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# Loudoun County School Board, Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting, Wednesday, September 2, 2026

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| Date                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Wednesday, September 2, 2026                                                   |
| Place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV) |
| Length                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 1h 5m (video)                                                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <a href="https://player.vimeo.com/video/1222765509?rel=0">https://player.vimeo.com/video/1222765509?rel=0</a></li><li>BoardDocs (School Board): <a href="https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public">https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public</a></li></ul> |                                                                                |

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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.

[00:00:01] all right good afternoon everyone I'd like to call the September 2nd meeting of the curriculum instruction committee to order I'm dr. sheet I'm the chair of this committee I appreciate all appreciate you all being here today we have a couple things on the agenda we nobody signed up for public comment am I correct okay great thank you so much a couple things on the agenda we do have to go into approval of the August 5th meeting minutes and we have three information items policy 53 50 30 creating an assessment we got two updates office of health and physical

[00:00:36] education and an update on gifted education program enhancement all right so has everyone had a chance to look over the minutes and if so um i entertain a motion to approve the minutes if you're okay with it i move to approve the minutes from the august 5th 2026 uh cni meeting thank you mr. Spence second seconded by mr. not so the minutes have been approved for August 5th so now we will move on to our information item which is policy 5030

[00:01:13] greeting and assessment I will turn it over to dr. Blake lock thank you I'm gonna do a brief introduction dr. Rashid and thank you dr. Ellis sorry about no problem then I'll turn it over to dr. Blake lock and dr. single for the details so this afternoon as we promised you back in the spring we are bringing you an update regarding the revisions that the board made to the assessment and grading policy through

the work of this committee and staff but we will review the modifications to the assessment and grading handbook so dr.

[00:01:45] single and dr. Blake lock worked with the assessment and grading focus group that's not the name of it the group of teachers and administrators who came together multiple times last year we made some revisions based on initial feedback and so we'll talk through those and then we'll also show you the grade distributions versus the current the current assessment and grading policy versus the previous policy so you can see that as a comparison and then we'll talk briefly about next steps so I'll turn it over to dr. B I'm gonna turn it

[00:02:20] to dr. single it has been a day good afternoon if we go to slide 3 as dr. Alice mentioned, we do have a work group that comes together a couple of times a year to provide feedback and input on the implementation as well as help guide the direction of the revision of the assessment and grading work group. So throughout the year we collect feedback from students, families, board members, teachers, administrators, generally through Let's Talk and sometimes through email or Teams messages and we use that feedback to bring to our assessment

[00:02:58] and grading workgroup that then analyzes it and looks to address it so today we are going to share with you some of the pieces of the feedback that we have taken into consideration as we revised the assessment and grading handbook if we go to the next slide and then the next slide on this slide you can see that we have clarified just a few minor pieces one of them is clarified grading of formative assessments in the policy it does state that completion or reasonable effort should be taken into account when grading. We have given the direction to our teachers that CLTs should

[00:03:35] make the decision whether to grade formative assessments or whether to grade them for completion or accuracy rather. So CLTs are engaging in those conversations and taking a look to see what counts as formative assessment in terms of what assignments fall into the category and then whether to grade them so that there is at least some consistency within the CLT.

[00:03:58] We have also added grading parameters for English language learners. We did have those parameters in for special education learners, but based on some feedback that we have received from our English learning team, we have included the English learner assessment participation plan as part of the handbook.

[00:04:19] We have also added parameters for students participating in the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning. They don't follow traditional grading or assessment practices, and so our special education department has been instrumental in helping us outline what grading in those courses might look like.

[00:04:39] And then we have clarified, added clarifying information for dual enrollment courses, as well as health and physical education and transition courses. I do want to give a shout out to our HPE team that's here with us this afternoon. They've spent quite a bit of time taking a look at how grading should be done in those courses.

[00:04:56] because in some schools, health and PE are done, I believe, every two weeks, or they switch from health to PE every quarter or every couple of weeks. And so grading looks different because it's two courses in one course, if that makes sense.

[00:05:13] And then our transition courses is for students who have aged, not aged out, but based on their special education status or IEP, they have returned to complete their. If we go to the next slide, a couple of different other updates that have been made to the handbook based on feedback, is we have clarified the difference between learning recovery and credit recovery. Learning recovery is when a student is currently enrolled in a course and maybe they didn't master all of the standards from, let's say, semester one. The teacher can and should go back and work with the student to make sure the student masters those standards. And then credit recovery,

[00:05:51] our schools work with students who fail a course that they need to graduate, and so they spend the summer working with those students to make sure that they recover their credit so they're able to graduate on time. We added information to the transfer grade section of the handbook. We did have a pretty detailed scenario list in terms of if a student transfers in between schools in LCPS outside of school based on different information that the teacher receives. However, sometimes the teacher is not given all of the information and so we just added verbiage into the handbook that says the teacher should make the best professional judgment based on the information that they

[00:06:29] have, which was a request of our teachers. And then finally, for the last two bullets, we did add information about the weighted categories, provided a little bit of a more in-depth explanation, and then provided a formula for how teachers can calculate their category weights.

[00:06:46] And so those were technically minor changes, but I think they addressed some of the main questions that we have received previous year during the first year of implementation. And with that, I am going to turn it over to Dr. B. Thank you, Dr. Singel.

[00:07:03] What we're looking at here is this slide shows the final grade distribution for middle school students over the last three years. One thing you'll notice is that there's a slight decrease in the percentage of A's during the 2025 school year. But at the same time, there's no real substantial change in the percentage of D's and the percentage of F's.

[00:07:20] We'll go to the next slide. And here we see the same concept for the high school courses. Really, we're not seeing any substantial change in the grade distribution for the high school students. It's pretty even-keeled across the board. So we wanted to make sure you had that as context, and we do have some potential next steps.

[00:07:50] So one thing that is not a potential next step, it is a concrete next step that we are planning for, and that is a thought exchange to get more detailed written feedback from students, families, and teachers later this fall. We plan to send one thought exchange so that each of those three groups can see all of the thoughts floating around.

[00:08:13] And then when we close that thought exchange, Dr. Blake-Lock will be able to sort that by group, and we can see what each of the different groups have to say about the policy implementation. Some things that are on our radar for potential revision or clarification in the policy, once we have that thought exchange information, is to clarify the grading of formative assessments.

[00:08:39] It is best practice that formative assessments are more for learning and are not to be graded, but there is inconsistency and differences of opinion, and the language in the policy is a little confusing, and it leaves room for interpretation.

[00:08:57] So we hear that a lot, and that's one thing that we would want to clarify in the policy. The threshold for the ceiling for reassessments is a topic of debate amongst those three groups. The students, families, and teachers all seem to have different opinions about that, and I'm sure we will see that in the thought exchange as well.

[00:09:15] Two other things that probably need clarification when we do make modifications for the policy is the minor summative assessments and the definition or specific guidelines regarding extra credit. So, those are really things that could, they're not deal breakers right now.

[00:09:37] We're working through it. Schools are consistent at the school level, and I do think there may be some inconsistencies from school to school that we could tighten up with policy revisions. And with that, I'll turn it back over to you, Dr. Rasheed. All right. Thank you so much. Great next steps, really informative.

[00:09:54] And before I move on to questions from the board members, I just wanted to say let's go ahead and do a vote because I forgot to vote on the minutes. So all those in favor say aye for approval of August 5th minutes. Aye. Okay, now the minutes have been approved. All right.

[00:10:10] So now moving forward, I did have some questions in regards to this. And I know that we're always limited in time. But just for clarification, and maybe this was already mentioned, when it came to credit recovery, I think that's safe to say that credit recovery is the same thing as extra credit.

[00:10:30] So extra credit generally applies to individual assignments. Extra credit or credit recovery refers to the whole course. So if a student fails Algebra I, they have not gained the credit to graduate, so they recover that credit during the summer by working with their school staff to master the content that they did not master.

[00:10:51] Whereas extra credit, teachers can assign them extra credit based on a couple of questions or extra points on an assignment or a standalone extra credit assignment. So they are two different. I see. Okay, well, that's helpful. And also, are there any guidelines for the teachers to explore or rather to follow?

[00:11:11] And I know we have them in next steps for any guidelines that they have to follow to just make sure that it's equitable among students when they're giving that form of recovery or even extra credit. Sure. So in terms of making it equitable, we did ask teachers to make a CLT decision in terms of how often and how much of a credit students can gain.

[00:11:35] The policy does indicate that it's up to 3%. And so if extra credit is offered, it has to be offered to all students and not some. So that hopefully addresses the question. Yeah, that's very helpful. And then I had another question about thought exchange.

[00:11:51] I know that that's coming up. We will be sharing that soon with families and students and educators. My question was more, are there any particular questions or primary questions that we have in mind so that we can get, I guess you could say, good feedback or more helpful feedback, constructive feedback?

[00:12:11] So I'll ask Dr. Blakelock to talk a little bit about how the thought exchange works. The beauty of the thought exchange is that it will allow the participants to raise their own concerns or comments rather than potentially being led in one direction or another.

[00:12:28] So that's why we leaned on that approach versus another survey. There are so many of those floating out. Is there anything you'd add, Dr. B? The only thing I would add is that the intent of thought exchange is to ask one single very broad question that will be all-encompassing of challenges, barriers, benefits, those sorts of things.

[00:12:49] So it's a very broad concept. And then based on the feedback, individuals are able to rate the feedback of others so you can see what's popular or what's not popular, and we can sort that out by thought. That's helpful. And then also when this is up for five-year policy review, does ThoughtExchange change that?

[00:13:11] Based on the feedback we get from ThoughtExchange, can this policy then be up for review before then its deadline? Or when it is up for review, can it be looked into even further? Yes, that's the will of the board.

[00:13:27] And so if you bring that to us and say you have recommendations for revisions and like to bring it to committee, We will do that. I'm under the impression that that's sort of already taking place, and so we'll bring this thought exchange to you and then have a conversation about potential changes to the policy.

[00:13:47] Thank you. Does that sound fair? Yes, yes. Thank you. Yeah, yeah, it is very fair. All right. So now we'll move it on to my board members if you have any questions. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Chair Rasheed. I do not really have any questions.

[00:14:03] I'm looking forward to the thought exchange after a full year under our belts. I know there are teachers that are anxious to share their feelings, and I know we've heard from students and families as well, so I expect similar themes. I am very happy to see the grade distribution. I actually did not expect it to be this tight comparatively to 2023.

[00:14:24] And, again, I've said it before. I'll say it again. We really raised the bar. I think we set really high expectations for our students, and we're seeing that they can and will rise to those expectations. I think the data speaks for that. So it will be interesting to balance what we've seen from the data and what we're hearing from our educators with what our students and families need and if any tweaks are needed.

[00:14:46] And I just wanted to thank you so much for being so responsive out of the gate when the first handbook went out about formative assessments. You were willing to take that feedback on demand, pivot, and teachers seem really happy with that change and with the option to choose. So I also will be looking for that feedback to fine-tune that going forward.

[00:15:05] But I just want to really kudos to the team on the fly, very quickly met and got that out to our teachers. So thank you so much. Thank you. Any other questions? All right. We will now move on to our next information item.

[00:15:21] Thank you so much, guys. To 4.02, the update of Office of Health and Physical Education. We'll turn it over to, I'm not sure. There's so many of you guys. Okay. All right. Mr. Roundsy, should I turn it over to you?

[00:15:38] Yes. Okay, Mr. Roundsy. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm excited to be here with our health and PE team. They're going to introduce themselves in just a second on the next slide, but I just want to say we have a phenomenal team of health and PE educators here who lead this in our look-to as leaders from the

state and national level, done lots of presentations, and one thing that I hope comes across in this is just the sheer scope of what these incredible educators are managing every day between health and P.E., driver's education, behind the wheel, family life education, adapted P.E., the numerous state regulations that come into play in health and P.E.,

[00:16:16] our community partnerships that are extensive in P.E., they do an amazing job. So I'm glad they have the opportunity to talk here tonight about some of the great work that they do. So I will turn it over to Amy and her team. Okay, hi. I'm Amy Wheeler, the supervisor for health and physical education, and I have my team with me today, Amy Riggio, the health and P.E. specialist, Christian Ellingson, the content specialist. So together today we are going to try to briefly highlight some of the more prominent work in our office because we could spend a lot of time talking about all the things that we do. So we'll go through the scope of the office,

[00:16:53] different operations and collaborations that we have, some legislative impacts to curriculum, emphasis on some, and then we'll take any questions or comments you may have at the end. So, to start with a bigger picture, and before we get into the individual programs, we wanted to show these four priorities.

[00:17:16] These are the superintendent's strategic priorities with a little bit of a spin that have our health and physical education program goals blended into them. So, these four pillars are what we work off of every day.

[00:17:33] It's our lens to the choices that we make, the directions that we go, and if sometimes we start going off course, we come back to this as an anchor. So, the next slide is actually going to illustrate all the different content areas that we have.

[00:17:54] And so when I showed those four priorities on the screen, we are thinking about those not just on a grassy field. We're not just thinking about them inside of a gymnasium for physical education or adaptive PE.

[00:18:11] But we're also thinking about those four priorities in the four walls of a classroom of health education, family life education. And even in the vehicle, the passenger compartment of a vehicle, right, for behind-the-wheel instruction.

[00:18:27] So we're really doing it all with all the different things. And I want to break down by numbers the range that we have going on on the next slide. So within all these content areas, we have about 370 health and physical education teachers across the division.

[00:18:50] And then we support specialized programs such as Adapted PE, we have 23 teachers in that, and FLE, we have 14 teachers in that program. And those two programs, just in and of themselves, have their own special and unique requirements and staffing and various supports that are needed.

[00:19:14] So in total, our direct contact with teachers, we have about 413 teachers that we have direct contact with. And then over to the side, the honeycomb that's all by itself, is the 1,600 teachers that are the general ed teachers in elementary where health and FLE is being taught.

[00:19:39] So supporting a workforce of this size that goes beyond just curriculum and development or curriculum instruction, because we're also providing professional learning for all of those different

content areas. We're having to organize and coordinate staffing for each of those and then addressing the different program needs and just trying to maintain consistency across all the schools.

[00:20:04] So it definitely involves ongoing coordination across schools, various offices in this building, and then community partnerships. And so I wanted to show the next slide where this is kind of like pulling the curtains back a little bit more to see what levers are being pulled and what really the operation looks like.

[00:20:29] And I think of it in two different buckets where we have like the collaboration and development side and then we have the compliance and support side of things. But generally speaking, we regularly collaborate with offices throughout this building like planning services, student support, special ed, transportation, virtual Loudoun, you name it.

[00:20:50] I feel like we have some type of reach or branch or arm with lots of different offices. And then community partnerships, we're trying to expand community partnerships to bring this learning alive, to bring it to life.

[00:21:08] And I've already touched on professional development a little bit, but in general, we're always trying to improve how our programs are delivered and how they're received. While this is all fine and good, the collaborative relationships and professional development, the other significant responsibility is making sure we are meeting federal and state laws and also LCPS policies.

[00:21:34] So this really is a big part of our work behind the curtain. And on the daily, we're answering family inquiries, and that could come directly to us or be filtered through a school to us. Again, we're targeting and supporting staffing, like itinerant staffing.

[00:21:55] That's always really fun to do, and school assignments and placements. And then you're going to hear more about the legislative side of things that we're following. We have a lot of legislation in health and PE and driver ed, all the things. So without further ado, I think you've heard enough about the behind the scenes, And I'm going to let Amy Riggio start to really talk about what it looks like for our students and our teachers.

[00:22:26] Thank you, Amy. At the classroom level, our work centers around two main areas of focus. One is our foundational curriculum priorities, and the other is our current areas of focus. So on the left are our core curriculum priorities that ground our programs. We maintain tight alignment with our Virginia SOLs while keeping curriculum evolving and responsive to Loudoun County's growing diversity.

[00:22:50] We build both academic, understanding, and real-world life skills for lifelong activity. And we prioritize inclusive practices, such as an adopted PE, ensuring equitable access for students with disabilities.

[00:23:07] Also detailed on this slide are the current areas of focus, which target proactive student safety and well-being. We equip every learner with mental health tools, substance misuse, and fentanyl awareness, personal safety, and inclusive supports to navigate real-world risks.

[00:23:25] On the next slide, what you'll see is that the Health and PE Office is actively following the VDOE's timeline to update the Health and Family Life Education Standards of Learning for 2027. the revision process is moving right on schedule and the state board will conduct its first review in January of 2027 opening the process for public comment and formal adoption while considering the videoe revision

process it's also important to note that our curriculum work doesn't just happen every few years within a revision program so whenever new state legislation passes we immediately

[00:24:05] adapt curriculum around health and substance education our office continuously translates legislative requirements into age-appropriate instruction and then support schools in implementing that instruction with fidelity the health and physical education office balances compliance with meaningful developmentally appropriate instruction and as stated before this list is not all encompassing on the next slide regarding safety and injury prevention legislation our curriculum fully aligns with state mandates. For example, House Bill 1215 requires instruction on personal

[00:24:44] safety, social media awareness, and hazing prevention. A key component of fulfilling House Bill 1215 is our close collaboration with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office and Leesburg Police. By partnering directly with these offices, we ensure our safety instruction is accurate, realistic, relevant, and highly impactful for our students. This collaboration is just one of many ways local expertise enriches our curriculum which brings us to our broader work with community

[00:25:16] partnerships the broader work being the key element there but given that broader work we have a focus point here that we could discuss which is the hands-on heroes program that encompasses just as one program encompasses all of those entities on the left so the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office is a part of our hands-on heroes program which takes place with the ninth grade students Currently, the Loudoun County Fire and Rescue Education arm has enough staffing to do this every other year for our high schools.

[00:25:55] So half the high schools will get this program this year, half next year, and that pattern repeats given the staffing that they have at this moment. But within the program we touch on, as I said on the previous slide, the CPR, first aid, and AED elements, that is present here.

[00:26:14] The Sheriff's Office is present via the SRO. The Student Assistance Specialist in the building works with the SRO to discuss opioid use and abuse and then a proper response during these programs. The Loudoun County Fire Rescue is our main contact through the Education Department, like I said.

[00:26:36] So they'll send out lots of staff to help cover that. The Inova Health System covers the first aid, CPR, hands-only elements, stop the bleed, and so on. So essentially a major portion of the ninth grade health curriculum, a major focus of it, as it's a graduation requirement being the CPR element, is covered here in addition to what has already been done or will be done in the classroom.

[00:27:07] It's just a wonderful supplement. The picture there with the fire truck, that's either going to be a fire truck or an ambulance. that shows up to the school with a crew, and they discuss their path to get there through their career. So it's a lot of the 5C elements involved in this program, and it just really hits.

[00:27:26] We wanted to highlight this one because it really hits a lot of the organizations that we work with. And then so through some of the first aid and response elements that we just discussed, There's, you know, what is an emerging trend is all the e-bike use and maybe misuse, right, in the area among students.

[00:27:52] That is something that we currently work on in partnership with, you know, the LCSO and that sort of thing, just as we're garnering information on how to respond and how to best implement the guidance, because that's the point where we're at, right?

[00:28:08] It's not we can't dictate what ends up in the standards, and we are directed by what we can and can't do in terms of what the curriculum covers by the standards. That being said, it is in review, as Amy previously mentioned.

[00:28:23] So we're looking to see come January if that's going to be an area where we can address it more directly via the standards in our classrooms. That's the e-bike portion. If we go back to that previous slide, we do discuss in various other ways pedestrian and bicycle safety and that sort of thing.

[00:28:44] We have the Safe Route to School program on the right, which had, you know, all of those events listed there recently, right? That was within the last year. And the connection there is typically for the lower grade levels, right?

[00:28:59] As you transition up, we can still make the connection to risk management, injury prevention, and so on through the health strands via the middle school. And then in the high school, in particular, with driver education, we can discuss targeted information on motorcycle or moped or pedestrian safety, as it's covered in Module 6, in case you were really wondering.

[00:29:27] But that's where that's covered in the driver education program in 10th grade. Something else that we've been really focusing on is the enhancement of the behind-the-wheel program. And the real focus is going to be on the communication efficiency and consistency and compliance, really, that the program requires.

[00:29:49] So what we're moving towards is more centralized administrative approach through our office. Currently, there's autonomy for the schools due to their own staffing to kind of run the initial parts of the program, parent communication, scheduling, and so on, in their own manner.

[00:30:10] We're trying to centralize that through our office just to make it a little bit more efficient. And just the oversight element is going to be there in a greater degree with us. And then to modernize the software platform, so that's looking to be implemented, is, again, just streamlining the signups, the payment, the scheduling, the oversight of compliance to the point where two 50-minute sessions were done in each lesson seven times over.

[00:30:42] That's a complete behind-the-wheel experience. We can address that through the software programs that we're looking at. And then just oversight in general, there's a lot of law that's on the books that has to be really attended to, and I think our office is the place for that, more so than having it a little decentralized to the buildings.

[00:31:06] So that's a major change and a major effort at the moment in addition to everything else that we were just discussing. And so we could talk a lot more about a lot of other things, but we were told we only have 15 minutes.

[00:31:21] So a closing thought is I hope that you were able to take in just how vital the Health and PE office is and health and physical education overall is to preparing students for a healthy and safe life. So we'll take any questions that you may have.

[00:31:40] Thank you so much, and thank you for this informative presentation. You know, I have one of my kids is now starting to drive, so they're getting their permit, or they have their permit. And so it's definitely vital. Like, it's, like, really dangerous, especially when they go on the road and they're getting there behind the wheel.

[00:31:59] But speaking of, I think it was the last few slides, and I did have a question. I know that e-bikes is a really big, hot topic, and I know it's growing concern in the community. I was just wondering how our driver's education instructors are implementing or incorporating addressing the e-bike issue in their curriculum.

[00:32:22] Is there an addendum? Is there something specific? So the driver education curriculum is state-mandated, so we do get it directly from the state. They are obviously aware of the growing concerns with e-bikes, and Christian was joking about Module 6.

[00:32:40] But Module 6 is the Sharing the Road module, and so when I was teaching this when I was in Harrisonburg, we had to talk about horse and buggies because in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, there were horse and buggies everywhere, so we had to be specific because that was a relevant thing in our area.

[00:33:02] And my assumption would be that during the Sharing the Road module that our instructors are going to know to talk about the things that are relevant in our areas. And the state curriculum does give us the autonomy to do that. Instructors should know to do that.

[00:33:19] But we can certainly make an effort to explicitly say that. I think it's important to say that the bicycle portion and how to interact with bike riders as a driver is explicitly in it.

[00:33:34] Yeah, it is. So if we're considering the e-bikes, and in large part they are considered bikes, right, that is covered. That is a direct conversation. And I can see that transitioning to e-bikes immediately in the classroom. Definitely. But explicit e-bike mention is not.

[00:33:50] It's not. Okay, that was going to be my next question, if we implement or just even mention or talk a little bit about, like, braking or speed management with the e-bikes. But if that's in the works, that's great. That's a different module. But the space management, it's called the see it system, search, evaluate, execute, do it in time.

[00:34:11] And so that's applied throughout the driver education curriculum. Okay, all right, thanks. I'll turn it over to my colleagues. Do you guys have any questions about this? Yes, Ms. Sheridan. Thank you. And wow, you all do so much and such a huge part of our school culture.

[00:34:28] Obviously, I was in a school today in a PE class, so it's a huge part of their day, of their credits. This is sort of maybe a selfish question or a naive question. I have an almost 15-year-old. So what is the – everybody gets driver's ed through their high school curriculum, correct?

[00:34:48] Yes, if they have health and PE 10, it's part of the instruction. Okay, and then for behind the wheel, I see in here it talks about sign-ups and scheduling. Are you maxing out your behind-the-wheel classes? Do you have wait lists? Do most kids that want to access it have access?

[00:35:06] That depends school to school. Okay. And so some of our schools are very consistent, and then we have other schools who do not have sign-ups. Okay, and then if they do not get in through the school system, they would do their own program privately, correct?

[00:35:22] That's correct. Okay, and both of those meet the requirements? Yes. Okay, sounds good. Thank you. Yes, Mr. Spenson. Thank you, Dr. Rashid. Thank you all for all that you do, and it's clearly quite a lot.

[00:35:37] My question was, it seems like probably over the last several years we've had more and more things added to health MPE's plate in terms of topics to discuss, if you think about mental health or social

media or e-bikes. I'm wondering when you have these new elements coming into the curriculum, how you manage making space for that.

[00:35:56] Maybe there are topics that become less relevant, and then those are deprioritized. But how do you handle that, and do you have the resources you need to be doing more based on what state and local requirements are?

[00:36:13] That's a very loaded question. So, we do run out of time, and this is not just an LCPS concern, but when I meet with the city-county supervisors from around the state, this is a common problem, and sometimes we do have to make tough choices, and sometimes things have to go, or sometimes things maybe don't get the attention that we feel they deserve.

[00:36:42] I am going to turn it over to these two who are in the curriculum a lot more than I am probably if you have an answer obviously we do our best to make sure that our students are getting the appropriate information i do feel that specifically i work with elementary and so for our elementary programs it's not that difficult to do unfortunately we don't oversee well we do we just have very little time with the elementary classroom teachers to discuss health content

[00:37:18] that's coming through but otherwise our elementary teams are doing just fine with legislation it doesn't really affect them so christian i'll pass on to you for secondary yeah so um i think that's where the partnerships come into play uh with the more with the more that's added there's the less time maybe in the classroom that you could potentially hit on every single element every single requirement um in its own lengthy period of time so we would have like for example the hands-on heroes program hits many of the standards many of the elements and you know over the course of a two-day period situational awareness legislation in

[00:37:58] partnership with the LC so delivering that content it really does dive into a lot of the pertinent standards and all of the tangential information that we could go into at the middle school level I think partnership with the student assistance specialists via the programs that we have just addressing drug use and that sort of thing those are those are also elements that help but yeah I think just for instance these situational awareness presentations to just to add them into the middle school timeline three

[00:38:38] three separate presentations over the course of a year just that alone does does take away from the classroom time so trying to hit all the standards as appropriate in that in that limited time is definitely the goal thank you awesome thank you so much really appreciate that really helpful all right all right so we will turn it over to 4.03 update on gifted education program enhancements and I think I will turn it over to miss Clark director of academic programs thanks thank you thank you so much good afternoon this afternoon we're gonna discuss with you a

[00:39:17] a quick overview of our gifted education program, our current staffing standards that have been in place for many, many years, current staffing needs to support and sustain our current gifted program goals. We're going to talk about our program review recommendations, and then staffing needs that would need to be put in place if we move forward with some enhancements. And then we'll end with some questions and feedback. And I'm going to turn it right over to Wendy King, our supervisor of gifted education. So I feel like I have this slide in every presentation that I do

[00:39:55] around town, but I know there are a lot of names in the gifted program, so I always like to do a little review, so make sure we know all the different components to the program. So just remember that

SEARCH is our program for K-3 students. There's no identification process for that program. Gifted resource teachers visit K-3 classrooms every other week to provide a variety of lessons that challenge students to think deeply and creatively. And then DCI K2 is for our K2 students who are performing significantly above grade level in reading or math, and gifted

[00:40:32] resource teachers collaborate with the classroom teachers to provide differentiated learning experience for these students. So that's not direct teaching time, that's collaboration with the teacher. And then of course we have EDGE, which is our talent development program designed to provide additional rigor and challenge for students who exhibit high academic potential and just need that extra nurturing in their areas of strength in small group settings.

[00:40:59] Then we move on to Fusion, and that's our program for identified gifted learners in fourth and fifth grade. And in that program, the curriculum includes interdisciplinary enrichment, studies in leadership and innovation and also some math and language arts enrichment as well and then DCI grades four through five now that is our program for identified gifted learners who demonstrated exceptional performance during the evaluation process in either language arts or math and then they receive enrichment in their area of strength and then finally spectrum is our middle school

[00:41:38] program for identified gifted learners and our high school students self-select academic advanced academic pathways and that could be AP could be dual enrollment or special programs okay so now we'll get down to business and talk about gifted staffing so our current staffing standard which you see here it was established I've been talking to people decades ago I know I spoke with some people who were here in 2001. And it was the same. So it's been around for a while. And it really

[00:42:16] just has not evolved with our expanded programming over the years. So to manage our growing program demands, we've had to rely heavily on discretionary and flexible staffing to patch the gaps. And yet there's significant inequities remained throughout our schools. So we are here to demonstrate why this decades-old staffing standard no longer supports our operational reality and how a revised right-side staffing standard, right-side staffing standard, will allow us to meet our current program

[00:42:51] goals with fidelity. Now, today I'm really talking about elementary staffing, but I included the middle school model as a key reference point. The middle school staffing is calculated solely on identified gifted student enrollment. However, we are not proposing this model for elementary schools, but I think it's fair to look at. Elementary resource teachers manage a dual workload, so if you think about it, they have whole school talent development through our search classes in every K-3 classroom, and that's combined with direct instruction for

[00:43:30] identified gifted learners in grades 4 and 5. So middle school demonstrates that gifted student counts matter but in elementary it really demands a more robust hybrid formula that factors in both total building enrollment and identified gifted caseloads. So now let's look and see what our teachers are actually doing on a day-to-day basis and how we can bridge the staffing gap to meet our current program goals. So our gifted elementary gifted or excuse me our elementary gifted resource teachers wear many hats. So they're guiding student talent development sharing

[00:44:09] best practices with classroom teachers and overseeing program implementation within their schools. They deliver direct instruction across multiple programs, reaching all K-3 students through search to nurture critical thinking with our young students, while providing targeted talent development and specialized instruction for EDGE, Fusion, and DCI.

[00:44:32] They also manage the local gifted evaluation workflow by overseeing testing logistics, building student portfolios and driving equitable identification practices. So this work demands significant time, precision, and strategic planning, and updating our staffing standard will help these educators to make sure they have the necessary bandwidth and instructional support to succeed.

[00:44:58] And we want to make sure that they have time to complete all the tasks here, but also be an available resource in their school and instructional leader, and we want to make sure that they have that time. So we can take a look at two different schools here.

[00:45:14] So this is school A, and this is just keeping our current staffing standard in mind. We have a relatively small elementary school with 416 students, 20 K-3 sections, and 13 identified gifted learners in grades 4 and 5.

[00:45:31] So under the current staffing standard, the school has a 1.0 FTE. So when we tally up Search, Edge, Fusion, DCI, CLTs, if they can, and evaluation workflows, the teachers' required minutes, their whole schedule and responsibility totals about 1,630 minutes per week.

[00:45:55] And we could see the maximum amount of time that they have, possibly with students, as long as the students are available at the time, would be 1,725. So with the instructional week maxing out with the 1,725 instructional minutes, a 1.

[00:46:12] 0 at school A is already pretty much operating at near capacity to cover the base requirements, leaving almost zero buffer for things like travel in between classrooms or common planning with our K-2 teachers and student availability conflict.

[00:46:32] So then we move to School B. So this is one of our larger schools. Enrollment jumps to 773 students across 36 K-3 sections with 34 identified gifted learners in grades 4 and 5. Yet under our 20-year-old staffing standard, School B also has allocated the exact FTE, which is 1.0.

[00:46:55] So the required weekly workload here is 2,100 minutes per week, and because the instructional schedule caps out at 1,725 minutes, the teacher's basic job requirements mathematically exceed the time in the school week.

[00:47:13] Now, think back when we were designing this program, we anticipated that there would probably be two teachers at the school, but right now the staffing standard has number one. So beyond direct instruction, gifted teachers lose significant time transitioning between pushing classrooms, aligning schedules around set grade level blocks, and trying to access shared instructional spaces.

[00:47:38] So when schedules are stretched this thin, essential components like talent development, collaboration with classroom teachers, and push-in support kind of inevitably get pushed to the wayside. So up until now, we have relied a lot, and I said this earlier, on discretionary and flexible positions to bridge these gaps.

[00:48:00] But we really need to establish an updated, equitable staffing standard, which will help long-term stability. Because every year, it's like we have to build back the puzzle with this discretionary staffing and consistent program quality across all schools.

[00:48:15] So if you compare school A and school B, it's pretty obvious one teacher manages 416 students while another manages 773 students under the exact same FTE. And that's about 500 minutes per week of a discrepancy in what they're doing.

[00:48:37] So, again, I'm sorry, I'm trying not to say this too many times, but to support program success division-wide, we really need a staffing standard that accounts for both total school enrollment, and that would help with the search side, with total number of students identified for gifted education, and that helps with the Fusion and DCI side.

[00:49:02] So if you think about a dual variable model, it ensures resources are distributed equitably, allowing teachers in every building to deliver high-quality instruction without compromising program fidelity. So we are proposing that new staffing standard and the updated formula, right-size the staffing across all buildings, eliminating forced tradeoffs, and restoring time for talent development, teacher collaboration, and push-in support.

[00:49:32] And to maximize impact, we will also work with the elementary education department and other departments to just kind of resolve some little issues that pop up during the year in terms of scheduling, clustering, making sure that co-services aren't competing with each other for time, and space availability.

[00:49:54] And I know I talk about that a lot, but that really is an issue that we face. So moving from temporary, flexible fixes to an official standard provides long-term stability for our schools and helps us support consistent high-quality instruction across the board.

[00:50:12] I'm going to take a little breath, and then we're going to switch into just talking about our gifted office for a moment. So behind the school-based programs, our gifted office, our team here at Admin, manages all division-wide professional learning, curriculum, compliance, and ongoing school support.

[00:50:33] And while our team has grown overall, one specific area that requires some additional staffing capacity is acceleration and assessment support. We manage a growing number or volume of acceleration evaluations, as well as several assessments across grade levels.

[00:50:54] And with the next slide, you can see some of the things that we support. So to effectively manage these growing evaluations and assessment workflows and to ensure our schools receive timely support, we are requesting an additional central office position dedicated to acceleration and assessment.

[00:51:11] And as you can see, we coordinate COGAT and the new NGAT logistics alongside the assessment office. We facilitate algebra readiness testing for rising sixth graders as part of our single-subject acceleration process. Manage Saturday testing options for families so that students, if families would like their students to be tested outside of the school day rather than missing instructional time, that's an offer that we have.

[00:51:39] And we also support TJ admissions testing across three sites for over 600 students annually. So this new rule would be dedicated to carrying out these comprehensive acceleration evaluations and assessments so we can maintain full fidelity across all of our services.

[00:51:56] So moving into our next session, we'll take a look at our program review recommendations and the community insights relating to this work. So as a reminder, we were here last May, and we talked about our gifted program review and some of the recommendations from that review for moving forward.

[00:52:22] And so first, we were looking to formally extend dedicated gifted services to third grade so we can nurture high-ability learners earlier in their schooling. Next, we're piloting the Nagliari general ability tests with second graders to effectively identify the gifted potential in all students.

[00:52:40] We also plan to build an onboarding process and clear communication channels to welcome newly identified families. And I was actually in a meeting today with other supervisors in the region, and I put that as a topic on our agenda so that we could discuss what other areas are doing and learn from them.

[00:53:00] And then to keep improving, we're establishing a student advisory group so that we can bring real perspectives directly into our work. And then finally, we want to give principals a comprehensive toolkit to help them recognize top-notch gifted strategies and instruction and guide teacher growth.

[00:53:19] So we've already gathered some feedback from parents, gifted resource teachers, and school staff, and we'll continue to do that in the fall through some advisory forums. And stakeholders support early talent development and equitable identification, for sure, but they do highlight some of those operational concerns we talked about around teacher workload, scheduling, and space.

[00:53:46] So bringing all these perspectives together, we are seeking your guidance and feedback today to help us define funding parameters so that we can work toward selecting the right operational model for our FY28 budget cycle.

[00:54:02] Okay. So with all that feedback in mind, let's walk through our proposed implementation timeline and operational models so we can get your guidance moving forward. So if we look at moving to – I don't know. Maybe not.

[00:54:30] So just to – words are – so in terms of proposal, this is more of this is what a third-grade enhancement would look like. We don't have firm plans on proposing this. It's more of this is what it would look like if the board had an interest in expanding to third grade on an accelerated timeline.

[00:54:49] We haven't made any decisions about whether or not this is an FY28, but we have heard feedback from multiple board members that there's interest in going to third grade. So we just wanted to kind of put a little bit of reality out there of what that would look like. Is that fair, Ms. King? Absolutely. Okay. Sorry to jump in.

[00:55:05] No problem. Okay. So this is what a rollout might look like for third grade. So we would do it in three-year phase rollout. In school year 28, we would launch an initial pilot in 14 schools, and you might say, why 14?

[00:55:24] We kind of looked at our clusters that we use in the gifted program, and we were thinking maybe about two schools per cluster, just as an idea. And, of course, it would be pending any staffing decisions that are made to establish baseline logistics and some feedback loops.

[00:55:40] And then in 29, we would double that pilot to 28 schools to refine the program details based on what we hear from year one. And then possibly full implementation by school year 30. I really say that's school year 30.

[00:55:56] I know. It's hard to believe. And that would roll across to all of our schools. So just to support what Mr. Slevin was saying is that if we really look at long-term strategy for staffing, It's kind of helpful to think of it in two distinct sequential steps.

[00:56:20] So the first would be right-sizing our elementary staffing standard, factoring in that total school and gifted population when we're doing the calculation. And this would help fix existing gaps to deliver in our current programs with Fidelity.

[00:56:38] So we would do that first, and then the next thing would be, you know, once the core foundation is stabilized, we would then kind of layer on additional resources, staffing resources required to roll out expanded third-grade services with fidelity. So we would anticipate that that expansion would require an investment of about 10 to 15 FTEs, along with a gifted coordinator to handle the daily operational demands of this expanding.

[00:57:07] So, building on the input we received from you today, we would start thinking about what the next budget cycle would look like. But meanwhile, our team is moving forward with certain key fall priorities like the second grade NGAT, Naglery General Mobilities Test, coordinating scheduling and space with elementary education, and finalizing.

[00:57:32] I wouldn't even say finalizing. I would say get moving on what a third grade curriculum would look like. And then all of these, you know, updates, along with any finalized staffing that we decide upon, would then come to you later because we would update the gifted plan.

[00:57:50] So we would need approval on the gifted plan. So that would be kind of what the future might look like. So now, questions, feedback, comments? Thank you, Ms. King. I appreciate that. And it looks like there's quite a need, and I know that's an understatement.

[00:58:08] So, but I know with the interest of time, I had so many questions, but I did want to ask that with the SPED EL overlaps and the schedule constraints and with the space, are there any type of guidelines or room standards that are being followed in order to accommodate like added gifted service blocks, if any, if it's not in place?

[00:58:33] Yeah, we do have a guidance document that we share with principals that gives them an idea of how to go about, you know, for example, clustering. And clustering just means that, you know, you look at how many identified gifted learners you have, and you might identify two classrooms where those students are in small clusters.

[00:58:53] We don't want all of the gifted learners in one exclusive classroom, but we want them clustered. So they're with their peers, but they also have some intellectual peers, other gifted learners there as well. And that provides that motivation also for the classroom teacher to differentiate, and it allows time for the gifted teacher and the classroom teacher to collaborate.

[00:59:17] So rather than the gifted teacher pushing into every single classroom at a grade level, there might be two identified where they would focus their efforts. Thank you so much. And I know that there's a lot that's being done.

[00:59:32] You mentioned quite a few among them being like Saturday testing, I think you said, coordination with TJ, all those acceleration evaluations, is there like a plan in regards to how that workload would be absorbed? I think you already mentioned it, but how, generally speaking, how that would be absorbed by, for example, adding the new gifted coordinator? Yeah, well right now it really is just all hands on deck. So it is our team alongside teachers who volunteer to work on a Saturday to get that done. It would be pretty incredible because there is a lot of need where

[01:00:08] we would have one specific coordinator who worked on all of the testing. So it would be kind of a variety of tasks, but I think that would really help so someone could really focus on it. Any questions from my colleagues?

[01:00:24] Mr. Svensson, yes. Thank you, Dr. Rashid, and thank you for the presentation, Ms. King, and I really appreciate how you lay it out and make the case, and I appreciate Mr. Slevin's disclaimers about what is and not promised, but I like that it's clear and presented to us in terms of what the different options are. So thank you. And I think the staffing standard clearly needs to change to support our gifted learners. I was curious on, in terms of the expansion to third grade, and maybe this is a conversation to have offline or materials to be sent, but what the

[01:01:00] literature research says about the benefits of expanding to third grade and as a side question to that how many students would we be talking about per school would it be the same size as the fourth grade or fifth grade set of students but just wondering because of the potential cost and investment in it what what the research says about benefits to starting earlier well I I think most of the research and literature that I've read talks about the earlier that you can provide support and services and differentiation for our students, the better.

[01:01:36] So we certainly want to look at providing those services and supports for our younger students. So I think, hands down, if we can do that, it would benefit our students. And it would also help our teachers as well in terms of giving them an opportunity to collaborate with the gifted resource teacher.

[01:01:56] And I'm not saying the gifted resource teacher is the be-all and end-all, but the gifted resource teacher has that specific expertise in instructional status in school, but we would be looking at similar to what we see in fourth and fifth grade. Thank you.

[01:02:12] Yes, Ms. Chernow. Thank you. This is like a really no-brainer for me. I think we have to do something about it. I appreciate your honesty and your candor. I'm surprised it took us this long to get here. I think we have a real gap when we talk about differentiated needs.

[01:02:30] Gifted sort of gets left out of that conversation. It doesn't become part of the conversation. We talk about special education. We talk about English language learners. I mean, we're doing a lot of things for a lot of different unique needs, but gifted has somehow, in my mind, fallen by the wayside, and I've been meeting with gifted educators since I got on the board and hearing these concerns, so I'm really appreciative of the proposal.

[01:02:52] Obviously, I'm really hoping to see a lot of this in the SEAN, and that that will be a superintendent priority. If it's not, I think it will fall to us to carry that torch, and I plan to. Certainly, the right size, the staffing standard feels like the right thing to do.

[01:03:10] And then beyond that, a phased approach for third grade, I think, let's see what we can do given the constraints of our budget. But we hear you. And so I thank you for your work. I thank you for the teachers that are right. really bending over backwards to meet these incredible needs. And so I appreciate that you were honest with us and that you have a plan forward.

[01:03:30] So hopefully we can support that. Thank you so much. And, yeah, hopefully we can see lots of changes in the very near future. All right. So our next meeting will be October 7th at 430. Is there any further business or new business? Yes, Ms. Chernoff.

[01:03:46] I'll make it quick. There is a lot of discussion out in our elementary classrooms happening around our new common assessments for performance matters i'm hearing about it a lot and so i've been having conversations with dr ellis and mr slevin about how that's going to roll out i know new guidance has been presented but part of that conversation that is happening has brought up a concern about how

those common assessments align with our current grading practices in elementary school and so while we're talking about assessment and grading policy 50 30 and we're kind of opening that up for feedback for middle and high school the handbook is something that relates to

[01:04:24] elementary but I think there is a real appetite and desire for elementary leaders coaches teachers to come together and develop a true elementary grading policy and so I am going to be asking that this committee pursue that conversation as an agenda item and as a possible either add-on to 50/30 or its own individual policy as we seek to align this new wave of common assessments and really dialing into what our kids need and making sure that that actually does align with what we're reporting out to parents and preparing them for middle and high school. So I will leave it at that, but I just wanted

[01:05:01] to put it on the table. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Okay. And I guess we will now adjourn our meeting. Thank you.



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