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Loudoun County School Board, Legislative and Policy Committee Meeting, Wednesday, September 9, 2026

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Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1225362123?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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[00:00:01] Good afternoon, everyone. I called the September 9, 2026 Legislative and Policy Committee meeting to order. Sign-ups for in-person public comments occurred prior to the start of the committee meeting. Do we have any sign-ups today? Seeing none, thank you.

[00:00:16] We'll move on to the next item of the agenda. Before doing so, I'll note that Mrs. Griffith should be joining us in just a few minutes, but we will go ahead and take a look at the draft minutes. Dr. Rashida, have you had an opportunity to take a look at the draft minutes for the August 12th meeting?

[00:00:33] I did, and I have no amendments or changes to it. Thank you. Do we have a motion to approve the minutes? So moved to approve the minutes. I will second the motion. All in favor of approving the minutes for the August 12th, 2026 meeting, say aye.

[00:00:49] Aye. Aye. All opposed? The motion to approve the minutes passes 2-0 with all school board members present voting yes. um and mrs griffiths absent for the vote and with that we will move on to our first action item which is item 4.01 policy 1010 school division legal status and i will turn it over to dr bergen

[00:01:24] to discuss that action item thank you chair spenson board members how are you tonight good good to see you both uh this of course is returning to you from action from your last meeting policy 1010

school division legal status is due for its five-year review and it would be our recommendation that you consider the proposed changes that were presented at your last meeting and then take action to forward the revisions to the full school board but before taking the action I'll just take a minute to review some of the feedback we received all of the feedback for our

[00:02:02] listening public is attached online there's a summary in front of you board members which I'll read from for you we did have feedback from MSAC leaf and the equity committee MSAC's feedback on this particular policy occurred at lines 20 through 22 and they were referencing that section that says if the school board believes the law adopted by the General Assembly of Virginia to be unconstitutional how would the board then proceed really more of a question or a comment than a

[00:02:33] suggestion on a revision to the policy at line 11 leaf asked how often the for rezoning purposes how often this occurs because there is a reference within the policy of the state creating the boundaries for the various school divisions in the Commonwealth and similarly the equity committee asked if the Board of Education is responsible for school and division zoning which was unclear to me if they were asking if they met within the boundaries of Loudoun County or if

[00:03:10] we have some ability to change our boundaries with our neighboring school divisions. At any rate, staff doesn't have any recommendations for any revisions to this policy 1010 based upon this feedback. I would just share we appreciate the feedback from all of our advisories and in response to LEAF and the Equity Committee asking about rezoning, at least at the state level.

[00:03:33] The Constitution of Virginia Article 8, Section 5 states that the powers and duties of the Board of Education shall be as follows, bullet point A, subject to such criteria and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe, the Board, meaning the State Board of Education, shall divide the Commonwealth into school divisions of such geographical area and school-age population as will promote the realization of prescribed standards of quality and shall periodically review the adequacy of existing school divisions for this purpose.

[00:04:05] The law, at least the Constitution, did not define periodically. So, again, staff has no proposed revisions to this policy, and we will turn it over to you, Chair Svensson, for any action the committee may wish to take.

[00:04:20] Thank you, Dr. Bergen. Yes, I read the feedback maybe to be referring to rezoning locally, and I can see why there might be some confusion reading it. But just for clarity, the policy is referring to the dividing up the school divisions across the state.

[00:04:36] So we have Loudoun County, Prince William, etc. So I appreciate the feedback on that point. Do my fellow members have any comments on policy 1010, school division legal status? All right, then we will go ahead and take a vote.

[00:05:00] So I'll first ask if there's a motion to move this policy forward to the full board. Yes, Dr. Rasheed. Thank you, Chair. I'd like to move Policy 1010, School Division Legal Status, to the full board.

[00:05:18] Thank you, Dr. Rashid. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. So, and I think the motion, Dr. Rashid, you said that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider proposed changes to Policy 1010 and forward it to the full school board as an information item?

[00:05:38] Yes, I confirm that. Okay. And you second that motion, Ms. Griffiths. Thank you. Yes. thank you um all right with that we will take a vote all in favor say aye aye um all right all three uh school board members uh voted yes um and the motion passes policy 1010 will go to the full school board as an information item with that we'll move on to item 4.02 policy 1035 school board norms protocols and violations i will again turn it over to dr bergen thank you chair svensson

[00:06:16] Policy 1035 was adopted in April of 2021, and the proposed changes in the red line that were before the committee at your last meeting align with our current practice and provide additional clarity. The policy was last reviewed in December of 2025 by the former LA&P committee and had been forwarded to the school board, which forwarded it back to this committee for further review.

[00:06:44] There were quite a few, quite a bit of feedback on this policy as well from our various advisories. And so before I share that feedback, again, it would be our recommendation from administration that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider the proposed changes to Policy 1035 and forward to the full school board as an information item.

[00:07:07] We also have some recommended changes for your consideration should you care to take up an amendment based upon the feedback. MSAC, at lines 24 and 25 of the red line, referenced that there are various roles and responsibilities of the school board, and their comment was that other members of the school division and staff also have various roles, in addition to the school board members.

[00:07:33] They didn't explicitly state, but I think it was implied that perhaps we would reference that others other than the school board have various roles to play. We are not making that recommendation for that change in administration, but you're certainly welcome to take that up as a committee both msac and the equity council referenced some duplicative language in the policy so at line 79 to 87 under the paragraph for professional development the language is tracks almost uh precisely with the language at lines

[00:08:04] excuse me 184 to 190 msac also in in that same section at the end of the professional development section at lines 84 and 85 noticed or noted that there's a conflict between to the extent possible and shall MSAC also referenced at lines 197 to 198 the use of the word may indicates that a school board member may not face any reprimand if found in violation of the school board norms and

[00:08:43] protocols so their recommendation was to change the word may to shall and the equity committee provided some feedback that they had heard from teachers that yearly professional development can sometimes be repetitive and does not include other professional development which should be necessary such as including cultural competency and training should be effective and geared towards areas needing improvement considering all of the feedback from the advisories it would be the the administration would recommend that the committee consider

[00:09:22] striking lines 184 to 190 and amending at line 79 under paragraph B professional development as prescribed by the Virginia standards of quality which was about the one standalone phrase that existed in 184 to 190 that's not underneath professional development so if if you were to entertain that that paragraph would begin as prescribed by the Virginia standards of quality each member of the school board then further along in that section at line 84 with

[00:10:00] the recommendation from MSAC we would ask the committee to consider striking to the extent possible and leave shall in place that's all the feedback that I have to give and I'll turn it back over to

you chair Chandler or chair Spencer thank you dr. Bergen school members any feedback comments on this policy I didn't know if I can bring about amendments but I did not have any feedback okay yes well maybe we can we can do the base motion and then we can

[00:10:38] do some amendments so just for simplicity I will I will make the motion I move that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider proposed changes to policy 1035 and forward it to the full school board as an information item do I have a second second thank you mr. Griffith the motions been made by myself myself and seconded by Mrs. Griffiths. Now we'll entertain any amendments. Dr. Rashid.

[00:11:05] Thank you, Chair Svensson. I had teams, both my colleagues here on two separate threads, indicating for policy 1035, the red line version below, and this coincides with what MSAC is recommending. There's two portions, and that is one for, so I moved to amend policy 1035 red line version to change the word may to shall in lines 197 to 198 I'm going from down so that it reads quote if a majority of the school board members find a violation has occurred the school board shall issue one or more of the

[00:11:42] following or direct the board chair to do so on behalf of the board unquote so as it's currently written it's it could it is possible for a school board member to kind of misconstrue or misunderstand this and in fact not face any reprimand even though they had been found in violation.

[00:12:01] And then I have another one, but I'll wait. Thank you. I appreciate splitting those up. Folks have feedback, comments on that proposed amendment to change that language from May to Shall. Yes, Ms. Griffiths.

[00:12:17] Thank you, Chair Svensson. So for this policy, per Ms. Rashid's amendment, this is to, if we don't do the training, if I'm understanding this right, If we don't proceed with the training, is that what that's about?

[00:12:35] And forgive me, I came in late, so I'm just trying to. I'm happy to step in, and maybe, Mr. Allen, you can step in if you have something additional to add. My understanding is that the section that Dr. Rasheed's proposing to amend, the violation section, applies to the whole policy.

[00:12:54] So it would be any violation, not just professional development, just if a majority of the school board member found another to be in violation. So that would mean, like, what we're adding, it's 79 to 87, which is red line. If a school board member did not do the training, they're in violation.

[00:13:13] Can somebody explain that to me? That's what it looks like. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. I can hop in. That's one part of it. So this policy provides guidance to school board members for all the norms, protocols, and the code of conduct, which is 1030.

[00:13:34] And so it's any perceived violation that the board determines would then potentially, if I understand Dr. Rasheed's proposed amendment correctly, would require then the school board to address that school board member who they found violated any of the norms or protocols to include the training, but for any of this or any potential violation of the code of conduct.

[00:14:02] Again, that's policy 1030, then the school board would be required to render one of these options to address that violation. If I may, the reason why I bring that up is because we already had 1035. We're adding that red line, which is new.

[00:14:21] So that's why I bring it up, because that is a new paragraph that we're adding to this document. So we should have been following this policy all along, but now we're adding the training in there as well.

[00:14:36] So that's why I was concerned and why I brought it up. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Just as a point of clarification, that language that you see there on line 77 through 87, that is duplicative or it's pretty much the same.

[00:14:54] rather as Section 8 on page 5 on lines 184 through 190. So there's already a requirement for school board members to participate annually in high-quality professional development activities.

[00:15:11] And, for instance, that includes the VSBA trainings that you do in November. So you are already doing those. Thank you for the clarification. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Dr. Ashid, I realize maybe I should have given you the opportunity to speak to your motion.

[00:15:28] if there's a reason that you support changing the May to shawl. Appreciate that, Chair Svensson, and no worries. I bring this about also because I think it holds us school board members accountable, myself included, and it just makes it more definitive.

[00:15:46] Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Rashid. I definitely appreciate the goal of ensuring that we have accountability for fellow school board members. I struggle a little bit with changing from May to Shawl just for limiting the flexibility with how to handle a particular violation.

[00:16:06] Maybe the majority of the school board thinks, you know, the violation is technical in nature and doesn't necessitate one of these admonitions. So I'm thinking through the amendment, but I welcome thoughts from if you have anything further you'd like to add or Mrs. Griffiths, any additional comments.

[00:16:28] Thank you, Chair Svensson. Yeah, I tend to agree with you there on that particular amendment. Thank you. Nothing further. Why don't we take a vote? And Dr. Rashid, for clarity, could you read the amendment again?

[00:16:45] Thank you. Thank you, Chair. I move to amend policy 1035 red line version to change the word may to shall in lines 197 and 198 so that it reads, quote, If a majority of the school board members find a violation has occurred, the school board shall issue one or more of the following or direct the board chair to do so on behalf of the board, unquote.

[00:17:11] And then was there, I will second the amendment, so it's on the floor here. And then with that, I think we'll move forward to a vote. All in favor of Dr. Rasheed's amendment, say aye. Aye. Those opposed, say nay.

[00:17:26] Nay. Okay, the motion fails two to one with Dr. Rashid in support and myself and Mrs. Griffiths opposed. With that, we'll move back to the base motion. I think, Dr. Rashid, you had an additional amendment. Yes, thank you, Chair. In the same policy, policy 1035 red line version, I moved to amend in lines 84 to 85, delete the opening phrase, quote-unquote, to the extent possible, unquote, and changing the sentence to read, quote, The school board shall hold such a session jointly for all members on an annual basis, unquote.

[00:18:03] Second that amendment. And would you like to speak to your amendment? Sure. Thank you, Chair. Again, not much. It's pretty self-explanatory. But just changing the phrase gives more clarity that's required.

[00:18:18] And it just, again, makes it just more definitive. Thank you. Any back comments on Mr. Allen, do you want to weigh in? Yes, just for clarity. This specific provision is not required by the Virginia Standards of Quality or SOQs.

[00:18:40] That's set forth in 22.1-253.13.5, Section D. And it would require, if the school board jointly has such a session, that would be subject, rather, to open meeting requirements under FOIA.

[00:18:58] And I don't know if the school board has contemplated if that being in the form of a retreat or otherwise, but I just did want to share that consideration because that would be a change in practice.

[00:19:18] Is there some tension in the language there currently to the extent possible in Schall, or do we think that is reconcilable? Thank you for the question, Chair Spinson. I tend to agree that that tension is kind of glaring, and so I think it should be addressed.

[00:19:37] I just point out the underlying consideration that this is a new practice from what is currently in policy, and it's not required in law, so it would be certainly within the board's well to do so, but I wanted to point that out for consideration.

[00:19:57] Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Chair Svensson. And in regards to that, I'm going to say maybe we just keep it as is and not remove to the extent possible. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:20:14] For consideration, the board can make it or this committee could recommend that it be aspirational. So you could strike that to the extent possible and revise the language. The school board shall endeavor to hold such a session.

[00:20:31] Then it leaves it in the school boards as aspirational. Dr. Sheed, since your amendment, thoughts on that proposal? Just for clarification, Mr. Allen, if you can repeat that phrase again, because I'm trying to see if it's just a synonym to the extent possible. That's all.

[00:20:56] Thank you, Dr. Rashid. I think it captures – it's more aspirational rather than to the extent possible. To the extent possible is – to the extent it's – I mean, there could be various reasons that it's not possible in terms of scheduling or otherwise. But I see your point, and I think it's for the committee to consider.

[00:21:24] And then for that reason, I think my amendment still stands as is. Thank you. And Dr. Rashida, I was wondering if we were to have the mandatory professional development as a group, if you were envisioning us having our current retreat transformed into more of a professional development setting or thoughts about that.

[00:21:51] Yes, the latter would be perfectly fine. And I didn't look at this more as an individual basis, but, yes, as a session would be fine. Any type of annual basis, be it in whatever form, is what I'm amenable to. And all together as a group?

[00:22:10] Absolutely. Could you read your amendment again?

[00:22:35] No problem. Thank you. I move to amend policy 1035 red line version to read in lines 84 to 85, delete the opening phrase, quote, to the extent possible, unquote, and changing the sentence to read, quote, the school board shall hold such a session jointly for all members on an annual basis, unquote.

[00:23:00] Thank you. I think any further discussion on this? All right. We will take a vote. All in favor of Dr. Rasheed's amendment, say aye. Aye. All opposed? Nay. The amendment passes two to one.

[00:23:16] With Dr. Rasheed and myself voting yes and Mrs. Griffiths voting no, The base motion has been amended accordingly. At this time, I'd like to ask if there's a motion to support staff's recommendation to

strike lines 184 to 190 in the proposed red lines to policy 1035 on the basis that such language is generally duplicative of the language in lines 79 to 87, 184 to 190.

[00:23:50] I'm sorry, Chair. I'm a little unclear. Maybe I missed this line. Is this something that you're pertaining to of those lines that you're recalling? Yeah.

[00:24:05] So when Dr. Bergen was presenting, there was discussion from some of the advisory committees that lines 184 to 190 of the red line version are duplicative of our new professional development section up at lines 79 to 87.

[00:24:21] So, um, my ask is if there's a motion to support staff's recommendation to delete lines 184 to 190, um, because it is duplicative of lines 79 to 87. Is that a, are you, um, do, do, is there a motion to do that?

[00:24:39] So moved. Is there a second? I will second. Um, any further discussion on that? All in favor, um, say aye. Aye. All opposed?

[00:24:56] Nay. Um, the amendment passes. two to one with Dr. Rashid and myself in support and Mrs. Griffiths opposed. So now the base motion has been amended to strike those duplicative lines on 184 to 190.

[00:25:13] I think that with that, is there any more discussion on the base motion? All right.

[00:25:29] Chair Svensson? Yes, Dr. Bergen. I'd like to just check in with Division Council when we strike, If the committee were to strike paragraph 8, the only reference in paragraph 8 that doesn't repeat in professional development is the reference to the Virginia standards of quality.

[00:25:49] So part of staff recommendation would be to carry that phrase into the intro to the professional development paragraph. I don't know that it's necessary. I'm just asking does the additional reference to the standards of quality give that more weight? Thank you for the question, Dr. Bergen.

[00:26:07] Because there is a legal reference to the Virginia Standards of Equality, I don't say that it's necessary. It's certainly within the committee's purview and ultimately the school board's purview. What I would point out is this legal reference, which is 22.1-253.13.7, should be replaced.

[00:26:27] It should be 13.5 Section D, which I was going to propose as a technical amendment down the road. but since we're talking about it, you all could consider that right now to clarify that. Thank you, Dr. Bergen, and thank you, Mr. Allen.

[00:26:45] I will make an amend, and so just to clarify, you're referring to the cross-reference 22.1-253.13.7? Yes, which should be 13.5 instead of 7.

[00:27:04] I move to amend the policy 1035 to remove the cross-reference or to replace the cross-reference 22. 1-253. 13 colon 7 with 22. 1 slash 253. 13 colon 5 section D of the Code of Virginia.

[00:27:32] Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. I've made the motion to amend the cross-reference. Dr. Rasheed has seconded. Is there any discussion on the update to the cross-reference? All in favor of this amendment, say aye.

[00:27:50] Aye. All opposed. The amendment passes 3 to 0 with all school board members present voting yes. And now we'll go back to the base motion as amended. Is there any further discussion? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:28:08] If I could just get clarification, you were talking about line 8, Mr. Allen? the red line thank you Mrs. Griffith section 8 section 8 it's a line 8 section 8 or line 8 it's lot section D 8 okay so it's lines 184 to 190 and let me go back to that and what was your what would what were you referencing please certainly the Dr. Bergen was mentioning on line 184 that starts out

[00:28:45] that section the Virginia's standards of quality provide that each school board must require its members to participate annually in high quality professional development activities dot dot dot you'll as we discussed earlier the proposed section B that's online 77 through 88 on page 2 pretty substantively tracks that language except for it doesn't call out the Virginia standards of quality Okay, so are we going to amend and add that back, the Virginia Standards of Quality?

[00:29:28] I think the recommendation was, or the advice was we didn't necessarily need to. That is where that obligation stems from, but I don't know if we necessarily have to have that language in. Okay, if we don't need it, that's fine. I was looking in the wrong section, so I was like, I didn't know what you were talking about, so now I know.

[00:29:46] So thank you so much. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. And if no further discussion, we'll take a vote on policy 1035. So the motion on the floor, so I will move that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider proposed changes to policy 1035 as amended and forward it to the full school board as an information item.

[00:30:10] It's just for the record. Is there a second for that? Second. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. And we'll take a vote now. All in favor of the motion, say aye. Aye. Nay. Say nay, nay. And we now have the motion passes two to one with Dr. Rashida and myself voting yes and Mrs. Griffiths voting no.

[00:30:34] That 1035 will go to the full school board as an information item. All right, now we'll move to action item 4.03, which is policy 7712, sick leave. I will, I'll put the base motion on the floor.

[00:30:54] I'll move that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider proposed changes to Policy 7712 and forward it to the full school board as an information item. Is there a second for that motion? Second.

[00:31:11] Thank you. And with that motion on the floor, I just wanted to turn it over to Ms. Brown to present any additional information on it. Good evening. Thank you so much. We did receive some feedback on this policy.

[00:31:26] a few work clarifications requested the definition of suspicious pattern was asked and a question about references to bereavement leave there were also concerns raised about requiring employees to repay overused sick leave and limiting leave whenever a substitute is unavailable so at this point in time staff does not recommend any changes to the revised policy that we have presented All references to bereavement policy have been removed because we are hoping to establish a standalone bereavement policy.

[00:32:03] Employees' ability to use sick leave when a substitute is not available applies only to when sick leave is utilized for personal leave. And at this time, our intent is to align this policy with the newly established CBA sick leave policy.

[00:32:22] And so the provisions regarding sick leave payouts upon separation and those types of things were not contemplated in this current revision. Thank you, Ms. Brown. And board members, any questions on this policy?

[00:32:39] No? All right. Thank you very much for putting this policy together and conforming it to the policy under the CBA. I appreciate that effort. We will go ahead and take a vote. All school board members in favor of considering proposed changes to policy 7712 and forwarding it to the full school board as an information item, say aye.

[00:33:04] Aye. All opposed, say nay. The motion passes 3 to 0 with all school board members present voting yes. With that, we'll move to item 4.04, which is policy 7713, bereavement leave.

[00:33:23] I will just put the motion on the floor. I move that the Legislative and Policy Committee consider a new policy 7713 and forward it to the full school board as an information item. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. I've made the motion and it's been seconded by Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:33:40] With that, I will turn it over to Ms. Brown to speak about this bereavement lead policy. So this policy establishes bereavement lead for those who are not covered under collective bargaining agreements and the feedback that we received was largely positive. There was only one concern raised and that was about the potential misuse without the requirement of documentation and at this point in time we do not recommend any changes to the revised policy employees whenever they submit for this type of leave can provide documentation and can provide additional information should they choose through our current system and so I believe that should they choose

[00:34:17] to disclose more information there is a mechanism in place for them to do so thank you Ms. Brown board members any questions or comments no all right with that we will take a vote all in favor of the motion that the legislative and policy committee consider new policy 7713 and forward it to the full school board as an information item say aye aye all opposed say nay the motion passes three to zero with all school board members present voting yes with that we are completed

[00:34:50] our action items we are now moving to information item 5.01 policy 3130 evaluation and I will turn it over to Dr. Bergen to present on evaluation. Thank you Chair Svensson and as we shift out of action Ms. Brown has another commitment so we thank her for her time and joining the committee today okay evaluation policy 31 30 is up for its five-year review there are minor revisions as shown up on the screen consistent with changes we've made to other policies striking the word

[00:35:30] division in front of superintendent at lines four and seven and just for clarity inserting at line 11 that this is the purpose of this policy is to guide the superintendent's evaluation Staff has no other recommended changes.

[00:35:46] Open to questions. Thank you, Dr. Bergen. Board members, any questions? No? All right. With that then, I guess I'll take a temperature check if we are comfortable moving this to action at the next LNP meeting.

[00:36:05] Second that, yes. It looks like everyone's comfortable with that. So we'll move this to the action item for the next Legislative Policy Committee meeting. committee meeting and we'll go ahead and put it out for review by our by the community bring bring you back any feedback thank you very much Dr. Bergen and next we are going to go to item 5.02 which is our legislative update for Mr.

[00:36:31] Sutton and looking forward to hearing the update about our plans for the upcoming legislative session and and looking forward especially hearing how the roundtable went hearing from community members here at LCPS so Mr. Sutton. Thank you so much. Appreciate it. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, board members. Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on Loudoun County Public Schools'

proposed legislative priorities for the upcoming 2027 Virginia General Assembly session, as well as an overview of our upcoming legislative breakfast. As we prepare for the 2027 General Assembly, LCPS has taken a

[00:37:08] deliberate and collaborative approach to identifying the issues we believe are most important to our students, families, educators, and community. Rather than developing a legislative agenda in isolation, we engaged a diverse group of 42 participants from across the school division and the broader community. This group included parents, students, principals, cabinet members, and departmental staff, bringing a wide range of experiences and perspectives to the conversation.

[00:37:39] We convened a stakeholder roundtable to create an intentional opportunity for participants to identify emerging challenges share experiences and discuss potential policy solutions and help determine the legislative issues that should be that should receive our attention during this upcoming session the participants engaged in small group discussions focusing on five areas that have been determined uh that we can anticipate a lot of discussion and a lot of

[00:38:09] attention at the 2027 General Assembly session. They are important, and we will hear a lot about them this year. They are school funding, as always, workforce alignment, student mental health and well-being, intentional technology, and safe and supportive school environments. We also made a specific effort to incorporate student voices by providing our student participants with targeted questions and opportunities to share out their experiences and perspectives, which was absolutely

[00:38:44] amazing. Following the roundtable, we had an opportunity, our legislative partners had an opportunity to review the feedback, common themes, policy recommendations emerged, and that information helped us refine the proposed legislative priorities that I'm going to talk about today and that hopefully we're going to bring forward for information on September 22nd to the school board. The result of the proposed agenda is grounded in experiences of the people we serve and inform by, again, a cross-section of our school division and our community. So let me go through

[00:39:21] them if I can. At the center of our agenda is the K-12 education funding and equity. Loudoun County continues to be very large and very diversified, and sustainable state investment is essential if we're going to provide every student with the resources and opportunities that they need to be successful.

[00:39:40] We will continue to advocate for sustained investment in several critical areas this year, including student mental health and well-being, high-quality and affordable pre-K, English learner education, and intentional technology infrastructure that's going to be necessary to provide a comprehensive and equitable education.

[00:40:04] For early childhood education, we support the funding for high-quality pre-K. Expanding access to pre-K gives children an opportunity to develop academic, social, and emotional foundations they need to enter kindergarten and to learn.

[00:40:20] For our English learner students, we support increased aid, excuse me, increased funding that recognize the staffing, infrastructure, instructional translation, family engagement, counseling, wraparound supports necessary to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse student population.

[00:40:42] We also will continue to emphasize the importance of adequate and sustainable funding for school operations, staffing, infrastructure, and general programs. Ultimately, investment allows local

school divisions to manage local resources responsibly while maintaining high-quality educational opportunities for our students.

[00:41:04] Let's talk about secondary and post-secondary access, which is going to be a huge issue this year. This is our second major area that we're going to be talking about, particularly career-connected learning and workforce development. We will continue to advocate for increased support for dual enrollment, technical training, career readiness initiatives, and youth pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

[00:41:28] These programs give students the opportunity to explore careers, develop technical and employable skills in our industry-recognized credentials, and gain meaningful work-based learning experiences while they are still in high school. We also see tremendous value in strengthening partnerships among schools, colleges, businesses, workforce partners, and community organizations.

[00:41:52] The goal is to work with our legislative partners to create clear pathways from high school into registered apprenticeships, post-secondary education, and high-demand careers, while also helping employers develop a strong pipeline of skilled and work-ready talent.

[00:42:13] This is an area where education and workforce policy are increasingly interconnected, and we believe Virginia has an opportunity to make strategic investments that benefit both students and the commonwealth's economy. Let's talk about student health, mental health, and well-being.

[00:42:29] Again, another issue that is going to be talked about on a large scale this year. LCPS is committed to ensuring that students have access to mental and behavioral health support they need to succeed academically, socially, and quite frankly, personally.

[00:42:48] We will advocate for sustainable, recurring funding to expand school-based mental and behavioral health services, strengthen staffing for our school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, behavioral specialists, and other student support professionals.

[00:43:04] We also support investments in prevention, early identification and screening, suicide prevention, crisis response, mental health awareness, and professional development for school personnel so that they can, because they're on the front lines, so that they can really take hold of what's going on.

[00:43:24] Partnerships are also critical. Schools cannot address issues alone. We need strong partnerships with families, community service boards, health providers, and other community organizations. We also are looking at strengthening Medicaid reimbursement for eligible school-based mental health services and ensuring that services are responsive and accessible to all of our students and families.

[00:43:49] That's crucial. And importantly, as Virginia considers new health requirements or initiatives, we believe that mandates must be accompanied by funding, workforce capacity, professional development, and implementation support. Local school divisions, regardless of whether it's Loudoun County or Washington County, need the resources and flexibility to implement new requirements effectively without diverting resources from those other critical education needs.

[00:44:17] Let's talk about safe and supportive school environments. Our fourth priority is about safety. Safety is more about physical security, increasingly more about physical security.

[00:44:33] It also means creating schools where students feel a sense of belonging, where concerns are identified early, and where students have access to supports that they desperately need. We will advocate

for sustainable funding and resources to strengthen our school climate, student connectivity, bullying, cyberbullying, prevention, behavioral supports, threat assessment, crisis response, and evidence-based approaches to student discipline.

[00:45:00] Again, adequate staffing is key, and adequate staffing is central to this work, and we will continue to advocate for that. School counselors, psychologists, social workers, behavioral specialists, nurses, all these people play an incredible, crucial role to identifying concerns early, providing interventions, and connecting students and families with community-based services.

[00:45:24] So we also support mental health and behavioral health training for school personnel, suicide prevention and crisis intervention initiatives. And again, strong partnerships among our school family, our community service boards, behavioral health providers, and public safety partners.

[00:45:44] That is crucial. As with mental health, we believe that any new state requirements also related to school safety and state report need to come with the adequate funding. professional development, implementation of resources, flexibility by our local school divisions. Again, that is crucial. Let's talk about intentional technology and digital access.

[00:46:04] Purposeful instructional use. Technology should support clear educational goals, such as personalized learning, accessibility collaborations, digital literacy, research, or career preparation. The technology should serve the learning objective rather than technology driving the lesson technology is an essential part of today's educational environment but effective technology integration requires more than simply devices and schools need to need reliable broadband talent communications network infrastructure to support this teaching learning and communication and

[00:46:42] many digital services students and staff rely on every day the infrastructure to make that possible is desperate as needed students and staff need reliable uh again devices network capacity cyber security telecommunications and technical support this is where programs such as e-rate become uh particularly important lcps supports at the federal level preserving the fully funded uh federal e-rate program and strengthening it to ensure schools have the resources necessary to maintain robust connectivity and upgrade those critical network

[00:47:18] network infrastructures. So this year we'll be jumping, putting our toes in the federal water just a little bit. Equitable access to technology in all its forms is fundamental also to ensuring the students can fully participate in their learning. Our goal is intentional use of technology, supporting legislation that whose goal is intentional use of technology and technology that supports learning, improves opportunity, and always prepare students for an increasingly digital future. Why these priorities matter. Taking together these priorities reflect a

[00:47:55] common theme. We are focused on ensuring that every student has access to safe, equitable, innovative, and future-ready educational experiences. Whether we are talking about funding early childhood education, EL services, career pathways, mental health, school safety, or technology, the underlying question is the same. What resources and policies are necessary to give every student the opportunity to facilitate success.

[00:48:22] The stakeholder process that we had helped us answer that question from multiple perspectives. This proposed agenda is not simply a list of legislative requests. It represents the experience

and priorities we heard from students, families, educators, administrators, and our community stakeholders.

[00:48:40] And we're very excited about the opportunity. Finally, I'd like to highlight our upcoming LCPS legislative breakfast on October 2nd. Invitations all went out. I know all of you got them, and I'm starting to get a lot of responses for that as well. Last year, if you remember, it was a very, very well-attended event.

[00:48:59] The breakfast provides an important opportunity for LCPS to engage directly with our state legislators and our community leaders, especially as we look ahead to 2027 and the General Assembly session, which, again, if I believe I mentioned this at the roundtable discussion, we are in a short session.

[00:49:20] We have 44 days, 44, 45, depending on the schedule, literally 44 days. So it will be an opportunity to share our proposed priorities, explain the stakeholder process that informed them, And most importantly, to have a conversation about how we can work together to support the students and families of Loudoun County.

[00:49:44] We recognize that effective advocacy is built on those relationships and meaningful dialogue. The legislative breakfast is an important part of that effort. As we move forward, again, the advocacy for those policies and resource strengthens our ability to do what we do.

[00:50:06] I'm submitting this report for the committee's review, we just did it, and requesting the committee support to move the proposed legislative agenda, which, by the way, is still being prettied up. I should have the actual physical agenda, all of this laid down in a very nice little package for you tomorrow.

[00:50:27] We had some additional edits because we got additional input from our stakeholders, which was great. So hopefully, with that said, based on what we've talked about today, you'll provide its endorsement to advance to the proposed legislative agenda to the full board for information on September 22nd.

[00:50:47] Thank you, Mr. Sutton. I really appreciate the rundown of the priorities and the feedback we received at the roundtable and looking forward to working with you on these priorities going forward. And I will open it up to my fellow board members if you have questions or comments.

[00:51:03] Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Chair Svensson. I did request today for transparency something to be on the actual board docs. What you just gave was a fantastic summary that could be bullet-pointed, or you could have subject to change in there.

[00:51:24] But I think it's very important to have it for transparency on board docs. And I understand you're still working on it, and you're going to have changes, but you seem to have a lot of information today. so i'm hoping we can you know moving forward we can have that on board docs also i don't have anything for october 2nd where is this breakfast oh i'm sorry october 6th my bad uh october 6th all the all the invitations okay now i see it okay all right but yes um i'd like to see maybe more of a summary and i i totally understand you're working on the legislative agenda and all

[00:52:04] that. But for transparency, I think for our meetings, we should have something bullet pointed. And of course, I'm going to just repeat, you can put subject to change, subject to additions, if possible. Thank you, ma'am. I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Griffiths. Dr. Rasheed.

[00:52:21] Thank you, Chair Svensson. And thank you, Mr. Sutton. It was such a, it was a really helpful, very comprehensive update that you provided. I really appreciate that. And just from what I grappled, I

noticed that there's an overlap between safety, security, and student mental health. Am I correct? Are they merging in a sense? Because it almost sounds like it's leading that way. Yeah. Thank you for that question. I appreciate it. The lines are, for lack of a better term, blurring a bit. We're looking at safe and supportive school

[00:52:57] environments are distinct right as from mental health or they have been traditionally meaning safety safe and supportive school environments have always been sort of what i would consider to be a bricks and mortar thing you know infrastructure buildings uh gun safety uh recidivism all those all those things that we talk about every year the the the work is continually commingling and or or they're basically they're they're commingling to create bills and and and and policies that create school environments that prevent problems and allow those

[00:53:35] people those professionals through the through the training that we talked about through the education opportunities that we talked about through the pathways the suicide prevention all those things to respond effectively when they occur and it gives the students the ideas that gives the students the support that they need i know i'm backing away i tend to do that and talk with my hands, support they need to sort of remain connected to the school environment.

[00:54:00] The reality is, again, we're basically in a position now where we're creating these, combining these physical security measures, again, facility upgrades, relation-based supports with the sort of mental health stuff, anti-bullying measures, cyber-bullying measures, again, the suicide prevention those things um that's what they consider to be safe you know the safe school environment now so you're going to see those commingling now granted we're still uh

[00:54:37] joel anderson i were just having a conversation the other day about this you're still going to see we're still going to see that what i would again what i'd call the bricks and mortar kind of safe safe school stuff right software uh you know alert stuff um but but it really comes down to um all of that really comes down to you know who pays the bill you know so that's that's where that's where we're that's what it's going to come down to you're going to see a really pushing

[00:55:12] together of those things but how are these limits limited resources going to be prioritized and and i just don't know the answer to that yet and we'll see more substance abuse stuff this year as well thank you and i appreciate that the the technology piece is really critical and that's something we hear regularly from parents and students thinking through how do we balance you know preparing students for the digital world we live in while being intentional

[00:55:49] about our technology use and not overusing it and making sure that we're still developing the the social emotional and and educational skills learning skills that are not going to be dependent on technology or not warped by technology in a negative way.

[00:56:06] So I know folks across the Commonwealth are thinking about that, and I'm glad that we will be part of that conversation. I know it's really important to our community. And I know for this, we are under a time crunch with a short legislative session, so we want to make sure that we are on the front foot in getting out there and advocating for these priorities.

[00:56:29] And for that reason, I'm supportive of making sure we can talk about this as an information item at the next school board meeting. Is there a formal vote that we need to take as this is an information item? I defer to Mr. Sutton and Mr. Allen. Mr. Allen, you can remind me last year, did we take a formal vote

or did they just, did the committee at that time just kind of say, okay, this is wonderful and let's move forward.

[00:56:53] And then I did the main presentation for the school board then who voted to bring it back. Thank you. Yeah, I think it's advisable, too, for the committee to vote on it to then present to the full board for a vote. Yes, Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:57:13] Thank you, Chair Svensson. I just want to mention I'm happy to vote on this today. But, again, if we can get it ahead of time, a summary, that would be great. But I'm certainly in favor of it going to the board. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:57:28] Yes, and I think that ahead of that information item for the full board, we'll have the agenda attached to that and more detail written out that folks can review ahead of time. So with that, I'll move that we move the legislative agenda to the proposed legislative agenda as an information item to the next full school board meeting.

[00:58:00] Do we have a second? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Chair Svensson, if I might, because this was an information item, did you all agree to suspend the rules? No, thank you very much, Alan. Do we have a motion to suspend the rules?

[00:58:18] So moved. Do we have a second? We need to do suspend the rules to send it to the board? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Because this was on for an information item, not an action item today, you would need to suspend the rules to take it up as an action item.

[00:58:38] Can I ask another question? If it was here as a summary and we were able to view it ahead of time, we wouldn't have to suspend the rules. Is that correct? Oh, thank you for the clarifying question. You would still need to suspend the rules based on it being an information item.

[00:58:54] Okay. All right. No problem. Thank you for the clarification. Yes, suspend the rules. Okay. So we have a second for that. So we will now take a vote to suspend the rules to take this up as an action item. All in favor, say aye.

[00:59:11] Aye. Motion passes unanimously three to zero with all school board members present voting yes. And now we will vote on moving the proposed legislative agenda as an information item to the full school board meeting at its next scheduled meeting.

[00:59:33] Do I have a second for that motion? Second. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. All in favor of that motion, say aye. Aye. All opposed. The motion passes 3-0 with all school members present voting yes.

[00:59:48] So we will take up that proposed legislative agenda as an information item at the next board meeting. Thank you, Mr. Sutton. And with that, we will now move to item number 6.01, the Ombuds Annual Report.

[01:00:05] And I will turn that over to Ms. Miller and Ms. Williams to present and welcome Ms. Miller to the committee. Thank you. Did want to see your preference tonight. This is a presentation that is prepared to be a full presentation to the board on October 27th.

[01:00:23] So you have the entire report and you have the slide version here tonight. Would your preference be for us to go through it as we would for the board or to do an abbreviated version here for the committee and then the full presentation for the board in October? I personally am in favor of an abbreviated version.

[01:00:43] Second. Is that right with my fellow board members? Yes. Yes. Okay. We are all on board for the abbreviated version. Thank you, Ms. Miller and Ms. Williams. Of course. I'll still use the slides if we could for that. Do you have those slides?

[01:01:01] Yes. I'll still use the slides and I'll skip through a few. Some of them are going to seem familiar, a really similar format to the report that's been given in the past. We are both giving the report because I am new to the position of the ombuds now, but this is last year's data from the school year 25-26 in which Kerry Williams was the ombuds at that point.

[01:01:20] So I'll give the presentation, but should you have any questions, please let us know, and we can answer those together. So we'll skip through the first few that talk about the core values and the strategic goals associated with the office itself and go right to some of the summary data that's captured there.

[01:01:36] So if you'll go down to slide six, please, Marie. So the report starts out with just an overview of the number of contacts from the school year from last year, which is 524. With a breakdown of each of those contacts in categories, you'll see that the employee category is the largest, with 70% of the outreach to the Ombuds Office being in the employee category, followed by parent and family, community and other, and then students. There were 476 contacts during the previous school year, just to give you a reference of the growth of

[01:02:12] office the following slide breaks that down by voting district and also contacts by level so if there is an associated level with the contact it is identified as either elementary middle or high so you're able to see the breakdown there of where they're coming from as well as the schools are captured by voting district as we go into the next part this is a representation of the parent family, and community contacts alone. So you'll see from that that of those concerns brought by

[01:02:46] this subgroup, general concerns constituted 85.8 percent, and special education concerns was 14.2 percent. In previous reports, Carrie had done, Ms. Williams had done a breakdown of some of those special ed concerns. We have included that in this year's report, but you'll see that the numbers have gone down significantly. So in the special ed at a glance slides, we're looking at a total of 22 special education concerns directed to the office of the ombuds last year this is a change so you'll see some of the highest categories there are related to 504 plans and iep matters

[01:03:24] but those numbers are reducing over the years so this number 22 for last school year it was 28 the year before and 35 in the previous year before that so on a downward trend for the next one is a breakdown of the employee contacts this was the largest category that came to the ombuds office and you can then see that it's broken further into were they school-based staff which was 268 of those total central office or support staff or people who came anonymous or unknown didn't

[01:03:55] identify which group they went with that number is totaling of the 369 employee contacts 268 were tied to schools-based staff, and 90 were tied to central office, with then only four being anonymous or unknown.

[01:04:13] And then that is, these are the topics that came up through the employee contacts, the highest being evaluative relationships, peer and colleague relationships, and then some services and administrative issues. These categories are categories that have been tracked for several years, so you see the three colors represented showing the last three years of data for each of those categories, but pretty much on trend for the last three years of those being the top three.

[01:04:38] And then after the contact was made, what type of action was taken by the ombuds and the number of days that it was taken to close out that. So most common actions taken by the ombuds were providing information or referring the visitor to the appropriate office, listening to the issue or concern, discussing possible options.

[01:04:59] And on 47 occasions, the ombud raised the concern to the appropriate staff member on behalf of the visitor or anonymously as a trend that emerged in the data. Most contacts closed out in one to five business days, depending on the complexity of the concern and the need for any follow-up meetings.

[01:05:20] And then the end of the report has some recommendations for moving forward and looking ahead. The goal of keeping this data is to then inform what some next steps might be. There are four big things that came out, and these will be highlighted to the board in October as well. But it emphasizes the core values of confidentiality and informality of the role, and so the report overall said that people are appreciating feeling heard, understanding the potential options for resolution, and they left feeling more confident about how to advocate for themselves.

[01:05:53] Another big takeaway was that the Ombuds Office received feedback from families and employees that having the Ombuds present as a neutral party when navigating difficult conversations could help support some productive dialogue and any stressful outcome. And then the last two, as the number of employees accessing the Ombuds Office continues to grow, it's important to also increase opportunities for central office staff and school-based employees to provide feedback regarding their working conditions and overall job satisfaction.

[01:06:24] One piece of that has already been in place with the piloted Upbeat Survey, which is a third-party vendor used to survey some staff members and give them an additional voice of how they might share their feedback with staff and even their own supervisors. And then finally, using the office to continue to extend professional development opportunities that are considered proactive professional development, which could include coaching sessions to support successful conflict resolution, And all of this in alignment with the new LCPS profile of a leader framework that has come out from HRTD.

[01:06:58] So that sums up the overall big picture of the report itself. If you have any questions, either of us can tackle those. Thank you very much, Ms. Miller. Board members, any questions? I was curious on the contacts by voting district and level, I mean, not even just isolated to that, But are there folks who contact the office about the same, like, recurring issues?

[01:07:29] So this might be a particular, you know, thinking of a building, it's like a building issue, and someone's contacting me about that building issue. And I guess does that kind of explain some fluctuations or why there might be a particular number coming out of a particular school or building? I'll give Ms. Williams a chance to speak to her data.

[01:07:48] Sure. So it all depends on what the concern might be. It could be that a visitor reaches out a singular time about a singular incident, and then they're like, this is a valuable service. So the same visitor from the same voting district might reach out five or six other times, but for different issues or concerns.

[01:08:03] So the way that we track it, if it is one particular issue being brought to our attention, it might have four or five follow-up meetings regarding that one contact, but that's considered one contact. But that same visitor from a similar voting district might then utilize the office often in that year.

[01:08:23] And then I have seen, over time, an increase in repeat visitors, which I'm sure Jenny will continue to see, in the office as they're getting to know her and utilizing her services. Thank you. That's very helpful. And it said contacts on there, but having the explanation kind of underscores that this is not individual people but contacts just separated by issue.

[01:08:43] So that's helpful to know. Thank you. Any other questions, board members? I know we'll have an opportunity to ask questions again when you present at the full board, so I appreciate you all coming to the committee today. And that, is there any new business?

[01:09:01] No new business. All right. I will – oh, Mr. Sutton? No new business. I just want to make a – I want to let all of you know, as I was speaking, at 555, I did, in fact, get the proposed agenda, and I sent it to you.

[01:09:18] So, again, Ms. Griffith had a good idea. I said, there may be additional information depending on what our legislative partners have to say. And as I get them, I will just continually send this committee the updated versions. And if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, you can let me know.

[01:09:35] Fair enough? Thank you, Mr. Sutton. We appreciate it. All right. No new business? All right. With that, we will adjourn. Thank you, everyone. We'll see you at the next legislative and policy committee meeting. The time is 6-12.



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