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Loudoun County School Board, 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting, Tuesday, October 13, 2026

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[00:00:08] good afternoon i call to order this october 13th 2026 loudon county school board meeting first up today we'll start with our disclosures and i will read mine first as a member of the loudon county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for lcps employees specifically as a school board member i am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an lcps employee these benefits however affect thousands

[00:00:47] of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected of which i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries, the budget, and/or health insurance, and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, my spouse, my minor children, and I are enrolled in LCPS health insurance that may be affected by any potential changes to employee salaries,

[00:01:27] the budget, and/or health insurance. Additionally, my sister-in-law is an LCPS employee who does not reside with me and is not dependent on me these subjects include thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may be affected of which my spouse my minor children my sister-in-law and i am included i can and won't participate fairly objectively in a public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you mrs griffiths thank you madam chair as a member of the loudoun county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget

[00:02:04] and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees while in the excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, which I included. I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public's interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the school board for five years. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you,

[00:02:42] Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and/or health insurance and related benefits in any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee in addition as a former LCPS employee I as well as my spouse receive Medicare Advantage insurance benefits through LCPS these benefits

[00:03:18] however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interest may also be affected of which my spouse and I are included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you miss Riccardi thank you madam chair as the as a member of the laden county school board I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that

[00:03:55] may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you Ms. Chernoff thank you Madam Chair as a member of the Loudoun County School Board I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and

[00:04:33] or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits from LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I'm eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected of which i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be

reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you um we will now move on to agenda item number three the approval of the consent agenda

[00:05:06] are there any changes to be made to the business consent agenda right um i will now entertain a motion to approve the business consent agenda so moved thank you vice chair Donahue second thank you that is the motion is made by Vice Chair Donahue and seconded by Ms. Chernoff it has been properly moved and seconded to approve the business consent agenda at this time we'll take a vote to approve clerk please open the vote board members please report your vote clerk please close and

[00:05:45] display the vote that motion passes unanimously with all nine board members present for the vote with that we will move on to item number four our proclamation consent agenda before we start we will hear our proclamations beginning today with indigenous peoples day this proclamation be read by dr rasheed thank you chair whereas columbus day is a federal holiday celebrated in our nation on the second monday in october and since a 2021 presidential proclamation indigenous people's day

[00:06:24] is also celebrated in the United States on the second Monday of October to honor and recognize the contributions, cultures, and histories of indigenous peoples. And whereas Indigenous Peoples Day was first proposed in Geneva in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas to help promote their rights and well-being.

[00:06:52] And whereas the state of Virginia is home to 11 state or federally recognized tribes with distinct cultures and histories. And whereas Indigenous Peoples Day is a time to honor the diverse cultures, histories, and contributions of indigenous communities and to foster a sense of belonging, respect, and understanding for indigenous students and families in our schools today.

[00:07:16] And whereas as a community that values diversity, equity, inclusion, and history, Loudoun County Public Schools will continue to acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day and recognize the original inhabitants of the Americas for their rich traditions, inventions, government, agriculture, astronomy, sports, and medicine.

[00:07:35] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board hereby proclaims Monday, October 12, 2026 as Indigenous Peoples Day for Loudoun County Public Schools, encouraging our school community's collective responsibility to teach and affirm Indigenous people's culture, history, and community. Thank you.

[00:07:55] Thank you. Our next proclamation is National School Lunch Week, and that will be read by Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. Whereas the National School Lunch Program has proudly served nutritious meals to children since 1946, and whereas National School Lunch Week was created in 1962 by President John F.

[00:08:12] Kennedy to highlight the importance of a nutritious school lunch in a student's life and the impact it has on academic success and overall well-being, and whereas school nutrition professionals, staff, and administrators plan, prepare, and serve nutritious meals that meet USDA nutrition guidelines and meal patterns while accommodating special dietary needs and incorporating culturally inclusive recipes into menus and now therefore be it resolved that loudon county the loudon county school board formally recognizes october 12th through 16th 2026 as national school lunch week and encourages

families throughout the community to reflect on the importance of developing sustainable healthy eating habits as a foundation for lifelong wellness thank you our

[00:08:50] next proclamation is gifted education awareness month and this proclamation will be read by mr pepper thank you madam chair whereas the commonwealth of virginia and loudon county public schools Recognize the importance of providing appropriately differentiated educational experiences, specialized pacing, depth, and meaningful challenge to ensure all students reach their full potential.

[00:09:12] And, whereas gifted and talented learners are found across all cultural, geographic, and socioeconomic groups, representing a vital resource of potential leadership, innovation, and creative talent across our diverse community. And, whereas advanced learners often experience asynchronous development, intense curiosity, and unique social-emotional needs requiring deeply engaging, responsive instruction and supportive environments that foster a deep sense of belonging.

[00:09:38] And, whereas Loudoun County Public Schools remains committed to expanding access, broadening horizons, and utilizing comprehensive identification strategies to ensure all high-ability students, regardless of background, have the chance to access resources that challenge their potential.

[00:09:53] and whereas building a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy while empowering high-ability learners to explore diverse academic, artistic, and technical domains helps students see clear, inspiring pathways toward their imagined futures and prepares them for leadership in a changing world and whereas gifted awareness offers a critical opportunity to celebrate the dedicated collaboration of gifted educators, classroom teachers, specialists, counselors, administrators, and families who nurture young minds, advocate for equitable resources, and elevate student voices.

[00:10:26] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board formally recognizes October 2026 as Gifted Education Awareness Month in Loudoun County Public Schools. All students, staff, and community members across Loudoun County are encouraged to recognize the unique abilities and needs of our gifted learners, fostering inclusive environments where every advanced learner is inspired to achieve their fullest potential. Thank you. Our next proclamation is Hindu Heritage Month and this proclamation will be read by Mr. Svinson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Whereas Hinduism, one of the world's oldest religions and third largest in the

[00:11:05] world, has a rich cultural, spiritual, and philosophical heritage originating in the Indian subcontinent over 5,000 years ago and is the guide and direction for millions of people around the world, including residents of Loudoun County, and whereas the Hindu community has contributed to the rich tapestry of our diverse county by significantly enhancing the social, cultural, and economic fabric of Laban County, enriching it with traditions and values that uplift the human spirit. And whereas Hindu Heritage Month officially began in October of 2021 and was launched as an annual global and national observance and designated in the state of Virginia in 2022 and in each succeeding year to celebrate Hindu culture, history, and traditions. And

[00:11:44] whereas the celebration of Hindu Heritage Month provides an opportunity to celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of Hindu culture, traditions, and history, including festivals such as Diwali, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and light over darkness. And whereas the Hindu heritage, culture, traditions, and values provide invaluable solutions to many of life's problems and often serve as a source of inspiration, reflection, and contemplation for the millions of individuals who look to the teachings of Hinduism for guidance. And whereas our school division is

stronger when we reflect and respect the full diversity of our school community, helping enable 97% of all students in Loudoun County Public Schools to graduate in

[00:12:23] 2026. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board formally recognizes October 2026 as Hindu Heritage Month. Be it further resolved that the Loudoun County School Board encourages our student staff and community to observe, recognize, celebrate, and learn about Hindu heritage, culture, history, and contributions to our country, the Commonwealth of Virginia, our beautifully diverse county, and our schools during Hindu Heritage Month and throughout the school year. Thank you. Our final proclamation this evening is Family Engagement and Education Month, and this proclamation will be read by Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. Whereas the

[00:13:00] Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to excellence in education and recognizes the importance of family engagement in supporting student learning and success, and whereas the Virginia Department of Education has recognized November as Family Engagement and Education Month, highlighting the important role of family engagement in schools and its positive impact on student achievement, And whereas families are and shall remain the primary educators in their children's lives.

[00:13:24] And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools believes that every family has hopes and dreams for their children and wants to see them succeed. And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools recognizes that every family brings knowledge, strengths, and experiences that contribute to their children's learning and development.

[00:13:39] And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools believes that families and school staff are essential partners in education. And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools believes that cultivating and sustaining strong partnerships among families, schools, and the broader community requires intentional commitment from school staff and leaders and is grounded in respect, inclusion, and collaboration.

[00:14:01] And whereas family engagement is a shared responsibility and should be a priority at every level of our education system, from the classroom to division leadership. And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools is strengthened by acknowledging, affirming, and celebrating the diverse cultures, languages, backgrounds, and experiences of our students and families.

[00:14:19] And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools is committed to fostering a culture of belonging and continuous improvement in fulfillment of its mission to empower all students to make meaningful contributions to the world. And whereas Loudoun County Public Schools recognizes that effective family and community engagement is essential to creating supportive and inclusive educational environments that contribute to students' academic, social, and emotional success.

[00:14:44] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board recognizes November as Family Engagement in Education Month and affirms the essential role of families as partners in education. The School Board encourages schools and staff to continue strengthening meaningful partnerships with families through communication, collaboration, and opportunities for family voice and engagement in support of every student.

[00:15:06] Thank you. Board members, are there any changes to be made to the proclamation consent agenda? All right, let's move forward with a vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please. I'm sorry. Did I miss? I would make a motion. Oh, I'm so sorry. To approve the proclamation consent agenda.

[00:15:22] Yeah, I'm getting a little bit ahead of myself here. Thank you for pointing that out, Vice Chair Donoghue. I will now entertain a motion to approve the proclamation consent agenda. So moved. Thank you. Vice Chair Donoghue, is there a second? Second. All right. So we have a motion by Vice Chair Donoghue and seconded by Ms. Chernoff.

[00:15:41] Let's move forward with the vote. All right. Clerk, please close and display the vote. All right. That motion passes with five board members voting yes, including Mr. Svensson, myself, Vice Chair Donoghue, Mr. Pepper, and Dr. Rasheed, and four board members abstaining, Ms. Riccardi, Ms. Chernoff, Mrs. Griffiths, and Ms. LaBelle.

[00:16:09] And with that, we will move on to item number five, our work session. First up, we have item 5.01, the Department of Academic Strategic Plan 2032 update, which will be presented this evening by Dr. Ellis and Dr. Singel.

[00:16:31] And Dr. Blakelock. And Dr. Blakelock, how wonderful. All right, I'm going to try out this new clicker we have here. So good evening, board members.

[00:16:48] this afternoon dr single and dr blakelock and i will share progress of our strategic planning process to date we are going to share the results with you regarding the thought exchange that was conducted last month and we also are seeking your feedback on the refined goals and strategies and those are listed in board docs separately and also you should have a hard copy in front of you if that's easier to follow along and so with that i will turn it over to dr. single thank you dr. Ellis and good afternoon before we've reviewed the

[00:17:24] feedback and the revised schools and strategies I'd like to briefly highlight the work that has taken place since our last presentation to the board and where we plan to go from here so in September the strategic planning team held its final meeting to provide additional feedback and begin considering potential measures and layouts for the new plan we also launched as dr. Ellis mentioned a thought exchange to gather broader feedback on the draft goals and strategies and tonight we'll share the results of that engagement with you. Our next steps are to bring the 2732 strategic plan back to the board as an information item on December 1 and for

[00:18:02] consideration for action on December 15th. Following approval, the work will shift from plan development to plan implementation with a focus on building awareness, understanding, and clear action steps across the division. With that, I'm going to turn it over to Dr.

[00:18:17] Clark for the results. Thank you Dr. Singel. Just a quick reminder of how ThoughtExchange works, where a link is sent out. There's a very broad question that people are able to answer and then people are able to rate the thoughts that are shared by other people as well. So ThoughtExchange itself was open from September 16th to October 1st. There were 534 thoughts that were shared and or rated by 807 participants. There's a total of 21,295 ratings with each thought receiving an average of 40 ratings. The data were broken down into two

[00:18:55] categories as more favored and less favored. So everything with a star rating above three was the more favored. Anything that was three or less was less favored. So looking at the results here, I'm just going to go through a couple of these. The rebalanced technology use was really around the idea of less Chromebooks and EdTech, and some delayed exposure to technology in the elementary grades.

[00:19:19] When it comes to the support for advanced learners, what we're looking at was increased enrichment activities and more access to advanced coursework. Prioritizing student well-being focused really on more student movement overall. Investing in teachers spoke to reduce workload and stronger retention efforts.

[00:19:40] And then the improved strategic plan clarity was clear measures and outcomes and strong accountability measures. For the AI expectations in use, the idea was that people wanted students to be able to retain critical thinking skills while also learning about responsible use. And then finally for the more favored ones, the increased focus on college and career readiness, really some ideas around financial literacy as well as executive functioning. When we get into the less favored ones, you'll see the technology expansion, which was more, you know, people asking for more AI, charter school expansion, the year-round school, and then

[00:20:18] expanding access to cell phones, and then the major structural program changes, which really spoke to the idea of, like, overhauling entire curricula, redoing the sports programs, those sorts of things as well. I'll now turn it back to Dr. Singel. So based on that feedback, the plan was refined to improve clarity, sharpen the focus of the strategies, and better reflect the priorities stakeholders identified.

[00:20:43] The revisions did not change the plan's central direction and focus, rather they strengthened the connection between our vision of life readiness and the specific work LCPS will undertake to support learning, well-being, future readiness, staff success, and organizational excellence.

[00:20:59] Examples reflected in the revised plan include a clearer emphasis on high support, high challenge learning, more explicit attention to belonging, trust, and connection, a stronger focus on executive functioning credentials and multiple pathways expanded attention to staff onboarding professional growth and belonging and clear language around communication community partnership sustainability technology and financial stewardship so on the second page of the document that you have in front of you that's also in board docs you have a list of the goals and the specific

[00:21:36] strategies aligned to each goal we would appreciate your feedback on these goals and strategies and we have two questions for you to consider. I skipped a slide. No, sorry. That was my fault. We have two questions for you to consider as we gather your feedback.

[00:21:57] The first is, to what extent do the revised goals and strategies reflect the direction and priorities you believe our school division should pursue over the next several years? And as you look across the goals and strategies as a whole, is there anything you believe is missing, may be under-emphasized or needs greater clarity before we move forward.

[00:22:21] So with that, I will turn it back to you, Chair Chandler, or open it up for discussion, but we would love some of your input. - Well, thank you very much, Dr. Ellis. Board members, anyone wanna jump in?

[00:22:40] Mr. Carty. - Oh, come on, I know everybody's got comments here. I'll do it, I'll go. You guys, thank you so much for the work on this. I really appreciate it. It's, I'm really taking my time kind of diving into all the strategies that you've put out here. There's a lot of them.

[00:22:56] And I get that over time, we've got a five-year horizon to work on these, but it's a lot of strategies. And so I guess one of my questions to you all kind of at the beginning is-- so we've got goals, we've got strategies.

[00:23:12] Are we going to craft anything measurable as a next step? I'm assuming we are between this and December. And what's the plan for that? Yes, we are going to dive deep into metrics, and I'll ask Dr. Singel to talk about that process.

[00:23:35] Sure, so at our last strategic plan team meeting, we did have a discussion around what we might use to measure success and progress. And we also do want deeper engagement of department offices, as well as a consideration of how we can include that in our dashboard.

[00:23:53] So we definitely will include measures and metrics. In addition to that, we do plan to have departments develop tactics in terms of how they will meet the strategies. Some more information on that is coming, but before we decide on the metrics, it's really important to have a solid approval from the Board in terms of the direction with the goals and the strategies.

[00:24:14] I have more questions, but I want to let everybody go first because I want to get a couple thoughts in order. I really like the thought exchange results, you don't have to switch to them, but I like comparing them and the color coding, if you will, for those of you who are giving public, how they match up with the goals.

[00:24:47] For me, I find some of them don't necessarily fit where I thought they would fit. example, where it says rebalanced technology use. I know that you have it under college and career readiness, but really if we're rebalancing, I feel that fits more under cultivating student well-being. That's just personal kind of thought here. So I'm hoping that that's kind of where each one of them fits. Would love if we could match some of these thought exchanges with some of these goals and strategies. I really like the goals and I like the strategies. And I think I'm with my colleagues and that I would love to see some kind of measurable steps to

[00:25:26] take you know we talked about the development of goals we really want them to be smart goals so what are the measurable steps for the bullet points we're going to take going forward excellent comment and we definitely did discuss how the feedback aligns with the current goals and strategies we did not think that far ahead in terms of color coding the two slides so I apologize for the confusion but that is an excellent idea and I wish we had thought of that before so thank you for that and that's why some of the misalignment comes because they're not intended to be aligned but thank you

[00:26:04] thank you madam chair and thank you to the team and I feel selfish even taking one minute of my time on this because chair Chandler and I have had the privilege of walking alongside of you in this journey dr. Spence and community members and teachers and I just want to thank you for this work I think it's been really powerful I haven't been shy about saying how much I've enjoyed it and that I got to keep my binder was really meaningful to me.

[00:26:30] So a little Parks and Rec reference there. But I really, the deep dive that we did, and when I say we painstakingly combed out every single word that's on this document, and it was such a collaborative effort, literally people standing around the room just hashing it out about which words and where to put the words, and if that's your jam, it was a great experience.

[00:26:55] And I, you know, I think there's definitely room for tweaking, but I also really appreciate where we're coming from. I think for me, a lot of this, the work that led me to be excited about this was how cumbersome and bulky the old strategic, I guess not old is current, the current strategic plan that we have now is.

[00:27:17] And a lot of the work that we did was studying other strategic plans and seeing how streamlined they could be. And I really appreciate how streamlined this is and that the categories are really tight. And I will defer to my colleagues as they want to make edits, 'cause I feel like a lot of my voice is already here.

[00:27:34] One question I did have, because we did do many sessions, we did a deep dive on vision, mission. We definitely looked at core values. We looked at how we're gonna do metrics and tactics and goals and strategies. But something that is new to me that I'm seeing for the first time, having been part of the process, is a section on promises.

[00:27:52] And so I was just wondering if you could elaborate on sort of where that's coming in, because that wasn't part of our process in the committee. Our current strategic plan doesn't really have promises. And I know we talked about, you know, making sure kids' dreams come true and things that were in the old strategic plan felt really aspirational and sort of ethereal and not meetable.

[00:28:13] And to me, a promise is something you must keep, whereas a strategic plan is putting those building blocks in to meet those things. So for me, promises feels a little out of place here. And I think the promises are beautiful, but I think they're embedded in what we've already done. So just wondering what the thinking is behind that.

[00:28:31] Sure. As you know, because you've been part of the process, how much feedback was provided by the community, the strategic plan planning team, the focus groups, some felt like we needed to highlight or specifically call out a few things.

[00:28:49] so staff after the strategic planning team session wanted to float the idea by you to include a section that includes some of those missing pieces however if the board does feel that they're included throughout the plan which I do see that they they are we can certainly remove that part part out just my personal feedback is if people feel like those things are not called out in what we already have I would maybe prefer that we weave them in to those strategic goals and have them there rather than these three standalone things that I mean

[00:29:25] like again I think it sounds really nice but I don't I don't know promise is what I'm looking for in a strategic plan I'm looking for a goal and a way to work towards it I think they're different. Mr. Cardi. Thank you Madam Chair so I tend to agree with you on that I find that the promises on here are things that we've kind of woven into some of the other pieces already I will say I think for me the communication piece for me and in my community in

[00:30:04] particular is becoming I think more and more an interesting tenant that we've got to really figure out I think we do a good job generally of communicating out to the public about opportunities but I feel like we need to do an even deeper dive on that and I know we've talked about communication under number five about clear communication I'm wondering if perhaps maybe there's a fifth element in there somewhat similar to four but I think it actually has a different focus

[00:30:43] which is meeting our public where they're at with regards to communication right so I'm finding out more and more that my community in particular is using things like whatsapp versus email versus you know straight text messaging what is our strategy for addressing those communities and I know we have a lot of communities actually in Sterling district and probably others as well that use whatsapp way more than they use kind of email communications as one example so I feel like there's

something around that I'm not sure how to get it there but it might be another addition to the to number five as

[00:31:22] another way to support our communities where they're at appreciate that feedback and I And I think that also emphasizes Ms. Chernoff's point about embedding at least that second promise, openly and effectively communicate within the strategies.

[00:31:43] So we'll definitely take that feedback to the group. This is really helpful. Keep it coming. Well, to some extent, I feel like Ms. Chernoff does, that I've had lots of opportunity to share and I do very much appreciate having had that opportunity.

[00:32:06] I think in sort of reflecting on where we've landed with it as it stands now, and I'm so pleased with how much more accessible it seems to me. I really think we've gotten to the point when we've talked about some very important concepts and have brought in lots of thought partners and experts into the room and the conversation, and it just really shows that the work was done within the community, And I think it will be much easier to understand than the current iteration.

[00:32:42] And so for that, I'm extremely grateful. Work members, any other comments at this time? No? OK.

[00:33:03] Thank you so much for the presentation. We'll move on to the next part of our work session, item 5.02, the Department of Academics Student Achievement Data, which will be presented this evening by Dr. Ellis.

[00:33:27] Thank you so much. Oh, and Dr. Tyler. Hi, Dr. Tyler. Thank you, Chair Chandler. Yes, this evening I am joined by Dr. Ryan Tyler, our Director of Research Assessment and School Improvement, and we are excited to share our annual student achievement data presentation to you and the community.

[00:33:50] We have a lot of information to share, lots to celebrate, and lots of work underway that we want to dive into. so we are using a slightly different format this year we've structured the conversation into three buckets we're going to talk essentially here's what so what now what we'll start with some background information and the data itself which has all been publicly released and you've likely already seen it but for the benefit of the public we'll quickly walk through that data this evening then we'll talk about what the data is telling us our state and federal accountability results and and some changes coming down from BDOE.

[00:34:29] And then finally, we will share the structures we have in place and how we support schools as well as how we plan to address some of the changes that are coming from BDOE. So most of the presentation, most of the data in this presentation is readily available as I mentioned to the public, both from the BDOE school quality profiles, which are linked here on this slide, as well as our amazing LCPS data dashboard that continues to grow.

[00:35:00] So these links on this slide lead to those sets of school profiles. And additionally, just a note on the school quality profile page, if a person were to search an individual school, they would also find a link to the SPSF School at a Glance document.

[00:35:19] There's one for each school. It's pretty dense. It's a lot of information on a two-page document, but that is available as well. So I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Tyler to highlight some of the student

achievement data. And before I do, in the interest of time, we have moved the MAP and the VALS data to the appendix in BoardDocs for your review.

[00:35:45] Also, as you all know, we do deeper dives on both of those topics in the Performance Monitoring Committee, so we felt comfortable really focusing on the SOLs and the accountability information this afternoon. Good evening. As you see on the next slide, since 2021, we've seen sustained performance for reading achievement, and we've seen significant increase for math achievement across the student groups. We all know what happened in 2020. This is acknowledging the continuous process or progress we've seen since then, and you see that for reading and math. The next slide shows you

[00:36:21] the results for science and history. Again, steady recovery since 2021, and history especially starting to return to pre-pandemic levels. Compared to the state, this slide shows you that LCPS continues to outperform the Commonwealth across all subject areas. And as we start to look at certain reporting groups, for English learners, we see that English learners are higher than the state average in every area except for science. We will show you on a follow-up slide, there are

[00:36:56] significant persistent achievement gaps for student groups in LCPS and the Commonwealth. The next slide you'll see LCPS still outperforming the Commonwealth for students with disabilities in every subject area and wide ranges for history and writing.

[00:37:16] For economically disadvantaged students, similar in three content areas and higher in two others. And the next slide shows you when you look at the student groups, while LCPS is outperforming the Commonwealth overall for each of the student groups, There are significant achievement gaps that persist, especially for students with disabilities and English learners.

[00:37:40] Comparing to other divisions, you see similar divisions of size and demographics compared to the state. LCPS is high-performing relative to our comparable divisions for reading, for math. You see very similar to Virginia Beach for science, outperforming the other comparables.

[00:38:03] And for social science, on the next slide, significant differences there as far as high performance. for lcps another interesting statistic 130 plus divisions lcps is one of only three that are in the top 10 statewide in every content area and the only large division to accomplish to have accomplished that feat you'll see as one of the attachments the actual pass rates for all of our schools listed there i feel like that previous slide was actually worthy of applause but we'll

[00:38:39] save that for another time. So the next slide, going to, we should be going to graduation on the next one. So graduation rates you see for LCPS remain very high. When you get to small student groups, you do see fluctuations from year to year, significant increase for American Indian, and we see that our lowest rates overall for English learners and Bikini-Vento eligible students. Compared to the Commonwealth, again, outperforming the Commonwealth in every area, except for McKinney-Vento eligible.

[00:39:18] Again, a high-achieving division, high overall performance. Some differences by student groups for graduation, more significant for SOLs. Dr. Tyler is being very diplomatic, but he just shared a lot to celebrate.

[00:39:37] We also wanted to share briefly the SAT score comparisons for the past three years. We typically, while we don't have the state and global data yet, it should be out any day now, you can see that

LCPS scores increased in reading and math, and they remain consistently higher than the state and the global scores.

[00:40:04] We will certainly get the 2026 data to you as soon as it's available. The main reason I wanted to share the SAT school data is to share that we do have a new SAT school day being implemented this year. This is in response to House Bill 410, which is a mandatory SAT school day administration. So effective this school year, the 26-27 school year, each school division will administer the College Board's SAT school day program. LCPS, we worked with the Office of Assessment Services, as well as the Office of School Leadership and school

[00:40:44] counseling directors to determine the best way to do this we do have some flexibility from the state on how and when to do it so we will be implementing during the spring for every 11th grade student this will we are able to do this free of charge to students for their first test administration and it is absolutely optional so each 11th grade student will be afforded the opportunity to participate. And obviously that won't preclude students from also signing up

[00:41:16] on their own like they normally do for Saturday administration. So now we're going to shift gears and talk about what the data tells us in terms of our strengths and opportunities, our state and federal accountability status, and other significant changes that are coming from VDOE. And Dr. Tyler is going to jump in if I miss anything so to summarize our overall results we do have a lot to celebrate we are a high performing school division with above average achievement overall

[00:41:49] notably I'll share on the next couple slides two out of our three schools two out of every three schools have earned the state's highest designation rating of distinguished we saw meaningful increases in achievement across all subject areas for our students with disabilities we have really strong supports in place for our priority and enhanced support schools and the structures seem to be working very well at the same time we are realistic about opportunities for improvement we do need to continue providing equitable access to work-based learning opportunities to advance

[00:42:28] coursework while navigating the 3E metrics. We are maintaining our momentum and focus on mastery and growth, particularly for our students with disabilities and English learners. We continue to adapt to the changing cut scores that I'll talk about in a few minutes, and every school has identified an area for improvement. We have a strong school improvement process, and work underway is leading us in the right direction. So I want to talk about three distinct measures.

[00:43:02] The first is really straightforward. So schools in Virginia are evaluated through these three distinct accountability measures. First, school accreditation, which measures operational compliance with things such as staffing, safety guidelines, required course offerings.

[00:43:21] This is super simple, also a celebration. All LCPS schools are fully accredited, and they have been for the past several years so we'll move on to the state accountability framework known as the spsf framework school performance and support framework this is the confusing mathematical equation that you probably remember from last year it incorporates mastery growth and readiness and also graduation for high school students this is where the 3e data really comes into play as um as well and there are there are four performance categories that have actually been

[00:44:00] renamed this year so rather than on track off track that you might remember from last year we have distinguished meets expectations approaching expectations and needs supports so those are the four

categories and each school in Virginia based on that complicated mathematical formula is given one of those four designations then the third piece is federal accountability driven by federal laws that require schools to look at individual student groups. This is where you will recall the comprehensive support and improvement or targeted support and improvement.

[00:44:35] CSI and TSI designations come in. So not all schools are labeled as CSI or TSI. There's another mathematical equation where we overlay the federal accountability system and some schools may be identified for either targeted or comprehensive support. So each school in the Commonwealth receives an SPSF designation and potentially a federal designation for support. So here's a summary of our SPSF and federal identification numbers for this year using the 2026 achievement

[00:45:08] data that Dr. Tyler provided. You can see even at this high level, we have so much to celebrate. 66 of our 98 schools earned the state's highest rating of distinguished. Like I said earlier, that's two out of three schools. That's up from 46 a year ago. Pretty impressive numbers. Nine in ten of our schools are rated, distinguished, or meets expectations. And the number of schools needing intensive support has gone from three to one. So for our SPSF results, we have a lot to celebrate. You'll see the bottom two lines indicate our federal designations. So we have 14 schools

[00:45:48] that have been identified for targeted support and intervention and two schools that have been identified for comprehensive support and intervention and I'll talk about each of those in just a moment but before I do that I do want to do some comparisons with our neighboring and comparison school divisions so a comparison of our 2026 spsf performance categories by division you can see that LCPS is has the highest percentage of distinguished schools and the lowest percentage of approaching expectations and needs intensive

[00:46:26] support schools so again definitely a celebration similarly as we talk about federal accountability and identification we have the lowest percentage of schools federally identified as either TSI or CSI so now share some more specifics this slide is a description of our two CSI schools so these are the same two schools that were identified last year and the reason of their identification this year is essentially time and that that language comes straight from BDOE

[00:47:04] they are ineligible to exit status because the CSI process is a multi-year process and we are only one year into that process my understanding is that if we make two consecutive two years of consecutive gains they will then move out of CSI status I will also add that our school improvement team and the school leadership team particularly the elementary office work really closely with each other and the the offices and academics to support both of those schools so this slide shows

[00:47:41] the list of schools identified for targeted support and improvement or TSI in the federal accountability process the schools in the blue box on the left have all exited TSI status this year this is due to the incredibly hard work of the teachers the principals and the staff in these schools and their partnership with central office teams and their families this also is a huge celebration the schools in the orange box in the middle were identified last year and continue to be identified for TSI again this year. Their teams continue to work hard to close achievement gaps, particularly with students for disabilities when it relates to this plan. They all have

[00:48:18] specific plans in place, collaborate with central office teams, and will continue to do the hard work for each student to achieve. The schools in the red box on the right are newly designated as TSI for

this year. All of the schools on this slide were identified for targeted support for students with disabilities with one school also being identified for English learners.

[00:48:41] A couple of things I hope will become clear in the next few slides. First of all, this is not based just on pass rates. This is based on multiple factors within the SPSF framework, including that 3E readiness framework.

[00:48:57] And I also want to be clear that the TSI label is just a label. It's a snapshot of data in time. It does not show the strong work that our communities and schools are doing every day, and it does highlight areas of opportunity that we know we need to continue to work on.

[00:49:21] So this next slide, I'm going to attempt to describe the process for determining TSI for a specific student group. I do think it's important, because it is so much more than a pass rate, to understand little bit about the the math that goes into these calculations so bear with me for just a couple minutes so in order to determine the designation for federal identification based on state accountability the school the the state starts with ranking all of the title one schools in that

[00:49:57] particular level so in this case we're going to use the high school example so ranking all title I high schools in the Commonwealth. Then they take the top performing of the bottom 5% of those Title I schools and they use that school's SPSF threshold, their overall framework score. So overall the entire mastery growth readiness, all of those calculations lead to one framework score which is a 73.16. So the highest performing of the bottom 5% of Title I high schools in the state

[00:50:34] earned a 73.166 as their overall framework score you can see that's far below the overall framework scores of our four high schools that were identified however the tsi designation is for specific student groups so the next level the next step is to look at individual student groups we're going to focus just on students with disabilities their overall framework score against the threshold the TSI threshold of 73.16. So for example, Broad Run High School's students with disabilities

[00:51:10] framework score, not their overall framework score, which was over 94, was 69.0, which is obviously below the 73.1. Okay. The second step is for any school that each, that a particular student group is below that overall framework cutoff or threshold score, you then look at the mastery index for each subject area, reading, math, and science. And again, it's really important to remember that the mastery index is not an SOL pass rate. So our SOL pass rates are much

[00:51:49] different than this mastery index score. The mastery index is calculated with another confusing calculation. It's based on pass rates, but certain students, if you earn certain points on the SOL, you earn you can earn more than one point for your school so for example if i if a student were to pass advanced on the reading exam they would actually count 1.25 points whereas if a student were to fail the exam they would count as 0.5 points so that is why the mastery index can

[00:52:25] technically be above 100 and you can see we have three of our three of our four identified high schools where their overall reading mastery index exceeds 100%. However, the test is for TSI looking at this VDOE TSI threshold schools overall reading pass rate of 91.95 against our individual student group pass rate, or I'm sorry, mastery index of 86.6. Okay, so we took this VDOE TSI

[00:53:02] threshold school, their overall mastery index for reading was 91.95. We compare our individual student group's mastery index, not pass rate, of 86.6, which is below that 91.95, and therefore, because

that's true in reading, math, and science, they receive a TSI designation. So it's extremely confusing and I hope that is one thing that I'm articulating is just how confusing it is and how

[00:53:35] it is not at all comparing apples to apples. So while it does highlight gaps, it is extremely confusing and Dr. Tyler and I have lived this and studied and practiced for a long, long time and so I cannot imagine how families might feel when they see this number and that's why we're really focused on all of the hard work that goes behind it and not the number. Okay so I hope that was useful. I don't want to I don't want to dwell on those numbers because again at the end of the day

[00:54:11] it is just a snapshot. I do also want to point out that there are in addition to a confusing framework there are multiple changes coming from VDOE that we are also navigating. So one thing that I'm sure you've heard about is the changes in the SOL cut scores. The state is raising cut scores for reading and math to, as they've said, align with national benchmarks. They are not changing the assessments. They are simply changing the cut scores. They have, based on some feedback,

[00:54:49] I'll say, from schools across the Commonwealth, decided on a four-year rollout plan of these cut scores so changes will begin this school year with this administration of assessments and conclude in 2030. I want to be really clear for the board and the public who's listening this shift represents a recalibration of the standards a change in cut score not a reflection of our students for our teachers. Our students are just as amazing and high performing as they were yesterday and our

[00:55:26] our teachers are just as amazing and high-performing as they were yesterday and we continue to work on closing gaps and focus on areas we need to focus on but these change in cut scores do not reflect our students or our teachers so this slide is probably pretty hard to read but i did for those of you interested want to include the actual cut scores they're planning so you'll notice even within individual assessments and grade levels they're different from grade level to

[00:55:59] grade level so no longer is a 400 passing for all assessments across the board it will it will truly depend on the year in the implementation rollout and the grade level and the assessment to determine the passing score you'll also notice that they've added a quote pass approaching category and this is how they're using this is how they're rolling out the change in cut scores over time so this past approaching category will be considered passing for a student for example needing a verified credit to graduate it will not be considered passing for school and division

[00:56:38] accountability purposes okay so dr tyler wanted to just do a fun little activity and see what this would look like if we were to have implemented the new cut scores this year and so using the 2026 pass rates now now we're talking straight pass rates not mastery of any kind straight pass rates if you were to apply the 2027 cut scores you could see for example in third grade reading we would actually have a 64.9 percent pass rate rather than a 76 percent pass rate if you were to

[00:57:15] apply the 2030 cut scores, like at the end of the road, you would see it would go down to a 47.1. And we did the same fun activity for math. And again, you can see some pretty stark changes in the pass rate. And again, I want to reiterate here that these changes are not a change in the assessment. They're not a change in the questions. They are simply a change in the cut score, in the standard it is not a reflection of the work that our teachers and students do every day

[00:57:51] you know if you think about a cross-country race and the pass rate is the finish line it the finish line is moving and our students and teachers are still running as fast as they possibly can okay really

quickly I also wanted to talk a little bit about some changes in test SOL test administration, you may have heard. So testing windows are changing. They are narrowing.

[00:58:22] Schools will, starting this year, be reporting SOLs not only on the 600-point SOL scale, but also on a 100-point scale. That should actually clear things up maybe a little bit for families. Also, you may have heard about schools having to count for secondary courses the SOL score as 10% of a student's grade, VDOE has paused indefinitely, right?

[00:58:52] For two years until the new assessment system is in place, so it's paused for two years. Okay, so we have some time, and that will likely, if this does actually happen, it will involve some change in our assessment and grading policy. And then you can see the state testing windows. You'll notice that the spring writing test has not changed, and the spring non-writing for the elementary in grade 6 has not changed as well. It's really that non-writing in grades 7

[00:59:24] through 12. Okay, so that's a lot of information, and I do want to say that last but certainly not least in this conversation, I really want to emphasize the great work that our schools and central office teams are doing together to support students and also try to remain strong and flexible in in this accountability system we recognize there are changes we recognize it's

[00:59:57] confusing and we want to make sure that we're providing the clearest most helpful support for our schools and our families and we've been really working hard to do just that so this graphic is one that we've shared pretty widely, and it pretty clearly illustrates the instructional framework, our school improvement process, and our aligned professional learning that are all interconnected to really support student achievement. This framework provides us a common vision. The

[01:00:32] improvement process helps us set and monitor goals toward that vision, and the professional learning provides the targeted support necessary to reach those goals. The structures we've put in place around the mission and vision, the school improvement planning instructional framework will get us through the next several years of these changes in accountability and cut scores. So I briefly want to touch on these three important areas of instructional structures and supports that we have in place. I often think about curriculum instruction and assessment as three

[01:01:12] points of a triangle around high quality teaching and learning. Curriculum sets the standards and what we teach. Instruction brings those standards to life through effective classroom practices and assessment measures how well students are mastering the material. When these three pieces are really locked together and aligned, they provide a unified support system that provides clarity, consistency, and rigor across every school. So looking at curriculum, coming out of the division-wide curriculum audit a few years ago, LCPS has focused on establishing a common

[01:01:48] curriculum foundation to ensure that every teacher in every content area has high-quality guidance and support through this curriculum. We've streamlined access to materials, taking the guesswork out of the curriculum for teachers. We have curriculum maps, pacing guides, and high-quality instructional tools all centralized now in PowerSchool curriculum and instruction, and we've made great progress on really strengthening this division wide. Regarding instruction we've spent the last few years as you all know building and strategically rolling out the LCPS instructional

[01:02:24] framework that includes key focus areas as well as specific teacher and student actions we expect to see in classrooms. Being really clear about these things collecting data through walkthroughs

we've built and we continue to build out resources for our teachers in these focus areas and consistency has really been the key to our success in this area and we we hear that feedback pretty regularly from our schools and new this year is a focus on common assessments that have been really the weaker link in this triangle for the past few years so in collaboration across the department of academics as well as school leadership we've implemented the use of common

[01:03:03] assessments in math k-12 across all grade levels and reading and science in certain grade levels to start. We are admittedly still working out the kinks in implementation and as we find our rhythm schools are finding that common assessments really provide the data that helps their CLTs continuously refine their teaching and respond to student learning needs in real time. The primary purpose is to measure grade level content, reflect on growth, make just-in-time adjustments in their

[01:03:35] instruction and inform those decisions so we are excited to be embarking on this this work in common assessments for those of you interested we're bringing this up at a cni committee soon i think it's in november so stay tuned for more information on that so another way we provide support is through strategic staffing and coaching supports so differentiated staffing is approved through the budget process and it provides support to schools based on their enrollment and demographics. On top of that, we provide flexible staffing that allows for

[01:04:11] additional adjustments and supplemental staffing based on unique needs of schools and time-sensitive decisions. These both are reviewed annually by school leadership and academics. Last year, I'm really excited to share, I know we've also talked about this in committee, but our Office of Professional Growth and Innovation collaborated with teams across academics and school leadership and HRTD to develop a consistent division-wide coaching model. This is being implemented across all support roles such as instructional coaches and facilitators, the mentor

[01:04:45] coaches, resource teachers, and specialized instructional facilitators. And those school-based and school-facing support positions use that coaching model blended with their specific subject matter expertise to support teachers in this framework, in this work. And again, the instructional framework is what grounds the work. And then finally, I promise I'm near the end, I wanted to touch on some targeted supports in light of our achievement data and the VDOE accountability framework. This year we will continue to have a focus on math and reading and with math specifically

[01:05:20] we plan to apply some lessons learned from rolling out the Virginia Literacy Act to our math instruction, specifically focusing on foundational skills and conceptual understanding. Our math office has done an incredible job creating common assessments for all grade levels and also reviewing and aligning common assessments provided by the vendor. We're also considering what intervention support we might need to provide schools specifically at the secondary level.

[01:05:49] And then finally, for our TSI schools and actually all of our schools, we are looking really closely at our 3E data that seems to be driving some of our results, specifically ensuring students with disabilities are enrolled in advanced coursework like AP, IB, and DE courses. We're also looking forward to receiving specific recommendations for improvement from the external SPED audit that is currently underway. And then as you know, we've developed our own internal identification of schools for support that I've talked about previously. It's separate from but closely

[01:06:26] aligned to VDOE's support framework. We realized last year that waiting for the VDOE's framework wasn't going to serve any of us well so we went ahead and identified schools and rolled out a

plan to support them ahead of time and it was pretty closely aligned with the with the information we got from BDOE so we were proud of that work as well and I think on the school side it benefited them not to not to also wait for for state results when we have all the information we need here and then finally I'll just shout out the work of our teams supporting our English

[01:07:02] learners and students with disabilities we continue to provide the ELD and QTEL training to school teams and continue our focus on the co-teaching model that is designed while it's designed to support EL and students with disabilities in reality it really is good instruction for all of our learners and good practice for all of our teachers so I know that's a ton of information I appreciate you humoring me I think it's all really important context to tell the whole story. And we do have a lot to celebrate. I am just incredibly proud of our teachers and

[01:07:39] principals and central office staff. And I think we are set up to continue to do the hard work to close gaps for all students. And with that, I will turn it back to you, Chair Chandler. Thank you, Dr. Ellis. And thank you, Dr. Tyler. I know we started at not necessarily wanting to focus too much on some of those problematic numbers.

[01:08:05] But I guess I'm just going to face the elephant in the room and start there. I'm sorry. It's so perplexing. I just don't understand. I just don't. And I guess we have had the opportunity to talk through this now over multiple years, and recently on at least three occasions.

[01:08:29] I still don't understand. So I guess ultimately, just laying that fact that I'm flabbergasted aside, how are we going to balance this so that we can continue to assess accurately how our students are performing?

[01:08:47] So I appreciate that. And I don't know if Dr. Spence wants to weigh in here, but I'll start. And he's always welcome to jump in. I think that it is important for our teams to constantly monitor the data, to be aware of what the state's index is telling us, and also be realistic about what that means for our students.

[01:09:15] So while it is just, and it's a balance, right, the information is extremely confusing. It does sometimes feel like it's shifting, and we still have an obligation to monitor our students progress and do what's best for them even within that shifting system so I don't know if that clearly answers your question except I do just want to reiterate that we have really strong practices in place I will I will really do I'll do a shout out to Dr. Spence who came in and said

[01:09:54] you know we need to strengthen our school improvement process that was one of the first conversations he and I had and I think my team has really taken that to heart and over the past three years I've just been really proud of the work they've done to tighten up simplify keep the main thing the main thing in the school improvement process and I think this year we're really seeing that work pay off regardless of the frameworks floating around us the framework that shifts and

[01:10:24] could shift and be different from year to year fair okay Dr. Spence so the I mean it is obviously when you're looking at how the federal determinations could made it's obviously very kind of hard to understand and we will endeavor to continue to explain that to our school communities particularly when you look at some of our schools that have very high overall framework scores that are targeted for intervention. The plus side to that, obviously, is there is additional support

[01:11:03] available. There are additional dollars available. There is additional support through the state's school improvement work. We're sort of just now getting details on a new network that's being developed for schools that are in targeted support that the state's going to be facilitating. And so I think there will be opportunities for these schools, even schools that have very high overall framework scores to take a deep dive into some of their reporting groups and really figure out other opportunities for improvement where we can leverage some of these state grants to support them so I would the perplexing piece remains perplexing but we're gonna see the silver lining in that and allow our

[01:11:42] schools the opportunity to dive in deep with our team to provide the supports that those students need and deserve and I know we didn't specifically talk about it but I do think in the long run we're gonna have to have a real conversation with the board and our community about what the SOL scores actually tell us when you look at those changes and in the SOL scores that are predicted out of a few years just based on cut scores I think having an honest conversation about what those cut scores really meant and why they were selected is going to be really important because I think the one important message we need to be sending is that our students did not suddenly become less capable

[01:12:20] overnight simply because we changed the cut scores and it's one of the reasons that we give you context to show you how our students are doing compared to other students around the Commonwealth, because if you saw what our schools are predicted to become, you can only imagine what's going to happen around the rest of the Commonwealth, and so I think there's a reckoning that's coming across the Commonwealth with trying to understand what do these tests actually tell us, because they're not, the cut scores themselves, and we don't have to go down this road tonight, but we're aligned to try to mimic NAEP proficiency,

[01:12:59] But when you look at NAEP proficiency as a measure, it's an aspirational measure that actually had nothing to do with grade level proficiency. And they say so on their website and the people who have developed that test have said this is an aspirational proficiency level. I mean, like an example is that the 8th grade proficiency on the NAEP is work that 12th graders were expected to be doing in the 1990s.

[01:13:22] So that's a really interesting disconnect between what 8th grade proficiency would be for most people and what the NAEP said is aspirational proficiency goals. And then, unfortunately, what's happened is that people have conflated those proficiency scores with state proficiency scores, which were intended to be more assigned to grade-level proficiency and competency.

[01:13:45] And so, you know, we then get these distorted messages about, you know, two-thirds of the nation's fourth graders can't read on grade level, and that's absolutely inaccurate based on NAEP data to make that assertion. So we're going to have to then have that same conversation about our SOL scores because our SOL scores are now aligned to that data once we get to the end of these cut scores.

[01:14:08] So really important dialogue for us to engage in because this will be perplexing to people as they see those scores start to fall off quickly over the next couple of years that we are able to say start now and say as we move forward, A, we're going to continue to see our student performance improve, but you're going to see test scores that don't reflect that.

[01:14:28] And so I just want to make sure we are all engaging in that with eyes wide open because it's going to be a really interesting couple of years. Thank you for that clarification. It is perplexing and I hope we'll find an opportunity to find balance and perhaps it will shine a light on some communities that need more support while allowing us to really take a meaningful look at the work that we're doing here.

[01:14:58] But with that, Ms. Riccote. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for the presentation. I know we've had conversations about this in PMC and other places, and it's hard to wrap your head around all of this. I'm going to start, I think, with just two things.

[01:15:15] One is that I am not in any way afraid for us to raise the bar on academics and LCPS and continue to really push the envelope on continuing to raise the bar. It's kind of, you know, and I put it in sports terms because that's what I know probably best.

[01:15:35] But if you have a team of high performing players, your highest performing player always needs a bigger goal and a harder goal to accomplish in order to continue to really get the best you can out of them. And your lowest performing player on that same team needs to constantly be pushed to improve and contribute in the ways that they do.

[01:15:57] And so I'm all about, you know, as we look at the other regional divisions and we see that we're performing really well, I would like for us to start thinking about a couple of different things.

[01:16:12] Number one, and we talked about this earlier today, I am concerned that education and the metrics around education are becoming a political football at both the national and the state levels. and depending on who's in charge of politics at the time, the metrics and the frameworks get shifted and moved depending on the whims of the political wins at the moment, right?

[01:16:37] So I would really like for us to think about and consider our own internal metrics and framework of data that we are already collecting and how we're measuring and how we can measure our own team of students and players on our own terms.

[01:16:57] And I don't mean that so that we can storytell an only positive message, although we have a very positive message. But if you've got a really high-performing team, I want to have metrics that are scaled up for the high-performing organization in this case.

[01:17:15] And so I think that's just something I've been noodling for the last month or two. And I think that that's something that we should think about examining is what are the data points for Loudoun because we do have so many high-performing students.

[01:17:31] On the other side of that, too, for our students that are struggling or just need a lot more support, I think we need to also continue, and I've been saying this this whole 10 months, we need to continue to keep the bar high, raise the bar for those individuals, raise the bar for everyone and our resources to really get them up to speed as fast as possible, And there's ways we can do that.

[01:17:55] And we've seen it. We've been hearing about it. So we've got QTEL. We've got co-teaching. We've got a lot of great things going that are proving to be really great programs. We need to really continue to invest in that, too. So I think I know that we have to live by these other measurement systems and continue to gather data and report those things out.

[01:18:14] But I actually think there may be some interesting ways for us to look at our own data and figure out what the truth is around this and how we're defining it and keep it steady and not change it over time so that we're comparing apples to apples consistently across the board.

[01:18:36] You know, when we're reclassifying students and changing definitions and changing terminology, it just makes it much more difficult for us to really understand the true growth that's happening over time and measuring the things that are really important, so thanks for that.

[01:18:51] Ms. Taylor, can I respond really briefly? Sure, please. Sorry. Thank you so much. Ms. Riccardi, I really appreciate those remarks, and I think it will really resonate with our team, particularly the School Improvement Office and the School Leadership Office.

[01:19:07] That really is the approach we have tried to take in the past couple years, starting with what I mentioned earlier, when we knew results weren't going to come until much, much, much too late for us to actually do anything. we created our own internal school support model.

[01:19:25] And while we don't really talk about that with the board because the public is interested in the public framework of VDOE, I'm happy to do a deep dive on our school improvement process and the school support model that really has been the one constant over the past couple years.

[01:19:44] And to your point, I think that we know what we need to measure, right? And we know what we need to keep track of and improve. And so I just, I appreciate your remarks. Thank you. - Thank you. Mr. Svensson. - Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:20:00] I just wanted to start off by congratulating the 20 or so schools that are now in the distinguished category. I know that took a lot of hard work from the students and the teachers and staff and from division staff. So definitely congratulations to those schools for making that jump in just one year.

[01:20:16] It is really impressive. I wanted to ask a couple of questions about the TSI designated schools. If you could just, and I know this was a, I appreciated the explanation. Could you just remind me the schools that are kind of the baseline schools, like how that, what schools go into that?

[01:20:35] I know you said it with Title I schools that are kind of create that reference for the overall framework and the mastery framework. Yes, of course. So, and Dr. Tyler, correct me if I'm wrong. So for each level, elementary, middle, and high, it's done separately. So for elementary, for example, to identify TSI schools, the first step is the state will rank all of the Title I elementary schools in the division, in the Commonwealth.

[01:21:01] And then with that ranked list of all Title I schools, they look at the bottom 5% of those schools, and then they select the top performing of the bottom 5% of the Title I schools. that is the threshold school and that school's TSI framework score overall for the entire school population is the threshold for individual student groups for all other schools okay so the overall student population at those schools is the framework for the specific student groups

[01:21:34] yes and that's what I meant by we're not really comparing apples to apples so they're so we're not comparing their students with disabilities performance with our students with disabilities performance we're we're comparing their overall student performance with our students with disabilities thank you that's very helpful so if i i could interrupt for a moment so if i summed it up the idea is the state is saying when you look at the fifth percentile title one school no other school should have any student group being outperformed by that fifth percentile title one

[01:22:11] school, and that's what they're saying and sum it up. Thank you. Yes, that's a helpful way for thinking about it, and I guess it does provide us, you know, helpful information about how those particular student groups are doing, I suppose, even if it is a roundabout way of providing a figure for us to measure against. So I was just curious, because, you know, as you said, some of the schools that appear on that list

are really high-performing overall, and it does expose these achievement gaps between, you know, students with disabilities and the overall population.

[01:22:45] And I appreciate, again, the reference to the different supports that we have in place now and that are underway even at these specific schools. And so I'm really interested, as we approach the FY2028 budget conversation, to learn from you all and from folks on the ground in these schools, what are the most helpful supports and where can we train our attention, particularly to support students with disabilities, to address the TSI designation.

[01:23:19] And I know this is also hard to measure because the proof's in the pudding of these scores, but that takes a little while to show up. I know, like, for instance, in FY27, we added additional special education mentor coaches and their impact when it show up in these figures we just received, it would show up later on.

[01:23:39] So I'm also curious to discuss a little bit more, and maybe you have some initial impressions now about the best way to measure the impact of some of these supports, whether it is an additional staff member or otherwise, the best way to kind of actually make sure that that is having an impact on the scores before we even get that information.

[01:24:04] So I don't have a crystal clear answer to that question, except to say that it's a really important question for us to be grappling with. And it's something that I know our research office and business and finance team have started to think about, like, how do we truly measure the impact of these different investments?

[01:24:25] And so I hope to have a clearer, more specific strategy for that and because it is important. Thank you. I appreciate that. And I also appreciate, I know that CX and to all the board members, their recommendations for FY 2028 budget and what supports they see as helpful.

[01:24:43] And it will be helpful to have this conversation with you all as we evaluate those recommendations and conversations with the community about what will make the most impact for these students so we can move schools out of the TSI designation. Thank you. Mr. Pepper.

[01:25:00] Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll keep this brief because I know we're coming up against a little bit of a deadline. But, first of all, thank you for doing all this work, particularly the comparison that I know Mr. Svensson asked about the TSI scores. It's not even comparing apples to oranges, it's comparing apples to zebras, like not even another fruit. It's like just absolutely bizarre.

[01:25:19] But it does give us a little picture about what schools may need additional sports. But I think that deep down, when you know your schools, you know which schools have needs. And I actually really loved Mr. Cardi's suggestion about an internal metric that we can use to track our schools. A couple questions here, and they're really not some more statements, but it really is about the moving of the customers.

[01:25:41] And truthfully, part of the reason you move the goalposts is because you want to tell a story in a different light, right? And so we need to think about who moved the goalposts and why those goalposts are getting moved and when they happen and the distinct possibility that they could actually be moved back relatively soon.

[01:26:03] But my question is, with the new SOLs, we also have this ability, particularly in social studies and science, to, instead of test, do a local assessment. Have we thought as a division about going to doing that method instead of testing, knowing that in some ways we can control, not control the outcome, but control the process a little bit more?

[01:26:29] So we do utilize locally developed assessments whenever possible. I'll let Dr. Tyler talk about the work of the assessment office and teaching. And I would add, even while we're seeing the SOLs change, the power of the common assessments where teachers can administer an assessment, look at the assessment item and see the students' responses and see the misconceptions they have about a standard or a skill and adjust their instruction, it's actually making more meaning out of what rigor is than the SOLs, which they're unable to release items.

[01:27:05] we can't really see what a more challenging item looks like relative to others. So the value of having a common assessment system that teachers are administering and they're seeing that Ryan responded in a way that shows a misconception he has about computation and estimation, and I can adjust according to that, is what's happening that actually is bringing more clarity to what rigor actually is locally.

[01:27:28] So I just wanted to add that for perspective. Appreciate that. And I could ask questions all night because this data is super fascinating to me, but I just want to thank you thank you board members any other questions or comments with that we will now recess this meeting for dinner and reconvene

[01:27:50] at 6:30 the board is now in recess good evening everyone good evening the board

[02:01:51] is coming out of recess at this time we will continue with item number eight the pledge of allegiance and national anthem tonight the national anthem performance will be provided by the Loudoun County High School Chamber Orchestra in its first year with Dr. Willis Rosenfield as its director. This auditioned ensemble consists of 30 students from grades 9 through 12 with 20 representing the group here this evening. We are so excited that you're here and we understand that you're excited to be here representing the Loudoun County High School

[02:02:29] Fine Arts Program. Welcome everyone and thank you for being here tonight. Please stand for the pledge and remain standing for the national anthem.

[02:04:45] Thank you so much, everyone. That was absolutely wonderful.

[02:05:32] With that, we will now move on to item number nine, the Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee update.

[02:05:55] Welcome, everyone. Thank you. Dr. Grubbs, I'll just ask you to please introduce your team. Greetings.

[02:06:13] I am Michael Grubbs. I am the Director for Career, Technical, and Adult Education. I'm going to pass it off to our CTAC Chair, Lisa, to introduce herself. After an evening, I'm here, and I don't know what time it is. Lisa Marie Horvatinovich, I'm the chair of CTAC committee.

[02:06:30] Thank you. Good evening. Jen Alpers, CTE supervisor. Good evening. Nick Rosita, CTE supervisor. Good evening, Dr. Spence, Chair Chandler, and members of the board.

[02:06:46] We are pleased to share a few updates on the collaboration between our career and technical education advisory committee and the division of career technical and adult education. We are

continuously seeking opportunities to grow and enhance career and workforce development for our students. Whether that is through program expansion or mock interviews, we have prioritized ensuring the business community is with us throughout this process. Those members are vital for ensuring that we have real-time insight into the latest technologies, tools, and practices being used in their fields, helping programs develop industry-recognized certifications, ensuring that

[02:07:24] we facilitate hands-on experiences like internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and site visits. This allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in authentic real-world environments to ensure that we provide mentorship and career guidance through experts that are guest speakers, advisors, and networkers, and to ensure that we train students on the same tools they will use on the job, making them workforce-ready upon graduation.

[02:07:49] At the division level, SeaTac has been instrumental in ensuring we are connected to the greater Northern Virginia business community, not only for workforce development input and feedback for programs, but also supporting a variety of initiatives we offer throughout the year.

[02:08:05] They often make connections, bring a colleague, or in the case of Lisa, their spouse, and help us identify specific partners that we are looking to secure. For example, they have attended and recruited business partners for our upcoming LCPS Workforce summit, not just as attendees, but also as collaborative partners looking to secure vital voices that are missing in the conversation for our program expansion. Lisa, for example, has helped us solidify our participant list for a game design representative at last year's CTA roundtable. They often host and recruit business partners for job for a day and when needed,

[02:08:42] participate in career fair conversations, judges for our CTSO events, and even as certification proctors for our skilled trade programs. Jen and Nick will now share examples of program-specific collaboration and partnerships. So I'm excited to highlight an area where we are leveraging industry partnerships to elevate existing programming. We're excited to be working with John Horvatinovich of Bread and Olive Social, who also serves on our CTE Advisory Committee.

[02:09:12] John is bringing his experience in the hospitality industry to serve as an advisor to our culinary programs, helping us take a fresh look at our existing instructional spaces, evaluate opportunities for equipment modernization, and consider how our classrooms can better reflect the operations and expectations of today's professional kitchens. This is a great example of how we're moving beyond simply asking business partners to support our programs and instead inviting them to help shape what comes next. Through our CTE advisory committee, we're strengthening the connections between our classroom and the workforce creating meaningful and authentic learning experiences for our students.

[02:09:51] We're grateful to John and all of our business and industry partners for their continued investment in LCPS students and the future of CTE. Another great example is our review of our aerospace and aviation programming where we're working with industry partners to explore updates to our aerospace technology courses and flight simulators that reflect current aviation industry practices and prepare students for the workforce.

[02:10:19] After more than a year of successful use of the Redbird flight simulators, we are exploring what comes next. And as Terry Baker, our CTE department chair and aerospace teacher at Dominion High School shared, they use the Redbirds every day and students are ready for the next level.

[02:10:36] So we are connecting with Mr. K-Win Chan, Head of Business Development of North America for Airbus Americas Customer Services, who represents the supply chain and transportation cluster to review simulator options and industry expectations his input is going to help us with potential updates that build student skills and prepare them for future education and careers in aviation so the committee's purpose remains steadfast we

[02:11:10] are a committee of about 18 we're looking to add a few more members to round it out to 21 members that represent as many of the clusters as we can obviously this is a volunteer organization and time commitments and things have have precluded some folks who are interested but not necessarily able to commit the the morning meetings but like i said we remain steadfast in collecting industry advice and guidelines and what the industry is looking for to help guide our programming and

[02:11:47] Pathways for our students so that they're successful after high school. So next slide Okay, so perspectives, so you'll have to excuse me because I updated the slide after it was due So I have some cheat sheet notes So my apologies. I like to ad-lib a lot. I'm sorry So industry feedback like I said, we like to we are always in search and always in in accepting acceptance of gathering industry expert industry information from our experts, excuse me.

[02:12:21] So we try to identify where there are gaps in the industry to make sure that we are addressing those so that when we are graduating our high school seniors, they are well prepared for whatever they plan to do, whether it's the military, whether it's higher education or working in the workforce.

[02:12:44] We engage with diverse partners across K through 12. We can't forget our kindergartens through fifth graders as well, so really trying to focus, or part of our focus, I should say, engaging in our elementary school students and planting that seed of CTE early.

[02:13:04] Next slide, okay. This is my husband's probably favorite meeting to date. John, this is where we went over the Perkins plan. We broke up into smaller groups and were really able to dive into the material. Dr. Grubbs and team gave us a lot of information for us to digest, and then in the smaller groups, we really broke down what we were reading, tried to understand, and then provide feedback to Dr. Grubbs and his team of how that impacts and how that affects our specific industries.

[02:13:36] And since then, we have continued that kind of, I don't know, configuration of the meeting or setup of the meeting where we're addressing maybe only a couple topics in our committee meetings. However, we're really able to get a lot deeper and participate and provide feedback to the team.

[02:13:56] So it's been very, in my opinion, it's been very productive. Opportunities for growth. Again, my cheat sheet, my apologies again. So to me, supporting the 3E model of enlistment, employment, or education after high school is really important.

[02:14:18] I will say that wasn't something when I went to high school. So I think that is a really great model to follow and providing those pathways to the students. A strategic planning for improvements based on pathway input.

[02:14:34] Dr. Grebs and his team has really been fantastic about collecting our input and really thinking about it and really seeing how we can apply the different inputs from the various pathways in the various clusters, which is a lot, right?

[02:14:50] There's 21 clusters, that's a lot of information to digest and kind of put into action. But I have seen personally in the last couple years the words put into action and the impact that it's been having, and kudos to the team.

[02:15:08] Expand to Western Loudoun. Western Loudoun, I think, is one of the areas that we have been focused on because a lot more folks are moving out that way and making sure that they stay aligned with what we're doing in the rest of the county is really important.

[02:15:26] So making sure that that happens as well as K through five education. That's kind of a passion of mine. So I keep on plugging that one in for you guys. And then as Jen mentioned, upgrading equipment and labs and kitchens and such, making sure we get industry expert input on that.

[02:15:46] What's really necessary? Nice to have versus need to have are I think a balance that we have to strike. So while someone might want this wonderful, you know, kitchen for John specifically, what is really required for them to be successful, right? What are the foundation or the fundamentals that are required in industry?

[02:16:05] And then lastly, but not least, continue to support the WBL resource teachers. That's a wonderful group. and anything that we can do as industry partners to support them and provide opportunities for our students I think is paramount to really engaging with the students and keeping their interest, so that's it.

[02:16:26] - All right, thank you, Lisa. So at this point we wanna open it up for questions and feedback. We're always looking for opportunities for what topics would you like to be more involved in or hear more about, and what can CTAC do to support the school system and CT moving forward? Thank you.

[02:16:41] - Thank you so much for the presentation. It's so nice to have you all here with us. And board members, I'll open up the floor to questions. Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you so much for that great presentation. I just had a question. Do we, and forgive me for getting away a little bit, do we have a firefighter program at AOL?

[02:17:03] Somebody had just asked me about that. And forgive me for not knowing off the top of my head if we have that. Thank you. Sure, I can answer that for you. At this time, we do not have a firefighter program in Loudoun County Public Schools. we do have an EMT program but not firefighting. Mr. Svinson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you all for the presentation. It's really great work that you all are doing and I just wanted to highlight my thanks that you all are taking industry expertise into the classrooms to decide what is most helpful to have in their kitchen, for instance, for folks who are going into like the

[02:17:43] culinary path and it's great to see that we're thinking strategically about where our capital budget dollars are going. I know we're going to be renovating and working on CTE spaces throughout the school division so to have folks not just from the culinary field but other aspect other clusters that you all have represented um will be really beneficial and i think help us you know strategically um make sure that the the spaces are what our students need um for industry afterwards so thank you very much for that and it's a nice um collaboration thank you thank you mr carty thank you madam chair and my favorite crew i'm so excited for all the work you guys

[02:18:22] guys are doing it's I think one of the things that people don't know is just how fast the CTEIC program has grown number one I think that the expansion is amazing and I think one of the questions I have for you all is you know what do you all need from us we're going into our budget season obviously

and so what do you need from a staffing perspective I know there's a lot going on so I'm going to put that I put in that one for one second too and I just also want to thank you guys. I think one of the really cool things is that you all are bringing industry

[02:18:55] expertise into curriculum. And I think that there's a very big difference between teaching the theory and teaching what really happens in the real world. And I'm getting to experience that at Mason while I'm teaching this organizational behavior class, right? And we're teaching out of a theoretical textbook, but I get to put the real world pieces to it. And I think for our students to have that real world expertise from our professionals in Loudoun County, and we have so many here I think it's really incredible so I think you're just in a great job big cheerleader of the work you all are doing and I would love to hear from you all a little bit more about what you think you need from us as

[02:19:34] far as resources go for the next couple of years sure I really appreciate the question I appreciate your representation on CTEC as well so I want to thank you Mr. Carty for all your work and supports I'll lean in I think right now the workforce is evolving so rapidly I'm starting to use the phrase pivots over pathways it's it's pathways are changing they're evolving for me my number one area of focus I think is the work-based learning work-based learning resource teacher role that that role has increased almost a thousand new partnerships internships clinical

[02:20:10] experiences nothing can replace career advising like a person in the building making those connections with our business partners with just five work-based learning resource teachers for 14,700 businesses. That's overwhelming. It's daunting. And I think we have a really great model right now with our five work-based learning resource teachers. We have other counties around the state asking us how we're responding to 3E around workforce development. I think we're going to see that at the Workforce Summit on Friday with our students and our employer matching.

[02:20:41] So me, that's a big focus because I think we're seeing dividends already for program outcomes. And I'll pass it off to Jen and Nick if they have anything at their level they would like to share. Sure. Just as a follow-up to that. So could you explain, I mean, I know because I'm working with you all on what that looks like, but can you explain a little bit more about what that role is and what they actually do? Sure. So they're embedded in schools. So right now we have a ratio of around one work-based learning resource teacher per every three to five schools, depending on their geographic zone. They are based geographically. So for example, we have a work-based

[02:21:20] learning resource teacher that's largely Western Loudoun. They're in schools. They're connecting and partnering with the Career Center assistants. They're doing RISAC lessons with our students to see what are your skills, your values, your interests. They're meeting with business partners based on that feedback from students to make sure that they're doing that matchmaking.

[02:21:40] This was a model that previously our teachers would have to make those partnerships. This position is 100% building those partnerships, whether it's during the school day or outside the school day. They're attending chamber events.

[02:21:56] They're also analyzing our data. They're looking at our students' areas of interest, and they're thinking about how do we bring new partners in to fill where our students are most interested. Healthcare's a really good example. That's probably the number one area of focus for our students right now. And our work-based learning team is looking for how do we bring in more healthcare participants for job per day and for business partner developments.

[02:22:19] So they're really embedded in schools, and they are on the front lines making those business connections with our students. And also they're doing that tracking and record-keeping that the state now requires, which is a huge shift for 3E. You can't simply just say a student attended an internship.

[02:22:35] You have to provide documentation. You have to get it certified by the state. And those individuals are making sure that we are accurately reporting that to VDOE. Great question. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Dr. Grubbs and team.

[02:22:54] I got to say that Ms. Riccardi and I think along the same lines. I was going to ask about your work-based learning resource teachers so I'll adjust my question a little bit how is this being brought into the classroom and integrated into a the curriculum and where are students learning about this could you give us a little more detail about that I would love to provide an example I have provided some updates over the last year around the work we're doing in our school stores as it relates to our marketing and strategic marketing pathway

[02:23:29] So a really great example of one of our work-based learning resource teachers was able to make a connection with SR Coffee and brought a master roaster into the classroom. The master roaster then walked our strategic marketing students through what that coffee process looks like from a business and entrepreneurial standpoint as well as the procedure for roasting beans they did a full taste test and offered really sort of this template for students to then take that information and turn it around so they were able to implement a taste test for the roaming

[02:24:07] roasters at John's so there's just a one example of a connection with our work-based learning resource teachers bringing business into our classrooms if I could share one more just to we recently presented its SPC and we're doing a future ready lesson this school year in partnership with academic programs and with school counseling we're all 16,000 middle school students are going to be getting exposure to what are the special programs that we offer what are your skills your values your interests how is that matchmaking happening and so I think that's a really exciting at the middle school level how we're getting earlier into the middle schools to

[02:24:45] talk about career advising and making sure all of our students know about the pathways and the programs we're building out. So just to echo Jen's comments, I think we're hitting all levels, elementary, middle school, and high school moving forward. Thank you so much for that.

[02:25:02] All right. Well, I will say I think it's that expansion into all of the different grade levels that makes this innovation so exciting because ultimately we're not necessarily pushing anyone towards anything, but by comparison, giving students lots of different opportunities and exploration so that they have some tangible experience to grow on so um well board members if I don't see any further questions I will say thank you again to the team for the presentation

[02:25:34] thank you we appreciate it all right with that everyone we'll move on to item number 10 our one LCPS spotlight tonight we will be looking at accelerating student growth through continuous improvement. Good evening, Chair Chandler, Vice Chair Donahue, School Board members, and Dr. Spence.

[02:26:00] Supervisor of School Improvement. It is my pleasure to introduce this evening's Spotlight Schools, Cool Spring Elementary School, and Sterling Middle School. Joining us tonight are Mr. Cadwell, Principal of Cool Spring Elementary, Mr. Fru, Principal of Sterling Middle School, and Sterling Middle

School's instructional coach, Ms. Infante, who will share how LCPS's continuous improvement process comes to life in their school communities. Every year, every LCBS school develops a school improvement plan grounded in a comprehensive needs assessment that identifies

[02:26:36] strengths to build upon and opportunities for growth. Through intentional planning, collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to the student success, Cool Spring Elementary and Sterling Middle School have demonstrated significant growth. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and look forward to hearing how their efforts have translated into meaningful results for students.

[02:26:58] Before providing a brief overview of our continuous improvement process on the next slide and turning the presentation over to the principals, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the school board. Your vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment to excellence create the conditions that allow our schools to engage in this important work. Your support of continuous improvement efforts across LCPS reinforces a culture of reflection, innovation, and accountability, empowering our educators to continuously improve outcomes for every student. On behalf of our schools, thank you for your ongoing partnership and dedication to the success of our students,

[02:27:36] staff, and community. As Dr. Ellis shared earlier during our work session, our continuous improvement process, the instructional framework, and professional learning operate as an interconnected system to drive student achievement. Each cycle begins with a comprehensive needs assessment and root cause analysis, allowing schools to examine data, set clear improvement goals, and implement research and evidence-based strategies. Our instructional framework provides the common vision for how those strategies come to life through a consistent, high-quality

[02:28:11] instruction across our classrooms. To make that vision a reality, division supports and professional learning are purposefully aligned to the unique needs of our school improvement plans. A vital component of this support is our instructional coaches and facilitators who partner side by side with teachers to build capacity and strengthen classroom practice.

[02:28:35] Coupled with ongoing community engagement, school teams engage in continuous implementation and impact data analysis to monitor progress and adjust instruction in real time. To see how this continuous improvement cycle translates into measurable growth for our schools. I will now turn the presentation over to Mr. Cadwell to share Cool Spring Elementary's story. Well, thank you for the opportunity to share an overview of our work at Cool Spring Elementary supporting student

[02:29:12] learning in reading and math through intentional practices guided by the continuous school improvement process. Slide. This slide highlights our focus on differentiated small group instruction during the three-year period. Recognizing the many needs of our students with respect to developing foundational reading and math skills, our intent has been providing skills-based instruction that is responsive to the needs of our students. Next slide. As we set our goal with clear strategies and action steps, we've been intentional about ensuring that our work is aligned to our school

[02:29:52] improvement plan focus of differentiated small group instruction. During CLT meetings, teams are engaging in discussion of student data and developing targeted small groups with aligned resources. We have streamlined the discussion protocol so that our teams can have focused conversations on standards and more time for collaborative planning and identifying resources.

[02:30:17] Classroom teachers, EL teachers, and special education teachers work together to plan and implement small group instruction aligned to student needs. The division instructional coach, math resource teacher, and reading team partner with teachers to support the analysis of student data, planning, co-teaching, and modeling of strategies in the classroom. Professional learning is connected to our school improvement plan focus. Next slide. As our team of teachers, staff, and coaches are implementing the strategy, we are looking closely at both implementation data via

[02:30:55] aligned walkthroughs in reading and math, as well as impact data, how our students are performing on MAP, VALS, HMM assessments, and the LCPS common assessments and within intervention to measure progress both with teacher practice and student learning and make adjustments as we go. As we complete a PDSA cycle, the leadership team celebrates our student growth with teachers.

[02:31:20] We utilize the data and reflection from the study meeting conversation, as well as gathering feedback from them to inform next steps. Teachers also provide input through individual reflective coaching conversations. It's important to us that we include teacher voice as part of the improvement process. Next slide. This final slide provides a snapshot of student achievement as measured by the SOL during the last several years. The consistent focus on differentiated instruction using CLTs and planning structures alongside collaboration among teachers, staff, and other

[02:32:00] stakeholders has supported the positive student growth at Cool Spring. We continue the work this year as we strive to support the needs of all of our students. Next slide. Good evening, everyone.

[02:32:18] Dr. Spence, Chair Chandler, members of the board, senior staff. My name is Fitzroy Fru, proud principal at Sterling Middle School. Whenever we get together at Sterling, we always ground ourselves with our mission and vision, which is in front of you. Sterling Middle School provides a safe and caring environment where students acquire lifelong academic and social skills.

[02:32:39] I'm going to now pass it over to my colleague, Mrs. Christina Infante, our school-based instructional coach. Thank you, Mr. Fru. Thank you for welcoming us tonight and providing the opportunity to highlight the successes happening at Sterling Middle School through our continuous school improvement process. Tonight, I want to emphasize our strong alignment between the LCPS vision and the direct impact taking place in our classrooms. Through the guidance and resources of the School Improvement Office, we have engaged in purposeful, impactful conversations that actively

[02:33:15] shift teaching practices to improve student learning. Furthermore, the LCPS instructional framework has given us a common language, making it exceptionally clear how our unique community aligns with the LCPS vision. Next slide.

[02:33:32] At Sterling Middle School, our continuous improvement work is anchored in two clear academic goals centered on literacy and mathematics, in which 100% of our students will demonstrate on grade level or above proficiency in reading and mathematics, as measured by the spring SOL assessment.

[02:33:49] While this is an ambitious goal, the strategies and resources we deploy are designed to move every student toward grade level mastery. Next slide. To reach these goals, Sterling Middle School has utilized a multi-tiered, three-strategy approach over the past three years, explicitly aligned with the division's instructional framework.

[02:34:11] Strategy one is active engagement across content areas in which consistent school-wide commitment to utilizing high-leverage engagement routines provide daily opportunities for students to

read, write, listen, and speak in every classroom.

[02:34:28] Strategy two focuses on targeted intervention and remediation. By using division, department, and CLT common formative assessments, we identify student learning gaps early. Supported by our EL teachers, special education teachers, reading specialists, math resource teachers, and instructional coaches, we provide targeted remediation and intervention right in the classroom. Strategy three is our Pioneer Readiness Initiative, or PRI. PRI is driven by student data and designed to meet students where they are. The entire school pauses for a

[02:35:02] dedicated 30-minute literacy enrichment period three times per week. Using rich grade-level text like Scholastic Scope magazines, alongside word study and comprehension lessons, all staff collectively enrich the literacy experience for every student.

[02:35:20] Next slide. Our collective commitments are showing strong and measurable results in student achievement. When we examine the SOL achievement across subgroups over the past two years, all student reporting groups have either maintained or demonstrated significant growth across these assessments.

[02:35:41] Next slide. Additionally, over 62% of our English learners demonstrated language growth on the WIDA ACCESS assessment. 55.38% of EL students met the Virginia Department of Education's explicit growth criteria.

[02:35:58] Over a three-year period, the percentage of EL students achieving full proficiency on the assessment expanded from 3.58% in 2024 to 11.56% in the spring of 2026. We celebrate these significant gains; we recognize that our work continues until 100% of our students achieve grade-level mastery. Next slide. Continuous growth requires transparent reflection.

[02:36:26] In the spring of 2026, our leadership and school improvement team engaged deeply in the study phase of the PDSA cycle. Using inquiry protocols and guiding questions developed by the School Improvement Office, our staff collaboratively evaluated what strategies are yielding results and where we need to refine our practices. This structured process elevates teacher voice, ensuring our staff directly shapes the instructional direction of our school. Next slide. Following our comprehensive needs assessment, Sterling Middle School officially identified the literacy focus area within the

[02:37:06] instructional framework as our primary driver. By connecting our existing strategic routines to the division focus area mindset, skill set, and tool set, we have unified our efforts. Literacy at Sterling Middle School is not just the responsibility of the English department.

[02:37:24] It is a shared commitment carried out across every content by every member of our staff. Ultimately, these aligned academic supports do more than raise test scores. They cultivate an environment where every student feels seen, valued, and empowered as an LCPS learner.

[02:37:46] To show you what this looks like in practice, we would like to share a brief video highlighting one of our Sterling Middle School students reflecting on his personal experience with the Pioneer Readiness Initiative. Next slide, and play the video, please. My name is Sorling Avilés.

[02:38:04] I learned to read with Dr. G in the office of him, and the letters I learned with him were M-A-U. Me llaman el poeta porque estuve leyendo una carta de amor a una niña.

[02:38:25] Thank you for the time for both of our schools to share our highlights and our growth and the work of the School Improvement Office. And we'll open it up to questions and or comments.

[02:38:41] Thank you. Thank you so much for the presentation. And I really want to start by commending you for the work that you have all put in to ensuring that our students are continuously growing. Job well done. And with that, board members, Vice Chair Donahue?

[02:38:56] Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have any questions. I just wanted to echo the Chair's comments that seeing the information that you presented to us is inspiring, not just the care and work that you are putting in for the students in your schools, but also the example that you're setting for the rest of the division for a path forward as we continue to struggle with our student achievement numbers in other areas.

[02:39:20] So thank you for your commitment to our students. Mr. Cardi? Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all so much for this, and I have the joy of being able to see Sterling Middle School in action, which has been really fantastic, but I wanted to ask you both, from your school perspective, if you were to pick, number one, I think one of the things I'm learning is that every school is different.

[02:39:44] The success factors are customized for the students that are right there in front of you. There are certainly some things that are happening across the division that are great, but I'm seeing some different things from both of the schools that are working really well for both environments.

[02:39:59] So could you guys just share with me one or two things from your school that is like the thing that you think is just really moving the needle quickly? because my whole thing is on some of these, at some of these schools, we need to make dramatic and like big shifts, which both of your schools have clearly done. And I love that. So what are the things that have worked for your school? What has created the environment for that success?

[02:40:25] Which could be a presentation all in of itself, but yeah. Absolutely. So last summer, if I remember correctly. The middle school office, Beth Robinson, Ms. Charlie Green brought in Dr. Luis Cruz from Solution Tree. And one of the things that Dr. Cruz mentioned is that we should no longer say buy-in because the opposite of buy-in is sell-out. So what we need to come up with is shared commitment, shared agreement. And one of the things that we've done at Sterling is we have said it's a moral imperative that when students leave our building, they can read on grade level

[02:41:03] or above. They can do math on grade level or above. So we start with something as simple as that. It's a moral imperative. And if you don't agree with that moral imperative, quite honestly, maybe that's not the place for you, but that's where we're going to start. And then how do we support you as a teacher? How do we support you as an administrator to make sure that that gets done? I think definitely the work of our CLTs and having a consistent CLT schedule where we're continuously going back and looking at data and reading and math and keeping that focus on student growth not just for one year

[02:41:39] but two years three years so I think staying the course and trying to be as consistent as possible has really helped us I also think just the collaboration among our special ed our EL teachers our coaches everybody is doing the work it's shared work and I think everybody feels a sense of purpose with what we're doing can I ask a follow-up to that really quickly what okay go so we just had a presentation earlier about performance data so I guess one of the questions I have for both of you is how often are you looking

at your data is it I mean obviously you're getting the assessments from the various testing that we do but are you looking at anything more frequently that's helping

[02:42:16] you kind of course correct as you go or is it just kind of a couple times a year that you're looking at the data so are in the elementary level we have HMH weekly assessments so the teachers are continuously looking at those we have the unit assessments for math which are given by unit so the teachers are continuously looking in their planning meetings their weekly collaborative plan looking at their data but we have structured time set each month in CLTs where we've designated certain CLT meetings as data discussion so between

[02:42:54] the work that teachers do and then within our CLTs it's a continual focus I'd like to respond to your first question which is what is working at our school it's our staffing at our school we have a very unique combination of EL special education and content teachers working very collaboratively that staffing is critical to the success of our students to meeting their unique needs and then to your follow-up question on the data happens with the work of the division to really focus in on CLT work has been imperative to those

[02:43:32] conversations looking at the d4/4's questions that is driving instructional practices what do we do if students didn't get it and what do we do if they did because we have both of those students sitting in the same classroom is essential and then finally also spiraling in the curriculum so when we look at that data if students didn't get it is there an opportunity coming up in future units and that's where the unit guides are very supportive so the investment that the division has put into those unit guides really gives a clear picture to our staff when they might have an opportunity to spiral back

[02:44:09] and reteach something that might have been missed by our students board members any further questions all right well thank you for sharing your experience with us thank you everyone next up we're going to move on to item number 11.01 this is our student school board representatives comments tonight Tonight, we are joined by Rishitha Muntri, who is our school board representative from

[02:44:48] Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, and a current senior, proud to serve as the 2026-2027 student school board representative for Loudoun County School Board. She is deeply committed to both health care and public service and aspires to be a physician who balances research with community service.

[02:45:10] Rashitha works towards the goal through her position as a certified EMT-B. Maybe we can hear more about that. Her dedication to excellence has been recognized on the national stage. She has earned top honors in the academic decathlon and the Toshiba NSTA Explorer Vision competition.

[02:45:33] As a student representative, Rashitha is honored to advocate for her peers and looks forward to bridging the gap between student perspectives and county leadership to foster a more inclusive and innovative educational environment. Thank you for being here. Rashitha, the floor is yours. Thank you. I'm so excited to be here. Good evening, members of the school board and everyone here tonight. My name is Rashitha Munthri, and I'm a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, and I'm representing Loudoun County students at TJ. And I want to talk about my experience at TJ.

[02:46:06] so when I first got to TJ as a freshman, one of the first things that stopped me was how many different people I was suddenly surrounded by. Students came from all across Northern Virginia, from different schools, communities, cultures, families, and experiences, and everyone seemed to bring

something completely different with them, and I think that is one of the things that has made TJ so special to me. Over the last four years, I've been exposed to people who think differently than I do, care about completely different things and have experiences I probably never would have encountered otherwise. And I share that experience with so many of my peers.

[02:46:38] TJ has become this kind of mixing pot of perspectives, interests, and backgrounds, and the people there, my teachers, my classmates, my friends, have shaped so much of who I am today. And when most people hear TJ, though, I think there's a pretty immediate picture that comes to mind. STEM, academics, research, and maybe a lot of students studying for tests.

[02:46:57] And obviously academics are a huge part of our school, but after spending the last four years there, think that picture leaves out a lot of what actually makes TJ feel like TJ. So through the events happening at school this fall especially, you can see how much of our school community exists outside of the classroom. Earlier this month, TJ hosted a college fair with representatives from 71 colleges for seniors especially. It was exciting to be able to walk from table to table, ask questions directly to admissions representatives, and learn about schools we might otherwise only know through a website. But what stood out to me was not really the number 71. It was seeing hundreds of students think about completely different futures, even though we all attend

[02:47:35] the same specialized STEM school. That same variety shows up in the arts at TJ as well. Our band and orchestra students have October concerts coming up, and our wind ensemble will also be performing through the Virginia Music Educators Association. And our fall play this year is Clue. These may not be the first thing someone associates with TJ, but for a lot of students, rehearsal rooms, stages, instruments, and performances are just as much a part of their high school experience as labs and problem sets. And TJ was also recently recognized with a purple star designation reflecting the school's support through military-connected students and families.

[02:48:11] And in November, TJ will hold its first Alumni Hall of Honor induction, which I think is especially meaningful because it gives current students the chance to see the different directions people have taken after leaving our school. One of the recent examples of what students at TJ can do outside of academics is SafeWalker. TJ's students created SafeWalker to address pedestrian safety, and their work has now received attention from both WTOP and the Washington Post.

[02:48:36] What I like about this project is that it started with students noticing a problem around them and deciding that knowing how to solve something should come with a responsibility to actually try, and I think this idea connects TJ back to Loudoun County. TJ is physically in Fairfax County, so sometimes it can feel like Loudoun students who attend TJ exist somewhere between the two school systems.

[02:48:55] We spend our school days in Fairfax, but Loudoun is still our home. We ride LCPS transportation, come back to Loudon every afternoon, volunteer here, work here, participate in our communities here, and bring what we learn at TJ back with us. Being a Loudon student at TJ gives us access to a very unusual and very rewarding educational experience, but it also means we have the responsibility to stay connected to the community that sends us there.

[02:49:17] And everything I've talked about right now shows a school that is much harder to reduce to one year, which is universal to all schools. And what I think I'm getting from this is TJ students are scientists, engineers, musicians, actors, entrepreneurs, and people who deeply care about the communities around them.

[02:49:34] And as one of the Loudoun students lucky enough to call TJ my school, I hope we continue finding ways for that connection to go both directions. For Loudoun students to take advantage of everything TJ offers and for us to keep bringing our ideas, service, and experiences back home to Loudoun. Thank you. Thank you, Rashida, for being here and for sharing your experience with us.

[02:50:03] We will now move on to item number 12, the superintendent's report, which will, of course, be presented tonight by Dr. Aaron Spence, our superintendent. Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the board. As always, it's my pleasure to deliver some good news from around the school division. Starting this evening with students in two LCPS academy programs who recently marked major milestones through white coat ceremonies celebrating the start of their academic and career-focused journeys. On October 6th, the Academy of Science at the Academies of Loudoun welcomed its largest ever freshman class with 190 students beginning a four-year program of

[02:50:38] advanced scientific study. Earlier on September 24th, freshmen in the Health and Medical Sciences Academy received their white coats and recited an oath committing themselves to explore, to learn, to serve, and to grow. While each program has a unique focus, both ceremonies recognize students as they begin pathways that prepare them for future careers in science, health care, and related fields. And we're excited to be able to attend another white coat ceremony this week at the MATA program. Next, LCPS welcome local business and community partners for a roundtable discussion.

[02:51:11] FOCUSED ON THE VIEW TRANSITION ACADEMY SLATED TO OPEN IN THE 2028-29 SCHOOL YEAR. DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO SUPPORT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THIS ACADEMY WILL OFFER SPECIALIZED CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, WORK READINESS, TRAINING, AND INDEPENDENT LIVING EXPERIENCES.

[02:51:26] THE ROUND TABLE PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LCPS STAFF AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO SHARE INFORMATION AND IDEAS ABOUT THE TRANSITION ACADEMY, DISCUSS WORKFORCE NEEDS, AND EXPLORE HOW SCHOOLS AND LOCAL PARTNERS CAN WORK TOGETHER TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS. Participants were able to ask questions and engage in conversations about workforce development and inclusion, including the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities and the critical skills our students need to succeed in today's workforce.

[02:51:55] Next, in honor of Virginia Farm to School Week, the Crunch Herd Round in the Commonwealth took place last Thursday during lunch at all of our LCPS schools. Students had the opportunity to sample Virginia-grown apples from Saunders Brothers Farm Market in Piney River, Virginia. Varieties, including Gala, Ambrosia, Fuji, Johnnagol, Evercrisp and more, were available as a part of this fun taste test.

[02:52:19] Congratulations to Carolyn Harrigan, teacher assistant at the Academies of Loudoun, for being named this month's Shine Award recipient. Ms. Harrigan was nominated by Robert Rimmel, assistant principal at the Academies. In his nomination, he shared that after joining the auto-service classroom this school year to provide targeted support, Ms. Harrigan quickly demonstrated exceptional compassion, dedication, and commitment to her students.

[02:52:43] As a Shine Award recipient, Ms. Harrigan received a gift coordinated by the Loudon Education Foundation and sponsored by Guernsey. Shine, which stands for Spotlighting Heroes in Education, is a partnership between the Loudon Education Foundation and LCPS, recognizing employees who go above and beyond in service to students, schools, and the community.

[02:53:00] Congratulations again to Ms. Harrigan. And then continuing with our recognition of our LEF partners, the Loudoun Education Foundation celebrated the 25th anniversary of its annual golf classic at River Creek on Monday, September the 28th. In addition to raising more than \$150,000 to support LEF's mission, the event highlighted the strong partnership between LEF and LCPS, demonstrating to the business community how their support directly helps create meaningful opportunities for our students.

[02:53:30] And then finally this evening, I'd like to remind everyone that this Thursday, October the 15th, is One LCPS Celebration Day. While we celebrate LCPS every day on One LCPS Celebration Day, we're turning up the spirit. This Thursday, we'll celebrate our incredible students, staff, and teams who make LCPS a great place to learn, work, and grow.

[02:53:50] To join the fun, we're encouraging folks to wear school colors, department shirts, or favorite spirit wear, and show their LCPS pride. Please keep an eye out because I, along with members of my team, will be visiting schools throughout the day to celebrate the amazing work happening across our school division. So let's make it a day full of school spirit and celebration.

[02:54:08] We can't wait to see how our LCPS pride shines. And, Madam Chair, that's the end of my report. Thank you, Dr. Spence. I'm sure we'll all be ready to celebrate. That brings us now to item number 13, public comment. These are our procedures for public comment.

[02:54:24] Thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process. The school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted.

[02:54:40] Based on the number of speakers and the agenda this evening, all speakers have been allotted two minutes each for public comment. Please be advised that speakers who miss their time slot will not be called at a later time. Decorum and civility. All audience members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and dignity of the school board at all times. Please remain seated unless arriving, departing, speaking at the podium, or during a break. Violations of civility, decorum, and respect include shouting, heckling, jeering, applause, or other noise which disrupts or delays the meeting,

[02:55:15] obstructing speakers from being able to see the school board and vice versa, interrupting speakers, attempting to speak when not called to do so by the chair and approaching a speaker or otherwise attempting to intimidate disparage or distract a speaker staff member or other meeting attendees speakers should refrain from vulgarity obscenities defamation profanity and other like breaches of respect nor may speakers target criticize attack individual students and or individual division employees during public comment the school board requests that comments on an individual student or employee related matter not be shared at public meetings where the disclosure could violate

[02:55:54] applicable confidentiality requirements speakers should communicate those concerns to their school principal or an appropriate school official speakers should face the dais and direct their comments to the school board per school board policy 2520 members of the school board will not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period to the extent necessary i will also warn of breaches of decorum civility and respect from attendees prior to taking other actions to preserve the orderly conduct of the meeting violations of decorum or civility by any meeting attendee may result in the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the

[02:56:33] remainder of the meeting repeated or persistent violations of decorum or civility by the audience may result in on the decision of the chair public comment being tabled until a later point in the the meeting's agenda, limiting the number of attendees in the meeting room during public comment for safety reasons or public comment ending for the evening.

[02:56:55] Distribution of materials to school board members. Copies of materials for board members should be given to the public information officer in the media box at the back of the board room before the start of the meeting. Please provide 12 copies of the materials. Under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais.

[02:57:10] The public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through LCPS-TV on 1070HD and Verizon Fios Channel 43. The live stream of the meeting may be viewed on the website. We look forward to hearing your comments. And just because there are some new people in the room tonight, I just wanted to clarify, although we do clap for students and at the earlier part of our meeting, we do not clap during public comment.

[02:57:36] It is traditional for people to do jazz hands if they want to show support, But please, we want to make sure that people can be seen and heard by the school board and ask that you maintain civility and not clap if you agree with something.

[02:57:53] With that, we will now start our virtual public comment. Our first virtual speaker is Laura Thomas, followed by Morgan Cabuzzi. Good evening. Can you hear me?

[02:58:11] Good evening. My name is Laura Thomas. I am the parent of a second grader in the Sanders Corner Dual Language Immersion Community. I'm here tonight because our Spanish DLI program is now in its fourth year. Our oldest students are in third grade. They've spent four years building language proficiency, confidence, and cultural understanding.

[02:58:31] But right now, we don't know where that journey takes them after elementary school. I believe we need to start planning for that now. LCPS has already invested in these students through teachers, curriculum, training, and resources. So as taxpayers, shouldn't we ask not only what will it cost to continue, but also how do we maximize the investment we've already made?

[02:58:53] The research gives us good reason to keep going. A longitudinal study followed 322 students who completed a K-5 Spanish immersion program through high school. They performed as well or better than non-DLI students in English language arts and math, and nearly half earned a seal of biliteracy.

[02:59:10] Another study found that an additional cost of DLI was relatively modest, about 2-4% of per-pupil spending, while finding positive academic outcomes associated with the investment. So this isn't simply enrichment, it's an academic investment, and there's very loud and reason to continue it.

[02:59:29] Our county is part of a global economy. We have international businesses, technology, and aerospace industries, federal contractors, and Dulles connecting us to the world. Our county's own economic development strategy recognizes education as part of building our future workforce.

[02:59:45] Our students deserve the opportunity to graduate not only prepared for Loudoun, but prepared for the world. These children started this journey in kindergarten. Let's not stop at fifth grade. Let's establish a pathway through middle and high school, protect the investment our community has already made, and give these students the opportunity to finish what they started.

[03:00:04] Thank you. Thank you. Our next virtual speaker is Morgan Cabuzzi, followed by Brett Brown. Good evening. My name is Morgan Cabuzzi, and I'm a former English teacher, the founder of the Loudoun County Balance Project, and an LCPS parent.

[03:00:22] Tonight, I am asking the board to make educational technology more intentional in LCPS by implementing the following. Banning YouTube and Spotify on student devices, expanding the Smart Start pilot through sixth grade, and establishing a tech audit committee. First, LCPS students need stronger online safeguards.

[03:00:41] YouTube and Spotify raise legitimate concerns about age-inappropriate content, advertisements, recommendations, distractions, and exposure that content filters cannot fully block. Our county could ban these sites on student accounts and still enable teachers to share educational videos with students, as many districts like FCPS have already done.

[03:01:01] Our students deserve to learn in a safe environment free from these unnecessary and harmful distractions. Second, LCPS needs to implement evidence-based use of technology. The Smart Start pilot should be expanded through at least 6th grade, as hands-on learning and development do not stop at 2nd grade.

[03:01:18] In addition, the new elementary school weekly testing deserves a critical review. Testing reading one day per week deprives students of one reading lesson per week, and testing on computers makes low-tech curricula near impossible. Students cannot make great gains or losses between weekly testing. It is more disruptive to their learning than informative for their teachers.

[03:01:37] Finally, LCPS needs greater curriculum transparency by creating a full tech audit committee that includes parents and educators. Every LCPS-approved online platform needs to be re-evaluated for safety, privacy, and educational value, as there are currently over 400 pages of approved apps for parents to sift through.

[03:01:56] We cannot help our children learn when we don't know what they're learning, or worse, entrust their learning to for-profit edtech companies who do their own audits. Technology and testing in our schools must enhance learning, not undermine it. - Thank you. - Thank you. Our final virtual speaker this evening is Brett Brown.

[03:02:19] - Hi, good evening, can you hear me? - Yes. - Yes. - Hey, good evening. So my name is Brett Brown. I'm an LCPS parent of four young children. And after listening to the last meeting, I keep coming back to one thing about special permissions and why it should not be phased out.

[03:02:34] At the last meeting, I heard the word perception come up often, along with whether all our schools are great. And I'm confused why perception is even part of the discussion. LCPS parents can believe in our schools and still know every school environment may not work for every child. It does not have to be one or the other. My eldest daughter attended Sanders Corner before DLI came there. She had the usual ups and downs, but nothing that fundamentally disrupted her experience. My younger daughter started there after DLI came to Sanders. Now, with fewer traditional classrooms, we saw more behavioral and support challenges concentrated in my daughter's classroom. That was the environment she was trying to learn in. My younger daughter stopped wanting

[03:03:12] to go to school because of that environment. And when she wasn't in school, she wasn't learning. Same school, same family, two very different experiences for our daughters. And if we're serious

about being inclusive, families have to count too. Special permissions are one way. LCPS shows the families count. That should not be taken away. Currently, our daughter is attending Belmont Station and has never been happier about going to school again. So really, my wife and I are very adamant against taking away special permissions from any and all students in LCPS.

[03:03:46] Thank you. - Thank you. We'll move on now to in-person speakers. Our first speaker is Carmen Pond, followed by Judy Lee.

[03:04:02] - Hi, it's good to see you all again. Tonight you get two for one. I brought you a sibling, in case anyone needs to be reminded who you're making policy for. I agree with the speaker before me. I'm here also to speak about special permission. I'm here to kindly ask you all tonight support board member Pepper's amendment on siblings. I really want to thank him for listening to concerned parents like me and acting on that concern. Tonight I'm kindly asking all of you to act on the concerns of parents like mine and others of my parents, fellow parents in the back. Let me be clear because I think there was some confusion at the last board meeting on the debate about transportation. We are not asking for LCPS to provide transportation for

[03:04:41] students who are now in special permission and we're not asking for LCPS to provide transportation for their siblings if they were to go to the same school. We do that. We commit to that. I wanted to underline that good policy making is done without unnecessarily shocking the system, allowing younger siblings to attain the same school as their older sibling as this new policy takes hold, would phase out the current special permission, as I know some of you really want, over time without creating significant hardships to families like mine. Trying to undo a policy that is more than 50 years old in just one year is not good policymaking. I've also seen concerns from LCPS staff that adding

[03:05:21] the siblings provision now would create hardship for them. I do trust that the board can find smart ways to avoid that, and if not, I do think it's worth delaying the implementation of the new policy to the 2028 school year to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Thank you. Thank you. Our next speaker is Judy Lee, followed by Melanie Carreras. Good evening, members of the board. My name is Judy Lee. I live in Peace Plantation in Sterling, and my oldest is a kindergartner at Algonquian Elementary. We love it there. We have two younger siblings who will start school over the next few

[03:05:58] years. My hope is that you will view us as real families with real emotions, varying circumstances, and not just numbers on a spreadsheet. My kindergartner doesn't know what an attendance zone is, but she knows her teacher's name and loves her, the friends she sits with at lunch, the school that feels like her home. I had to ask you to consider why our situation is also a bit different from a typical transfer request. Our address is split, our zoned elementary school sits in a different cluster than our zoned middle and high schools. Choosing Algonquian keeps our children with the classmates they will grow up alongside through the 12th grade. We are not trying

[03:06:37] to leave our community, we're trying to stay in it from the start. With three kids we also want them at the same elementary school, having them at two different schools or moving one partway through would be hard on them and on us so as you finalize policy 8155 and the new maps please consider letting students already enrolled stay at their school giving younger siblings a path to join them and recognizing split feeder addresses as a legitimate reason for an out of zone placement thank you for your time and service to our students and

[03:07:08] communities thank you our next speaker is melanie carreras followed by catherine marlow good evening madam chair members of the school board and superintendent spence thank you for taking the time to hear from families in your community my name is melanie carreras and i am an lcps i'm a parent of lcps students on special permission under policy 8155 i have seen my children and other students on special permission thrive and grow and put down deep

[03:07:44] roots at their school they have formed strong positive bonds with their teachers school staff and friends. They love their school and are looking forward to attending with siblings and graduating with friends. First, I would like to ask that you please maintain the amendment to grant current special permission students the opportunity to finish out at their current school and also support an amendment to allow siblings a chance to stay together. If special permission does go away, please land the plane smoothly considering there are real people on board as Mr. Pepper so aptly put it at the last meeting.

[03:08:19] Second, I would like to point out that special permission has been a lifeline to many students I've heard about that really needed it due to unresolved issues at their zone school. Please look into schools with higher rates of students leaving on special permission and really prioritize resolving any issues so that each student can feel safe, valued, and cared about at school.

[03:08:42] Third, I would like to emphasize that special permission students do not utilize LCPS transportation or put schools at over capacity so they are not a huge burden on the school system please don't think of special permission as a hardship but truly listen to families when determining what is in the best interests of the students of loudon county thank you very much thank you um our next speaker is katherine marlow followed by evan thornton good evening members of the board my name is katherine marlow and i'm a parent of two still children one currently attends lcps schools and receive a special exemption and the other one will join LCPS in two years to start

[03:09:21] kindergarten. I'm here this evening to ask you to keep the Adizone transfer for those students who currently have it and to grandfather siblings of students who have it. I'll tell you why this is personal. My child was a student with an IEP at Adizone School in Countryside. They broke IEP law numerous times after pointing it out to them. We then received special exemption when my kid was moved to from countryside elementary school to a golfer in elementary school where she's loved appreciated received personalized education and has thrived each year we go through the anxiety written process of applying for an

[03:09:59] out-of-school school zone knowing there's a chance that she could go back to our zone school where harm has already been done I now have a younger child will soon be in school age and I'm told they're gonna they could possibly attend the same school zone that's failed their sibling a school where harm has been done to not only my child but several of the families, numerous IEP violations at Contreras Elementary School, multiple cases of lost children, including where a parent had to take their child to their ER room to confirm with their child if it's sexually assaulted or not, refusal to work with parents, lack of communication, lack of teacher accountability, and lack of administration by the school board and administration at Contreras Elementary

[03:10:39] School is what we're dealing with, and this is why we request special exemption. Only recently did the school board say would investigate countryside after a group of parents, including myself, advocated for this for several months. I appreciate the investigation that will occur, but an investigation is a first step, not a result.

[03:10:59] We're still waiting for answers and a report. Until there's a real fix, I cannot and can constantly send my children to country elementary school, and therefore, my children and several other families need special exemption, or as we now call it, out-of-zone transfers, to consider to keep grandfathering siblings and special exam. Thank you. Thank you. Our next speaker is Evan Thornton, followed by Nicole Scott. I'm in the Algonquian district, so Ms. Chandler and Ms. Donahue, you guys are my

[03:11:37] representatives. My son is a kindergartner with a documented medical condition. He's zoned for Meadowland and goes to Algonquian on special permission. In pre-K, he gravitated to the highest energy kids in the room, and it set him back. At Algonquian, his teacher taught him words that make friends instead of pushing kids away and when he drifts she hands him a job. It's working. On item 1401 policy 8155, the clean copy has no renewal provision for elementary students. Every year's new application under one of six reasons. The only one that fits my son, of course, is emotional or social adjustment and it

[03:12:12] requires a hardship at his school and proof we exhausted its resources. For a kid that's doing fine at Algonquian, that means going back to Meadowland, struggling enough to build a record and then applying to come back. Section F paragraph one is the only thing that spares him that. It passed five to four with a rider making it subject to the capacity conditions of the policy. One question before you vote. If Algonquian's first grade is over 85% of capacity next year, does my son lose his seat? It's a privilege, not a right, and I'm not asking for a guarantee. If the answer is yes, say so, so families can

[03:12:50] plan. If not, measure capacity when you grant the seat, not every year after. And since his reason is medical, please put medical back into section D. Your own form still states that. Ms. Donahue, you seconded the rider. I ask you to please look at what it does to a child who's already in the seat and whether that's what you meant. Thank you. Thank you. Our next speaker is Nicole Scott,

[03:13:18] followed by Jaden Scott. Good evening. My name is Nicole Scott and I'm the proud mother of a sophomore at Loudoun County High School. I'm changing the topic a little bit and kind of focusing on the Naval Junior ROTC program that they have. So my son has dreamed of attending the United States Naval Academy and then following up with serving in the Navy since he was about six years old. When he entered high school, he was offered placement at both the Academies of

[03:13:57] Loudoun and in the NGROTC program. But because we live outside of Loudoun County High School's zone, he couldn't pursue both. So at 14 years old, he made an incredibly difficult decision to turn down the academies because NGROTC was his passion and he knew what future service meant to him in the grand scheme of things. So that's what I'm really asking you to preserve, the opportunity for a child to demonstrate something and how much it matters to them.

[03:14:29] And JROTC teaches leadership, character, discipline, service, and commitment. A strong unit depends on cadets willing to live those values and contribute to its success. And that success matters beyond competition's recognition.

[03:14:47] The United States Naval Academy allows Navy JROTC units to nominate candidates for admission, With additional nomination opportunities available to units designated honor units with distinction, which Loudoun County High School has.

[03:15:03] So the strength of this program can help create opportunities for the very students it's preparing to serve. I'm not suggesting that selection through lottery lacks passion. I'm asking that we give

each applicant the opportunity to demonstrate it. Going back to a comment made earlier this evening, how success factors are customized for its schools.

[03:15:22] That's what we're really asking. we wanna make sure that each child has the opportunity to demonstrate why they deserve to be an NGROTC. Thank you. - Thank you. Our next speaker is Jaden Scott followed by Lori Conti.

[03:15:48] - Good evening, my name is Jaden Scott and I'm currently a sophomore at Launa County High School and a member of the ROTC program. I've always wanted to attend the United States Naval Academy and serve for as long as I can remember. I participated in the Naval Academy Summer STEM program, track camp and leadership camp for many years in the past.

[03:16:06] and each experience has made me more certain that this is the path that I want to take. Military service is also very personal to me. I have a lot of family members that served in nearly every single branch as far, as I can go back. And I grew up understanding that service means commitment, sacrifice, and being a part of something bigger than yourself.

[03:16:29] In NGROTC, I participate in arm drill, color guard, academic, uniform and personnel inspection, physical training, and admin. I give a lot of time to this program because I want to be here. Because I live outside the attendance zone for Lana County High School, I had to apply and interview for my spot.

[03:16:50] I had to show that I wanted this opportunity, and honestly, I'm proud that I've earned it. NGRTC teaches us leadership, character, discipline, and commitment. I think students should have the opportunity to demonstrate those same qualities when applying.

[03:17:07] A lottery can choose a name, but it can't measure commitment. Please give students the chance show why they want to be here and what they're willing to contribute thank you for your time thank you our next speaker is laurie conti followed by juan hernandez good evening my name is laurie conti and i'm the full-time librarian at rosalie carter elementary school i'm here to highlight how rlc's current library staffing affects student literacy please watch

[03:17:46] for a follow-up email with more details teaming with a half-time itinerant librarian we serve over 700 students in 33 classes each week for a 50-minute lesson and checkout time. This schedule means we must co-teach 10 double classes. That puts 50 elementary students anywhere from K to 5 in the library at once. Large crowded sessions make read-alouds, library skills instruction,

[03:18:25] and individualized reader advisory significantly harder. This full schedule also eliminates open checkout times, book clubs, classroom collaboration, and library collection maintenance.

[03:18:45] Strong library staffing drives literacy growth. Librarians are teachers with vast experience and resources to elevate student achievement at every level. During budget considerations, please increase library staffing to meet elementary literacy needs.

[03:19:09] Adding a second full-time librarian at larger elementary schools like RLC will ensure all students receive the literacy support they deserve. Thank you. Thank you.

[03:19:26] Our next speaker is Juan Hernandez, followed by Marina Cluiz. So I had written down what I was going to say, but I'd rather just speak from the heart. So I'm a parent of a fourth grader at Algonquin Elementary.

[03:19:42] We're on special permission, and it's been the best decision that we've made. It's a night and day difference. We made the move when our oldest was in fourth grade. He's now a freshman, and it's the best. Algonquin is such a community. You just heard from Ms. Pond, who chairs International Night.

[03:20:00] You heard from Melanie, who chairs Thank You, Thankful for Staff Thanksgiving. I just finished serving two years as the PTA treasurer. We have another mom who's chairing Halloween Monster Mash, and as much of the community that the parents have, it's nothing compared to the community that the kids have.

[03:20:20] I'm asking you to vote to allow special permission to continue. The kids need that structure, they need that community that they've built over the years. Thank you. marina klusis followed by shannon madden good evening school board members thank you for having me my name is marina klusis tonight i urge the board to leave policy 8155 mostly intact and

[03:20:55] reject the effort to restrict 56 years of foundational policy our family is proof of what special permission does best it brings invested families into public education we were a private school family. We chose LCPS this year specifically because special permission allowed our daughter to attend a school that could meet her academic needs. The zone school could not offer a full cohort of double accelerated math peers, which would have placed a sixth grade girl

[03:21:28] in class with eighth grade boys. The transfer school gave her a full cohort of age-level peers where she is challenged, supported, and isn't stigmatized. Special permission brought our family into LCPS.

[03:21:45] This board claims that eliminating transfers solves an administrative burden on a three-person staff. And that workload is real, but the diagnosis is backwards. Roughly 70% of those 3,000 applications come from already settled families forced to reapply every spring.

[03:22:05] LCPS cannot solve paperwork problem by evicting children. Solve it through operational reform, automate renewals, and grant feeder cluster approvals. The 85% capacity cap that was enacted 10 months ago has already cut approvals by 18%. It hasn't even been allowed one full cycle to work. Give this time before enacting more changes. Lastly, while LCPS spends months seeking public feedback on calendar tweaks, This 56-year-old policy was compressed into weeks with amendments dropped days ago.

[03:22:40] The community deserves to be involved. Families have built their daily lives, careers, and houses around these establishments. Thank you. Our next speaker is Shannon Madden, followed by Melissa Larson. Good evening.

[03:23:02] My name is Shannon Madden. My son is in kindergarten at Legacy Elementary, and I'm also with the Balance Project. I stand behind everything that Morgan said earlier about removing YouTube from student devices, as well as the need for a tech audit committee and ensuring that any regular assessments do not occur at the expense of actual learning.

[03:23:25] I've kept my son's early childhood intentionally low-tech, and it prepared him very well for kindergarten. This year, he had his first experience with a one-to-one device in school. His school is not part of the Smart Start pilot, though his principal has assured me that they're taking a balanced approach anyway, which is very hopeful.

[03:23:46] But the opportunity to maintain a balanced approach should be available to all students, not just a select few. Technology is a powerful tool and ubiquitous in our society, but in these formative years, children need time to engage with the world around them and master the basics first before working primarily on screens, using AI tools and having full access to the boundless information of the Internet, the good, the bad, and the ugly.

[03:24:14] My hope for my son and all LCPS students, in which I'm sure I'm not alone, is that their schools will protect their attention spans and creativity through hands-on learning, as well as give them ample opportunity to work things out on paper and read physical books.

[03:24:31] So today, I'm asking the board to expand the Smart Start pilot to every school, not just a select few, and to extend it through sixth grade, because hands-on learning doesn't stop at second grade. Technology should enhance learning, not replace the fundamentals that make it possible.

[03:24:47] Thank you. Thank you. Our next speaker is Melissa Larson, followed by Greg Northart.

[03:25:01] Good evening, members of the board. Tonight, I'm speaking on behalf of our elementary school librarians and the Loudon Association of School Librarians to share how library staffing shortages are negatively impacting instructional quality and academic programming across our district.

[03:25:25] Librarians are certified instructional specialists who manage thousands of resources, support classroom curriculum, and lay the foundation for lifelong learning. Yet, libraries are often staffed far below other special area subjects like art, music, and physical education, despite librarians managing both a full teaching schedule and an entire physical collection.

[03:25:55] However, severe staffing constraints severely impair our ability to deliver a comprehensive instructional program. In schools forced into biweekly schedules due to staffing cuts, instructional continuity breaks down.

[03:26:11] Multipart research projects that should take two lessons end up stretching across an entire month, and six weeks units drag on for 12 weeks, draining student momentum and engagement.

[03:26:26] Furthermore, when librarians are scheduled with back-to-back classes to cover teacher planning time, authentic collaboration and co-teaching on project-based learning and STEM units are eliminated. High-impact collaborative instruction simply cannot be sustained under reduced staffing.

[03:26:47] When schools attempt to maintain weekly visits without adequate staff, libraries are forced into overcrowded double classes of over 50 students sharing the space at once. Beyond lessened diversity, staffing shortages leave librarians with little time for student book clubs, author visits, makerspaces, or other initiatives.

[03:27:06] Please address library staffing during the creation of the budget. Thank you. Our last speaker this evening is Greg Northart. All right.

[03:27:23] It looks like that concludes our public comment period for this evening. Thank you all for coming out today and providing your public comment. The board will convene a short recess. We will come back at 8.05.

[03:35:51] coming out of recess we will move on with our next item next up we have action items our first action item is number 14.01 student services committee revised policy 8155 out of zone school transfers mr pepper would you like to kick us off this evening yes madam chair um i believe we need to remove this.

So I move that the Loudoun County School Board adopt revised policy 8155 auto zone school transfers. Thank you. Mr. Pepper has made a motion that has been properly seconded

[03:36:31] by Vice Chair Donahue. Mr. Pepper, would you like to speak further to your motion? So we began this process in May in Student Services Committee and it has come out of committee and it's gone to the school board now twice. Once on information, then on action last week, it was some amendments were made. It was pushed forward to this week. This is a revision of policy 8155 specifying the regulations and rules for students who wish to attend a school outside of their assigned

[03:37:01] attendance. Thank you. Mr. Pepper? I'm sure I have some amendments too. I do believe we have a presentation this evening. Should we start with a presentation? Why don't we start with that and then we'll get into the amendments. Ms. Richardson, Mr. Nolson, please the floor is yours. Good evening Chair Chandler, Vice Chair Donohue, board members, and Dr. Spence. We are here yet again to present

[03:37:35] to you policy 8155 for action. This presentation is just a highlight of some of the policy amendments from the September 22nd school board meeting. We've included those amendments. The next three slide highlight those amendments in yellow based on the individual board members suggested amendment.

[03:37:55] Each of these amendments was moved and passed as they appear in the slides. The first one you see is the Bricardi Amendment. The second, you know, you're fine. The second slide indicates Mr. Svensson's amendment. And the third slide does indicate Mr. Pepper's first round of amendments that were moved and passed.

[03:38:18] The last slide in this presentation, and then we will certainly open it up for questions, is just some of our staff wonders and feedback. So currently, our friends in the Department of Digital Innovation are preparing for what we call the NYR, the next year rollover.

[03:38:37] That actually starts tomorrow for, if you can imagine, the 27, 28 school year. So we're already preparing for that. That is based on a series of layers upon layers upon layers of business logic that, as you can imagine, those of you in that kind of an industry where logic is very important in how businesses are run, so are they within a school division of our size.

[03:39:00] So the logic models that our friends in DDI really build upon the success rate of how we move kids from one grade level to the next, one school to the next, based on those logic. So we just gave you a quick if-then kind of scenario for you to consider as you're having your discussion for this evening.

[03:39:21] So if our logic is altered right now, for example, we are considering, you are considering, I should say, adding sibling provisions to the special permission policy at this stage. We want to be transparent with you and to the members of LCPS, to be quite frank, as a parent myself, I would wanna know this.

[03:39:45] There is a risk of data integrity. Altering that logic now increases the complexity and the risks to data accuracy. Secondly, the capacity and planning time constraints. Those of you that were on the board this time last year do recall, I will just use a word, and I'm certainly not trying to conflate anything, but the severe difficulty it posed on staff when we made a decision in December to implement the new policy as it's written currently.

[03:40:19] It was a huge undertaking for, I'll just say, name it, for my office and the planning office. It also will be complicated with our attendance zone and boundary change conversations that I know you all are in the midst of. And Thursday night, I think, begins that process for you.

[03:40:36] And then lastly, the operational impact. Any changes are going to be difficult, but the changes during this time frame may result if our friends in in department of digital innovation cannot find a technical solution for us it may require us to do manual entry which will impact also planning and budget if those data errors are found and i get i do want to emphasize that adding siblings will make elementary school reassignments more likely

[03:41:12] depending on where you are mainly right now in some of the the attendance zones that you're considering for rezoning it may be resolved with the attendance rezone but it may not and so the likelihood currently we do have some schools that are going through school reassignment right now for families that are moving into those communities they are having to reassign based on students attending that are out of that that attendance zone and that is my presentation and

[03:41:46] I am certainly welcome to answer any questions Ms. Richardson and I are here thank you for the presentation Ms. Riccardi thank you madam chair so I have just some data questions we may not have the answers to but I would like to just ask them because I know last meeting we had a presentation about the schools or the districts and the numbers of students and I think I mean the Sterling district Eastern District has a significant number of people that are moving out or getting special permission to go elsewhere it

[03:42:25] dramatically impacts funding for our title one schools for the students that stay there and I'm very concerned about the fact that you know in particular in my district I have schools that have significant numbers of students that are moving out which impacts money which impacts resources impacts the number of teachers we have if that gets magnified significantly with younger siblings if we have that policy come into play have we looked at the number if we expanded the current students out to all of their siblings assuming we know what that

[03:43:02] headcount is do we have a number or a ballpark number of how many students that would be and then impact on the different districts and what that looks like? So, Mr. Carty, your memory serves you correct. We did the data slides that we presented last meeting were that sort of preemptively thinking that you might, you and your colleagues might ask that question. If siblings that were already of, let me rephrase that, if siblings of students who were already on special permission, we'll use Sterling Middle School, for example,

[03:43:38] if every student that was special permission out of Sterling Middle School had a sibling that also wanted to be special permissioned out what would that what would those numbers look like we did pull that data I can tell you just because of the numbers in my head right now sterling middle school has 15 percent of its students population being special permissioned out Parkview high school has 14 percent of its students population being special permissioned out so I don't have the elementary numbers in my head but I do have the middle school and the high school for the park

[03:44:13] So if we're talking, let's just say 100, 150 students, we're talking, that's a number of classrooms, I don't know what the staffing standard is for middle and high school, I know elementary is 20, I believe, right, so we're talking potentially five, four to five classrooms worth of Title I English learner potential support that we wouldn't be able to get.

[03:44:40] Yeah, I don't have those numbers in front of me, but you're looking at a significant amount of staffing. You're exactly right. And the student-to-teacher ratios are a little bit different in a secondary school just because of the number of classes that students take.

[03:44:56] But you're exactly right. The way staffing is done is based on the number of students that are attending as well as the courses that they are taking. And so, you know, there may be some schools that can't offer certain courses because they don't have the students that are asking for those courses.

[03:45:13] Okay. And so, middle school and high school have the ability to disperse students across different courses, different programs that we offer. What does that look like at the elementary school level when you're pulling, you know, let's say it's a two-child family.

[03:45:31] Like, if I pulled one of my children out and brought the second one with, and I have five elementary schools in Sterling Park itself. If we start taking siblings out too, what does that look like? 'Cause that impacts the whole classroom number, not just a course throughout the day.

[03:45:51] - So Ms. Richardson was able to find the chart from last time, if you recall, what we did is we broke it up by your voting districts, and then in the Eastern Loudoun we did Dominion, we did the Dominion cluster, the Parkview cluster, and the Potomac Falls cluster all together.

[03:46:08] So there were a total of 59 possible siblings that could move out of the Dominion cluster. There were 102 siblings out of the Parkview cluster and then a total of 96 out of the Potomac Falls cluster for a total of 257 possible siblings that would be able to special permission out of those cluster schools.

[03:46:34] not knowing exactly where those siblings attend and that really truly is the difficulty once you get out of middle school or I'm sorry elementary because many of our I shouldn't say many we have 18 of our elementary schools that feed more than one middle school so it's very hard for me to predict the staffing challenges that you're presenting but but you're you're exactly right there's really no way to predict where that staffing might go with the exception of saying that would create holes in school buildings because you wouldn't have students and you wouldn't have staff needed in those schools?

[03:47:13] So I appreciate wanting to keep children together. I mean, that was a big issue for me when my kids were in school. So I get that and that desire. I'm really concerned about the impact on our most vulnerable schools and those students and the impact that it's going to have on and we're working really hard right now on staffing and making sure that we've got the right staffing blends for our English learner schools our title one schools I'm really concerned about

[03:47:50] that impact and on just so many levels because if we are continuing to allow not only the special permission but siblings now too coming along it's it's going to really take things backwards in my view at least as I anticipated. If I could just comment on what you said, the presentation that was done here tonight from Sterling Middle School really took me back because of the fantastic staffing that I was afforded as the former principal of Parkview High School for all of the reasons that you're saying. I was not able to, we were not able to get to the place that Parkview

[03:48:28] is now and was when I was service principal because of not having enough staff we were there was a need that the school board saw and that differentiated staffing that is was lauded this evening by the instructional coach and and basically she said this is how we are doing what we are doing and to again to mr. Frew's leadership but that is exactly how you get great schools to become great schools um there's a lot of research out there that that suggests um you know it is not

[03:49:02] the zip code from where you live it is it is the the actions of the teachers and the leaders within the school building um and you can build a great school culture and a great school community no matter where you are um but you've got to have the fortitude to want to do that and um you know i think we're fortunate to work in a school division that that has that no matter um where you attend school um so i would just echo what what you all heard this this evening from both of the schools cool spring and and sterling middle school but specifically sterling middle school because the instructional coach made a um a very poignant comment about the staffing model that's there

[03:49:44] vice chair donahue thank you madam chair um mr dolson when you're referring to those 200 students from the parkview cluster uh some of those are likely siblings already special permissioned elsewhere i would have guessed no no ma'am we should we when we look at the data now again recall this was from the september 8th um this is from the 22nd but the questions that posed were given to us on september the 8th i believe and we came up with um this data set that we pulled quite quickly um but this is to the best of our ability um these 257 students from dominion park

[03:50:23] View and Potomac Falls clusters have siblings that are on special permission but those 257 are not on special permission so they are attending a school within those clusters and that is their zone school if that makes sense.

[03:50:41] So it could be a student that for example is on special permission at River Bend Middle School but they are attending Sterling Elementary School and they live in the Park View cluster. Okay, thank you. That is helpful to know. Although, having sat on several of the special permission appeals over my time here, we do get those requests from parents, right?

[03:51:02] There's, because previously there hasn't been a basis that requires a reason for special permission, particularly, but we have seen requests for special permission come in from families who want their, a younger sibling to go to the same school as an older sibling. Correct. Yes, we have.

[03:51:19] Thank you. Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to point out again that we've had this policy for many years. I might vote for amendments today that make sense, but with potential school closures due to low enrollment, I think policy 8155 permissions provides freedom and flexibility for our parents at our schools. It is a great opportunity that we offer here in Loudoun County.

[03:51:52] parents should have the choice to send their students to the schools of their own reasoning if capacity allows. As taxpayers even, permissions is a great opportunity that we offer to the people of Loudoun County. And unfortunately, I see that this policy is being phased out and I do not agree with that direction. I believe it continues to provide meaningful benefits to our families and students, for these reasons, I can't vote for it. It's a great opportunity. We've had it for many years, and I can't imagine taking this great opportunity away from the people

[03:52:30] of Loudoun County. Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Spenson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Dolson, you made a reference to a distinction between elementary school and secondary school in terms of how you're accounting for siblings and the math and the logic that goes into those preparation. So could you explain a little bit about why it's less complicated on the elementary level and more complicated on the secondary level? Absolutely. So it's actually easy. It's the opposite. So I'll just give you a quick mathematical. So a middle school and a high school

[03:53:07] student normally has five to six teachers. An elementary school student has one teacher. So by sheer math, you're accounting for a student to teacher ratio that is, you know, one to 23, one to 24, 1 to 20. Whereas within a high school or a middle school, you've got multiple teachers that are teaching English, that are teaching science, that are teaching math, and those students are rotating through those classes. What the challenge really becomes in a high school, and I'll just use myself as an example, is I had to make sure that I had enough students wanting to take AP chemistry

[03:53:44] in order to run a section of it to where i felt like i was using my staffing um fairly and judiciously whereas you know maybe students that struggled in math i wanted to make sure that my algebra one numbers were a little bit lower whereas if you're a principal of an elementary school and you've got five fifth grade teachers you're trying to evenly distribute those 150 students across five teachers and that probably wasn't the right math but i was a former english teacher not a math teacher so thank you that's helpful yeah thank you i'm sure enough thank you

[03:54:20] madam chair just to piggyback after mr svensson's question and i do appreciate the clarification that is happening around us particularly elementary as we know the amendments are forthcoming if that was a place where we wanted to find middle ground with siblings would the capacity measure protect the title one situations so that we can maintain the class sizes that are appropriate to to maintain that funding would they also protect the staffing better I know it's not perfect allowing it at all cause disruption I think to class numbers and

[03:54:58] making sure that kids can stay in their zone school and getting bumped out but what a capacity threshold for siblings as well help to minimize some of that so at an elementary level staffing is it's I mean I'm just gonna answer the staffing is staffing right 85% is 85% I my main concern really and truly is is the school reassignment you all can set 85% as the threshold and we will look at you know making sure that our grade levels are at that level that's

[03:55:36] that's my main concern only because it is very difficult when you have a family that is moving from North Carolina and they have chosen Loudoun County for a specific reason and they've chosen move they've chosen to move into a specific neighborhood for a specific reason and a lot of times it is because of a school and they go to enroll and they find out that they have to be bused to a school you know across the street or to a school that is and it's not it's because there are students that are attending there that really should be attending their their home school I think that's the the biggest concern that I have

[03:56:15] taking title one out taking all of the other things those are important we can we can work around those situations in the sense that you know again the numbers are the numbers but what we're dealing with right now are in some cases a number of students that are at a school an elementary school in particular that you're looking at probably four classrooms of students that should be attending a school other than their their zone their zone school I appreciate

[03:56:49] that thank you mr. Svensson thank you madam chair this is a point of information point of inquiry just for clarification for all of us that what the motion that's on the floor is as amended thus far this is a continuation of our previous meeting just wanted to confirm that yes that's correct Ms. LaBelle I'd like to go back to Mr. Dolson's example of schools and our 85%

[03:57:23] limit and I remember when we first started it and it wasn't in May Mr. pepper it was three years ago we've been working on this particular policy the policy that lives forever that's what I call it one of the

schools that I had had 90 out of district out of zone students and we counted that up if you have a limit of you know 25 to a classroom 90 schools I'm sorry 90

[03:58:01] students puts five extra classrooms full of students that do not live in the school zone that they are attending. And of course, out in Western Latin, we were experiencing growth at the time. We had a lot of people moving out there, absolutely shocked, looking around at the open spaces, thinking, why can't my student go to the school where they're supposed to go? How are they going to make friends? What's going to happen? And that is a consequence of this policy of

[03:58:37] special permissions. We had, as I said, five classrooms full of students that didn't belong in that school zone. So again, looking at what Mrs. Riccardi is looking at in Sterling or in the other school that most of our 90 students came from which was down in Little River you know we're emptying out schools to overstuff other schools and not leaving room for the people who are moving in or who have students who actually belong in those schools and that is a concern for

[03:59:16] me that's a big concern thank you Madam Chair I'm going to make some amendments it's a better discussion all right i'm going to begin with a very simple one i move to move slash relocate the language that is currently reflected in lines 206 to 233 of the red line

[03:59:51] versions these are the lines dealing with vhs1 considerations to the second numbered paragraph under what is currently reflected as section H under considerations and renumber the subsequent sections accordingly.

[04:00:10] 233. The red line, the new red line. Oh, did that change?

[04:00:30] The old red line, I apologize. It's the original red line then. Oh, could we, Mr. Pepper, look at which version of the document we're all looking at? So we are going to be on, so now it's not the original red line, it's the new red line.

[04:00:49] I took the, I will change the line numbers. I apologize. Okay, thank you. It is going to be on VHSL. I'm sorry, just a second, please. Before we start, I just want to make sure that we're all looking at the same document. So are we looking at policy 8155, out-of-zone school transfers, new red line dated 9-22-26?

[04:01:11] Yes, ma'am. Okay, great. Thank you. And then could you please state the line number? - It is going to be 228 to 255, gotta be seconded.

[04:01:43] - Okay, well Mr. Pepper, could you restate-- I will restate the amendment, ma'am, thank you. So I move to relocate the languages currently reflected in lines 228 to 255 of the red line version dealing with VHSL considerations as the second number paragraph under what is currently reflected as section H, other considerations, and renumber the subsequent sections accordingly.

[04:02:05] Okay. Mr. Pepper has made a motion. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Svensson. Mr. Pepper, would you like to speak further to your motion? Yes. This is just cleaning up because I did not feel that the section of VHSL transfers belonged under rezoning and instead felt it was more appropriate under other considerations for this policy.

[04:02:25] Okay. Board members, is there any discussion? Yes. I know. Sure enough. We've all been battling the ick. It's all good. Can I just ask staff what the original reasoning was for having it in that section?

[04:02:48] And is there any detriment to relocating it? I do not see any detriment of relocating it, no. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. All right, any further discussion? All right, let's move forward with the vote.

[04:03:05] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Yes, Mr. Pepper, could you please restate the motion? I move that we, I got to reopen it again. move to relocate the language that is currently reflected in lines 228 to 255 of the red line version dealing with VHSL considerations as the second numbered paragraph under what is currently reflected as section H, other considerations, and renumber the subsequent sections accordingly.

[04:03:38] Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion passes unanimously with all nine board members present for the vote. Okay, Mr. Pepper. Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay, I move to insert a new section with the following language after the newly added section F. This would be section G and it is going to be entitled siblings of students who attend an out-of-zone school and it will read as follows. Students with an older sibling who is attending an out-of-zone elementary school in accordance with this policy will be afforded the opportunity to attend the

[04:04:17] same elementary school that their older sibling is then currently attending subject to the conditions set forth within this policy, the younger sibling may voluntarily remain at the elementary school through completion. Thank you. Mr. Pepper has made a motion. Is there a second?

[04:04:35] Second. Thank you. Vice Chair Donohue. Mr. Pepper, would you like to speak further to your motion? Yes, Madam Chair. So I believe that this amendment is a good compromise, particularly as those students at the elementary level are the ones with the most significant need for child care transportation more so than those of the middle secondary school it only extends to the elementary school students and over time I understand the concern that miss Richardson and mr. Dolson put forth but over time this number of students should trickle and trickle and trickle down till eventually the families have

[04:05:14] aged out and this section is no longer really going to be used or in effect thank you it has been properly moved and seconded is there any discussion on mr. pepper's motion miss LaBelle thank you madam chair I have a question these elementary siblings their older sibling gets to middle school whether it's their regular zoned middle school or special permission middle school does the sibling also have that opportunity to go to one of the two or do they go to

[04:05:48] their zoned middle school at that point I'm sorry mr. pepper would you like to direct that was this for me or for staff i i wasn't sure who miss labell was addressing i i believe the way that it i'm asking you what your motion is going to the way that i read it and miss ewing can correct me if i'm wrong the way that i read it this is only at the elementary level so once the student attends the middle school that special permission does not apply anymore the student may finish at the elementary but does not guarantee the right to continue at the middle school if the

[04:06:24] sibling goes to special permission okay thank you very much that's what i wanted to know thank you for the clarification. Any further discussion? Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to offer a friendly amendment to my friend Mr. Pepper. It just sort of rearranges some of the sentences that I think make more sense to make sure that the provisions cover all of what he is asking, as well as I believe that it would be assumed that the capacity measure would apply here based off of the changes that were made at the last meeting, but I would just like to

[04:06:59] reiterate that because that's sort of my hill to die on so and I will send this to you so my friendly amendment would read instead students with an older sibling who is attending an out of zone elementary school in accordance with this policy will be afforded the opportunity to attend the same elementary school that their older sibling is currently attending the younger sibling may voluntarily remain at that elementary school through their through completion these provisions for siblings are subject to the conditions set forth in this policy, including the capacity considerations. And I'm sending this to you right now. So it just puts everything forward before the

[04:07:38] provisions are set, but it makes sure that the capacity considerations are considered. So I'm asking if you would accept that as a friendly amendment. It does not change the spirit in any way, shape, or form. I'm totally fine with this as a friendly amendment. All right. Thank you. So Mr. Pepper's amendment as amended. Any further discussion? All right. Seeing no further discussion. I'd like to ask Mr. Pepper to read the motion as amended. Madam Chair, can Ms. Chernoff do that, please? Sure, Ms. Chernoff, would you be willing to read the friendly amendment? I would be delighted. My mic is still on.

[04:08:19] Students with an older sibling who is attending an out-of-zone elementary school in accordance with this policy will be afforded the opportunity to attend the same elementary school that their older sibling is then currently attending the younger sibling may voluntarily remain at the elementary school through completion these provisions for siblings are subject to the conditions set forth in this policy including the capacity considerations all right thank you any further discussion board members all right let's move forward with the vote clerk please open the vote board members

[04:08:58] please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote the motion passes with six board members voting yes, including Mr. Svensson, myself, Vice Chair Donahue, Mrs. Griffiths, Mr. Pepper, and Dr. Rasheed, and three board members voting no, including Ms. Riccardi, Ms. Chernoff, and Ms. LaBelle. With that, we return to the motion as amended. Mr. Pepper.

[04:09:26] Madam Chair, because of the insertion of G, I have another amendment. I move to renumber the section so that section H entitled Other Considerations becomes new section I, and section i and titled charter schools becomes new section j all right uh thank you mr pepper has made an um amendment is there a second second oh thank you mr svensson um mr pepper would you like to speak further to your amendment just getting things in the correct numerical or correct alphabetical order thank you um is there any further discussion all right let's move forward

[04:10:04] with the vote all right clerk please close and display the vote now that motion passes unanimously with all nine members present for the vote all right uh mr pepper i'm sure i have uh one more amendment it's a bit lengthy so i have shared it with you so that you all have it in front of you i move to rewrite section f on continuity of auto zone school transfers so it reads as follows

[04:10:39] section one is going to now read students who were attending a school to which they were assigned as a result of the former LCPS special permission process or as a result of a prior school boundary modification in the 2026-27 school year are afforded the opportunity to continue attending that school through completion so long as the student's approval to the school that the out-of-zone school transfer was granted has not been rescinded during the year by the parent or legal guardian or LCPS as contemplated below. Students wishing to continue to the middle and or high schools in the cluster to which that school feeds must reapply through

[04:11:18] the out-of-zone school transfer process and are subject to the capacity conditions set forth within this policy. Also adding a section 2 which says students attending an out-of-zone school transfer due to the qualifications in section D above are afforded the opportunity to continue attending that school through completion so long as the student's approval to the school that the out-of-zone school transfer was granted has not been rescinded during the year by the parent or legal guardian or LCPS as contemplated below.

[04:11:46] Students wishing to continue to the middle and/or high schools in the cluster to which that school feeds must reapply through the out-of-zone school transfer process and are subject to the capacity conditions set forth within this policy. Additionally, students attending an out-of-zone school based on criteria D2, social and emotional adjustment, will be required to provide documentation of continued need as set forth in regulation 8155 and then I will also move to renumber section two original section two to number three and original number three to number four. Thank you Mr. Pepper

[04:12:22] has made a motion is there a second? Second. Thank you Vice Chair Donohue. Mr. Pepper would you like to speak further to your motion? Yes Madam Chair. So this is really just setting forth the process as I reread section F I realized that we had quantified a process for students who had previously been a continuity process for students who had previously been granted special or out-of-zone transfer, but we had not quantified a process for students who were granted out-of-zone school transfer based on the new policy. That's why there is an additional section two. It also ensures that we put the capacity conditions in there as well as a chance for students to demonstrate continued

[04:12:59] need as was discussed at a previous school board meeting several times ago and then just some renumbering to clean it up. Thank you. Board members, any discussion? Oh, yes, Ms. Riccardi. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a question. So in this new amendment, is there any conflict between under Section C about, I guess, would an elementary transfer now continue through

[04:13:33] fifth grade without a review? Ms. Richardson, would you like to speak to that? Yes. Mrs. Riccardi, you are reading that correctly.

[04:13:52] This new language makes it so that an elementary student that is currently on special permission would remain at that school should their parents choose so, or as long as the school has not proposed to rescind that placement without a review.

[04:14:12] - Even if that school winds up going over capacity while the student is there? - That is correct. - Okay, thank you. - Just for clarification for myself, - We are talking about the out of zone transfer piece of the policy.

[04:14:29] Is that correct, Mr. Pepper? - We are talking about what happens once a student is granted out of zone transfer. So currently in our current policy, students do have to reapply every year.

[04:14:44] This says that they get to go to that school, continuation through that school, and aren't necessarily reliant on reapplication every single year to that school. - Thank you for that clarification. board members any further discussion i'm sure enough can you say that one more time mr pepper yes so what the rewrite of f is explaining is the process for how students remain on out of zone school transfer it is taking the process from a one year only and continuing it so students can

[04:15:23] remain at said school through completion thus eliminating hopefully some of the burden on our staff to re-up that every year, eliminating some of the burden on our families to re-up that every year.

There still is the capacity consideration in that amendment, though, if you look at it. Yeah, there is. So the capacity would still apply, but since they're not reapplying, it doesn't apply?

[04:15:52] So, yes, and you're not wrong. Okay. And this is why we've been working on this for three years, to Ms. LaBelle's, and again, I say that from an endearment type of a standpoint, truly and truly. So currently, students that are on special permission, if they are a second grader at Algonquin Elementary, for example, they renew. As long as they renew within the time frame, it is not a question of capacity. They are a student at Algonquin and they go to the third grade. If they don't renew, then we rely on, or if there's a

[04:16:31] time frame where we ask the schools to reach out to those families and say, hey, we have not heard from the Chernoffs and we know that Lauren Chernoff is a second grader at Algonquin and she's on special permission do you think her parents want to renew we really try to work with the schools to make sure that the parents do have the ability to do that renewal if we do not get a renewal from them we assume they have then rescinded and they are then they're then rolled which is the the new year rollover they're rolled back to their zone school of attendance so then that opens up a seat in third grade for because Lauren is not at

[04:17:07] Algonquin and she is now attending Rolling Ridge so this again and I've expressed it I'll just express it again it causes me a little anxiety about the school reassignment possibilities that you're going to be engaged upon when you have this and it's good for no matter what the capacity is already being set at it's just it's an if it might not might not be a then but it's an if with

[04:17:44] a large possibility just based on where our attendance boundary changes take place thank you thank you madam chair mr. i want to make sure i understand correctly because the the language that we approved on 922 and the language that mr pepper is proposing to amend tonight in this section still include the phrase is subject to the capacity conditions set forth within this policy but i feel like what you

[04:18:21] are saying is even if we have those words there it's not actually going to be subject to the capacity conditions? So we look at the school capacity every year. We look at it, and again, we look at the students that are currently attending the school, no matter what their reason for attendance is. So that is how we get whether or not schools are currently over capacity.

[04:18:51] Does that answer your question? That's especially true for elementary. So the students in the newly proposed F-1 are already accounted for in the capacity calculation. It would be the students that are moving in to that area that would be impacted by the 85% that we would then have to consider a regional reassignment if they're at the elementary level. And that's a function of

[04:19:24] us saying they don't have to reapply. Correct. And even now with the current policy, even though it's a renewal process, we already count them because that's where they're seated. So if the Chernoffs have placed Lauren at Algonquin for second grade, we're counting her as we plan for third grade until we know otherwise. That's why the new year rollover is really an important process that takes place right now. So we can really plan for what schools are looking like

[04:20:01] they are already at capacity it doesn't necessarily impact staffing currently right now because we don't you know principals don't know how many more say for example in an elementary school they don't know how many kindergartners are going to register so you might have to adjust your staffing and move a first grade teacher to teach kindergarten if you have an influx of kindergarten or if you don't have

as many kindergartners you might have to have more first grade teachers second grade etc etc so but that's why we ask for that rollover to occur making the assumption that those students that are on special permission are going to stay at that school just so we kind of prepare for if you will a

[04:20:39] worst-case scenario from a capacity standpoint miss Donahue thank you mr. Dolson and miss Richardson that that is helpful I will say that gives me a little bit of pause I had not been in support of the language that was added on at our last board meeting and I did work with mr. pepper on these revisions because I what I wanted to see was a little bit of reining in of the the students if they're on special permission or out of zone transfer of having it having it not be automatically extended in perpetuity and I felt like

[04:21:17] we reached a good compromise about that but I had hoped that it would still be subject to capacity conditions but it seems like what I was envisioning might not be possible if we are going to have those students forgo the application process but maybe perhaps we will continue to take her with this policy next year thank you have any further discussion oh yes mr. Svensson I think I just wanted to note on this discussion that based on the criteria that's now

[04:21:55] governing out-of-zone transfers going forward that you know I think the purpose of the policies that there will be fewer students who are on out-of-zone transfer in you know you know intervening time period so of course our students who you know based on this amendment will be grandfathered in under the current policy but once we get into a new set of students it will be a smaller set of students we're talking about so just if that helps put things into context for folks in terms of the number declining overall thank you mr

[04:22:31] Riccardi? I guess I just have so many questions, but I'm going to just limit it to a couple of scenarios that I can think of in my head. So if you have a student, let's say an early elementary school who's gotten special permission and there's a new sibling, like a one-year-old, two-year-old, a little, in this scenario, that younger sibling would be able to go to the elementary school whenever they get there? Or is it just based on the students that are in school currently.

[04:23:05] So if you have a kindergartner and a second grader and the second grader goes to another school, then the kindergartner can go there. But what happens if you have a family that has a second grader and a three-year-old? From what I understand, and again, please correct me if I'm wrong, it is for current students. It is not for a student who is not of school age.

[04:23:26] It is for current students and siblings of those current students. Okay, and then my second scenario, doesn't this and we don't have a lot of new neighborhoods coming in sterling area so it doesn't impact that but I think what I heard you say is that if an elementary if I if I if my family moves into an area which we have in especially in central Loudoun right lots of new neighborhoods moves into Loudoun County and the elementary school that their child will be zoned for and presumably why they picked the houses because of the schools usually in big

[04:24:02] part um and that school is over the 85 capacity then then they get zoned for a different school if it's over capacity yes yeah and happening you know it's happening a lot of places um okay and so is there any safeguard that we can put in to say when a school gets to that point that we're not automatically renewing students that are out of zone so that would be i think the new fl that

[04:24:37] sort of before you to ponder a little bit um but to answer your question sort of yes or no i don't know that there is we currently what we do is we again we're always trying to look at those school capacities and trying to plan for um i know i do know that um the schools that are not at capacity so we don't have a lot of elementary schools that are that are bursting at the seams right now so principals do have a little bit of flexibility to look at their staffing and try to figure out you know can we move a teacher from one grade level to the next if we get an influx of move-ins

[04:25:17] over this summer um but there are some schools that are you know at 103 percent and so those schools are closed for um for special permission or for out they would be closed for out of zone school transfer so there would be no um you know ability for a family either to try to apply for or an out-of-zone school transfer or if that family moved in, you know, unless they were very lucky and there was a seat in a grade level that had just opened up, they would be reassigned to a school that had seating.

[04:25:51] - Yeah, see, I have real problems with us doing this. I mean, it's a chicken or the egg scenario and it's a really difficult situation to put new families in when they, you know, may or may not know that their child isn't gonna be enrolled when they purchase a home in the school that they're zoned for because of overcapacity.

[04:26:14] So I feel-- as part of PMC, I'm just going to say this now. I want to see the data on this as we roll this out in this whole first year cycle to see what the impact really is. Because if we've got a lot of downrange, unintended consequences of this new policy, we may need to bring this back and course correct next year.

[04:26:38] Not that I want to keep this hamster wheel going, because I do not. but we might have to because I'm really concerned about, I'm really concerned about this policy in general, but I can't support this amendment because it just creates too many situations that we're gonna have to backtrack on.

[04:27:02] So I'm just gonna leave it at that, thanks. - Thank you. - Thank you Madam Chair. I have a clarifying question about school reassignment as I read this policy, and then I wanna briefly talk about kind of where we are with this F.

[04:27:20] So when it comes to overcapacity, we determine overcapacity as 85%. But as I read section B of 8155, it says at the discretion of the division, students may be reassigned to a school other than their regular school assignment for purpose of relieving overcrowding.

[04:27:42] School reassignment is the assignment of an elementary school student to another school within the planning district when the student's zone school has reached capacity. Is capacity capacity or is capacity 85%? It's really not specified in there. In that reference, that particularly pertains to elementary schools.

[04:28:00] Yes. So we look at overall capacity at 85%, and then we work with the elementary office in school leadership to look at the grade level capacity for a school that is sitting at that 85% threshold because you may still have some availability in fourth grade or fifth grade but maybe there's none in second or third so we might then be able to consider a fourth or fifth grader being able to move to that school as an out of zone school transfer so for elementary it's twofold it's the 85 percent capacity overall and then we dig a level

[04:28:40] deeper to look at grade level capacity so for me and i don't know what and i'm not making an amendment because we've been touching this we've had our hands in this policy apparently for three

years now, but before my time on the board, part of why I liked the 85% threshold was that it gave us that flexibility between 85 and 100% to allow students that perhaps moved into a district to attend that particular school.

[04:29:05] I can understand it if it's at 103% capacity, but if it's at like 87% to tell a family that actually belongs to go to that school that they can't go there, that's kind of where I have a problem. That being said, what I would like to reiterate is that Section F, the way it is currently written in the red line version that we're all looking at, was changed last week, or last school board meeting.

[04:29:34] So we already have this policy in here that is actually more expansive than the amendments that I'm presenting tonight. So if these amendments are not approved and we do approve this policy, we are going with a much more expansive version that, while it does the grandfathering part, which I think some of us care very deeply about, it's a little more of a free-for-all than kind of the tightening between grade levels, tightening between schools that I have proposed in this amendment.

[04:30:07] Thank you. Vice Chair Donohue? Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to add to Mr. Pepper's comments and somewhat in response to Ms. Riccardi that I came on the board in 2024 and started chairing the Student Services Committee, and this was one of my first priorities.

[04:30:25] I've been working with Ms. Richardson and Mr. Dolson on 8155 for a long time, and when I first came into this position, I thought, this is stupid and we should get rid of it completely. And I will say after a couple of years of sitting in on special permission appeals, I did become persuaded that there were some compelling reasons maybe not to get rid of the out-of-zone transfer practice completely.

[04:30:53] But I was also very sensitive to the downstream effects that Ms. Riccardi mentioned, which includes people moving into our school districts and not being able to send their kids to the school where they live because of these special permission issues. There are we saw we have seen over the last three years a drop in special permission applications So I think we are heading in the right direction And and to your point is Picardy Originally over capacity was 95% and we have been dropping it down Specifically to try and address that problem with new people moving into districts

[04:31:31] so I do think and this is also in response to Received a number of emails from members of the community who want us to not make any more changes to special permission who don't want it to go away And I I do want to speak a little bit to that a couple of points about the the background of this Policy it has been in place for a very long time But as has been mentioned in previous meetings the origin of this policy is not a positive one The origin of this policy was to allow white parents to send their kids to schools that did not have to be segregated.

[04:32:08] And I do not think that that is, the fact that it has been policy for more than 50 years, I do not believe is a valid or reasonable basis to leave it in place. The opposite, in fact. And I think there are compelling logistical reasons, as we have been discussing over time, why we need to make significant changes.

[04:32:30] And it may feel to some members of the community like we are springing this on them, but I think if you look objectively at the course of the last three years, that's also not what we're doing. We have been winnowing down the scope of special permission for almost three solid years.

[04:32:47] Ten months ago, last December, it was Ms. Chernoff who put forward an amendment the last time we were making revisions to this policy. and that amendment specifically said direct student services

to get rid of special permission going forward so this this is not this is not brand new we have been working on this for years we have been signaling to the community that we want to make significant changes if not get rid of it entirely and we have had a number of meetings and work sessions and heard public comment about it we do hear the concerns of the community we're trying to find a balance

[04:33:26] between respecting the needs of the community especially with children who are already on special permission and those families with our desire to push this policy in a different direction for the overall benefit of the entire school system and I'm proud of where we have gotten to I'm excited about these changes that doesn't mean that we'll leave it alone completely for the next five years I'd be surprised if that's what we do but but I I am proud of the work that we have done I'm proud of the work that mr. pepper student services committee has done and I'm excited to see how this policy goes forward thank

[04:34:03] you thank you I'm just gonna take a moment I have struggled with this mightily everybody knows I've talked about it as much as I possibly could right like I really struggle with the idea of where this policy originated I also struggle with the fact that we are talking about our neighbors and although I don't love how the policy came to be I do appreciate that people use the policy for many reasons that may not have had anything to do with that and and and

[04:34:38] truly in finding the best path forward what I would like to do is respect the fact that at the heart of all the work we do our students and we're trying to find a way to have this change be meaningful and also perhaps not cause further harm so it is I wanted sort of to escalate the shutdown and that was part of the reason why we talked about allowing some of these legacy changes

[04:35:15] right because we didn't necessarily want to see the policy perpetuate in perpetuity I agree with mr. cardi I think this is something we're gonna have to keep our eye on and make sure that it's working and if it's not we're gonna change but it does always come back to students and trying to do what's right so that we don't continue to perpetuate harm. I do think that allowing for Mr. Pepper's amendment as it's written is a fairly good middle ground. It's a little bit tighter than what we had

[04:35:53] proposed the last time. We have some opportunities. I honestly don't think I would have even considered this if the climate that we're in right now didn't exist as it does, right? Like we are constantly talking about declining enrollment we have a little leeway right now so i mean what i'm i just hope that we can take the grace to work together to make sure that we do it the right way we'll pivot if we need to pivot if it's not working um but it's hard for me to imagine especially in algonkian district that something's going to change maybe i mean i'd love it if it did

[04:36:33] if the interest rates changed or the price of housing changed and something could be different because it is so different than it was when i moved here 20 years ago and i could open the door and toss my kids out into the cul-de-zac and they were playing with 20 other kids there's one elementary age family on my street right now most people can't afford to move um and so i think this is just it gives us some grace to figure out what's happening in this transition period and think limiting it to the the school and limiting it to the siblings who are in

[04:37:09] that enrollment age is the grace that we're looking for here and soon this will be a relic of the past now did I see further discussion miss LaBelle um yes I also was on that same committee with vice chair Donahue all those years ago and one of the things that we as a group came up with was and and pushed forward there has to be a good reason to have an out-of-zone transfer and we came

[04:37:44] up with a whole list of reasons that you know you could provide that would hopefully help your application we have tightened that and we had a small decrease in the number of applications that we had then the following year we came up with instructional suitability and that once again tightened it a little bit but then we came up and had that for a year and we saw the

[04:38:18] number of applications rise and so everybody keeps saying oh well it's going to go down in a few years can we actually rely on that prediction that's what worries me I think we need to be very mindful of what we decide today and also no matter what it is one way or the other keep an eye on it maybe we can loosen up maybe we can't but I think we have to be very mindful that there's no guarantee about what's going to happen in the future so that's all I really

[04:38:56] wanted to think of. And like I said, this is the policy that just keeps giving. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Any further discussion, board members? All right. Let's revisit the motion before we move forward with the vote. Please, Mr. Pepper. Yes, Madam Chair. I move to rewrite Section F, Continuity of AutoZone Transfers, as follows. F1 would read, students who were attending a school to which they were assigned as a result of the former LCPS special permission processor as a result of a prior school boundary

[04:39:36] modification in the 2026-27 school year are afforded the opportunity to continue attending that school through completion so long as the student's approval to the school that the out-of-zone transfer was granted has not been rescinded during the year by the parent or legal guardian or LCPS as contemplated below.

[04:39:52] Students wishing to continue to the middle and/or high schools in the cluster to which that school feeds must reapply through the out-of-zone school transfer process and are subject to the capacity conditions set forth within the policy. F2 would read, students attending an out-of-zone school due to the qualifications in section D above are afforded the opportunity to continue attending that school through completion so long as the student's approval to the school that the out-of-zone school transfer was granted has not been rescinded during the year by the parental legal guardian or LCPS as contemplated below.

[04:40:21] Students wishing to continue to the middle and or high schools in the cluster to which that school feeds must reapply through the out-of-zone school transfer process and are subject to the capacity conditions set forth within this policy. Additionally, students attending an out-of-zone school based on criteria D2, social and emotional adjustment, will be required to provide documentation of continued need as set forth in regulation 8155. Additionally, I move to read number original section 2 to number 3 and number 3 to number 4. All right, let's move forward with

[04:40:52] the vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote that motion passes with six board members voting yes including mr. Svensson myself I sure Donahue mrs. Griffiths mr. pepper and dr. Rashid and one board member abstaining miss Riccardi and two board members voting no mission off and miss LaBelle okay so that are there any further amendments

[04:41:30] board members is there any further discussion about miss Riccardi thank you madam chair I am I think what I I want to say about this and you guys know that my biggest thing is just general good governance. When we first saw this amendment a couple of meetings ago, there were a lot of changes that had been made. I'm really concerned with all of the amendments that have come out since that initial reading and how many of them have been

[04:42:06] done so last minute. I mean, we literally got an email with two during the break or when we came back from break tonight that we really haven't, I mean, except for reading it here, we hadn't had a chance to really see before. The public didn't get a chance to see that before we just passed it.

[04:42:24] I have serious problems with this. This is not the first time this has happened since I came on the board in January. There have been circumstances where we haven't even seen an amendment before it was brought here where some people knew about it and other people didn't. And from a pure governance perspective, it's disrespectful to the public and the rest of us on the board who aren't sometimes clued in to some of these changes that are being made so I would just say I'm just disappointing that once again we're doing the same kind of repeated pattern and I was really hoping that we were gonna stop doing this at

[04:43:01] some point and start showing some strong mutual respect for the public and each other and share these things well in advance if this had come out of committee and it wasn't fully baked like it wasn't a couple of meetings ago it should have gone back to committee and I realized that there were some issues, but I had no clue that we were going to be coming back from last meeting to this one with more last minute amendments. We had a bunch that were dropped into board docs on Friday like they were supposed to be, but it's really disappointing to continue to see last minute amendments on a three-year-old attempt at fixing

[04:43:39] this policy being dropped on us literally while we're sitting here on the dais. And it's just, I'm just gonna say from a governance perspective, it's just really disappointing that we're back at this again. Thank you. Thank you. Vice Chair Donoghue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:43:58] I just wanted to point out that there is no requirement to post amendments. That has become a practice among many of our current board members, which I do appreciate when people do that. But it is not a requirement. And there's a good reason for that, which is, I think, a lot of I shouldn't speak for anyone else for me for my approach to the policies a lot of my thought process is unfolding on the dais in having the conversations in listening to public comment in listening to the statements

[04:44:37] that are made by my by my colleagues is where I get my ideas for changes that I want to make so when I know changes that I want to make in advance I do try to to circulate them in advance out of respect yes for my colleagues and the public but it's not always possible and I just wanted to I just wanted to throw that out there thank you thank you madam chair I see both sides of that

[04:45:14] issue I do think that I would encourage us to really press into the committee work spend the time in committee get it where you want it bring it to the board and defend the changes I mean that's kind of the approach that I would like that I try to take. I just want to make a quick comment about my vote tonight on this overall policy. Many have shared the long journey that we have been on and I echo those sentiments and certainly we've heard from families, we've seen the impact on our schools, the impact on people moving in and not being able to

[04:45:50] attend our schools. This has caused hardship for many years in many different ways and I'm sure these changes will cause hardship going forward. It has not been a great policy in my mind and I think we have tried to go back to the drawing board many times. I am going to vote for the policy as amended. I'm going to vote for it. I think we have moved in a much better direction taking this to out-of-zone transfers. I didn't support all of the amendments just on principle of where I stand with defending the ground of making sure that every kid can go to the school that they're zoned for.

[04:46:29] However, I do see this as a real positive pivot for us, and I want to celebrate that because it has been a lot of hard work by many people, many hands in the pot for a lot of years, and I want to thank staff for their patience and their flexibility and their listening and the countless hours of meetings that you've spent with all of us trying to deconstruct and reconstruct this policy.

[04:46:54] I also want to say, I think many of the fears and concerns that I'm hearing in email and in public comment and different things, I believe those root causes will be addressed through the out-of-zone transfer exceptions through this application process.

[04:47:12] I think that they will now be seen. I think that people will finally be able to voice why they're struggling, which my deeper hope in that is that we as a board can then analyze what some of these root causes in our schools are driving people away.

[04:47:28] And we can begin to analyze that data and start to really deal with the issues in our schools if we have them, rather than people feeling like they have to flee their zoned community. That is not the point here. So I think we have a big charge of school board members as we move forward with this new policy.

[04:47:46] Yes to monitor if it's working, yes to look at the data, but more importantly we need to be critically looking at the accountability in our schools and ensuring that every kid is safe, that they belong, that they are seen, all the things that we sit up here and preach about week after week after week.

[04:48:04] and we stand on those values and so my pledge is that as we move forward we really if we see patterns if we're hearing from people that we will not just say okay go to another school but we will say what's really happening here and what can we do to fix it because this is a systemic issue that this has caused and so for me I just want people to understand that that's my heart in this is to really make all of our schools wonderful and great and make everybody want to be at the school that their zone for. Thank you. I really want to reiterate that too. That really resonates with

[04:48:42] me deeply. And I think in part of the evolution of my thought on this, that's a very big piece is understanding how special permission as it existed in the past maybe hid some problems and didn't give us the opportunity to address them. And now we've, you know, we're trying to make changes and face that that said I do wish that we had been able to come to the point that we're at tonight in committee but to be perfectly fair we were not

[04:49:19] getting the engagement at the committee level and and I think really how the policy is evolved over the last few weeks has been part of how the community has engaged with us in the process, and so for that, I'll just say I'm grateful, and I'll see board members. Any further comments? Mr. Pepper? Thank you, Madam Chair, and I will reiterate because this actually came out of my committee, and it came out of a committee which I thought was what we had was a good policy, but as we've learned and as I've seen in my emails for the last four, five, six weeks at this point, once we got to the school board levels and information item,

[04:49:59] Our community is engaged with us at the full board level, but maybe not at the committee level. And so we're not getting the feedback. We get the feedback here. We get the feedback through public comment. We get the feedback through email. And it gives us the opportunity to think and to ponder.

[04:50:15] And I am with my colleague, vice chair of the school board, is I love to use my time in the dais as a listening and learning experience. There are many times where someone will say something and it

will spark my mind and it will change some things and change the way I'm thinking. And truthfully, I came in tonight and didn't even realize we had a gap in the policy.

[04:50:33] We did have a gap in the policy. And the gap was we weren't talking about the students who were put in on this policy. And so we had to change some things in F, and I apologize for the late manner of it. But sometimes there are changes that are necessary, and they're not significant.

[04:50:49] And I do respect that many of my board members, myself included, spending hours preparing for these meetings and writing themselves dossiers and notes on every single thing that comes on the board. And that's a perfectly respectable way to operate and is good governance.

[04:51:08] It's also good governance to listen to the people. So going forward, I will say this. I don't think this policy is perfect. I really do think we need to see how this starts to play out in the next year, two years, three years, even longer, right?

[04:51:24] As we trickle out these siblings that may be in on elementary level, we need to see what this is doing to our numbers. We need to see how this is going to change, particularly as we get literally Thursday into the drawing of lines of elementary schools and how this is going to play a role in that. But I am going to support this policy tonight because I think it makes significant changes, and I think it does a good enough job, as I said last time, landing the plane, knowing that there are people on it.

[04:51:55] Any further discussion? Let's move forward with the vote on the policy as amended. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote.

[04:52:12] That motion passes with six board members voting yes, including Mr. Svensson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Feisture Donahue, Mr. Pepper, and Dr. Rasheed. Two board members voting no, Ms. Riccardi and Mrs. Griffiths, and one board member abstaining, Ms. LaBelle.

[04:52:29] Okay, with that, we move on to our next action item. This is 14.02. Out of Legislative and Policy Committee, the Revised Policy 1035, School Board Norms, Protocols, and Violations. this evening this will be presented by Mr. Svensson. Mr. Svensson, do you have a motion?

[04:52:52] Yes, Madam Chair. I move the Galatun County School Board approve proposed changes to policy 1035. Thank you. Mr. Svensson has made a motion. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. Vice Chair Donahue has seconded the motion. Mr. Svensson, would you like to speak further to your motion? I will speak briefly because we've covered it before, but I would just highlight some of the changes THAT ARE RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MOVING THE DISCUSSION OF THAT AROUND AND ADDING SOME ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE, AND THEN SOME CLARIFICATION AROUND COMMUNICATION WHEN SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SCHEDULE VISITS TO SCHOOLS, AND I WOULD JUST SAY MOST OF THE CHANGES ALIGN WITH CURRENT

[04:53:29] PRACTICE AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CLARITY, SO I WOULD BE TO OPEN IT UP TO DISCUSSION. ALL RIGHT, BOARD MEMBERS, ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? MS. LABELL. THANK YOU, MADAM CHAIR. things I had asked about was on behalf of those of us who teach on the school board thank you mr. pepper we have to in order to keep our teaching license earn so many units of credit every year and my question was all of these events that

[04:54:07] we as teachers and also as school board members attend like the conferences and the things that we actually do on the board can they be counted towards CEUs for recertification do we have any kind

of answer about that so I think the best thing for us to do would be to let Mrs. Bolin's team work with you on that we have licensure folks who can help with that and they can contact us taking good answers to specific questions it does seem like it would be out of our jurisdiction to make that determination if you could just send me an

[04:54:45] email and i'll forward that along we'll get you we'll get you some support thank you that would be wonderful on and a big help because if you're here you can't be out taking classes earning ceus fascinating okay um any further discussion all right back to the motion any further discussion no okay let's move forward with the vote all right clerk please close and display the vote

[04:55:19] That motion passes with eight board members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Vice Chair Donahue, Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle, and Mrs. Griffiths voting no. We will move on now to item 14.03, the Legislative and Policy Committee Legislative Update.

[04:55:40] Mr. Svensson, do you have a motion? Yes, Madam Chair. I move that the Loudoun County School Board approve the proposed legislative agenda. Thank you. Mr. Svensson has made a motion. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. Vice Chair Donahue has seconded. Mr. Svinson, would you like to speak further to your motion?

[04:55:59] Yes, I'm happy to. I know my colleagues are familiar with the agenda from the last meeting and from the legislative breakfast, but we have five key priorities outlined in the proposed legislative agenda, K-12 education funding and equity, secondary and post-secondary access, technology integration and digital learning, student mental health and well-being, safe and supportive school environments.

[04:56:21] These are issues we focus on on the dais every week. We're up here and we are looking to push forward our priorities in Richmond at the state level. - Thank you, board members.

[04:56:36] Oh yes, Ms. Chernoff. - Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to clarify one thing. I had put this out on my social media page just listing out the items. And there was a little bit of confusion about technology integration and digital learning, meaning that we were pushing more of it.

[04:56:52] But if you actually dig into the agenda, it does say intentional, purposeful, time bound and developmentally appropriate. So just I know we're getting a lot of public comment and we're getting a lot of response on the Smart Start pilot. And we are supporting that work and that will continue through this agenda.

[04:57:10] So, yes, there is purposeful thinking about AI and technology integration, as well as making sure that it is also those things. So I just want to make sure to my people who reached out and were worried that we were going against that, that that is not what we are fighting against with this agenda.

[04:57:27] All right, thank you. Any further discussion, board members? Nope. Okay, let's move forward with the vote. All right, clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion passes with eight board members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Vice Chair Donahue, Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle, and one board member voting no, Mrs. Griffiths.

[04:57:55] and now we will move on to our next item which is 14.04 specialized programs and centers committee family and community engagement the face resource hub um let's see this one miss Chernoff do you have a motion yes madam chair i move that the loudon county school board approve the

specialized programs and centers recommendation for the family and community engagement face resource All right. Ms. Chernoff has made a motion. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. Vice Chair Donahue.

[04:58:28] Ms. Chernoff, would you like to speak further to your motion? I'm going to let my friends that are joining us, my many friends, speak to that. All right. So good evening, Chair Chandler, Vice Chair Donahue, Dr. Spence, and members of the board. We just wanted to bring what we talked about at the last meeting forward for you all so we we put just a couple slides together that includes the resource hub goals and the what and why but also we were asked about the budget projections

[04:59:03] and proposals so oh I have a clicker so just as a reminder goals but here was our initial proposal so through the special programs and centers committee the proposed staffing model was moved for consideration by the full board this model includes a coordinator five regional specialists a program assistant and a full-time financial analysts or in a full-time financial analyst and the budget shown reflects the staffing and operational resources needed we were asked about the potential for kind of

[04:59:42] rethinking having the same number of staff but if we needed all of them to be at the specialist level and so this one includes one coordinator three regional specialists and then two face resource hub liaisons with the program assistant and full-time financial analyst. And that ended up being a cost savings of \$73,852. So I wanted to bring that proposal as requested to you all before voting. Thank you. Let's see Ms. Chernoff. Yeah, I was

[05:00:16] just going to make an amendment that we adopt the alternative presentation, alternative option in the presentation with three regional specialists and two FACE Research Hub liaisons and one program assistant, full-time financial analyst.

[05:00:35] All right. Ms. Chernoff has made an amendment. Is there a second? Second. Thank you, Mr. Pepper. Ms. Chernoff, would you like to speak further to your amendment? Sure. And I'm very appreciative of you bringing this. I feel like in a year where we are really analyzing and being critical about our budget, we were very excited to extend the number of staff.

[05:00:54] And I still think that this accomplishes the mission. It may not seem like a huge cost savings, but to me, I also think bringing in that experience of the family liaisons into the hub and having them as the connector back to the family liaisons at the school could be a really powerful model in terms of just bringing in that experience of what it actually is like in the schools.

[05:01:18] That always seems to strengthen our system, so it kind of closes down that gap. So I want to thank you for the conversations that we had that led to this point, And hopefully, I think this will be an even better support. Thank you. Any further discussion or any discussion on Ms. Chernoff's amendment?

[05:01:37] Right. Let's move forward with the vote. Please record your vote.

[05:01:52] Thank you. Clerk, please close and display the vote. All right. The Ms. Chernoff's amendment passes with all nine board members present voting yes. Thank you all so much. Yeah. So, let's go back to the base. So now we can have discussion on the motion as amended.

[05:02:14] Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. I kind of struggled with this. I certainly love the idea and thought behind the program being centralized. But I'm still not sure about obtaining a warehouse with our current budget issues.

[05:02:30] Per Ms. Chernoff's amendment, that does help. But leasing or buying a warehouse when we may have to let people go or have a hiring freeze, It just doesn't make sense to me right now. Not the right time to approve this program due to those budget issues.

[05:02:46] I think our students should have the resources that are needed. This is just not the right time. And also, I saw somewhere costs were to be determined. I am not sure we should move forward. I will have to abstain today.

[05:03:03] Thank you. Thank you. Any further discussion? Ms. Riccardi. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just really excited about this. I mean, you guys know that I am, but of all the things that the Sterling community really struggles with, it's not just about the academics.

[05:03:25] There are so many more aspects of basic Maslow's hierarchy of needs that have to be met in our Sterling schools. I've watched lines out the door at our food banks. We have a ton of children in Sterling Park and in Eastern Loudoun who are getting supplemental food for the weekend.

[05:03:47] Not just a couple, huge percentages of our school students get that. It makes a huge difference when our students are fed. They don't have clothing, they don't have the proper clothing. I watched that at a back-to-school night where parents were in a very long line just for tennis shoes, basic needs, and this is going to really allow us the opportunity to centralize that.

[05:04:13] I think one of the other things is we have incredibly generous non-profits, houses of worship, families that want to donate things to our schools and help because people here in Loudoun County are very generous. We have to have a centralized place to not only warehouse that, but then distribute it to the right people and the right students at the right time.

[05:04:36] And I think this is going to really help us do just that. So I just want to thank you all again for coming up with this idea, seeing it to fruition, building it out. I know it's a lot of work to do this, but I also know that our families in Sterling are going to really appreciate having it, and our teachers and our staff and especially our family liaisons who are really the front line with our families at these schools. To have one place they can just pick up the phone and say, hey, I've got a student. They don't have a winter coat. We need it. And they know where they're going to be able to get it. So I'm really excited about this. Thank you all.

[05:05:11] Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I also, costs come in many different ways. I think that I echo everything you said and 100% and 1,000% in and definitely voting yes.

[05:05:27] But I've been reading some of the criticisms of this after it hit the media, it actually shocked me. Kind of took me back a minute and I had to assess that different perspective. But I think another thing that this is gonna do that maybe people don't realize is just how much time is sucked up by the family liaisons of meeting these one-off needs.

[05:05:52] It takes to make the phone call, to then make three more phone calls, then to circle back with the family, then to try and get them to come in when they are overworked and exhausted, and there's so much. I would encourage anyone to just have coffee with a family liaison and truly understand the magnitude of the work and the time that is spent to meet these needs that are exactly what you said.

[05:06:18] They are essential to learning, essential. You cannot learn if you don't have a full tummy. You just can't. So I also think there's an opportunity cost that we are gaining back, which is what family liaisons

are also designed to do, which is work that they so want to do that they rarely get to do, which is actually engaging families on coming to school conferences, getting a translator, making sure that they understand what is going on in ParentVUE, coming to the reading night, you know, making sure that they are engaging with the student learning, even at the granular level, understanding the interventions that are in place

[05:06:56] or the opportunities or summer camps or whatever. There are a million resources in Loudoun County and the family liaison serve as that pivot point to find them. But right now they're meeting one-on-one basic needs all day, every day. And so this hub will alleviate that stress.

[05:07:13] So we are actually gaining back the time for our family liaisons, in my mind, because we're gonna have the hub doing all that work, and then they will be able to do the work of connecting families, which is bringing in our parents, engaging them, getting more involvement in our schools, which is what all of us want, and we hear from our community all the time.

[05:07:33] So I think this is a layered issue, but we are going to be doing something, I think, unprecedented. I think other districts will follow us. I think the county might follow us. I'm hearing a lot of, you know, encouraging things about really bringing together all these organizations.

[05:07:49] I just wanted to make sure that's on the record because this is a huge deal and it's going to meet so many needs beyond just even what the hub is bringing back and forth. - I really agree with my colleagues. I think the time is exactly right to take a move like this.

[05:08:07] We know that there are added economic pressures in our community. Listen, I know people talk all the time about the wealth that exists in Loudoun County, But I think we've seen over the last two years as the economic situation has changed and there has been more pressure on the cost of groceries and the price of gas and people who've counted on their jobs to be always available have lost their jobs.

[05:08:33] And so I think we've seen all of those added pressures even still. And at this time when there's so much vulnerability in the community, it's the perfect time to create a system that will improve efficiency and will make it possible for us to better serve our students.

[05:08:55] So I'm very much in support of the effort. Thank you for the work that you've done. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you. I just have a quick question. I see that we have materials coming in. we talk about a central hub distributing it where's the hub do we have a building we have to rent somebody donning it donating it to us no ma'am we don't have that location yet we think we have identified a location we will be leasing a facility and that it will come out of funds that currently are already

[05:09:29] over in the student support services budget okay thank you further discussion sorry she clarified that support services not student services thank you great catch there you go all right board members any further discussion let's move forward with the vote um clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote

[05:10:00] that motion passes uh with seven members oh i'm sorry oh my goodness well thank you so much for letting us know, Ms. LaBelle? My goodness. Clerk, could you please clear the board? Board members, I will ask you to please vote again so that we can have the fidelity of our votes be counted. All right, let's close and display the vote. This motion passes with eight members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Vice Chair Donoghue,

[05:10:38] Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle, and one board member abstaining. And now we come to our last action item of the evening 14.05 finance and operations committee approval of the capital improvement fund transfer and supplemental funds request for view transition Academy Mrs. Griffiths do you have a motion yes madam chair I'd like to make a motion to approve the capital improvement fund transfer and supplemental funds request for the view transition Academy thank you Mrs. Griffiths I'm gonna ask you please to read the recommendation in

[05:11:14] in totality it's two paragraphs it's very long I know please well also if I may um Mr. Mamoon has mentioned to me that uh the bond should be read um on this one so I don't know if I should refer it to him well I would ask you just please to read the entire recommendation and it's entitled okay okay okay um Loudoun County uh school board requests that the board of supervisors appropriate \$20,039,095.33 from the county-held LCPS Contingency Fund or other county funding sources

[05:11:54] available and transfer \$3,930,904.67 from multiple completed capital projects to continue to fund the VIEW Transition Academy. Go on. Okay. The VIEW Transition Academy project was approved in the FY27 capital budget with the \$24 million in funding to renovate the Marwood Drive facility. The scope of work for this project increased beyond original estimates on new LCPS programs requirements that were developed. The scope of the project

[05:12:31] will include approximately 35,000 square feet of renovated space and energy savings initiatives to meet LEED standards. It will also include an addition of approximately 28,700 square feet in various site improvements the project is currently in design and third-party estimates for the revised scope of the work are used to determine the funding needs the supplemental oh I lost it sorry sorry thank you Mrs. Griffith oh do you want me to keep going or no well um so for the for the record um the the motion is um that the Loudoun County School Board requests the

[05:13:08] Loudoun County Board of Supervisors appropriate the 20 million 39 what let's see I don't even at 39.95 uh 33 cents 33 cents that the county held lcps contingency fund or other county funding sources available and transfer the three million nine hundred and thirty thousand nine hundred and four dollars and 67 cents from multiple completed capital projects with available funding to the view transition academy project for the bond funding on November 7 2017 the voters approved

[05:13:46] the issuance of general obligation bonds for CS Monroe Technology Center in the principal amount of \$63,193,000 and on November 2nd, 2021, the voters approved the issuance of general obligation bonds for ES32, Dulles South, Henrietta Lacks Elementary School in the principal amount of the fifty seven thousand or million fifty seven million nine hundred and eleven the Loudoun County School Board hereby requests that the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approve the use of two million eight hundred and sixty two

[05:14:26] thousand two hundred and twenty nine dollars and twenty four cents of the proceeds of the bonds issued under such authorizations in a principal amount of \$113,338,206 for the View Transition Academy project, which is a public school facility within Loudoun County. Further, the completed capital projects identified with an asterisk in the chart are to be closed. I'm sorry to be so technical. That's okay. But can I speak to it further a little bit? Oh, yes. I just wanted to make sure that we hit it. Mr. Allen not here

[05:15:04] tonight I could not let it go well I had the I had the bond information uh written but I you covered it no I just wanted to make sure that we got the motion okay on the record and please Mrs. Griffiths would you like to speak to them I would like to speak to it um for the people of Loudoun County I would like

to note that this project has doubled in cost due to adding state-of-the-art continuing technical education labs and other features to help our students go on to careers after high school. It is our job as school board members to make sure our students are successful after high school. I think that if Mr. Pasquarelli is here and he'd like to speak to it, he would be

[05:15:43] able to expand on this, or Mr. Mamoun, to add to the conversation for the people of Loudoun County as to why it has doubled in cost, if you don't mind speaking to it. Thank you so much. Yes, Mr. Mamoun. Yeah, so thank you.

[05:16:00] So part of the View Transition Academy when the budget was set it was based on a standard specification and square footage. Obviously as the program developed and we were able to understand what equipments are going to be needed for to provide the adequate resources for the students and we were able to, you know, build out the square footage space based on the program requirements and the equipment we were able to finalize the budget and that's the difference that you see. Thank you for that clarification. Also just for the record I wanted

[05:16:38] to know we made the motion but is there a second? Second. Thank you Mr. Pepper. All right so we've had the ability to speak further to the motion. Board members is there any discussion? Mr. Pepper.

[05:16:55] Thank you Madam Chair and I know this came up in committee but I would just like to let everyone know that there is no impact to our budget because of the 20 million dollars is accounted for by the county and is replenished each year so it's it's not impactful on our budget at all thank you further discussion let's move forward with a vote please record your vote oh yes the second was made

[05:17:23] by mr pepper please close and display the vote that motion passes unanimously with all nine board members present for the vote all right with that we have gotten to the point where we can move into our information items. First up, we have 15.01, the Legislative and Policy Committee, Revised Policy 7712, Sick Leave. Mr. Svensson, would you like to present?

[05:17:54] Yes, happy to. So we were going to speak about this last time and moved over to this meeting. This is Revised Policy 7712 on Sick Leave. So the proposed revisions bring the Sick Leave policy in line with what was negotiated in the collective bargaining agreement and what this covers is the employees who are not part of the bargaining agreement and bringing those benefits up to the level that were negotiated in the collective bargaining process so there's consistency and equity across our across staff within LCPS all right thank you board members any questions

[05:18:34] mr. pepper perhaps a clarification from miss Bolin and is the reason that a 12 month employee and an 11-month employee have the same number of sick days because it's the same in the CBA? So yes and no. I hate to say because that's the way it's always been done, but that's the way it's been in policy for quite some time, and that's how it still remains today and is aligned with how it is in the CBA. You'll see that's not redlined, and that's because there's no change. No, I understood. I was just looking for clarification because maybe me personally,

[05:19:13] I'm not advocating for a change at all, but feel that perhaps employees with more contract days should have an extra sick day. But that's just me. Any further discussion, questions, board members?

[05:19:32] So then let me ask, seeing no further questions, is there an appetite by the board to put this item on consent? All right, this item will come back on the consent agenda. We will move on to 15.02, legislative and policy committee, new policy 7713, bereavement leave. And again, Mr. Svensson, you're up.

Thank you, Madam Chair. So this proposed policy 7713 creates a standalone bereavement leave policy, and that aligns with what was negotiated in the collective bargaining

[05:20:07] agreement, and the bereavement leave provisions have been removed from other leave policies so that they're all together in this standalone policy, and this is to create a consistent approach between how employees in the bargaining unit, employees not in the bargaining unit are treated with respect to bereavement leave thank you any questions board members yes vice chair Donohue thank you madam chair I'm very pleased to see that we are putting forward this policy I did have one question so this policy

[05:20:47] provides up to three days of bereavement leave for death of a family member and then the family members appropriate family members are specified in a list, and I was wondering, I'm not sure Mr. Stenson or Dr. Spence or who the right person is to ask, but was there any discussion of perhaps more than three days would be appropriate depending on the family member who is deceased, slash is this what we put forward in collective bargaining that it was three days for any of these?

[05:21:22] I mean, I'm just, like, I can see a difference between the amount of time that a person needs for bereavement leave when it's their parent who dies or their child who dies as opposed to an aunt, uncle, or cousin. I will turn it over to Ms. Boland, and I think there's some nuances in terms of additional time that can be taken in combination with the bereavement leave, so I will turn it over to Ms. Boland to answer that question.

[05:21:48] I really appreciate that question, Ms. Donahue. We had extensive conversation in regards to that point in particular and the way that we found to be – there's no length of time that you can associate being acceptable if you lose a spouse unexpectedly or a parent unexpectedly or sometimes even expectantly.

[05:22:16] And so trying to put a designated time frame on that was quite difficult. And so that is what we did with E and providing an opportunity for a combined total period not to exceed 20 days with the understanding that 20 work days is essentially a month and could also be in alignment with FMLA and additional leave opportunities if they were needed.

[05:22:50] Thank you. Any further discussion? Board members, is there an appetite to have this come back on consent? All right, this item will come back on consent. And we will move on to our next information item, 15.03, Finance and Operations Committee Revision of Policy 4330, Remedies and Bids and Awards.

[05:23:14] Mrs. Griffiths? Thank you, Madam Chair. This policy was discussed at our last meeting on October 6th, 2026. Not a lot of changes to the policy, just fixing some verbiage to make it sound a little better for ownership of bids. Policy 4330 remedies and bids and awards is mostly recently confirmed by the school board on the last time it was confirmed was October 8th, 2021, with no changes to the policy.

[05:23:42] The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for vendors regarding bid withdrawals due to error, determination of non-responsibility, and bid protests. This information is incorporated into LCPS solicitations. Thank you. Thank you.

[05:23:58] Board members, any discussion? All right. Is there an appetite to have this come back on consent? Oh, I see. Nope. Okay. This will come back as an action item. Then we can move on to 15.04, Finance and Operations Committee Revision of Policy 4340, Procurement Procedures.

[05:24:21] Mrs. Griffiths? Thank you, Madam Chair. Now, this is long. Do you want me to read the whole thing? Oh, yes, ma'am. Okay. So, Policy 4340, Procurement Procedures, was previously approved by the School Board on May 24, 2022.

[05:24:38] This policy was presented to the Finance and Operations Committee as an information item on November 4, 2025, and recommended by the committee on December 9, 2025 to present as an information item to the school board on January 13 of this year.

[05:24:57] At the January 13 meeting, a recommendation was approved to return the item to Finance and Operations Committee for further review, which was our October 6 meeting. Proposed revisions of this policy identify goods, services, exempt from competitive procurement.

[05:25:15] Items related to contract terms in the original policy have been moved to Regulation 4340, contract terms and conditions. The policy title has been modified to reflect the items included in the revised policy. That's it.

[05:25:33] Thank you. Board members, any discussion? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. I'm sorry, Mrs. Riccardi. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just had a quick question about the policy itself.

[05:25:49] I know that section B references a Virginia code, and I just wanted to make sure that that code in full is referenced in the policy that deals with the language that these contracts can't be split into pieces and that it's being accounted for.

[05:26:12] Is anybody here from finance? Oh, yeah. There we go. So in policy 4340, when you look at Section B, it does reference Virginia Code 2.24303G.

[05:26:30] This is exemptions that are made to our competitive solicitation process. But any time, procurement can decide to proceed with competitive solicitations for these exemptions. These exemptions are what is noted in the state code regarding exemptions that are taken by the state for their competitive solicitation process okay so my question then is does the policy fully cover not allowing a purchase to be split into pieces that fall under the threshold we have a policy

[05:27:09] that does not allow the splitting of purchases in order to circumvent the procurement process that policy would apply that's policy 4320 which is our procurement thresholds policy And in that policy, it does identify that you cannot split purchases to circumvent the procurement process.

[05:27:25] So in these instances, the thresholds, though, would not apply here because these are exempt from the competitive solicitations. And do we need to put, I don't know, I can't remember if this code was referenced in 4320.

[05:27:43] I just want to make sure we've got everything covered because this is the last, I think, of this whole procurement package. And I didn't have a chance to look at that this afternoon. I do not believe that particular code number is referenced in policy 4320, but I would have to get back to you on that to confirm that.

[05:28:09] Okay, that would be great. Thank you. Thank you. Any further discussion? Great. This one, I'm just going to read the room and say this is coming back for information. All right, then let's see where we are on the agenda.

[05:28:27] We have 1505 Finance and Operations Committee, Town of Leesburg Proffer Funds. Mrs. Griffiths? Thank you, Madam Chair. Capital facilities include, per the proffer funds, capital facilities

include schools, parks, libraries, fire rescue stations, and other long-lasting public physical infrastructure.

[05:28:49] The town of Leesburg, like the county of Loudoun, assesses legislative land development applications, rezoning applications to address impact on both town and county capital facilities. The Code of Virginia identifies the voluntary collection of proffers as a key tool for localities to mitigate physical and or negative physical impacts generated from development.

[05:29:13] The town of Leesburg collects public school specific cash proffers to offset capital costs associated with residential development, directly impacting Leesburg residents, resident students. These proffers are held by the town until a request of reimbursement is made by the Loudoun County Public Schools.

[05:29:34] The funds can only be used for growth-related public school capital projects within the town limits. To date, the town of Leesburg has appropriated more than \$7.5 million in cash proffer funding that has financed in whole or part improvements to the following examples.

[05:29:53] Loudoun County High School, New Jersey, I say New Jersey, NJROTC building, designing the North Star School, providing inclusive playgrounds, pads at seven elementary schools, Falls Bluff, Catoctin, Cool Spring, Evergreen Mill, Frederick Douglass, constructing walking tracks at three schools at Tolbert Elementary School and Smartsmill. At the September 15, 2026 Finance and Operations Committee meeting, the committee reviewed information on the Town of Leesburg School

[05:30:28] Proffer Fund, including a list of potential projects to utilize and an estimated \$3 million in available funds. There is not adequate funding to move forward with all eligible projects. Some of the projects reviewed were included in the school board adopted FY27-FY2033 capital budget.

[05:30:48] Additional projects have been submitted by the administration of schools located within the town of Leesburg. At the request of LCPS staff, the town's zoning administrator has reviewed the identified projects for funding eligibility. Since it is Ms. Chernoff's district, I think she would like to speak to it.

[05:31:07] If you don't mind, Ms. Chernoff, can I refer to you? sure enough. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Finance and Ops Committee. I appreciate the work. I also appreciate the work of staff who've helped guide this, and I'm very appreciative to the town of Leesburg. It's wonderful that we get to have this conversation to support our schools in Leesburg, which further alleviates the capital budget for all of your schools, so don't hold a grudge, okay? All right. I have had countless conversations with my schools about this subject for the years that I've been on the board.

[05:31:41] And in looking at these projects, there were a couple of ways to spend the money. The way that we ended up recommending really impacts the most projects. So we're not using all of the funds, but with costs the way they are, as we're seeing with VU and other things, I think this gives us the leeway that we need in order to impact the most schools, but still have that buffer room to reach the upward limit should that happen.

[05:32:08] There were other proposals that got us real close to the edge of the funding, but I feel with conversations with staff, that's just probably not the wisest decision. So the option that is in board docs is what we are putting forward in terms of being equitable.

[05:32:24] This every school that requested something is getting at least one thing. So I feel really good about that, putting that forward. I would also just like to take a moment of personal privilege because we

have had an ongoing conversation with the town and we're gonna continue to have it, I think, over the next year about whether or not the digital marquee signs qualify under the verbiage that is set forth with the proffers.

[05:32:49] And I happen to think that it does, I'm not a lawyer, but I really do think that it does provide access to more students, which is sort of the adage of the proffers and is the purpose. And I think it does because it allows people get translations on their signs. It promotes school events, which bring more people in and kids in, and this is a hill that I am willing to die on, so I am going to be continuing my conversations with the town of Leesburg to get to this point. There's also major construction happening

[05:33:25] near Simpson Middle School that would make it much cheaper, in fact, to dig up the lines and put the sign in right now while that expansion project on Evergreen Mill Road is happening. And I want to shout out to Cool Spring, to Leesburg Elementary, and to especially Simpson Middle School, who have been fierce advocates and put together student-led proposals and other projects that are coming from the school to the town to be able to advocate for these signs. They've even started to raise some of funding on their own so it wouldn't have to be fully proffer funds. Again I could go on and on

[05:34:04] but I really I think this is a fight worth having because I think it would accelerate some of those projects in Leesburg so Leesburg to be continued but for now this is what we have. Board members any discussion? Nope. Since this is an outstanding question we'll see this come back for um well was there something that it could still be resolved regarding the signs? Not till next year most likely okay well so is there an appetite to have this going consent all right um this item will go

[05:34:41] to consent then that takes us to our item number 16 our discussion um 16.01 cameras during public comment um mrs griffiths would you like to kick us off uh thank you madam chair um i'm happy to have the discussion about bringing the cameras back for public comment um i have been very open that we don't limit public comment or keep the public from being seen and heard in any way I believe we discussed the matter during our September 15th retreat, which is available on BoardDocs.

[05:35:12] As part of the discussion on public comment, for reference, the discussion begins approximately at 5 colon 21 spot in the audio recording. During that conversation, I came with the encouraging sense that my colleagues felt it was time to restore the cameras during public comment.

[05:35:29] Our constituents want to be seen and heard. I would like to call on the administration to provide an updated report on all school districts in Virginia and where they are with the cameras in the boardroom. With that in mind, I would like to ask Ms. Ewing to clarify whether there is anything that could prevent this school board from bringing the cameras back to public comment at this time.

[05:36:03] Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. I did not receive the question ahead of time. There's nothing, I can say, off the top of my head. Legally, it's really going to be up to the board. However, I'm more than willing to do a little research and dig into it to see if there's anything possible that would prevent the board from moving forward with having the cameras on.

[05:36:24] If I may, and I apologize for this, I did have the conversation with Mr. Allen. Okay. And he did say there was, as far as he knew, there wasn't anything that could prevent us from bringing the cameras back.

[05:36:39] And I don't mean to speak for him. I did have the discussion. I thought maybe you guys might have had the discussion. But I apologize for that, for not bringing it to your attention ahead of time. But

regardless, I think the discussion should be had to bring them back.

[05:36:54] because, like I said, our constituents want to be seen and heard, and we shouldn't limit anything as far as them coming to the board to speak or being seen. Thank you. Thank you. Dr. Rasheed. Thank you, Chair. And I'd like to kind of follow up with what Mrs. Griffiths had mentioned.

[05:37:15] I'm also in favor of turning the cameras back on to public commenters. I think they should be seen. They should be heard if they would like to. The only thing is that, and I think I had already mentioned this in the retreat, I think that while we're on this discussion of public comment, I think it'd be just easier if we also not only turn on the cameras, but if we have a certain threshold or rather a maximum of like a certain number of public commenters, like, and I'm just throwing the number out there, 20, 25, I don't know, whatever number.

[05:37:52] And that could include virtual, that could include walk-ins, and of course to like to have a maximum amount of those, but that could be included in that number. But in addition to that, I also feel that speakers, public commenters that come out should not speak at consecutive meetings.

[05:38:16] I don't know if that makes sense. So I'm saying they should alternate at school board meetings so that it gives an opportunity to other people in the community that would like to come out and speak so that it's 25 or 20, however many public operators that would like to come out and speak at that meeting.

[05:38:35] And then the following meeting, another set of 25, again, it just promotes more communication with others. Thank you, Chair. Thank you. Mr. Pepper. Thank you, Madam Chair. So let me be very clear. I believe we're here because at our board retreat, I expressed the opinion that the camera should be on, and I still do believe that. I am also aware that as of right now, we are in a very unique position among school divisions in the

[05:39:10] Commonwealth of Virginia, in that I believe we are the only one who televises their meetings that does not have the camera on for public comment. That being said, we are also the only school division that doesn't limit public comment in any way, shape, or form, and that creates a double-edged sword.

[05:39:29] So I was not around several years ago when the camera discussion happened, but what I did do is I did go back and watch those school board meetings to see what some of my fellow board members who were on the board had to say in their discussions, and there were a lot of very interesting comments made.

[05:39:46] For example, my colleague, Ms. LaBelle, talked about getting an approval from a speaker, particularly if it's a minor, who has to come up to simply get their permission to be on camera. We obviously don't want to violate the rights of minors. We also can't control what people wear.

[05:40:02] We can't control their use of signs and political grandstanding. But the crux of the issue came from this idea of what public comment was. And I've been asked about public comment many times, and public comment is actually one of my favorite parts of the school board meeting because not only do I get to hear what the public thinks of the issues we're discussing, but I get to hear what the public thinks about issues that are just on their mind that perhaps the school board didn't know about.

[05:40:26] For example, the needs of our librarians is something that was brought to us at the school board level that we had not heard about, and it's good to know. I have this overarching belief that public comment is meant to be informative. It is a way for the public to inform the school board about the issues

we're voting on, the issues they care about and the issues that are pressing with the schools. What my perception of previous discussions was, was that public comment switched from being something that was informative to something that was performative. People would get up here to get their 15 minutes

[05:41:02] of fame. People would get up here for their political grandstanding. We need some method, if we turn these cameras back on, and like I said, I'm all for turning them back on, to ensure that this doesn't become a piece of performance art, whether that is showing the face, putting the cameras down from the back of the room so that the public can see the school board. I would love to see that the public knows that I'm writing down comments about each speaker because I often like to email speakers after they come from a comment to say thank you for coming out. I really enjoy what you had to say or you made me see an issue in a new light. I would appreciate that. I also know that this puts big liability on the chair of the board too because

[05:41:40] the one person who controls public comment, the one person who can speak, is the board chair. So there's a lot of things to think about if we turn the cameras back on. What does it look like? What cameras are on? How can we regulate public comment in a way to prevent it from being performative? For example, do we give the board, the chair of the board, the authority to turn the camera off? Should the speakers behave themselves inappropriately when they're presenting to us on the dais? As I dug further, I saw that public comment, I know that public comment is governed

[05:42:13] by policy 2520. In fact, I'm looking at it right now. I would love at this point to have the appropriate committee look at the policy, take what all of us say in this discussion, and use those recommendations to craft a policy that shows that as a board, yes, we believe that the public has a right to be seen, the public has a right to be heard, and we have a right to the public to be transparent in our actions. So I am all for sending this to the appropriate committee to work this out in the right way in a manner that protects us and

[05:42:51] protects the public and ensures that public comment is done with fidelity. Thank you. Vice Chair Donohue. Thank you Madam Chair. Mr. Pepper mentioned the public having a right to be heard and to be seen and that is an issue that people frequently bring up when we're talking about this question of whether we will turn the cameras back on for public comment. I have just pulled out my pocket Constitution of the United States of America, the First Amendment. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, prohibiting free exercise thereof, abridging the freedom of speech

[05:43:30] or of the press, or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. That is the right that the public has. The right of the public is to come and petition us as a branch of their government for a redress of grievances, and they have a right to assemble. There's nothing in here about a right specifically to be seen in person face to face. So I'm going to push back a little bit on that. Public has a right to be seen. But more than that, I was not on the board when they had the biggest difficulties with public comment, but I was on the board when we voted to

[05:44:10] turn the cameras off, and I was on the board when we did have... We have had some interesting public comment nights while I've been here. And my concern is, as Mr. Pepper alluded to, that there seemed to be people who were using the public comment process as a way to attack others. And I'm not comfortable with that. I'm not comfortable with being in the position of having LCPS

[05:44:42] facilities and resources to be in to be used in support of one person's attempts to embarrass or shame someone else and that being said we also don't place any restrictions on people being able to record on their own and I'm sure that all of my colleagues have noticed as I have although it's been less common recently that people do frequently bring their cell phones out and video each other while they are engaging in public comment so to the extent that an individual wants to have their comment their public their comments publicly

[05:45:21] recorded and later disseminated they can do that they can choose to do that themselves I am my gut is I'm not I do not tend to be in favor of saying that we're going to provide the platform for that I am not opposed to making other changes to public comment I think we should make other changes to the public comment process and I'm not opposed to that going through the appropriate committee mr. Svensson if that's something that that is the will of the rest of this board and the will of that committee but that's my two cents on the

[05:46:00] cameras thank you miss LaBelle thank you madam chair in terms of public comment being seen and heard we have in our long document that you read prior to public comment talking about saying things or you know people being asked to leave or to stop because this is against what we do that could also be for grandstanding I remember one of our meetings we had a couple of people

[05:46:36] turning around and facing the audience instead of the board to whom they were supposed to be speaking so I think in our document we could address any concerns that if somebody appears to be grandstanding or being performative or being too political we could at that point have the chair interrupt and ask them to stop politely or rephrase or do whatever else I think that could be handled there just as we handle it for the speech part I'm mr. cardi thank you

[05:47:11] madam chair my general take on this is that not only we should should we turn the cameras on. We haven't had issues in quite some time, and the times in the last couple of years when we've had a number of people coming here, it was because they were genuinely concerned about issues going on in their community. I don't have a problem with people coming back, because sometimes we're dealing with issues on, you know, obviously for multiple meetings. New things happen in the two weeks between. There may be new things that they want to do. It may just be that they want to be here in numbers, because they want to speak up for their community, and I

[05:47:48] think that we weigh that. I don't think we've had any issues since January, at least since being on the board, that we've had anybody come up here that's had to be stopped for being belligerent or anything else. I was present over the many years for some of the more contentious meetings, and I can appreciate those circumstances, but those are certainly the rarity. They were not happening on a frequent basis. So I think that a lot of this has to do with how we position public comment. I think we have a duty to listen to the public. I think we have a duty not to

[05:48:24] constrain people in what they want to come up and say. They're already limited most of the time to 60 seconds. You don't get a whole lot in in 60 seconds. And I think when we start getting into the idea of us judging whether or not somebody's public comments are appropriate or not, we're getting into viewpoint discrimination that I think has been a problem in the past, and so I would just say that, you know, let's turn the cameras on, let's let the public speak their mind. If we're going to continue with the one or two minute thing, then so be it, but I don't think that we

[05:49:00] need to try to put such a tight lid on this by limiting numbers, or maybe times when there's hot topics where we need to hear from a lot of people because there are a lot of different viewpoints to be shared. The other thing is when you limit it, you're going to wind up getting people stacking the deck in one direction and not letting the full public say their piece so I get really nervous when we start limiting numbers and again we really haven't had meetings that have run excessively long because of public comment so I like just to keep those things in mind as well thanks thank you

[05:49:34] sure enough thank you madam chair I did support putting this on the agenda as a discussion when and Ms. Griffiths asked me much for the reasons that Mr. Pepper voiced. I am usually not one to rehash things.

[05:49:50] I like to accept and move on. I did vote to keep the cameras on. I did not support turning them off for reasons of respect, dignity, best practice around us, all the things. You can go back and listen to all those if you really are fascinated by it. But for me, because the board does change and because the issue was brought forward, it did seem that the momentum on this had shifted.

[05:50:13] And if that is the will of the board, then I would support it. So I'm in the same place, even though our practice has changed, my mind hasn't. And so I would support us turning the cameras back on. And that's why I supported the discussion.

[05:50:31] - Thank you. - Well, I'm gonna go. - Thanks. So I think it's clear that we as board take public comment and public input very seriously.

[05:50:49] I think there have been several times this year, including tonight, where it's been evident that the way that the public engages with us is important to the work that we do here and a very important consideration that we take very seriously. When it comes down to it, though, you know, I like to say the word pragmatic.

[05:51:17] And I want our meetings to operate a certain way. And it's one of the reasons why I really like how polite and kind we are to each other on the dais, right?

[05:51:35] I want our discussions to be respectful and courteous, and I want us to extend that to the community. It matters. But if the video cameras were to come back on, I would need to see a compromise.

[05:51:56] I would need something else in the way that we do the public comment to change. And that doesn't mean that I don't respect the public comment, I really do. And we hear from people, it's not just the people who come in person that we're communicating with, right?

[05:52:15] I mean, I've been complaining a lot to staff lately about sometimes when I'm walking my dog, I'm getting feedback from my community. But we get emails, phone calls. Lots of us are doing sessions in our communities, whether or not we have office hours.

[05:52:36] It's really important. I just don't want to lose sight of some balance. And that's what I would be asking for if we made a change now. And it would be that I want us to also preserve the efficiencies of our meeting.

[05:52:52] I'm not sure that I have a plan. I don't know exactly how I want it to change. I would definitely be supportive of it continuing as a discussion in some other place, but I do think it's important for us to weigh the fact that what happened here in the past is a function of the fact that it was because our public comment policy is among the most permissive in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[05:53:20] Some districts don't take public comment at their meetings at all. don't have to take video because they can't afford to have the cameras and we are a large school division we are in the limelight a lot and we don't have any limits on anything and I think that finding some balance in that is part of the conversation before we can consider moving the cameras back on and I do think we've had some communication with mr. Allen miss Ewing would you like to

[05:53:54] address the current status of what would have to happen if we were going to move forward yes thank you miss chandler if the school board decided to move forward with cutting on the cameras to to a variety of extents because this was a prior decision of the board the school board would have to rescind the previously approved decision before they can move forward and i just want to note that any restrictions need to be to miss ricardi's point not based on viewpoint or content

[05:54:24] but time place in manner restrictions on any public comment so um is there any more discussion on this item for now i mean i think it's we've certainly had the ability to discuss i think we could all go back and sort of think about what we think the next most appropriate steps would be unless in further um mrs griffiths it was um where do we go from here that's what i was going to say

[05:54:57] so um so you're saying just have a discussion or or think about it um will it go to a committee well i mean in order to do anything now right so there was a previous action that occurred in march of 2024 that previous action would have to be rescinded and um it was noticed so that would be

[05:55:28] a majority there are i mean anytime there's a other motions could also be considered um so then it could be a motion to send it to a committee is that fair miss youing yes ms chandler so and i mean again it's a discussion item a discussion item could come back um i have a point of information yes mr recording so was this um was this under new business last meeting or is it under discussion It was a discussion item, and we didn't get to it, so it's a discussion item tonight.

[05:56:08] So what's the difference between a discussion item and a new business item, as far as being able to make a motion? A new business would be different. It would be treated in much the same way as an information item. The discussion item would be? Discussion item and information item are essentially the same. Is that fair?

[05:56:27] Ms. Chandler, that's my understanding. So then for the next meeting, would it be as a new business item, under business? It could come back as— Because we can't make a motion on an information item, correct? You—well, yeah, no.

[05:56:44] We would, if there was a two-thirds majority, you could— Yeah, so technically, I think, if we wanted to avoid suspending the rules, it could come back as an action item. It would come back as an action item by— If the board determines that it wants to continue.

[05:57:01] But we don't take votes on information items, so how do we get it jumped to the business? Technically, a discussion item is treated the same as an information item. So if it comes back as action. Ms. LaBelle? So before we could make it an action item, we have to move it to rescind the current one, correct?

[05:57:24] I mean, I think that there would have to be some clarification that we would need to seek before the next meeting on that from our parliamentarian. But technically, I think it's appropriate to have it as an action item at the next meeting, given that it was a discussion item today.

[05:57:45] Ms. Chandler, for a clarification, before the board can act on a new matter or a new motion to, for example, turn on the cameras, they would have to resend the prior vote first. Oh, so then that would be the action item? You can continue your discussion on whether you all want to and what the parameters are, but before we can actually vote to turn the cameras on, you'd have to resend the prior vote.

[05:58:10] Because right now, the will of the board is to cut the cameras off, and that stays until it's resended by prior. okay so if there was um as part of the discussion i believe there might have been a motion but that motion might not have been appropriate that some clarification was there yeah there's a motion okay um mr pepper you know a point of information okay and i think maybe it's for miss ewing

[05:58:47] hopefully so do we need to rescind the previous motion if we just want to study this item in committee not guaranteeing we make any changes for example maybe this goes to committee they hash something out before we make changes can them can we then rescind it if we're going to make changes or do we have to rescind it before we send it to committee no mr. pepper the the school board could decide to discuss it to flush it out before they take the steps because at that time they could decide you know what we don't want to make any changes because we

[05:59:27] haven't you know had a meeting of the minds or come to a consensus so it's not recommended to rescind the current action until the board has some direction and how they want to move forward so they could definitely the school board can definitely take it up as a discussion item or send it to committee but before they could actually approve a new action the prior one has to be rescinded well thank you for that clarification I mean this is fascinating I can't think of a time when we've had anything that's exactly operated in this similar way so in terms of protocol at this time it would be appropriate if a

[06:00:05] board member were to choose to to make a motion to send this matter to a committee but without rescinding the past motion because it would just be a discussion in the committee yes miss Chandler okay thank you miss LaBelle I are we allowed to make motions at this point in time good I move that we send this discussion to committee for further discussion and report back on some decisions or advice miss LaBelle you've made a motion would

[06:00:39] would you clarify which committee you would send it to this mr. Svensson's committee so lucky yeah all right so miss LaBelle has made a motion is there second second second thank you mrs. Griffiths has seconded is there any discussion Ms. LaBelle would you like to speak further to your motion I think that a committee discussion would be smaller more compact they could look and discuss

[06:01:12] quickly and then bring it back for the full board to let it blossom all right board members any further discussion no all right let's move forward with the vote on taking this discussion item and sending it to LNP all right please close and display the vote right this motion passes with eight board members voting yes including Miss Riccardi Mr. Svensson Ms. Chernoff myself Mrs. Griffiths Mr.

[06:01:50] Pepper Dr. Rasheed and Miss LaBelle and Vice Chair Donahue voting no we have come to the part of our agenda where we typically have board member comments this is something we have not done for some time but it's also 10:30 and we still have a closed session so board members is there an appetite to give board comments tonight no okay okay apparently we shouldn't have voted on

[06:02:21] discussion and information items but did we miss chairman would you like to go back and suspend the bylaws in order to yes then so then okay we let's go back thank yes yes yes please thank you

um it's so late everybody is so under the weather um then i'm gonna say we will strike from the record the previous vote and um miss labelle would you make

[06:02:57] a motion to suspend the rules to take up thank you madam chair i move that we suspend the rules in order to take up a motion on sending the discussion portion of our discussion to Mr.

[06:03:24] Svensson at L and P. No way. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. And his committee. Has made a motion. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. Did I hear Ms. Riccardi? Thanks. Ms. Ewing, do you have any concerns?

[06:03:39] So that's going to be two separate actions. The first one is to suspend the bylaws. then once you suspend them you can act to move it to committee right so this is just a motion to suspend the rules and it requires a two-thirds vote um and then no i think we're fine and there's no debate so let's move forward with the vote okay i'm sorry of course all right thank you

[06:04:19] all right please close and display the vote all right so that motion passes with eight members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Mrs. Griffiths, Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rashida, Ms. LaBelle, and Vice Chair Donahue voting no. So now that we have suspended the rules, is there a motion? Yes, Ms. LaBelle. I move that we send the discussion on turning

[06:04:51] on the cameras again to a committee under L&P and Mr. Svensson for further discussion. Right, Ms. LaBelle has made a motion that we put forward this discussion item and send it to LMP for further consideration.

[06:05:10] It was a second by Ms. Riccardi. Thank you. Is there any discussion? All right, let's move forward with the vote. All right, Clark, please close and display the vote.

[06:05:29] All right, that motion passes with eight members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Spenson, Ms. Chernoff, myself, Mrs. Griffiths, Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rashida, Ms. LaBelle, and Vice Chair Donahue voting yes. know so that item will be referred to committee um thank you for the procedural um machinations i know it took our entire team to get us there and and we did so um with that um we have decided to bypass the board member comments is there any new business yes mrs griffith thank you madam

[06:06:06] chair let me get back to it um i don't know if this is exactly new business but i do want to bring it up on september 10th 2026 the joint committee of the loudon county board of uh the loudon county school board and the um loudon county board of supervisors met to hear about safe passages safe passages was originally presented its fine it had originally presented its findings to the board in 2022 before my time before everybody's time here given the changes to our community the board and board membership i believe a fresh view is warranted to ensure we are moving in the right direction and refocusing efforts where safe passages

[06:06:46] will have the greatest impact on student safety. I'm, so I am calling on, I'm calling for research and recommendations for safe passages, the safe passages initiative to be reevaluated by district school board members as part of their individual districts. For my district, um, LCPS and the board of supervisors should work with the developers of the new development at West Belmont to improve intersections and pedestrian infrastructure I believe it is appropriate to visit revisit this study and ensure that they remain we remain with the right priorities for our students I also ask where the select

[06:07:24] committee is to discuss the safety and I think we created that for SROs that has been pushed to the wayside and on delay when our districts need it the most so basically what i'm asking for is we had in the joint committee a discussion on safe passages research was being done i believe by the county they were doing pilots on intersections in the county that i don't even know where they got them from because the ones in my district they don't have issues i have other intersections that have issues so what i'm actually actually asking for

[06:08:01] is to reevaluate safe passages because I don't, I think it's, I want to say I think it's a waste of money. I think that they should be coming to us directly to each school board member for our districts to see where the issues lie in our intersections. I've had a couple accidents. I just had one just the other day. Somebody was hit, a girl on a scooter was hit by somebody on Belmont Ridge Road we really need to reevaluate these intersections and you know I wanted to put it out there as new business per chair Chandler you know it

[06:08:41] is a joint committee or maybe Miss Ewing can tell me how to handle this how we can reevaluate that whole thing because it was through the Board of Supervisors so that's my new business thank you okay so mrs. Griffiths has made a request could staff please look into that whether or not that's the appropriate jurisdiction and how that could be addressed all right any seeing no further new business we will move through our closed meeting vice chair Donahue do you

[06:09:18] have a motion yes thank you madam chair I move that the Loudoun County School Board recess this public meeting and enter into a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2 - 3712 of the code of Virginia for the following discussion in consideration of the performance of a specific public employee as authorized by section 2.2-3711 sub-A sub-1 of the Code of Virginia. Thank you. Vice Chair Donahue. Second. Vice Chair Donahue has made a motion. I saw him. Ms. LaBelle, I believe that was a second. Is there any discussion?

[06:09:50] Yes. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to let everyone know I will be abstaining from the vote to go into closed and all of other votes concerning the closed session this evening to discuss or consider the performance of a specific public employee as as I will be recusing myself for such discussion or consideration based on my personal knowledge of the subject matter of my personal knowledge of the subject matter in discussion and I do not believe that I could be fair or impartial and/or there would be an appearance of impropriety and I would like to proactively avoid that scenario all right thank you any further

[06:10:25] discussion all right let's move forward with the vote clerk please close and display the vote. That motion passes with eight board members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, myself, Vice-Chair Donahue, Mrs. Griffiths, Mr.

[06:10:44] Pepper, Dr. Rashida, Ms. LaBelle, and Ms. Chernoff abstaining. The board is now in

[06:24:46] closed session. Closed. Vice-Chair Donahue, do you have a motion? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the closed meeting be adjourned, that the Loudoun County School Board reconvene as public meeting, and that the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting. Vice Chair Donahue has made a motion. Is there a second second? Thank you, Mr.

[06:25:04] Svensson. It has been properly moved and seconded that the Loudoun County School Board adjourn the closed session. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, let's move forward with a vote. Clerk,

please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion passes with eight board members voting yes, including Ms. Riccardi, Mr. Svensson, myself, Vice Chair Donahue, Mrs. Griffiths, Mr. Pepper, Dr. Rashid and Ms.

[06:25:32] LaBelle and Ms. Chernoff absent for the vote. Vice Chair Donna you do have another motion. Yes thank you Madam Chair. I move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of this public meeting. Resolution number 10-26-27 whereas the Loudoun County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of information act and whereas section 2.2 dash 3712 sub d of the code of virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with virginia

[06:26:08] law now therefore be it resolved that the levin county school board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge one only public business matters lawfully accepted from open meeting requirements by virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which the certification applies and two only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Loudoun County School Board. Thank you. Vice Chair Donahue has made a motion. Is there a second? Second.

[06:26:34] Thank you, Mr. Svensson. It has been properly moved and seconded that the Loudoun County School Board certify the closed meeting. Is there any discussion? All right, let's move forward with the vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion passes with all eight board members present for the vote, voting yes, and Ms. Chernoff absent for the vote. Vice Chair Donahue, do you have another motion yes thank you madam chair I move that the Loudoun County School Board appoint an impartial hearing officer from outside the school division to conduct the hearing in the personnel matter discussed in closed

[06:27:11] session thank you vice chair Donahue has made a motion is there a second second thank you mr. Svensson it has been properly moved and seconded is there any discussion all right let's move forward with a vote all right clerk please close and display the vote that motion passes unanimously with all eight Board members present for the vote and Ms. Chernoff absent for the vote. With that, seeing as there's no more business, the October 13th, 2026 school board meeting is now adjourned. Please drive home safely.



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