs. I would also like to acknowledge we have Jeff Adam in the audience, our principal at Heritage, which supports our IB program. Thank you for being here.

[00:22:41] without your leadership and support and all of our principals that house special programs, these programs would not be possible. So thank you for being here. I also want to thank Dr. Dave Blayclack from Research for his support and his team's support with some of the data that you're going to see this afternoon.

[00:23:02] With that, here is our agenda. We're going to give a brief overview of special programs outreach efforts this year and the connection to the policy and regulation 5115. Program-specific highlights today will include an overview, data achievements, and identified opportunities for the following programs.

[00:23:21] We'll have dual-language immersion, health and medical sciences, international baccalaureate, the diploma program, and lastly, the Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps. We will provide a little bit of time in between each program.

[00:23:36] We'll keep an eye on time to share any feedback for you guys to ask any questions. So after each program, we'll pause so that you guys can ask questions you have. This year, our special programs outreach focused on increasing awareness, access, and community engagement.

[00:23:53] We hosted two special program fairs in September at Heritage High School and Parkview High School. Those featured a student panel representing all special programs, and it had breakout sessions for families to attend. We also held 8th grade assemblies countywide to ensure all students received direct information about program options, and we followed up with a county-wide individual school email to both families and students regarding important program information.

[00:24:21] We developed special program videos that are linked in school links, and those are really to start advertising even as young as elementary school families and students can see those videos through school links. We also published the first edition of the special programs magazine, and each program held

their individual program information nights at their schools, along with presenting at committees such as LEAF, GIAC, and SEAC, along with others.

[00:24:50] We collaborated with principals, counselors, and parent liaisons to ensure consistent messaging across all of our schools. We did conduct a follow-up special programs and academy survey per the special programs committee advice last fall, providing valuable feedback to guide future programming.

[00:25:10] So currently, we are planning the expansion of dual language immersion at leesburg elementary starting this fall we are preparing for the launch of the academy of global and linguistic studies this fall and we are in the application phase for the ib career program and the expansion of rotc to include army over the past several years lcps has significantly expanded its special programs and opportunities and we just want to say thank you to our school board for its continued support in making these opportunities possible for our students lcps policy and regulation 5115 requires that the school board receive regular updates on each of our

[00:25:49] established special programs yearly with the that framework in mind i will now turn it over to kelly james supervisor of world languages and cultures who will provide an overview of the dual language immersion program so just to provide a brief program overview we currently have the language immersion at two schools potomac elementary and sanders corner elementary expanding to leesburg next year. Our model is a 50/52 way two-teacher immersion program that begins in kindergarten and is projected to progress through fifth grade. Students spend half their day learning

[00:26:27] in Spanish and the other half learning in English. Students are selected through a lottery selection and transportation is not provided for students living outside of the attendance. This is our current enrollment that shows our dual language immersion program is operating at or near full capacity across all sites demonstrating a strong and sustained program this chart is our dli cohort retention so this is uh students who were enrolled in dli at either school in september 30th of each

[00:27:02] year we currently have the past two cohorts we will have the 2025 cohort information after this year the 23 24 cohort of students are now in second grade and they're shown in the first graph labeled the 2023 cohort you can see that our retention for potomac is 83 percent and sanders is 96 percent and for the 24 25 cohort of students that are currently in first grade we have a retention of 87 percent at potomac and 94 it's important to note that this is students who started in the program and are currently still there that doesn't mean that we have open seats at

[00:27:39] the program as i just showed that because we're able to fill those seats in kindergarten and first grade and second. This is demonstrating the Spanish proficiency progress in all four are in listening and in speaking from with our cohorts in the fall and in the spring we're still in the process of finalizing our spring data but we collect since they are still like found creating the skills for reading and

[00:28:14] writing where we are primarily assessing listening and speaking and this does show growth from the fall to the spring in each of each year. This is our VALS reading risk data for kindergarten at both of our schools that's comparing both our DLI students and our non dual language immersion students. The kindergarten VALS data shows a strong overall shift from students who are identified from mid and high risk readings categories into the low risk

[00:28:50] performance by spring. Across both of our schools some students are demonstrating meaningful early literacy growth with significant increases in the percentage of students identified as low risk. So it's on par with their non-DLI peers. For our students who are in first grade, we see strong literacy development across both schools. Potomac especially shows significant movement of students from mid-risk into low-risk. Sanders maintains a high proportion of students in the low-risk category with stable performance over time. And for our students who are currently in second grade, we did see a slight increase in

[00:29:28] high-risk levels from fall to winter for second grade students at Potomac, but we do a significant decrease of students from the mid-risk level to low risk following the DLI trend Potomac. And we are still in the process of assessing students for the spring data, so we don't have that data to share quite yet, but this is just from fall to winter. Our dual language immersion program continues to show strong results in the three key areas of student success, family engagement, and program growth. Students are making steady progress in both Spanish and English, meeting academic expectations. Families are highly engaged through parent institutes, cultural celebrations, community

[00:30:08] information sessions, and school-based events that strengthen that home and school connection. We've also expanded successfully across multiple schools and grade levels, maintaining strong outcomes in alignment with state guidance. Some of our highlights include our Summer Science Fiesta, Hispanic Heritage Month events, international events, bilingual presentations, and increased access through countywide information sessions we've also identified some opportunities for ways that we can continue to improve our program and those are navigating concerns with the amount of time for spent on assessing on the English side so that's something that we're looking for ways that we can improve and support

[00:30:48] our schools in that way we also have identified some opportunities and concerns with hiring for teachers on both sides especially for Spanish as well as finding ways that we can expand the support of our language ambassador across both classrooms.

[00:31:06] And those are things that we're looking into ways that we can, those are opportunities for us to better support our schools. And we are happy to hear any questions or feedback that you might have. Mr. Pepper?

[00:31:23] Certainly. Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple of questions for you, not anything, just more curiosity. How does the dual language proficiency of students, because I know there's a little bit of a cohort dropout. It's not significant. It's really small, actually. It's pretty impressive that it's that small.

[00:31:39] But a student who joins the DLI program, perhaps, in first or second grade, how does their language proficiency, speaking and writing, compare to those of the students who have been in since kindergarten? We just not have the data yet because it's so new. So if a student is not a heritage Spanish speaker, they can, and if there's a seat that opens because somebody has moved, Again, the students who are, the seats that are open are primarily because students are moving out of the county.

[00:32:07] They are able to, because they don't have that foundational knowledge, once they are in second grade, there is those two years of language proficiency that's there, so they do need to have some Spanish-speaking background once they're in second grade. So we do have a way to assess students to make sure that they have the prerequisite language foundation to support learning content in the language.

[00:32:32] When we have had students who have come in in first grade who missed that first year of kindergarten, we have not seen too much of a lag. They're able to pick that up pretty quickly. But again, we're still, we only have that one year of data than if there's students who are in second grade and they just joined last year, so we only have that one year.

[00:32:50] But they're performing on par with the other dual language immersion students. It's really good to know that there's some, you know, They just don't come in and they're suddenly in a world where they don't speak the language that they're being instructed. So that's important. You mentioned challenges in staffing and hiring. I'm just looking at the numbers. I'm assuming it's two classrooms at each school that are dual language.

[00:33:10] So what's the process for finding both a teacher who's certified in elementary education and a teacher who is a native speaker of these, I'm assuming they're native speakers of these languages primarily, yeah.

[00:33:26] They are. What's that looking like and where do you see, you know, opportunities to find people who can meet these qualifications? And is there some incentive we can offer to, you know, find these really niche individuals?

[00:33:41] Yes. So previously it was like looking for a unicorn, finding somebody who had the level. It's not a requirement that they're a native speaker, but there is a level of proficiency that they have to have. So native-like. And previously they had to have both of those things, which was very hard to find.

[00:33:59] So we have worked with HRTD, there's a third party group that we've worked with for finding those individuals, but we've also received guidance from the state where there are other ways to get teachers who have either one endorsement or the other to have the actual dual language immersion endorsement from the state.

[00:34:20] So then they would be qualified even there's a course or there's an assessment that they take one of those both of those um that is provided that they just have to sign up and take and then they are certified to teach DLI we thought have we thought about offering some sort of additional stipend or do we for teachers who participate in this program it seems pretty unique and somewhat of an additional responsibility just going to put that out there as a thought

[00:34:52] thank you I will um piggyback a little bit off of that in terms of staffing I actually after seeing it which thank you very much for organizing very fulsome visits I got to be in every class and the one we didn't get to see because the teacher was at PD I actually went back another time to see her because I heard she was so amazing and I had to so it's sort of what seeing it totally changed my perspective of it and it's no fault to you with the presentations I think presentations are great but I think it speaks to that ability to when you

[00:35:29] actually get in the building and you talk to the teachers and you see the kids especially the engagement piece you can type on a slide like kids are we're seeing that they're engaged but when you're there and you're they're like I mean it was amazing and there's a lot of them because the class sizes are a little bit bigger so the fact that they are managed that way and the excitement in the room and I think actually the staffing the extra workload is actually falling on the English side if I'm not mistaken with the testing that they have to do for both groups and and I think just some additional things that they have.

[00:36:05] So that would actually be the piece that I would look at in terms of increasing for a stipend because they are also having larger class sizes along colleagues who have smaller class sizes who don't have the dual language component, which is another thing I didn't realize until we saw that. So I think that that could be a consideration, but for me that was sort of an aha.

[00:36:24] It was like, oh, the English side is a little bit doing the heavy lifting. So we always appreciate visiting schools with you, Mr. Chernoff, but also having a chance to talk to that principal, that is something staff's having conversations about in terms of supporting the English teacher side of the coin.

[00:36:44] So we can definitely look at stipends and see what makes sense. We've also talked about finding other ways for testing support, whether that's through part-time funds, people that could push in and help with the lift, looking at the balance between the two teachers. So this is some definitely feedback we received from that visit and what we've been hearing from schools.

[00:37:04] We need to balance staying true to our model. It is still a new program, but we also need to be responsive to the feedback of principals, in particular our teachers in terms of the experience they're having. So the team is definitely open to ideas, and we appreciate feedback you're giving us.

[00:37:21] Yeah, and I love that we can see the student retention. I think that's important, but I think the teacher retention is also equally important and sort of understanding why they may stay in or roll out. So that will be something that I would love to continue to look at. And I really appreciate what you just said, Mr. Slevin, about being responsive to the principles because when we were there, there was a sort of sense of like, well, we have to follow the rules.

[00:37:43] Like, we have these rules. And I was like, well, why was that rule put there? And they were like, we don't know. And so I think that sort of flexibility of understanding that, yes, we want fidelity. I mean, I'll talk fidelity all day long, but I think it's super important in order to continue the program.

[00:37:59] We have to have those structures in place, but particularly around the work of the Tier 3 students, finding that intervention block, making sure that those best practices that we know for all students can still find their way in. And so I was very appreciative of the debrief and the walkthrough because it did allow them to sort of speak to those things.

[00:38:17] And I do think that they really were never hard and set rules. It was just sort of like, this is how we're going to do it, and now we're going to adapt and change. So I'm looking forward to seeing how that rolls out. And then my last question is just, this is sort of silly, but a parent reached out to me and asked me why the promo video is of another district when we have the program here.

[00:38:41] So maybe we need to get our comms department involved and sell what we have to offer in LCPS, because I think that would be awesome. So I don't know if that's true or not, but I did get that feedback, so I thought I would share that. Yeah, we do have some, but we'll find out where that is and make sure our schools are represented.

[00:39:01] And maybe that's just because it was, like, brand new and we didn't have anything to go off of. But now we've had it, and I've seen it, and I know we have incredible educators and students, so I would love to see that. So love the work. Always happy to have you here. Anything else? All right. On to the next. I'm actually going to ask that we slide down just because of time, just in case.

[00:39:20] Our health and medical science coordinator is not able to be here. however I do have talking points and we'll do it at the end if time allows otherwise we can move that section to June if needed so I'm gonna actually turn it over to grant to talk about international baccalaureate you turn on your mark Mike sorry thank you thanks for that reminder all right so for for

[00:39:57] IB I'm gonna do a brief overview so we have two Ivy World Schools Loudoun Valley and Heritage and both grant both programs participate in the special program's lottery. I'm going to walk you through a little bit how that works. We're both in zone and out of zone students, both show interest. In zone students indicate their interest and have access to the program by just being part of the attendance zone for that high school. In zone interest in the lottery is new for this year. We wanted to do that for two reasons. One is so tracking of interest and two so the coordinators can build on that interest and build their

[00:40:36] relationship with the feeder school which is very important lastly the students prepare again for the rigor in ninth and tenth grade as we talked about last month for to be able to participate in the seven IB diploma program courses that you need to take in 11th and 12th grade next slide please so here we have some data and what I really want to share and emphasize on this slide is the overall access for IB courses for 11th and 12th graders with a focus on

[00:41:10] 11th graders, Heritage specifically has steered a majority of 11th graders to take IB English Lang and Lit and have also co-seeded DE U.S. History and IB History of Americas to offer more students access to this course. Loudoun Valley also believes in this model and has co-seeded IB and DE Biology, which again offers opportunities for students while also consolidating teacher workload to reduce prep time for multiple courses.

[00:41:39] Physics and computer science are also popular at Loudoun Valley, and they also have, both schools also have multiple electives and fine arts as well. In general, the sciences are quite strong. I'm going to focus on them today as an example at both schools, and I'll expand on that in the next slide with our class of 2026 data.

[00:42:04] So on this slide, I'm going to work from left to right. So the student experience, I really just want to highlight the research and the writing and reflection. That's going to come up a lot, and it might sound like a broken record, but that's a huge part of IB.

[00:42:20] So students who go for the full diploma program are working through their classes in the IB core. The Theory of Knowledge class is essentially a philosophy class that ties in all their coursework. The extended essay is a 15-page or roughly 4,000-word mini-thesis with a teacher-mentor similar to what you might do in an undergrad with a professor-mentor.

[00:42:48] And the creativity, activity, and service projects last two years as well, in junior and senior year. In addition, students are taking internal assessments through their courses, and they take external assessments that started last week and continue on until the third week of May.

[00:43:05] So students at Valley and Heritage have presented, this is the middle column, the outcomes, they've really practiced their oratory skills in talking about the program itself.

[00:43:21] And so I'll tell you a little bit of how they did that. They presented to prospective students and families at our IB information nights. These students volunteered their time and really led students and

parents through the program. So not only have they experienced it, but they're able to articulate it. They've also done internal showcases of their IB core work to their families, peers, and underclassmen.

[00:43:43] So particularly, I'll give a shout out to Heritage. They had younger students coming through the library to learn about what students are doing. So again, it serves two purposes. It builds up the program and helps these students to present with their presentation skills.

[00:44:02] Another thing that both schools have done a great job with is research. And this is really both schools wanting me to ask and to shout this out, that the research component has changed how students use and view the library, not just for IB students but for all students.

[00:44:20] And lastly, the last bullet point there is now we just had decision day, May 1st, is when students typically promote what they're going to do next year, right? And so many of our IB students, we have a survey that went out to them.

[00:44:37] Many of them are choosing to go to college next year, and the main top three schools so far and those who have participated in this survey are University of Virginia, the College of William & Mary, and Purdue University. I'm going to draw this back to the last slide on the science component, just to show you how popular and rigorous our science is in IB.

[00:45:00] Here are the following majors that students want to or have declared. Physics, neuroscience, biochemistry, pre-med, and engineering are the top ones so far. I did want to take the time, and I think it's important to quote two students.

[00:45:18] We asked for feedback on the program from the class of 2026, and here's the first quote. I quote, it has made me more of an open-minded thinker. I feel like through the diploma program, I've learned so much about other cultures from both my peers and during my projects.

[00:45:35] I've also become a stronger problem solver and am confident in my ability to keep pushing through even when things don't go amazing. Second quote is, the IB program has helped me create study habits that I will be able to take with me as an advance in my studies and has allowed me to stand out not only as an applicant, but as a person.

[00:45:57] And the last column here, I want to focus on some opportunities and program growth. The 10th grade on-ramp has been a subject of discussion because we realize that students that are midway through their eighth grade year may not fully understand the diploma program or feel comfortable committing to something like this.

[00:46:18] So both schools are doing a good job of going into ninth and tenth grade to talk to students, to let them know about the courses in general, and then looking at who's meeting the math and language requirements and the VDOE requirements to be able to fit this into their schedule in 11th and 12th grade if they choose to do so.

[00:46:40] The next one is looking at testing support. Right now, as we talked about also last month, the internal assessments, the oral exams, the external assessments are a lot of time and effort for teachers.

[00:46:57] And so particularly in English and world languages, when you looked back at those numbers that we showed, we're looking at how to better support teachers for that also proctors and instructional substitutes for for this time of year is is important so that's at the top of mind and lastly refining the curriculum development process working with our content supervisors to make sure that the scope and

sequence and the course outlines are out and visible and part of the overall collection of all curriculum so that ib is not a standalone but is part of it and

[00:47:35] and is showcased where everyone can learn from it and see what we're teaching. Do we want to do feedback and questions? Okay. Yeah. I didn't know if he wanted to postpone that.

[00:47:54] You sure? All right. I don't have a lot here. I've been so impressed with the rollout of this program. I'm so thankful to Mr. Adam being here today, but also just opening his doors to me for the many times that I want to come and peek around. And, again, I think you kind of hit the nail on the head in terms of the level.

[00:48:13] As sort of we talked about engagement with DLI, I would say the same thing with IB. When I walk into those classrooms, they don't even really ask who I am. I sort of sit down and, like, what are you working on? And we have to disprove this. Or they're doing research. And they just jump. They want to engage. And it's impressive.

[00:48:29] And they can. And they have the knowledge. And the teachers are really facilitating that knowledge. And I know Mr. Adam has been especially intentional about thinking about how to get the learners ready for those programs. And so integrating some of that into just the basic best practices for all learning.

[00:48:49] So I love that you mentioned that. My only question is why, and these numbers are incredible in terms of the amount of kids, why the discrepancy between LVHS and Heritage in terms of the numbers? is it just sheer volume of students or is it just more sections are offered and on slide 24 yeah I can I can start and miss Clark feel free to jump in I think overall just Valley is a smaller school okay that's our smallest enrolled high school comprehensive high school I think that's another thing I think that's part

[00:49:28] it is is again the the co-seeding model i know that we're we're trying to do more of that and so that so that we're combining courses so that we can have more students in some of these sections without having an ib teacher having to having to teach only ib that that's a lot that's a big ask of staff so i think there's i think we're working towards that and i know that last thing i'll share is that Valley started with a kind of a start small mentality and grow so they're working towards that and and I think they're they're getting there and

[00:50:06] their numbers are are trying to improve each year too that's that's my take miss miss Clark is there anything you want to add that's perfect thank you mr. pepper you're up thank you madam chair um so I you know I've lived in the IB world for almost two decades now so this is when you say things like to you okay I'm like yeah the second nature to this i'm i'm just so impressed for doing this i was actually talking to mr adam when i came in today a little bit and i love the way that kind of some of the dual enrollment co-seating is happening um really so students don't have to make a choice um and allow some of these really wonderful courses to offer i also as a science teacher totally nerding out on

[00:50:44] like the fact that all the kids want to do science which is um just one of the most amazing things i think that and some of this i mentioned kind of in our last meeting we were talking about ib as we get into some of the curriculum instruction particularly in what I like to call the 10th grade year with a pre-IB year we're talking about is really the considerations on just how very different the ask of an IB student is as opposed to the ask of an AP student so those students that are going into IB their courses look

extraordinarily different right they're much more focused on on depth and individual research and the ability to to foster and make their own arguments it's not

[00:51:22] just let's cover these you know 27 objectives and take a test at the end of the year and it's so the way that that CNI is really a CNI question is gonna have to design instruction at that ninth and tenth grade level at Heritage at Valley but really at all of our schools to have these students ready is something that we're really gonna have to think about because it's a different skill set that we need it's it's skill based other two really quick comments one I love when you're talking about the student comment how much they're using both the approaches to learning skills and how much they're using those learner profile traits I know you didn't mention it but the IB is

[00:52:00] set on a set of core ten core learner profiles and the first student hit like three of them in their sentence which I thought was was really cool they understand what it really means to be an IB student to repair be prepared for kind of the next little bit and then the one thing that kind of floored me is when students decide they want to be in the IB program if they're out of zone that's the eighth grade year is that correct yes that is correct okay so they really do not know what they're getting into super interesting I don't know how we fix that model because of enrollment issues but it's definitely something to

[00:52:35] think about and as much as I'm not a huge fan of it maybe time to think about possibly exploring what MYP might look like so the students get a little flavor of what IB could be so just some thoughts on the table but I appreciate this presentation I appreciate that we're growing this program because it's super cool I will just say one quick thing some students I just don't want to discount our outreach efforts I mean we do do a lot of outreach and I think some students who jump into it really do know what they are

[00:53:08] getting into and we tried the peer education piece too that the 11th graders talking to the rising ninth graders but but yeah I yeah I just didn't I didn't want to let that go I know I'm proud of our outreach effort but I know we have a ways to go and we can keep keep at it it's not it trust me when I say it's not about the outreach at all that start even going down to like what is to okay and like I've got to write a 4,000 word what the students gonna ask it's just a different world a different mindset of learning and thinking and like I said I'm really proud of Latin

[00:53:45] County for Clark can I ask a question I have a hard stop at 5:30 I have another commitment that I have to get to so do you think six minutes is sufficient or should we getting a head nod of we might need to cut off okay I'm so sorry I hate to do that normally I can hang a few extra minutes but June is that okay I can

[00:54:19] try to do a hand side quickly okay six minutes five minutes okay all right here we go I'm gonna put on my hand side I'll give you ten minutes I think we can do this. Okay. The HamSci Academy is designed to provide students with early exposure to health care careers through hands-on real-world learning. Students develop critical thinking skills and health science literacy while also working toward industry-recognized credentials. The program is

[00:54:54] currently at Briarwoods and Tuscarora High School. We have students apply in going into ninth grade and they are selected through a lottery process. Once they're enrolled, students participate in a four-year full-time program at their assigned hosts. With that structure in place, one of the first things we wanted to examine was whether students who entered the program chose to continue after their first year.

So here's our retention data for our first cohort of students who entered the program in September of 2024 and continued into the following school year. As you can see,

[00:55:29] we are seeing very strong retention across both sites, 96% at Briarwoods and 92% at Tuscarora. These early results are especially meaningful because they represent students' first full year in a brand new program and indicate strong engagement and commitment to the pathway.

[00:55:48] This data here highlights early indicators of students' interest in health care careers. First, 68% of students report a clear interest in pursuing health care pathways, with only a small percentage indicating no interest. In addition, 77% of students demonstrate moderate to strong interest.

[00:56:08] And then finally, over half of the students align with health science-related career profiles, particularly in the investigative and social domains of the RIASAC model. This slide outlines projected student outcomes based on current enrollment program design and expected attrition trends.

[00:56:28] Because these are projections, the final numbers may adjust slightly over time. In the senior year, students will be in one of the two pathways, either biomedical sciences and leadership aligned with the CMMA credential or Biomedical Sciences and Diagnostics aligned with the Phlebotomy Technician Certification.

[00:56:47] We project approximately 95 students earning the CMAA credential and approximately 40 students earning the Phlebotomy Technician Certification. This year, we have seen strong early indicators of student impact, including growing interest in health care careers, increased student confidence, and retention of over 90% across both sites.

[00:57:10] In terms of career exposure, students have participated in a guest speaker series, engaged with industry professionals during events like Inova Day, and begun involvement in HOSA. From a program development standpoint, we are in our second year of implementation and have expanded academic advising, strengthened our credential pathways, and began building healthcare partnerships.

[00:57:35] We have also continued refining curriculum to ensure alignment with both academic and industry expectations. As with any new and growing program, these successes also help us identify where additional support and refinement will be important moving forward.

[00:57:53] Strengthening post-secondary alignment will help ensure a seamless transition to both college and careers in healthcare fields. Transportation and logistics still remain a challenge for expanding work-based learning opportunities. And finally, as the program expands into years three and four, we will need to consider staffing and structural supports to sustain high-quality implementation.

[00:58:17] Addressing these areas will help ensure the program remains sustainable, high-quality, and aligned with student and workforce needs. Excellent. Mr. Pepper, do you have any questions? I do not. My only question is, are the third and fourth years starting next year going to be starting to work with the younger students in the program?

[00:58:37] is there going to be any vertical collaboration amongst the four different groups yeah yes according to dr grubbs there will be a partnership between the juniors and seniors with our incoming freshmen i love that and i also just want to say i know you put on the stats like the percentage of people that don't think they'll go into that field and i actually think that that's a good thing that kids realize that's the point like i think sometimes we think about special programs and it's like they have to go and do that.

But learning that you're not wanting to do that is really super important and probably going to save them or their parents lots of money down the road. So I'm appreciative

[00:59:16] of that number being small, but I think that it's significant that we're offering things that people realize this isn't really for me. So I think that that's cool. All right. With that, any new business? Okay. With that, I will adjourn this meeting. Thank you so much for working through that and we'll look forward to NJROTC and other programs next month. Have a good evening. Bye.



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