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Loudoun County School Board, Student Services Committee Meeting, Thursday, September 17, 2026

Date	Thursday, September 17, 2026
Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length	14m (video)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1227849414?rel=0BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-30. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:04] good afternoon everybody it is 4 p.m on september 17th 2026 and i call the september meeting of the student services committee to order i am john pepper member from the dullest district and i am the chair of this committee and joining me today are miss carrie labelle of the catoctin district and miss april chandler who is also the school board chair of the algonkian district and we'll begin with public comment is there any public comment this evening there is not any public comment this evening which means we'll move into item three which is the approval of

[00:00:42] the minutes of the august 20 20 26 draft the draft minutes of the school that student services committee meeting he tells early do i have a motion miss chandler thank you i move that the student services committee approve the minutes of the august 20th 2026 meeting there a second I second.

[00:01:05] It has been properly moved by Ms. Chandler and seconded by Ms. LaBelle. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all in favor of approving the minutes of the August 20, 2026 Student Services Committee meeting, please say aye. Aye. That motion has passed unanimously.

[00:01:21] Per usual, item four on our agenda is a placeholder for the Student Services Committee meeting presentation, which can be found on BoardDocs, which takes us to item number five, which are information items tonight. we'll begin with item 5.01 which is the revised policy 8140 on student attendance requirements and procedures and presenting that item tonight is jennifer evans our director of

student mental health services well hello there thank you for having me there were just a few updates through

[00:01:57] legislation that we want to incorporate into 8140. House Bill 653 provides that excused absences for visitation of immediate family members who are connected with deployment and the military. So if you look on line 59, you'll see the paragraph that we added. So basically it says it goes from what it was previously, which was just military obligations, to really laying out that they can

[00:02:34] have a week with their family member to meet the requirements and then just in we received some additional suggestions from legal just about aligning this with other policies while we are making changes just to reorder it so have the definitions at the top excused and the unexcused and then also separating a section for additional activities and situations that principals can consider and then maintaining the military obligation as that separate factor for an excuse it excuse me excused absence there was another change

[00:03:12] that was recommended by Jennifer which was related to civic duties we need to change that to allow for up to five absences and right now it reads as one so what we were hoping is that you if you approved the the red on the previous slide we could also make these changes that were recommended from legal to move it forward as an action item many members is there any discussion on these revisions thank you and thank you for the presentation I found it very

[00:03:50] interesting to read this policy this afternoon and ultimately it just had some foundational questions I wanted to note I did find it interesting specific carve out for 4-H activities. And imagine that's been part of the policy for some time now. Oh, since it was adopted in the 70s. But I was interested to see that truancy is defined as one or more. Is that a legal term? Because when I looked in the code, it wasn't abundantly,

[00:04:27] it wasn't easy to find. So I was hoping that you could explain that a little bit more and then speak to how it works? Because I have noticed, especially at the beginning of the year, it's not unusual for students to get labeled as truant when really it's the percentage of days that they've missed because there haven't been that many days. So if you could speak to that, that would be helpful. Yeah, so truancy is absences that the parent is not aware of or supportive of.

[00:04:55] That the others are unexcused absences that are locally defined, meaning the parent has provided a rationale, but we're determining that it's unexcused based on our policy. But it is based on the number of days. We don't take action until we have five unexcused absences, and that's when we would develop our plan, and that's all laid out in our regulation, all of the steps that we have to take per the state requirements. And then after seven absences that are unexcused, that's when we move to a multidisciplinary team meeting with the family and the school team. And then from there,

[00:05:31] if there's continued absences then we would move towards the court considerations and our attendance officers might get involved but most of our absences are or excused absences as you know from our chronic absenteeism reports that we've done but truancy really is that intentional not coming to school parents don't know where their kids are so we don't see that all that often so you mentioned five and seven was it ten that triggered the yeah so it's five for the plan And 7 is usually when we start looking at whether we need to schedule, if there's a consistent pattern.

[00:06:09] But we need to have the conference within 10 days after the 10th absence. That's how the code's written. Fascinating. Thank you. You're welcome. Ms. LaValle. Thank you. So it could be actually up to 20 days before anything is actually done, correct?

[00:06:29] No. I mean, you've got the plan, but it has to be implemented within 10 days following. yeah so the plan just to clarify is we can do that between the three and five absences if we're starting to see a pattern sometimes it's a family that's taken a trip um and they've told us so we don't necessarily take that pick that and make a plan but we just acknowledge that your student's already been identified as chronically absent we really don't want to see this happen throughout the year with repeat vacations but at five there's a written plan that the parent has to be part of the student has to be part of developing like what is getting in the way if there are barriers

[00:07:05] and then from there we monitor it closely then we will follow up with that seven to ten day window where it's a larger team conversation and then from there that's when the attendance officer will come in so we try to do everything we can at the school level before but yes you're accurate we could wait till 20 days to have a conference depending on the availability but there's constant communication with the family emails going phone calls home visits and on occasion too okay thank you welcome thank you um do you recommend knowing

[00:07:43] that there's this kind of parent notification understanding with truancy because I I would envision there actually may be times the parent does know the kid is true and it just isn't doing anything about it um do you recommend adding anything about parental notification in the definition of truancy between lines 139 and 142. 139. On the red library. I'm saying this just because when you define truancy for us, you had mentioned that parents were unaware and there's nothing in this

[00:08:22] statement that is. So when we have a student who hasn't shown up to school, we keep them as truant until we contact the family. And then once we contact the family, we're working with them to figure out what's going on so then it changes from a truancy absence to an unexcused absence which still triggers our response the same way so i don't think we need to change anything but i'm going to look over at mr madison and see if he's got any thoughts and if he doesn't that's okay too um but the question was about truancy and the definition we have in our policy so if you are mr madison if you are going to speak please come to the microphone so i'm going to

[00:09:02] Read it to you because you don't have a copy unless Lori has a copy. Do you have a copy? Oh, there you go. So it's just where we define the truancy as the parent is unaware or not supporting. And it just says that, and I explained the definition of that, and that usually when we call home and the parent finds out their kid isn't in school, they aren't supporting of it, so we change it to an unexcused absence versus a truancy absence.

[00:09:33] But if there's any clarity you think we could add. take a minute look at the line here take your time mm-hmm and it does say you know online 141 all cases of truancy shall be reported to the parents and we do that really timely thank you yes I I don't believe it that we need to add anything additionally because as miss Evans indicated we are you know the school is actively I mean a lot of times when these students if a student was

[00:10:11] typically this is truant there's probably been some prior contact with this student and also we typically see truancy at the high school level so you know often you're right parents will may know and their kid is is having some issues with some tennis gaps but on most cases we there's been there's already

some relationship most of the kids that are truant there's been some type of relationship established already with the school-based attendance team so

[00:10:49] I don't believe there's anything that would add that we need to add it in the policy this is my you know based on my experience thank you for the clarification I don't know further questions as I was gonna suggest for the committee that we bring this back as action noting there are some additional changes to be made at the next meeting is everyone in agreement with that so

[00:11:23] with that believe there's nothing else we will move on to item 5.02 which is revised policy 5170 on substance abuse education and miss evans is also going to present this item this is a really small update but a very important update so we wanted to align with house bill 1486 relating to public schools including information about the addictive potential of time spent using certain electronic devices so if you look at line 22 you'll see where we added this

[00:11:59] statement to educate students about time spent using electronic devices such as computers cell phones and other smart devices and the addictive potential thereof which aligns with the two items above committee members is there any discussion on this item this Chandler I'll just say I'm very heartened to see this change I'm happy to see that the codes been updated would also good to say

[00:12:36] the same thing i think this is a very necessary and important change um particularly as a parent of of younger students so are we okay with action we want to put this on consent action okay well we'll bring this back as action on our next meeting as well all right those are our two information items tonight which goes to item six new business committee members is there any new business seeing none i can't believe i'm saying this in the span of about 14 minutes um we are

[00:13:09] going to adjourn the september 17th 2026 meeting of the student services committee perhaps record time and we will see you all at our next meeting in october please get home safely



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