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Loudoun County School Board, Performance Monitoring Committee Meeting, Tuesday, November 17, 2026

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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1247781564?rel=0
- BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public

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[00:00:03] - Good evening, everyone. I'd like to call this November 17th, 2026 meeting of the Performance Monitoring Committee to order. My name is Amy Riccardi and I'm the chair of the committee and I'm joined by Ms. Chandler and Ms. Chernoff. Thank everybody for being here today. I'm assuming we don't have any public comment.

[00:00:19] All right, nope, move right along. Okay, so item 3.01 is approval of the draft minutes of our October 6th, 2026 meeting. Have you all had a chance to review them? Are there any corrections or additions? All right. Hearing none, I will entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the October 6th meeting.

[00:00:39] So moved. Is there a second? Second. Great. Thank you. It has been moved by Ms. Chandler and seconded. No, I'm like reading notes and thinking at the same time. It's never good doing two things at once.

[00:00:56] It's been moved by Ms. Chandler and seconded by Ms. Chernoff. All those in favor, say aye. Great. And it is passed 3 to 0. Item 3.0, actually we're on four. Item 4.01 is the Department of Academics School Improvement and Support.

[00:01:15] It will be presented by Dr. Ashley Ellis, our Chief Academic Officer, and Mr. Kevin West, the Director of Elementary Education and Charter Schools, and Mr. Mezenhoff, the School Improvement Supervisor. Thank you all so much for being here. It's late.

[00:01:32] It feels later than it is. I'm just glad I'm not the only one validating. Good evening, Chair Riccardi and the amazing Performance Monitoring Committee.

[00:01:47] So with me, I have Mr. West from the Elementary Education Office and Mr. Meisensal from the School Improvement Office. And this evening, we have lots of information to share with you based on conversations that the board has had about the school improvement process, about the way we locally identify schools for support internally outside of rules given to us by the state and federal guidelines we are also referencing dr. Spence's goals for the year that I know you all have spent a

[00:02:25] great deal of time talking with him about and so we will do a deep dive on some of our rules for staffing schools based on their needs for different types of support and then we'll also look at three specific schools Forest Grove Rolling Ridge and Sterling Elementary and the work that they've been doing with our central support from the Office of Elementary Ed and the all of the teams and academics to support their work towards the school improvement we'll talk about their strategies and their work underway and then we should have

[00:03:04] plenty of time for questions. So with that, I'll turn it over to Mr. Meisensal to talk a little bit about the school improvement process and identifying schools. Thank you, Dr. Ellis. Good evening. I'm excited to be here and thankful to have this opportunity to talk more about our school improvement process with all of you. All of our schools engage in our school improvement process based on these six core principles of improvement that are developed by the Carnegie Foundation and used widely in the school improvement process. This process centers on understanding the specific

[00:03:40] systems that create current outcomes, focusing on variations in performance, using measurable data and disciplined inquiry to test changes like PDSA cycles, and accelerating growth by learning collaboratively as a networked community. In this initial plan phase of the Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle, schools build a team to analyze academic, attendance, behavior, and climate data to identify key trends and determine root causes.

[00:04:12] From there, school improvement teams develop specific measurable goals and select research-based practices that align with the division's instructional framework for high-quality instructions. Schools do not do this alone. Central office staff provide supports to help schools develop these plans and prioritize meaningful community engagement.

[00:04:33] The do, this is where the schools put their plans into action. Collaborative learning teams drive the planning and professional development as schools implement their strategies through engaging lessons, differentiate instruction, and provide targeted interventions, all while collecting implementation and student impact data.

[00:04:53] During the study phase, school improvement teams step back to evaluate the data collected during implementation. Throughout the year, division staff collaborate with school teams during these meetings to analyze evidence and ensure strategies effectively improve student outcomes.

[00:05:11] And finally, during the ACT phase, schools respond to their data conclusions. With the continued support of division staff engaged in the process, school teams make explicit data-driven

decisions to either adapt and continue a successful strategy, adopt a new strategy for the next cycle, or abandon a strategy that they're finding is having a limited impact.

[00:05:35] This ensures their continuous improvement efforts remain targeted, effective, and fully supported. The PDSA cycle we just looked at does not happen in a vacuum. To drive student achievement, our continuous improvement process, instructional framework, and professional learning operate as one connected system.

[00:05:56] While schools are doing the hard work of analyzing root causes and implementing strategies, our instructional framework sets the shared standard for high-quality teaching in every classroom. To support this ongoing cycle, LCPS aligns division resources and professional learning opportunities to the specific goals identified by each school improvement plan.

[00:06:20] To ensure every school receives the exact resources it needs, LCPS groups these schools into distinct levels of support. As you can see in this tiered model, this allows us to deliver targeted school improvement interventions based on identified needs across multiple data points.

[00:06:37] While all schools receive foundational professional development, our tiered approach delivers specialized intervention exactly where it is mostly needed. So priority support is dedicated to schools with the greatest academic needs.

[00:06:53] This tier provides comprehensive support every month through a focused collaboration meeting designed to drive school-wide improvements at those schools. Enhanced support is tailored for schools with specific targeted needs. This tier brings central office staff directly to the table during the PDSA cycle meetings, and these teams provide resources for identified strategies and actively partner with school leaders during data analysis, reflection, and decision-making for the next steps in the cycle.

[00:07:28] To sustain this work, the Department of Academics and School Leadership meet regularly to review school data, monitor progress, and align our resources to meet the evolving needs of our students and schools. To answer the question of exactly how schools are identified for priority or enhanced support, we utilize this identification framework.

[00:07:51] We conduct a holistic data review across four categories. We look at overall mastery and growth using SOL and MAP trends. We drill down into student reporting group gaps to ensure equity. Beyond academics, we evaluate student engagement and readiness through discipline data, climate surveys, and chronic absenteeism data.

[00:08:11] And we weigh all of this against the school's enrollment data and staffing context. By combining this data-driven framework with hands-on division support and targeted resources, we are committed to working alongside our schools to drive continuous improvement.

[00:08:32] So one of the first things that we look at is the staffing that's provided to schools. And I know that is of great interest to the board. So we wanted to talk a little bit about what that layered staffing approach looks like.

[00:08:48] And we tend to think about it as sort of stacked on top of each other as layers. So if you start at the bottom, all schools receive staff each year based on the board-approved division-wide staffing standards for different staffing types.

[00:09:06] That's the baseline for all schools. And then on top of that, Title I schools or schools that have a 55% or higher percent of free and reduced lunch receive enhanced staffing that I'll go into on the next slide.

[00:09:21] That's on top of the existing division-wide staffing standards. And then another layer is the differentiated staffing that's allocated to schools each year based, again, on their percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

[00:09:37] That staffing is managed through the office, through the Department of School Leadership. The level offices work with principals to identify needs and approve their use of differentiated staffing each year, and that can change from year to year.

[00:09:53] An additional layer that's a couple of years old and has been widely successful is the addition of flexible staffing. And this is a pretty significant number of FTEs that are given out sort of, again, as a layer, once all of these other staffing allocations are provided.

[00:10:17] The flexible staffing runs through the Department of School Leadership and the Department of Academics. So Ms. Mitchell and I review flexible staffing requests with input from the level offices, as well as the content offices based on what the position is being requested.

[00:10:36] So, for example, if an additional reading specialist is requested, we would consult with the elementary office and the ELA office in teaching and learning. And then additionally, on top of that, there are central office assigned positions, and those are typically housed in the department's budget and assigned to a school.

[00:10:59] So, for example, because we do not have instructional coaches at every school, we assign those instructional coaches based on the need. Another example might be a math resource teacher or additional reading specialist on top of what is already in the staffing standards.

[00:11:17] So a little more details. I also did want to mention that in addition to all of these layers, there are a number of schools, 18, I believe, that are also that fall into the class size reduction category.

[00:11:35] This is a program funded by, we receive funds through VDOE, but we're required to keep the class sizes at those schools lower than our average class size in order to receive those funds. And so they receive additional staffing to make sure we meet the requirements of that class size reduction.

[00:11:52] So as an example, we wanted to show you the additional staffing supports that are assigned to Title I or economically disadvantaged, greater than 55% schools.

[00:12:10] So for elementary schools, you can see in that first column is the list of some of the positions. The second column is the LCPS baseline staffing standard. So all elementary schools receive this middle column. And then in the column on the right, you'll see we have, over the past few years, been able to enhance that support for schools with a high economically disadvantaged percentage.

[00:12:36] So, for example, social workers across all elementary schools are assigned at one per 2,000 students. However, we ensure that for every two Title I schools, they have a full FTE. additionally you can see that family liaisons are allocated in hours using part-time funds and we've been able to establish a standard where each title one i'm sorry each school where economically disadvantaged is above 55 percent is receives a full-time family liaison

[00:13:10] and that support has been much appreciated by the school communities so in addition to we also know that some of our title one schools do have do receive enough funds every year to use some of those funds for staffing that isn't widespread i would say and as you can see here only three schools currently have staff paid for out of title one funds that's for a variety of reasons. First of all, the total slice of the pie that they receive, and also they make

[00:13:48] instructional decisions each year about where to target those Title I funds. So before I turn it over to Mr. West, I did want to just provide a little bit of context. So I think it's helpful to understand the baseline staffing, but staffing is only one piece of this really important project this really important work of school improvement staffing is important and each staff member is utilized to benefit the the students in the schools and I also want to emphasize the

[00:14:23] importance of the work that's done in collaboration with all of the other offices that work to support the schools and so going back to that school improvement process and that identification of schools we have created for you one pager actually it ended up being two pages two page documents sometimes three that really outline the the work happening in these three particular schools these are just three examples I do want to emphasize that all of our schools establish school improvement

[00:14:58] plans they all have goals and strategies and are working toward those goals and strategies So I'm going to turn it over to mr. West who will give you these three examples and do a little bit deeper dive into these three schools Thank you. Good evening. So we're going to take an overview of a little bit more in depth of the three schools Forest Grove Rolling Ridge and Sterling Elementary And go a little bit more depth and from the slide that you have here and also from the two-page handout that you have For each of these we're going to sort of go through first of all

[00:15:35] what is the school profile gives some insight into the student population then we'll talk about the areas of needs that have been identified from from performance and why they're currently in support status while we also identify what are some current points of success and trending well then we'll get into the work that is happening this year and what the school's focus is and how they're supporting the students in terms of reaching those proficiency this year. So as we start with Forest Grove, it serves approximately 500 students in the Sterling

[00:16:08] community. It is designated as a Title I school-wide program. Over 54% of students are English learners and nearly 55% are economically disadvantaged. Loudoun County Public Schools has locally identified Forest Grove as a priority school to help eliminate proficiency gaps and to accelerate the academic growth with proficiency.

[00:16:32] This year, entering kindergarten at the beginning of the year, 35 out of the 60 students evaluated by VALS, the State Assessment for Literacy Screening, were identified and placed in the high-risk band as the school year started. Currently, within literacy, overall within the school, 236 students are receiving targeted Tier 3 Literacy Intervention Plans, and 65 students are receiving math tier three plans as well.

[00:17:02] On state SOL assessments for the 25 and 26 school year, overall reading proficiency for Forest Grove was at 52%, with English learners at 30% and students with disabilities at 37. Fall 2026 screening data shows substantial early literacy needs, particularly in foundational reading skills across the primary grades.

[00:17:24] However, demonstrates significant progress by the state performance and support framework Forest Grove made significant growth within that last year attributed to the growth within mathematics moving nine percentage points up to 61 percent and also English language learners achieved 11.3 percent growth on the WIDA access assessments and chronic absenteeism reduced to 11 percent for 2026 and 27 the school improvement plan targets a 70% proficiency on the SOL across reading mathematics and science

[00:18:04] to accomplish this the school improvement plan is going to be focusing on rigor within tier one instruction within the core instruction within the classroom some of the supports to help accomplish that the school leadership team has re-engineered the master schedule this year to assign specialized EL and special education teachers to single grade levels, which will help provide more targeted and specialized support to students, but also provide more planning, co-planning between teachers within those.

[00:18:37] Teachers also engaging in structured oral language routines using the QTEL frameworks to help build academic vocabulary and language development as well. And these teams are meeting within collaborative learning teams throughout the week as well.

[00:18:55] Additionally, another aspect that's happening at Forest Grove is the EL teachers as they're co-planning with teachers in the CLTs are also providing professional learning on a monthly basis to help implement specific English language learner strategies within core instruction to make sure that language development is a focus throughout the school day.

[00:19:18] So continuing on throughout the school year, there's gonna be a continued focus on the collaborative co-teaching, the structured oral language routines, and then also really using the assessments that are taking place within the school to really respond to that data and really refine instruction and provide targeted support to students to try to make sure that every student is receiving the rigor and also that has scaffolds that they need to be successful in terms of achieving that rigor.

[00:19:47] Additionally, all teachers are engaged in a job embedded professional learning through coaching cycles that's happening from some of the resources that Dr. Ellis mentioning before from district level supports and staffing and also from the school leadership team as well and the outcomes of these coaching sites coaching cycles the success of these are directly tied to student outcomes and assessments within the classrooms now we're gonna take a dive into rolling Ridge rolling Ridge is also a title one school and CEP school serving a student

[00:20:27] population where over 55% of the children are economically disadvantaged Under State Accountability, Rolling Ridge is designated as approaching expectations. And federally, it's also identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement School, or CSI school.

[00:20:44] And so from that, it also receives a grant and funding to help support some of the priority support school work that's taking place there. 2025 and 26 performance data for Rolling Ridge demonstrates some significant challenges.

[00:21:01] On the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments, the overall reading pass rate was 52%, with English learners at 32% and students with disabilities at 33%. In mathematics, the pass rate was at 51%, with English learners at 35% and students with disabilities with 30%.

[00:21:19] Some growth that the school and success the school had last year was within the student readiness as part of the SPSF framework. embarked upon targeted attendance interventions through daily

student check-ins, and they were able to reduce chronic absenteeism from a peak of 25% down to 17%, really improving the student stability and the school connections. For 2026 and 27 school year, school leadership and division

[00:21:53] teams are shifting to a targeted coaching cycle at the school focused around literacy so they developed with the academic department of teaching and learning implementing the coaching model through all the personnel available there in the school leadership team so all teachers there are receiving coaching support focused on literacy what they have targeted with literacy are the core actions from video eat in terms of correction one which focuses on interaction with text and then they'll be moving on next to the second core

[00:22:31] action of the questioning and that goes along with the text to provide that the rigor that goes along with engaging with the text so Rolling Ridge is going to continue to really focus on growing their students and achieving you know proficiency of more than one year's growth through these demonstrated coaching cycles within literacy as we move on to Sterling Elementary School Sterling Elementary School is a also a title one school and a priority schools

[00:23:07] support school serving a diverse population of about 400 students 66% of students identify as Hispanic 56% are English learners and 13% are students with disabilities and over 92% are eligible through the Community Eligibility Provision CEP.

[00:23:28] The school manages 381 active MTSS support plans. Sterling Elementary is also highlighted tonight because of academic proficiency marks on the standards of learning assessments in 2025 and 26.

[00:23:45] Overall reading SOL pass rates stood at 57% with English learners at 31 and students with disabilities at 26%. Math pass rates were 61% overall, with 40% proficiency for English learners and 32% for students with disability.

[00:24:02] 2025 and '26 data also signifies significant success in terms of student growth as measured by the Virginia Accountability Framework, SPSF, where the school was able to make significant strides based upon the student growth within the reading and math SOL assessment, Also within WIDA access in terms of the progress rate increasing and also reducing chronic absenteeism to 5.2%.

[00:24:34] The MAP assessments taken last year also identify growth at 52% in MAP and nearly 54% in reading, exceeding the standard of 50%. for this year to focus on growth Sterling is focusing on increasing rigor within the classrooms continuing to focus on oral language routines and also they're going to be having a responsiveness to the assessment data and really making sure they're responding to that in a targeted way to

[00:25:10] support students with interventions with that with the work that's taking place this year we're also beginning to see really immediate success and dividends at Sterling Elementary on some of the most recent common assessments within grades two and three within mathematics Those grade levels performed above division averages. So we're excited about the work that's taking place at Sterling and That's going to continue throughout the school year. All right, so that is a lot of information thrown at you and we will do our best to answer your questions and

[00:25:49] Would love to hear your thoughts. Thank you you I'm sure this is going to be a very entertaining and interesting conversation so thank you all for the presentation there is a lot of data here and I'm since I'm the newest of the three I have some probably some more basic questions but I would

love for the two of you to start first I know you've got questions I'm gonna ask this Chandler do you want to go first she's like no I appreciate that I actually don't have too much I'm pretty well acquainted with the school improvement and support process and applaud the work that happens across your offices to

[00:26:24] I mean, our schools vary in their needs so widely, and you all do such a great job with meeting with leadership and different teachers and teams and making sure that these plans are catered and implemented specifically to the needs of the schools. In terms of the staffing piece, I think you're right.

[00:26:46] I think the board is keenly tuned to what is going to happen with staffing and enrollment. So I'm feeling a little embarrassed because I have been talking about baseline staffing, baseline staffing, baseline staffing, but I think what I really meant is baseline plus enhanced, and I've been leaving that enhanced part off because I guess I sort of think of enhanced staffing for Title I as baseline staffing for Title I, so I need to make sure that I have, I am communicating clearly what I mean when I say I want to maintain baseline

[00:27:23] staffing for title one schools because now i'm like ah no i don't i want to maintain enhanced staffing um as much as we can with the hits balancing that with the hits to the enrollment that we're seeing so my apologies because for weeks on end i have literally been saying that and that is not the correct way to phrase this so i'm appreciative of this presentation and being part of this because i think that could have been lost in the process um what i do want to ask though i know that the baseline staffing standards are largely driven by enrollment and also the

[00:27:59] adjustments that lcps has had the benefit of making is enhanced standard title one staffing solely in our hands based off our budget or is that also driven by enrollment in title one schools so i will first clarify that just so we're all on the same page the division-wide staffing standards are also in our hands so they far exceed the state standards of quality so we through the board's approval create the division-wide staffing standards as well as the enhanced title

[00:28:39] one staffing standards also when you when you have said baseline over the past several weeks i have assumed that you meant all of this okay good but thank you for saying that thank you for saying that out loud. And I think that makes all of us feel better. I might need to have a conversation with Dr. Spence too. I don't know. I've been like baseline, baseline, baseline. So I think, I think we're all talking about the same thing. It's basically what exists already is kind of what I'm saying. Like, can we take what exists already and maneuver from there as little as possible within the budget constraints? So yes, because we are also not going to be recommending to you doing anything with differentiated or flexible staffing. Excellent. That works really

[00:29:17] well and is really needed where where it is so we're not recommending any reductions in either of those as well so to me this is baseline okay and then I forgot your question so yes so you have hands driven by some kind of state I don't use the words baseline again no some kind of state foundation and then we adjust with enhanced or is enhanced solely in the divisions and I guess we

[00:29:44] We have taken that upon ourselves to use the 55% economically disadvantaged because that's the threshold that we use to identify Title I schools, and that is our local decision. Again, it's more generous isn't the right word, but more supportive than the required 75%, is that right?

[00:30:08] No, I'm sorry, yeah, 75%. Okay. So it's much more inclusive. So we've made that local decision, and based on that local decision, that's where business and finance worked with us to include that 55% in

the staffing standards.

[00:30:26] Okay, that was my understanding, so I'm glad we clarified because to me that gives me a lot of hope for us going forward because it feels like it's more in our court in terms of where we make those decisions. Uh-oh, you need to say something. Go ahead. No, you're good. Well, just to clarify, 55% is elementary.

[00:30:44] Okay. Mr. Meizenthal reminded me 65% is secondary thought so it's a little bit different at secondary and then I I would like mr. West to Explain briefly the class size reduction because I really don't understand it and he does that'd be great So on that previous chart all those levels of staffing those are You know driven by lcps, but the one thing that we did talk about tonight Which isn't driven by lcs lcps is the vdoe class size reduction and so that's they the state has a formula that they send to local divisions and based upon that

[00:31:23] formula for that for specific schools they actually for at the k-3 level give specific targets that a school division needs to meet and if the school division meets those targets then they receive funding for that so as a result of that we have a lower class sizes at the k-3 level within those schools that's identified within that those generally are the same as our title 1 schools but then it usually has a little bit wider net beyond that where we also have some schools part of class size reduction that are also not title 1 schools as well just based upon the criteria that the state uses okay I

[00:32:02] appreciate that yeah so I think this is really helpful for me to kind of understand what delineates what decision and then as we go into budget talk sort of thinking about what are those non-negotiables in terms of what exists now and what we want to maintain because even though I mean to me I see this if we can squeeze out the money which will be the big question all budget season but if we can if we could maintain the staffing where it is now if our numbers drop that means those kids with high needs get more support I mean it's a simple math problem right so to me it's an opportunity if we can hold the line as much as possible to really increase support for students in the way

[00:32:42] of some the numbers are going down but the needs are the same so or going up in some cases so that's kind of where my headspace is at as we approach this I just want to make sure that that was clear so I appreciate you answering that question and then I just have one more question about the school profiles because I know I kind of know the answer to this but I want to give you a chance to tell the public and highlight how do I mean a lot of this sounds the same right like oh they need foundational skills and literacy and oh they need math and they need this and a lot of the school profiles look and sound a lot the same but when you get into the nitty-gritty they're doing they're pulling different levers to get there and the coaching supports and the

[00:33:22] staffing supports everything is differentiated so how do they collaborate and share with one another when they see success so that other schools can then replicate or pour into those same resources year after year yeah that's a great question and very timely because in fact that was a big exercise that we were doing today with our elementary school principals so you know that's a big part that we talk about you know where we're finding success you know how can we replicate that within the school so we talked about doing that within school so for instance you know within a grade three at a school if you see a certain teachers having success or certain grade levels

[00:34:01] you know how can we really grow that throughout the school and then we also want to you know do the same thing where we're seeing success from schools you know how can we translate that and

replicate that across schools so that really requires a lot of you know collaboration between our schools and between our principals and really embracing you know what Mr. Mazenthal talks about with continuous improvement really having that culture of learning innovation and growth and collaboration from our principals and our school leadership and it's something that they're really interested and then they love the opportunities to do that so for instance

[00:34:35] today we identified nine schools throughout our division out of our you know 62 elementary schools who were host sites and then our principals went on learning walks there and this actually I was thinking today knowing what where we'd be tonight I would just be a great opportunity that I would love to do with all of you at some time you know as well where there'd be an invitation to do that where you could you know join in an activity like this but we're at the schools the host principals really kind of do what we're doing right now and share some insight into who they are as a school sort of the journey that they've been on what they've been focused on what supports and strategies and action

[00:35:14] steps that they've been taking what then you would see in the classrooms and then actually go out throughout the school and visit the classrooms on these learning walks and then based upon that then that leads to you know collaborative you know discussion and it's like mutually beneficial so the school hosting really gets a lot more eyes from other principals and other buildings providing them with feedback in terms of in next steps and then the schools that you know come also then have very tangible concrete next steps and that they can take back to their own building so that's sort of an example of when we do find success how we can really build and grow upon that and so I

[00:35:54] I appreciate you sharing that and I wanted to just say that as a board member me personally some of the greatest things that have come out of PMC have been when we've been able to spotlight those huge shifts in data where we see the big jumps whether it's the belonging scores or you know the math scores from I think freedom and Parkview and now science so when we get those things highlighted even down to the elementary level I think it's really important for us to know what's working and then to dive even a step deeper and say do you have the staffing that you need and are those things at risk because our enrollment is dropping and the budget is shifting so I think we're kind of at that layered approach point at least for myself to

[00:36:34] ensure that those things don't waver or falter and so I am appreciative of you sharing that and I know you guys do a ton more even at the end of the year to make sure schools can celebrate success and and really capture even the hard numbers after all the data has been processed so super appreciative of all you do and I will pass it back thank you thank you thank you so much for the presentation it is really exciting to be able to dig in and see at this level the information that's available you know it is remarkable to me and reflecting on

[00:37:11] these three schools the similarities that exist across the board right the size of the schools is approximate it's close the makeup of the schools is approximate the challenges that the schools face it's it's all very similar and then when you really get in and look it's only the most minor things that are different and yet two of these schools are off track and one meets expectations and it is interesting to see the difference in the number of students who

[00:37:48] have been identified through MTSS but and in much the same way Ms. Chernoff's question like how do we harness the information that we have available to make sure that we are identifying the

appropriate supports and is it pop is it is possible right no I know that I know it's almost an unanswerable question I don't really mean that but could you help me better understand exactly how

[00:38:21] you're able to identify what is important in this information and utilize that to identify a higher need of support so just to clarify talking about the the data that we use to identify the different levels of support the priority and enhance support right i mean absolutely for us as a board member really like looking at these three comparatively and seeing how similar they are and noticing that there are only minor differences in the data and yet the out the you know Virginia SPSF rating

[00:38:59] is different and so there's obviously a difference I just think it would be helpful to understand that's a great question and while we do use the SPSF data as it is part of it is our state accountability system what's been driving our school support is is beyond the SPSF because we've identified some I don't want to say flaws but some some ways that the data some challenges some ways that the data could be hidden and so we've actually looked at our data through I believe a more rigorous model of looking at pass rates looking at gaps for different student groups that

[00:39:38] is not part of the SPSF we're looking at discipline data we're looking at climate survey data so really looking at a holistic approach to where these schools are. We're very careful that our support system is not considered an accountability system. We already have a state and federal accountability system, but rather these schools, we use this data to identify what levels of additional support they need. That answers your question as far as how we dig into the data further beyond the SPSF. It is helpful to contextualize the situation that we're in. I mean,

[00:40:18] know it's really just you know trying to look at the puzzle and understand how all the pieces fit together and it is important to reflect on that and I just want to add one more thing um kind of going with what Kevin was Mr. West was saying about our principals have the opportunity to collaborate but I was just at a monthly collaborative meeting for one of our priority support schools and they were talking about another priority support school that's doing math workshops really well and so how four teachers were going to be going to visit that other school to just observe and then have some debriefing with those teachers at another school on what does that look like?

[00:40:57] So we're looking to how we can leverage not only opportunities for our administrators to connect with each other, but how our teachers across schools can make those connections. It's really nice to hear. Thank you for that. With just sort of a little bit more insight into your question as well.

[00:41:12] With the data too, you're sort of looking at proficiency marks and across these schools, there's a lot of similarities with that, yet schools are achieving sort of different challenges rates with the SPSF formula different types of things because there's also different categories in there that look at for instance student growth. So for instance Sterling Elementary last year within the student growth they had 31 percent of their students within reading who achieved well over one year what would be one year's growth according to SOL scaled scores. So that's a pretty significant number that means that it's 31 percent of students achieved the maximum possible

[00:41:50] value on growth as measured within SPSF formula and they also had within mathematics 23% also attaining that over one year's growth maximizing the amount of points it's possible to attain for each student within the SPSF growth formula for mathematics on that as well as well and thank you for that well thank you guys again so I and again I take always a different approach sometimes I I have to always apologize for that because it just gets, it is what it is, but so I think

[00:42:27] from a big picture perspective, and I think everybody in here has heard me say this before, I really want to see, I want us to be able to really become exceptionally good at cracking the nut on big growth around reading and math for our English learners in particular.

[00:42:51] This has been my goal. My goal by the time I'm done here at the end of this term is really to make sure that our English learners are reading at grade level. However we've got to get there, I'm willing to just pour into that to make sure we get that accomplished. It changes the trajectory of entire families when we can do that, and that's my goal. And I'm setting a high bar, and I fully expect that we can get there. We have plenty of resources, and we just got to get them in the right place and in the right combination.

[00:43:21] It's like solving a very tricky puzzle. And I want to make sure that we can do that. So in looking at this with my consulting business mindset and background, this presentation is fantastic. You guys are in this every day. I am definitely not.

[00:43:37] So I feel like I've just swallowed a whale of information, which is good. I mean, and I get the staffing pieces, and I'm fascinated by this. I think one of the things I want to make sure that we're doing is that the growth from year to year, quarter to quarter, whatever we do, that it's replicable and we don't slide.

[00:43:58] Because what I've noticed, I have looked at the Sterling Park data for many, many years historically now, and there are times when we have these great growths from one year to the next, and then it slides down the next, and it goes up, and then it goes back down.

[00:44:14] And so there's just kind of this up and down, up and down pieces. So I'm all about celebrating those successes, but what I would love to see is how do we grow continually on the upward trajectory? And what does that look like? And I've thought a lot about, even from the Welcome Center perspective and the initial assessments we do with brand new families that are coming here, educating our parents on the process, getting our learners on their own roadmap to learning proficiency as quickly as we possibly can, and what does that look like? And I know it's not a

[00:44:53] one-size-fits-all, but I have to believe we've got enough data now to kind of understand some of those trends and figure out how we can continue to do things. I am all about doing whatever we need to do redesigning things if we need to to get the growth that we that we want so there's that kind of component to it I'm also really curious about progressing students to the next grade level when they're not reading on grade level and we saw this I think it was Mississippi

[00:45:28] with their with their test scores a couple of years ago where they stopped progressing students the youngest youngest ones after third grade until they were reading at third grade level and that made a huge difference not only for those students but their younger siblings and getting them to reading proficiency much faster and I'm wondering if and again these are just my my thoughts I'm not suggesting we do this I'm just putting this out there as food for thought you know if we get students that are kind of between third and somewhere in middle school are we progressing in eighth grade or up into ninth grade when they're not even reading at middle school level

[00:46:07] are we graduating high schoolers that aren't reading even at a high school level right and so what does that look like um for us I you know I see a lot of high schoolers getting a lot of time off because they've completed their studies and they've got periods where they're not um where they're leaving school

yeah I mean and as I visited high school as I see a lot of high schoolers kind of coming and going all day long right and my question is always are they proficient in all of their academics or have they just checked a box for completion and we

[00:46:46] you know where are we on that so just these are just questions that that I have in this whole entire process I'm also by the way not the SPSF process with video we is a political football and I'm it's kind of evolving and changing with whomever is in the governor's mansion at the time and whoever's running video we at the time and I'm I'm concerned about using that I know we have to meet those needs and those requirements of course but I like the idea of us having some of our own ways that we're looking at stuff that's consistent over time and I would just like to ask that we continue doing that and keeping that consistent and not

[00:47:26] changing or recalibrating data points that we have the trajectory of the data to look at over periods of time too so I have other things but I think those are kind of the big ones and I'll stop there and pick whatever topic that I just throughout there and see what we've got as a conversation piece so I'll start with your your last comment about the SPSF and our own internal support framework and we we developed this internal support framework for for many

[00:48:04] reasons but mostly because well one one important factor was we were essentially waiting for information from the state and we have a lot of us have been doing this a really long time and have seen a lot of changes and we did need to your point something consistent that we could rely on internally to and we have all this information right we have it the schools know it inside and out we should know it inside and out and so why are we waiting for a framework

[00:48:38] to be placed upon us when we have the supports that we know we need to use so this isn't going anywhere the other thing that that would be would be a significant wrench in this whole process if we were to use the SPSF framework alone is the timing of all of it you know it's it's a snapshot in time it's an autopsy of the previous year and our schools are well on their way to having a school improvement plan and goals and strategies and we just we can't wait around for that information so

[00:49:11] this isn't going anywhere and we're glad you like it your other ideas are are I really don't know how to respond to those I think there's you know it's I've I listened to a podcast actually on the Mississippi retention and it's fascinating and I I don't know how we would accomplish something like that in the commonwealth um not that it's not that i think it's wrong or right um but it's that would be a seismic shift for sure yeah and i and i'm not suggesting we do it i just i think

[00:49:46] there's something to be said for um for raising the bar right and setting high expectations uh my children would you know be like yep that's all she does and we can't meet them half the time but that's what we do and i i'm really big on just making sure that we're setting a really high bar and i'm good with with people not reaching it but i think you get better progress when the bar is that high then if you continue to create low expectations and on the flip side I will say I'm also not good with somebody coming in this environment and saying I want all these students at 100% because that's not attainable right now in the model that we've got either we've got to

[00:50:23] come up with the right stretch goal that makes sense and that we that that's manageable that that's doable but also a stretch at the same time so that's why I pushed back I think when we saw the original plans and everybody was at a hundred percent I don't agree with that I don't think that's yeah I know you wanted to go on this one go for it go for it I do want to push back just an alternative perspective

because I have also been here a while and I agree with you it would have to be a stretch goal for sure and I think you've communicated that you value high expectations

[00:50:56] but I push back on that because of what I have heard Dr. Spence speak on and I'm not going to speak for him, but I'm going to say I agree with the sentiment, is that we want that for every kid. And that says that message. Now, I understand where that's interpreted as like maybe that's not super attainable for us, but I like the idea that says everybody matters and we're all in the boat paddling in the same direction until we reach that 100 because of, I think, the sense of belonging and all those pieces that kind of fit under that.

[00:51:30] For me as an educator, I really think it's been a good shift in inspiring us all to keep the focus that I think you're talking about, which is making sure every single kid reads and leaves here with the things to change generational schooling or poverty or do new things.

[00:51:51] We have lots of new things in our world. So that's where I think it comes from. I don't think it's meant to fail, but it's meant to say we're going to keep moving until every single kid meets that and every single kid deserves that. And I totally agree. I agree with you. I'm getting there in a bit of a different way.

[00:52:11] Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I think it's fair and I'm very happy to engage in this conversation. A lot of people are interested in the Mississippi miracle. And I think it's an interesting idea to say maybe we can interrupt what we've done in the past.

[00:52:31] And so it would be curious to me to have some continued conversations and investigations around this. I mean, I believe when they hold students back, it may only be one time. But I think if we were going to apply something like that here, it would be interesting to explore.

[00:52:49] I mean, our student populations are so different, right? In Mississippi, they have a very low number of English language learners. But perhaps we could look at how we could apply more intensive supports to ensure that if students are not acquiring language at the same speed as their first language is English peers, then perhaps we can, I mean, it speaks to me that there are definitely changes that we could make to how we utilize the system.

[00:53:23] And that as we're looking really at a tighter budget and having to make more difficult decisions, that it's not a simple math problem, right? Just every student's needs are different, and it might be an investment to make sure that we're helping students leave LCPS and graduate with fulsome literacy.

[00:53:46] So, I mean, it's something that I could definitely get behind supporting changes, too. I think the goal is here is we want everybody to be achieving and fully literate by the time they're done with school and really getting there.

[00:54:01] So I think that's a piece of it. I had another question just about the common assessments. This is going to, I don't know what this is going to spark, to be honest with you. I have to put your earphones on her first. I know, because then she's going to go here. So I just had a question, because, again, I'm not familiar with the common assessments other than I'm getting a lot of messages about this.

[00:54:23] - So if we have a school where we've got, well, let me take one step back and then I'll go one step forward. I've noticed in some of this reports that we're missing tier two student head counts where I've seen there's populations in tier one and tier three but not in tier two in some of the reporting for some of the Sterling Park schools.

[00:54:45] So I just wanna ask a question about that and if we could take a look at that because one of the things I really value is the report that you've got that shows us how many students have moved up, like it's the, kind of like a cool flow chart that says, okay, these people have moved from three to two, two to one, you know which one I'm talking about, right?

[00:55:03] - Thank you. - Yeah, and I love being able to see that, right? 'Cause that's what we're looking for, is to getting students to move. But I did, there are a couple of charts, and I'll see if I can go back and find them, where there was tier one reported and tier three reported, but not tier two. And I've seen this in some of the data historically that was posted on VDOE about, would have been probably SOL scores at some point in time too but I've noticed that from time to time there's been data that sets that are fully missing and I don't know if that's just part of how things are going I'll get I'll follow up with you guys separately on that with that said with common assessments are we

[00:55:42] doing those for all students some students different tiered students my concern is that if you've got students that are getting tier three support and and they're doing their assessments, what are they getting assessed on?

[00:55:58] Is it where they're at currently, or is it where they should be at grade level? I don't understand exactly how common assessment pieces are done as far as how they aggregate or how they show up with the tiered support. Does that make sense? If you've got a student that's receiving tier three.

[00:56:16] - I'll start, and then Mr. West, maybe you can add. So first, I think it is helpful to know that last year, The schools that were identified for targeted support and intervention were required to start using common assessments, the elementary schools.

[00:56:37] And that was successful from what I had heard from the elementary office and the school improvement office. And this year, the common assessments are now used across all elementary schools in ELA and math.

[00:56:57] think you're asking if a student is identified below grade level do they still take the common assessments and I believe the answer is yes they they will still take the common assessments and that's where I'll need mr. West to add in any more specifics or somebody or might have to get back to you yes it was students so sort of going back to what you were speaking before about the the high expectations that we have for our students so are all of our students right are pursuing those you know grade level expectations and the common assessments

[00:57:36] helps us identify you know how they're progressing you know towards that so although a student may have a tier 2 or tier 3 you know plan for more targeted you know support we're still trying to work towards those grade level standards identify exactly where students are and then so they take those assessments to really help identify are they at the correct level of difficulty with what this state standards are expecting you know of them for proficiency and then that's really helpful data to use to continue to tailor those targeted interventions is there ever a circumstance where we're giving students

[00:58:13] common assessments on material that there's no way they're going to succeed on the common assessment that during that period of time or that that's happening week after week and I ask that because you know I'm all about the wins right being able to give students the wins and if they're getting tested on material that's at their level yes there's going to you know there'd be growth but I I'm curious if there's ever

an opportunity or time when we're testing above a student's capacity and that's consistently happening over time

[00:58:52] so they get discouraged because there's they're just not there does that happen and that's probably because I'm asking this question because I don't know enough about what we're like what we're actually testing so the the common assessments are you know division created assessments they're low stakes assessment so they're not like a SOL test or they're not like you know a map assessment or different types of things so it doesn't increase the amount of testing if they weren't given a common assessment there would be a teacher created assessment that the students would be receiving within the classroom so instead of for instance every teacher giving their own assessment to

[00:59:29] identify hey this is the learning that we've done this week how is a student progressing in regards to that and I need to know where my students are and how to continue to refine instruction to meet their needs it's all the teachers giving the same assessment as opposed to different assessments um so there's not changing the level of the amount of assessments that's taking place it's just now that it's all teachers are giving the same assessment and so what that does is a couple things one it really builds coherence with our curriculum so these common assessments are aligned with our curriculum and within our within our pacing guides and then two it helps to create sort of what you've been talking about that consistency

[01:00:08] of the high expectations throughout the division at all of our schools making sure that we're really trying to move all all of our students to those same high outcomes they're getting tested on the material that they're currently studying no matter what level they're at so if you're if they're a tier three support they're getting tested on their tier three material or if they're tier one whatever that looks like they're getting tested on what they're currently learning not on where they should be it's so when student so sort of tier one is the core instruction which all

[01:00:41] of our students receive tier two is when students need a little bit more support and then tier three would be students need the most sort of intense level of support regardless if you're tier two or tier three you're still receiving the core instruction within the classroom and the core instruction in the classroom is what the common assessments are built around and that's my concern because if you've got a student if you're getting core if you're in a core class but you're at tier 3 support so you're not you're not here yet and

[01:01:18] you're getting constantly tested on the core stuff again I'm just trying to have thought I don't know my brain is like I I feel like that you're T you're testing a child on material that they're not they're not there so they're getting tested week after week on material that they're not performing at right and then And what does that do to a child's, you know, confidence around what they're learning when they're not consistently able to answer the questions that are on a common assessment?

[01:01:54] Do you see, am I connecting, I don't know, I'm not sure if I, I've got it in my head, but I'm not sure I'm communicating it effectively. No, I see your point. I think we all see your point. And I just want to reiterate what Mr. West said about consistency across teachers.

[01:02:10] And the fact that these common assessments are very low stakes. They're a couple questions each. And in the absence of the common assessments, there would be teacher-created assessments that could potentially be all over the place from teacher to teacher, school to school.

[01:02:30] And so one of the benefits of the common assessment is that consistency. And a Tier 3 student who takes the common assessment doesn't do so in the absence of those Tier 3 supports. that are that are in the plan but I do see your point yeah I have more questions on that one but I'll go there another time so I think it'll be good I know I'm just want to be mindful of time too so any more questions on this topic are we good all right let's move on to thank you for this it's really it's really good

[01:03:04] stuff any new business this evening yep go for it I promise mr. Cardi and I did not collaborate beforehand but you did mention early release an early release is something that I have been struggling with for a very long time since I've been on the board and I've been really trying to be thoughtful about timing and where to funnel the conversation and how it connects and when I think about early release it is our high schoolers that have completed their coursework that leave early I think there's more a little more to

[01:03:41] it than that. But much like special permission used to be, it feels like it's just if you apply and you meet the requirement, you can do it. So at this pivotal point where we're having a lot of these conversations around staffing and electives and developing a five-year CTE plan and different types of diplomas and the 3E framework and, and, and. I also find arts programs suffering a little

[01:04:13] bit for support and competition with electives. I am wondering if we could have just some baseline data brought about early release. What percentage of students are accessing it? If we know why they're accessing it, if we take data on that? I believe that that could be a conversation that we could have in pmc i also believe that it could be a conversation piece and i believe we will be tackling it in part in special programs and committees as we talk about some of the cte

[01:04:49] planning and the special program planning and how that's impacting electives and i i'm as we have that elective conversation this inevitably comes up because it is a massive impact on that process as well as curriculum and instruction because what we offer and how we staff it is built on who's in the building and if half the kids leave at the end of the day that is impactful so and attendance and student services so i really feel like this is four or five areas that it touches and so my second question beyond the pmc question is since i have a captive audience of two more here where

[01:05:28] we can have a conversation of three do we bypass working this through committees and is it more prevalent as a full board item to tackle because I certainly have feelings about the implications of early release and assumptions that I would like to have addressed and answered but it would be in astronomical shift would we even touch it because many students are impacted by it so I'm kind of trying to see if you all what you all think about that conversation thank you um i mean

[01:06:05] i'm always happy to explore and and find out um if our assumptions are grounded and one of the things i would probably want to add to your list of requests is how did this start right i mean right um and and i feel probably a little bit differently than you do too because it's something that both of my kids have had and when we got to the point where it was utilized they kind of needed it and it's it's one of those things where it's not necessarily only a problem because it gave us

[01:06:41] in a time when we have such a difficult schedule to manage time to actually apply for school and yeah that that's kind of how it's been and to work so then I'm sure there are lots of reasons why students choose to do it but I'm always happy to explore the conversation and look in and deeply into whatever the issue is so and I would just say too I just want to make sure especially in you know one of my

school's cases that the students that are getting early release are performing at grade level before we're letting them out on early release if they need remediation

[01:07:16] that needs to be happening well before they're getting early release for other things because that's going to have the biggest impact on their role I mean I'm assuming that that's the case but i i don't know that i'm going to assume that because i the traffic i see outside of my schools all day long or i see students just coming and going and i don't know if maybe they're going to special programs um too that may be part of this i don't know but i'm used to seeing like the bell rings and everyone's inside except for maybe some adults coming and going but some of my schools the traffic is and i mean i mean traffic i mean students walking in and out of the building

[01:07:53] at a rate that i'm like wow this is shocking to me so yeah um thank you one of the things that i mean this may not be perfectly appropriate for this committee but if you want to look at at some of the reasons why students may be coming and going i would look at the fact that we have sports schedules that allow students to miss class and that's definitely something that i would want to address um before taking something away that impacts us you know a smaller number right like And, I mean, it's a lot to say.

[01:08:25] I think when it comes down to it, sports are incredibly important to families. And we live in a place that has, I mean, we have a very large and complex bus situation. And I think some of it is difficult to schedule at a time when there's daylight.

[01:08:42] But if we were really looking, that's probably the one I'd go looking at. Well, I'd like to make it clear that I'd like to begin to really look. I think I'm going on the record to say now is the time. And I agree with you, and if we really want to throw a wrench in it, like, let's talk about start time.

[01:08:59] So, I mean, I've got a plan and an idea, but I need to be grounded in research and data before we get there. And so I'm sorry that you are the mechanism for collecting that data, but I think I have my answer. I think we should kind of see where this stretches across the different committees and have us gather that data.

[01:09:17] If it is something that those committees are interested in, I'm on three of them, so lucky me. And we will begin maybe just the conversation about what that baseline conversation could jump us off to at PMC. And I definitely also see the value. I mean, kids work and whatever.

[01:09:33] So it's all good. Go ahead. So thank you for bringing this up. And I will start by saying we are able to provide that data so we could give by school the number of students who receive early release and the number of early releases they they have so for example some students are able to schedule their eighth block which is study hall at the end of the day or the

[01:10:08] beginning of the day so they come in late or leave early that's one early release some students do that um both days a days and b days so they leave early on both days that's too early release so we are able to pull that information listening to you all talk and just thinking about how the conversation would go I I do not do you ask me my opinion but I do think it would be more productive in a smaller committee conversation rather than with the full board just because it is so nuanced and I would want to bring in our school leadership team particularly obviously

[01:10:44] the high school team as well as school counseling who helps with all the scheduling because there are so many layers to the process so just my thoughts absolutely thank you for that I think it'd be a really great conversation to have any other new business okay seeing none our next meeting is scheduled

for Tuesday December 8th at 6 p.m. I believe and please check board docs just in case we have any updates to that and hearing no further business this meeting is adjourned thank you so much