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Manassas City School Board Meeting - February 24, 2026

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[00:00:04] for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

[00:00:41] Thank you so much. Ms. Garza, could you please call the roll? - Yes, ma'am. - Chair Spall? - Present. - Vice Chair Dr. Jones? - Here. - Mrs. Sieber?

[00:00:58] - Here. - Mrs. Stephens? - Present. - Mrs. Brescia? - Present. - Ms. Brown? - Present. - Ms. Miles? - Present. - Ms. Breeden? - Present. - Ms. Draymoon? - Here. - Thank you. Madam Chair, we have a quorum.

[00:01:13] - Thank you. Dr. Newman, are there any additions or deletions? no ma'am is there a motion to approve the public meeting agenda chair I move that the school board of the city of Manassas a public adopt the public meeting agenda as presented okay is there any discussion I have a motion by Miss Stevens and seconded by Miss Brescia that the school board of the

[00:01:51] city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda is there any discussion seeing and hearing none all in favor and are there any opposed the motion carry 7-0 it is now time for superintendent spotlight will miss ratford you have the floor thank you chair spall good evening to all of our other board members and to everyone that has joined

[00:02:31] us on tonight yes it is time for our superintendent's announcements and spotlights and so i believe we have some board members that will be coming down with us dr newman thank you we'll begin tonight with Osborne High School choral recognition Miss Shirley Glum the director of choirs at Osborne

High School is here to share information regarding recognitions earned by students during competition season so I'm going to ask her to come at this time hello good evening Dr. Newman chair

[00:03:11] Spall and esteemed school board members I am surely gone proud choir director at Osborne High School and I'm excited to present our delegates for the district in all state honor choirs this evening in november 32 of our students auditioned for district 9 honor choir the audition process required each student to prepare and perform a solo piece as well as demonstrate strong sight reading skills i am thrilled to share that 28 of those students were selected with two first alternates that is a 94 success rate an incredible accomplishment and a testament to their dedication preparation and perseverance these

[00:03:50] auditions are highly competitive it requires not only talent but disciplined individual practice and a commitment to refining their vocal technique and musicianship skills district honor choir weekend was held during February 7th through the 9th at Patriot High School during that time the students learned five to six advanced choir selections in just a few short days they had the opportunity to perform under the direction of distinct distinguished guest conductor dr. Craig Robertson from VSU and dr. Chris Hansen from VCU the musical growth that happened in one weekend was remarkable and our students

[00:04:29] represented our school with excellence professionalism and pride at this time I would like to recognize our district 9 on required delegates if they could come up. Nordi Batista, Cessia Gonzalez, Janiah Roberts, Zonia Alvarez, Leslie Hernandez,

[00:04:58] Lapis Valladolid, Kayla Rich, Roxana Espinoza, Vivian Deacis, Alexander Maiko, Francisco Espinoza, Min Bao Ho, Connor Moore, Adriana Willard, Adriana Simpson, Cindy Hernandez,

[00:05:24] Rebelsi Najaro, Javier Valenzuela, Malia Spriggs, Aisha Kamara, Layla Craig, Zebdi Quintanilla, Kelsey Mejia, Nicole Kant, Eileen Maltes, Malia Trammell, Nicole Gomez, Julie Reyes, Naila Abrego Osorio, and Kamora Williams.

[00:05:55] Let's give them all a big round of applause.

[00:06:08] Additionally, we are especially proud of our students who advanced also to the Allstate level consideration, representing the highest level of choral achievement in Virginia. Their commitment to excellence continues to raise the standards of our entire choir program. Those students who are selected for District Chorus then become eligible to audition for Allstate Honor Choir.

[00:06:29] This is an even more rigorous process with even harder sight reading. This year, we had nine students audition for Allstate, and I'm incredibly proud to share that six of our students were selected with two named first alternates. Those alternates missed qualifying by only one to two points.

[00:06:47] That was the level of scoring to show you how competitive this process is. What makes this achievement even more extraordinary is how our students ranked among singers across the entire commonwealth. Several of our students earned the number one, number two, and three positions in their respective voice parts at the state level.

[00:07:07] That is an outstanding accomplishment and speaks volumes about their preparation, discipline, and musicianship. We are beyond proud of their hard work and the way that they represent our school and community. These students will travel to Richmond in April for their Allstate Honor Choir experience and prepare music to be conducted by esteemed conductors.

[00:07:28] At this time, I would like to recognize our Allstate Honor Choir delegates. Norty Batista ranked number two as an alto. Can you do me a favor or just step forward or raise your hand just so they see you? Yeah.

[00:07:44] You want to raise your hand? Great. Amazing. Yay. Kayla Rich. She's at a sports event right now. She has a volleyball thing. But Kayla Rich ranked number one as an Alto 2 in the state. Let's give her a round of applause. Roxanna Espinoza ranked number two as an Alto 2 in the state.

[00:08:02] Let's give her a round of applause. Okay. Alex Maiko, base one, ranked number three in the state. Yay, Valix. And Julie Reyes, soprano two, ranked number two in the state, soprano two. Rebelsi ranked number one as a tenor one in the state.

[00:08:21] I also want to recognize Nayla Abrego and Lapis Valladares for also receiving first alternate positions. Can you raise your hands? And then that is it. Please help me congratulate all of these fine young students.

[00:08:40] Yay!

[00:09:57] All right, congratulations, thank you. Okay, now, as we come to the conclusion of the month of February and School Board Appreciation Month,

[00:10:32] all the way from 1977 Eagle Way, we have the Osborne High School choral students who are going to share a very special presentation for us.

[00:10:43] I can guarantee you all that no other school board in the state of the Commonwealth of Virginia

[00:12:41] has had a presentation like that. Can we give them another round of applause? Since it's a school night, we've allowed them to go ahead and slip out.

[00:12:57] Thank you all so much for sharing your beautiful gift with us.

[00:13:23] Wow, wow, wow. I can't wait for VSBA to see that one. It's beautiful. I know. Yes, such talent.

[00:13:38] So, each February, the Virginia School Boards Association invites school divisions to recognize local school board members for their dedication and service in their school communities. The 2026 theme is, From Strong Roots Come Endless Possibilities, focusing on the board's vital role in student success, governance, and community.

[00:14:05] Tonight, we have special baskets for each school board member, compliments of each school in the division. And so I think we have some helpers that are here tonight that will come. Yes, and board members, if you all can come down to the front, please. All of you, please.

[00:14:41] These are tokens that have been prepared by the schools for you. I think we'll just go ahead and be full a little bit.

[00:15:00] I don't know if she had to do that, but if it was my house, I would not be here.

[00:15:16] There's a PS5 in there, bro. Come on. Now I know the baskets are a little heavy for our principals and assistant principals that are here if you don't mind coming down front we'll take a group picture with us with the board come quickly principals assistant

[00:15:55] principals. Thank you all administrators for your assistance tonight. The school board of the city

[00:17:51] Manassas is one of 64 divisions in the Commonwealth to have student representatives to the school board yes and for our listening audience there are 132 school divisions in the state so 64 of them have school board representatives student representatives and we were one of the first so that's several years ago mm-hmm we are very fortunate to have two special students from Osborne High School who serve in a non-voting advisory capacity representing the interests of

[00:18:26] the students of Manassas City Public Schools in honor of school board appreciation month

[00:18:31] the board has special tokens of thanks for Miss Breeden and Mr. Emmon we really do appreciate them

[00:19:28] they always give such great feedback um each meeting so congratulations and thank you guys okay all right also the Virginia School Boards Association designated February 16th through the 20th as school board clerk appreciation week clerks hold a special role with school boards as they coordinate calendars and meetings manage the detailed work that keeps the board organized

[00:20:02] and informed and ensure everything runs with excellence behind the scenes Miss Alba Garza faithfully serves as the clerk of the board and Miss Muffin Wilkowski serves as the deputy clerk our board will come forward at this time for a special presentation

[00:20:19] Miss Garza Mr. Wilkowski words alva you are the steady heartbeat behind the school board's work your organization calm leadership and unfailing attention to detail makes everything function seamlessly even when demands are high and timelines are tight our board our

[00:20:59] division and our community are stronger because of you thank you for all you do for Manassas City Public Schools and Muffin your role may be called upon only occasionally but you are you but your impact is constant knowing you are prepared organized and ready to assist at any moment brings great confidence to our board to work thank you for your dependable service and your and

[00:21:38] supporting Manassas City Public Schools with such ease thank you okay this

[00:22:14] concludes our spotlights for tonight thank you gonna take a while to let that all soak in but thank everyone for all that you do we now move to board committee reports anybody miss pressure yes the board development committee met on Thursday February 19th where we discussed updates to the school board member handbook we discussed and agreed upon an update to the format of the

[00:22:51] handbook instead of using a Google Drive we are going to attempt a bookmarked and hyperlinked pdf which will hopefully make the handbook accessible both digitally and but also in print for anyone who prefers that format so we are going to convert portions of the handbook to this new format and see how it looks like and how we like it at our next meeting on Thursday April 9th we also reviewed the contents of the current handbook and identified items that will carry through to the new edition and we agreed on which sections needed to be revisited we additionally came up with a list of new sections to add such as the much discussed section on duties of the chair we divided the

[00:23:29] tasks among ourselves to make these updates with the goal to have an initial draft for the committee's review at its next meeting on April 9th it was a productive meeting I look forward to what we've come up with these updates are looking like they will be fairly substantial and I've already recommended to the chair that we reserve some time at our retreat to go over the final set of recommendations as a group thank you Miss Presha Miss Stevens thank you chair the policy committee

also met on february 19th and discussed two policies igr the grading policy and the development of a new policy to address recess the grading policy the proposed policy update sets the policy

[00:24:08] back to what it was prior to the pandemic and taken directly from the proposed update it strives to establish a fair consistent and transparent system of assessment and grading across monasca city public schools that supports high academic standards encourages student growth and accurately reflect student mastery of learning standards.

[00:24:27] Furthermore, the proposed policy sets the standard that grading regulations will be reviewed biannually with, and this comes from the policy itself, input from educators and or administrators to ensure they remain responsive to the needs of students. The second is a proposed policy to address recess.

[00:24:46] Previously, there was not a specific policy designed to address recess. It was mentioned in several other policies and regulations. the proposed policy spells out the requirements for recess amongst all our schools and both policies will be on the discussion agenda on March 10th thank you miss Stevens at this time we welcome members of the public who wish to speak about services policies and affairs of the City of Manassas public schools because we have an agenda to complete we ask that comments be limited to three minutes we do appreciate the time you've taken to be here and we do treat public comments as a public hearing and do not engage in conversation with

[00:25:26] speakers the lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern please be respectful when presenting your comments okay we didn't have to read that the next item is the consent agenda the items are considered routine and may be approved by a single motion unless a board member requests an item be removed for separate discussion do I have a motion chair I move that the school board of the City of Manaus approve the consent agenda as presented second I have a motion by Miss Stevens seconded

[00:26:05] by Ms. Brescia that the School Board of the City of Manassas approved the consent agenda as presented. All in favor? Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? The motion passes. Okay. We now move to the discussion agenda. The first item is the student under

[00:26:39] student achievement, the calendar. Mr. Craig Gefeller, Jeopardy Superintendent, will share information about a potential change the 2526 school calendar due to a special election scheduled in the Commonwealth of Virginia for April 21 2026 good evening chair Spall vice chair Jones members of the board and dr. Neumann tonight I want to let you know that we received information from the director of elections and general registrar for the city of Manassas informing us that HB 1384 passed in the General Assembly and that a special election has been scheduled for Tuesday April 21st 2026 because several of our school buildings

[00:27:19] serve as polling locations this election will require building access for voters throughout the day to minimize any impact I am recommending that shifting the scheduled professional day which is a student holiday from Monday April 20th 2026 to Tuesday April 21st 2026 and make the 20th a regular instructional they for students so the adjustment preserves instructional time will also ensuring that students are not present in the buildings that are being used as polling locations and the school board could take action on this at the next

[00:27:52] meeting if the desire is to make a change thank you mr. Capella are there any questions miss pressure it's more of a comment so we there's a lot that's in the news about this ballot referendum and

courts are staying it and other courts are saying no it's not staged or it only applies to taswell county or blah blah blah we get our information from the general registrar that is correct correct so we passing that we're taking no position passing no judgment on what's going on in the news it's just what the registrar

[00:28:27] tells us correct correct i wanted to clarify thank you for that clarification both of you um next up under finance is the superintendent's fiscal year 2026 2027 proposed budget The superintendent will present his FY26-27 proposed budget for the operation of the Manassas City Public Schools for his designee.

[00:28:53] Good evening, Chair Spall, Vice Chair Jones, school board members, and Dr. Newman. On behalf of Dr. Newman, tonight, Mr. Taft-Kelly, Director of Finance, will present the superintendent's proposed budget for FY2027, which is crazy, right? Along with the capital improvement plan for FY27-31.

[00:29:10] School board members, you have in front of you copies of the CIP book. You will receive hard copies of the 200-page proposed budget book at your work session on Thursday, as well as a link to a form where school board members can share your budget questions. Tonight's presentation is an overview. The budget book contains detailed information at the division, school, and department level.

[00:29:29] Before we start, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Ms. Tamika Lovett-Miller, our Senior Manager of Budget Services, and I know this is embarrassing her. She's the one responsible for the detailed CIP and budget books that you're receiving and that will be posted on our website for the public. These books help us tell the story of our budget and CIP and provide transparency.

[00:29:48] Tamika joined us this past July and has worked diligently to build relationships with budget holders at the schools and central offices and to develop these materials. Not only do they include a great deal of useful information, they are also beautifully constructed. We are so appreciative of her hard work.

[00:30:03] I would also like to thank both Tamika and Mr. Kelly for their partnership and flexibility in this process as the budget as ever is a moving target. I'm going to set the stage and help us connect the budget to our strategic plan, since our budget is the way we live out our vision, mission, and beliefs. All right, this is going to look familiar.

[00:30:22] As you know, our strategic vision is that each MCPS graduate will be prepared to maximize their potential as a member of the global community. That vision is supported by our mission that challenges us all to be architects of student achievement, which requires us to provide learning environments that support and empower our students.

[00:30:39] Our ultimate goals are to have students graduate on time with multiple opportunities, but also be prepared to be active citizens. As I mentioned earlier, our budget is the way we bring our strategic vision, mission, and beliefs to life. MCPS has identified a set of belief statements that are our critical bedrocks on which our strategic plan is built.

[00:30:57] You'll see in the proposed budget that these belief statements played a critical role in the choices made. First, I want to call your attention to the following belief statement: In fiscally supporting student intentional systems for success in an environment conducive to learning, this proposed budget represent intentional choices to support that student's success.

[00:31:14] Next, I want to call your attention to this belief statement. All Manassas City Public Schools employees are educators. This statement is a belief that all employees, regardless of role, play a critical role in supporting the achievement and success of all of our students. Finally, I want to highlight the final belief statement.

[00:31:31] Excellence in education is paramount to the success of the City of Manassas. Our budget reflects a partnership with the City Council, since a substantial portion of our funding comes from them. Now, typically, when we discuss the strategic plan, this is the image we start with. But tonight, however, it was very important to remind everyone of the groundwork with the vision and the beliefs.

[00:31:50] The budget represents the way we provide the aligned foundational support and necessary infrastructure to support the four pillars of the strategic plan that help us promote student academic success. The budget book that you will receive and that will be published online represents how the budget is a key part of the aligned foundational support for each of these pillars within our strategic plan.

[00:32:09] As you know, we're also in the early stages of the development of our next strategic plan, which will cover FY 28 through 32. Speaking of pillars, this slide reminds us of the objectives and strategic priorities for each. The common thread within each priority is quality staff to implement them in a coherent way to support our students.

[00:32:29] It is now my privilege to turn the remainder of the presentation over to Mr. Kelly, who will walk you through the proposed budget itself. - Thank you, Dr. Quesada, and good evening to everyone here in attendance and to those watching from home.

[00:32:52] I'll begin by giving some legal context as to why I'm here before you this evening. Virginia law requires that all school divisions to prepare a needs-based balanced budget on an annual basis. The budget process ensures transparency, school board oversight, and city council approval.

[00:33:08] This proposal represents our best estimate of what is required to operate our schools, our best estimate as to what is required to operate our schools responsibly in fiscal year 2027.

[00:33:23] We'll start by looking at some demographic data. Enrollment history. Enrollment trends are utilized heavily when it comes to guiding staffing and resource allocation for our schools and departments. As you can tell from the chart, enrollment has been trending slightly down for the last several years. For those who follow enrollment trends at the state level, this should come as no surprise as many districts have been reporting similar trends throughout the state. In fact, our trends are minuscule in comparison to a lot of the local districts. Given the national decline in overall birth rates, we anticipate

[00:33:59] continued reductions in enrollment at the state and national levels. Moving on to other demographic history, here's a closer look at our SPED, ESOL, and economically disadvantaged populations. You'll notice those populations are slightly down as well and I have no doubt that this is a symptom of the reduced enrollment that I just spoke about cost per pupil our cost per pupil numbers cost per pupil data provides important context when comparing regional investments as you can see from the data the cost per pupil numbers for

[00:34:36] all schools in our region have risen significantly over the last six years and now we'll get into the budget before we dive into the numbers I wanted to briefly discuss our budget development process the purpose of this graphic is to show that our budget development process is a 12-month cycle that really begins at the start of every fiscal year. Input that is included includes division leadership, input from

division leadership, staff feedback, meeting confer outcomes, and strategic plan alignment. Ultimately, we try to develop the budget by balancing aspirations with fiscal

[00:35:15] realities. Now, this portion of the presentation will focus primarily on the operating budget. However, we wanted to provide a snapshot of what the proposed budget looks like across all funds. As you can see from the table, the superintendent is proposing a \$175.4 million dollar budget across all funds. That is roughly a \$15 million increase over the FY26 adopted budget or for those of you who like percentages, 9.3% increase over the prior year budget.

[00:35:51] Now for the operating budget. The FY27 operating budget reflects both increased revenues and increased obligations. The growth is driven primarily by state funding changes, compensation needs, and pass-through funding due to our partnership with the Virtual Virginia Academy, also known as VAVA. I'm going to take a step back and talk about some of the state funding changes you all may remember at the January 20th work session where I discussed the benchmarking that takes place whenever there's a new biannual budget being presented by the general assembly that benchmarking includes re-evaluating the local composite index or LCI for all districts

[00:36:28] in the state as a result our LCI decreased from 3371 to 3285 which increased the amount of revenue received from the state it's always a plus here are the percentage breakdowns for the operating revenues and expenditures the primary drivers on the funding side are state aid at 57 percent and the city appropriation at 39 now if you're comparing these numbers to last year's presentation you'll notice a drop in percentage on the city appropriation and that's primarily driven by the increase in state aid that we received this year which is throwing off the number so it's just a

[00:37:06] matter of an increase in state aid not necessarily a decrease in funding from the city I want to make sure that's clear on the expenditure side you'll see that the majority of our funding is spent supporting instruction as it should be. It's followed closely by well not closely way off from administration attendance and health then operations and maintenance technology and then people transportation. Some operating highlights for the FY27 budget 14.3 million dollar increase in total revenue and again I want to hone in on most of that increase is due to our

[00:37:44] partnership with VAVA and that's about 6.8 million dollars that we're estimating is going to be for of our 27, \$6.8 million increase in compensation, and a \$1.2 million in additional strategic investments beyond compensation.

[00:38:03] On the expenditure side, the top budget priority remains competitive compensation. Health insurance cost increases also continue to impact our expenditures. As you all know, both of these topics really drive and impact our staffing, and maintaining a strong workforce directly supports our student outcomes.

[00:38:28] slide will really detail the superintendent's sustained commitment to the employee compensation. As you can see from the graphic, the multi-year trends show continued effort to close the regional pay gap. The FY27 budget continues to build on those prior year investments. And furthermore, if you were employed by MCPS for this entire period, you would have actually received about a 36.5% increase over what you started at in 2023. If you want to think about that from a more visual perspective if you made a thousand dollars in 2023 if approved in 2027 as a teacher you'll

[00:39:06] be making 1365.65 because of compounding and that really shows our investment in our staff and the superintendent's investment in continuing to support the increases there we'll continue the compensation discussion as we detail how this budget proposal aligns with our strategic pillars for quality workforce an average 5.5 percent increase for all eligible staff that means for For FY27, we took a more targeted approach, as you can see from the slide, 6.5% increase

[00:39:44] for support staff, a 5.5% increase for teachers, and an average increase of 5% for administrative staff. I'll speak more about that in a sec. And then an average increase of 5% for our hourly rates. So for the administrative staff, you may remember or you may know from looking at our website, our salary tables for the admin staff was simply a minimum, a minute, and a max.

[00:40:11] This year, we have decided to create an 18-step salary table and place the admin staff on that salary table, which inevitably led to an average increase of 5%. And so what that means is there's a range, and some folks are going to fall on the lower end and then some folks on the higher end, depending on where you fall on the step, where your step falls on the scale.

[00:40:32] Additionally, we've made some contract adjustments, which extended a few 11-month contracts to 12 months. This just provides those individuals opportunity to prepare in the summer and get ready for the next school year for inclusive and collaborative learning environment we've made the following investments funding to properly account for our partnership with participate which is a program that specializes in providing international faculty to school divisions funding to continue funding to support pathways additional CTE materials and increased funding for

[00:41:10] school custodial support culture of caring our investments made there were funding for handle with care recertifications funding for a project lead the way training and funding to support teacher transition to the new Jenny Dean Elementary and finally increased funding for communication and family engagements which supports our our pillar of strong family and community partnerships then this next slide outlines some of the commitments that derived from meeting confer targeted compensation adjustments which I just

[00:41:47] spoke about expanded EPEDs for specialized and hard-to-fill positions and for those who don't know EPED stands for extra extra pay for extra duties and modernized leave policies to reflect current workforce expectations as you can see before you here we slot as in prior years adjustments were made in an effort to balance the budget the largest adjustment was due to salary lapsing and vacancy savings which amounted to about \$989,000 I want to point out that this adjustment reflects realistic staffing patterns and not

[00:42:26] service cuts here we've outlined some additional priorities that will be considered should additional funding become available long-term sustainability of pathways addressing rising health care and health insurance costs support for Virginia literacy act implementation staffing for central registration implementation of special education and IT review recommendations and pay parental leave and now I'd like to shift gears and talk a little bit about our FY

[00:43:03] 2027 to 2031 capital improvement program there's been some slight adjustments to the plan but for the most part there have been haven't been any major major changes that is by design because on February 10th 2026 the school board approved a contract with RRMM for facility assessment that will involve a comprehensive community engaged process for long-term facility planning the plan will cover

fiscal years 2028 through 2042 and will drive our future capital improvement plans with that being said I will provide a brief summary of the project within the current plan but otherwise focus on the

[00:43:39] investment for fiscal year 2027 so here's a summary it's a little small here's a summary of some of the projects that are going to happen over the next five years again some of these will change more than likely with the facility assessment but as it's currently stated completion of new Dean New Dean Elementary. There is funding set aside for Old Dean Elementary once a decision is made on how to move forward with that facility. Hayden Elementary School will receive a new boiler replacement. Williams Elementary boiler replacement and new flooring. Mets Middle School we will

[00:44:16] continue with the restroom refresh. Phase two will start in FY 2027. Turfield installation which is in the outer years. For Osborne High School concession stand refurbishment replacement. Turfield installation. I think that's baseball and softball. And then security camera upgrade. Again that's one the outer year investments division-wide where most of the change has taken place we've increased our investments in technology updates we've added playground updates as well we if you all don't know we have an agreement with the city for every other year we we do playground updates and there's

[00:44:53] a schedule currently for those schools we have committed 60 000 per school as well as the city and so we set that funding aside for future year playground updates and bus purchases we have an aging fleet and so we are taking steps to commit funding for future years to purchase two buses a year over the next five years here's how those how those projects look on a year-to-year basis again focusing on FY 2027 you will see increases in technology updates that typically that's about \$200,000 there we

[00:45:31] are if we are investing 322,000 in FY 27 to \$60,000 set aside for playground updates and then \$330,000 for bus purchases moving down with new Dean we plan to close out their project in FY 2027 and opening that school Hayden we have to get set-aside funding for building there for Hayden we want to do a boiler replacement in FY 2027 weems here's the flooring and how that that lays out as well as their boiler replacement continuing on the restroom

[00:46:07] refresh for METS is there and then you see the school board or in the turf of insulation which is way off into the future Osborne just focusing on FY 2026 there be concession stand refurbishment and replacement project will start in 2027 and terrible installation will also begin in FY 2027 how we plan to fund those those projects are before you the majority of the funding will come from it's the normal investment that we make to our CIP we will be requesting to

[00:46:44] utilize use of fund balance for the bus purchases but otherwise that will be the bulk of our funding there's no more bond funding as you all know we issued the debt last year or the city issued that on our behalf last year so here's how that lays out then moving forward as you can see total investments and total revenue going to be 79 million sorry 15 million 800 818,000 387 dollars and

[00:47:17] that's over the next five years and here's the budget timeline I won't speak about the previous dates since they've passed but as you all know we're here every 24th presenting the proposed budget at the next regular scheduled business meeting we have a public hearing on the proposed budget and CIP on On March 16th, there will be a budget work session and final markup of the budget.

[00:47:41] Then on March 24th, the adoption will take place. And then a quick turnaround, on March 25th, we will present the adopted budget to the city council, adopted budget and CIP, to the city council on the March 25th joint session. And with that being said, I will take any questions that you may have.

[00:48:02] Okay. If I may just start by saying that we will have an in-depth work session during our next budget work session. So I'd ask that we keep all but very general questions for that work session. Does anyone have a general question to ask?

[00:48:22] Ms. Stephens, sorry. - Thank you, that's okay. Thank you, Mr. Kelly. I just had a couple questions. If we look at health insurance premiums, they're mentioned on slide 23, and I want to say,

[00:48:48] They're mentioned twice, and one of them says that we are committed to focusing on that. And then it says that on slide 23, and I'm sorry, I'm moving around slides, that additional considerations are for health insurance costs to staff.

[00:49:07] So are we going, as of right now, and you may not be able to answer this, as of right now, are we going to be able to offset health insurance costs a little bit, and then our desire is to be able to offset them more? Or is that just something that's just an additional consideration?

[00:49:25] - So we haven't received the actual rate increase from our vendor yet, but we have set aside funding to try to offset whatever cost we can. And then ideally, if we get additional funding and that priority is at the top, then we would like to reduce the healthcare burden as much as we can.

[00:49:44] - Okay, and then on slide 19, quality workforce average five point five percent increase in compensation for all eligible staff how is what makes staff eligible well if you're working here on July 1 you will receive a five and a half percent increase um on average again depending on where you fall on there right i like to say eligible because sometimes um if there are disciplinary actions or things like that it could there could be impact and so i like to use the term eligible just in case something else were

[00:50:19] to disqualify an individual for their salary and people at the top as well the longevity step that's a great point the longevity step isn't getting the same increase obviously as the folks in the middle of the scale okay so really it would impact the majority of our employees would be out would be considered eligible the ineligible would kind of be you and far between a very small percentage of our of our employees okay because when you hear that word eligible a lot of times there's fine print that ends up making just about everybody ineligible like when you go to buy a car you can buy a house anything like that so i don't want people to stress out and think well am i eligible

[00:50:59] do i need to be concerned because i think that is kind of important um and can you explain the participate program investment because we've got great teachers through the participate program and i'm curious as to know what additional investment we're hoping to do with the program so i wouldn't i actually wouldn't call that an additional investment we've used participate for many years as you just pointed out other districts use them as well it wasn't necessarily a major line item in our budget but we've been utilizing them and so for us it's just a matter of setting aside funding to make sure we have that funding available to support that program

[00:51:34] and support those individuals that help us teach our teach our students and so we just wanted to i guess repurpose and make sure that we're actually accounting for it because it just hasn't been accounted for in a way that that we solved it okay so we're we're kind of looking at it as its own individual budget item would you say that it's okay it's just not lumped in with salaries in general so that we can piece it out and look at okay thank you that's that's a good thing to to know and then just real quick we are setting aside funding for old gene old

[00:52:10] Dean elementary for 1.3 we're setting aside 1.3 million dollars for old Dean elementary we don't know yet we don't know yet what we are going to do so this could be a drop in the bucket or this could be that is that money was put aside years ago okay and we just kept it in there whatever that purpose will be all right because that was back when we had the original discussions about the

[00:52:47] old Jenny Dean and we got the original figures for refurbishing tearing down all of those different options okay so that is money that we've had kind of earmarked okay and then my last question for you um the playground updates you mentioned that we're kind of in a hard partnership with the city to refurbish update playgrounds the 180 thousand dollars that you have listed on here does that include the city's portion or is the city have a matching portion it's a magic portion this is just our portion okay so so because 180 thousand dollars

[00:53:24] doesn't sound like a lot for all the programs all the playgrounds we have so that's good to know that the city is matching what we're putting into it okay all right well those are my only questions and thank you and I look forward to hearing more about the budget coming up soon so thank you okay anyone else just a reminder that we are going to be heavily digging into this at our work session yeah I just noticed that on the additional considerations I

[00:54:00] just I'm very cautious of putting that on there and not having a number attached to it so we'll be getting information about how much it would cost for staffing for central registration funding to support paid parental leave which is one topic that we had discussed last year we weren't able to do so it obviously should hope hopefully be at the top of the list and sustaining the pathways all that program which is also something that we want to we're all in agreement that we want to continue so will we be getting more information on how much those would cost so that we can instead of saying additional

[00:54:37] considerations we can say oh this is how much it costs sure we could we could put together some projections for the work session and bring some information there okay thank you that's all I had think thank you miss miles miss pressure that was an important question it was one of my questions too so thank you see aren't you glad you went first so I just want to most of these are just observations that and some clarifications that I'd like so going back to near the top of the presentation here the per pupil the regional perp

[00:55:12] cost per pupil spending you noted that the per pupil spending has gone up in the region but what you didn't mention is that actually now we are the we spend the least per pupil in the entire region including Manassas Park and that really stuck out to me as sometimes you hear it say sometimes people have opinions about our cost per pupil and so I just want to put it out there to clarify and make sure that everyone is seeing that context that actually now we are the lowest cost per pupil. The pie charts that you guys have prepared, the revenue and expenditures,

[00:55:52] you know, how it's funded and how it's spent, I thank you for breaking it up by category. I do think that it's helpful to see that. In previous budget years, there's been a third pie chart, which is where the funding actually goes in terms, most of it is salary, is what I'm getting at.

[00:56:09] So these 76% instruction, most of that is for instructional staff salaries, correct? Sure. For any school division, particularly ours, more than 80% of the budget is going to be allocated to compensation. Right. So schools are people. This is what we talk about when we talk about the budget, is we are spending money on people.

[00:56:32] And most of those people work in instruction, and some of them work in other slices of the pie. But by far, most, that 76% is not just instruction. It is the people who work in instruction that is in that pie chart. so that's a clarification I wanted to make for that.

[00:56:53] You did mention the increase in our revenue, 14.3 million percent increase in our total revenue, which includes 6.8 million in pass-through funding for our out-of-district Virtual Academy of Virginia students. The last time we talked about the Virtual Academy of Virginia was July, so I just wanted to, if you could say, or someone could say a few words to remind everybody what VAVA is.

[00:57:18] I'm gonna let Dr. Sada explain from her perspective. - Okay, it's a 30,000 foot view. So the Virtual Academy of Virginia is a partnership where it's an online school and students who live within Manassas City can be participating and students from outside are participating and through our partnership are assigned to us, okay?

[00:57:39] So we have about 30 students that are Manassas City residents who previously would have been part of a program someplace else and are now officially ours and we get all of the ADM or average daily membership money for those students. There's around 800 other students from around the state who are participating in online instruction through this partnership with us.

[00:58:00] And so that flow through money is like 95% of the cost for those kids go through to VAVA for servicing 'cause they staff and teach those students. And then there's like, we get the 5% for like overhead and doing and managing the program.

[00:58:16] And so that's how it works in the bulk of the students from outside the division who are participating with us or in the like third through fifth grade range, I believe. So, and this is new to us this year and it's new the way the funding works to us this year and we're still waiting for some things from VAVA for the exact amount, but we're budgeting based on the expectations that we were given to make that work.

[00:58:38] Does that give you? - Yes, I just want, if this is the first meeting you're watching, you don't know what the virtual Virginia Academy is, and a 14.3 million increase in total revenue sounds like a lot, but half of that increase is something that is basic.

[00:58:56] We have no operating responsibility for the virtual, for BABA, I'll just say BABA. We have no operating responsibility for them. They operate it, and this is just a, there is a state law that allows us to register students through that, and we collect the per-pupil state revenue that would normally have floated into the ether were able to collect it now?

[00:59:20] - We collect and then most of it goes to them. But the reason we get some is there are some like administrative responsibilities in terms of on the enrollment front, the reporting front, the testing front, there's things like that. So that's why we get to keep a portion of it for the small portion for the outside students.

[00:59:35] - But it's not the taxpayers of the city of Manassas that have paid the 6.8 million. - Correct, correct. - That's what I'm getting at, there we go. So thank you. Moving on to the compensation over the years slide.

[00:59:51] So I just wanna make sure that this is very clear. If you're adding up all of the percentages of raises that we've got over the years, it's 32.2% for both our, oh, for teachers and support staff, sorry.

[01:00:08] I was looking at the blue band, the yellow band, for teachers and support staff. But, and you said this a little bit, but I wanna make sure that this is sinking in. If I made \$100 in 2023, If I was working here in fiscal year 2023, I would have made, I got a 5% increase.

[01:00:25] Now I'm making \$105. The next increase of 9%, it's not a 9% increase over the \$100 I used to make. It's a 9% increase of \$105. And so it keeps compounding, as you were saying, and that compound number is 36%.

[01:00:41] That's correct. So if you have been working here this whole time, your dollar amount increase in your paycheck has actually been 36.5% is what you said? - 6.5 is what my math told me. - Find a way to work that number visually into our next presentation.

[01:01:01] So tell me a little bit more about the administrative scale. This has been, we've talked about this before that our administrative scale was previously structured as minimum, medium, maximum, but we are now making that scale look like everybody else's scale where you're gonna get 18 steps.

[01:01:21] and you said that this is resulting in an average 5% increase. Can you talk a little bit more about how that conversion process results in an increase? - Sure, so essentially, we took a listing of all of our administrative employees. First and foremost, we built the scale, and so we wanted to make sure that the scale incorporated on an average of 5% increase, and so the scale was built first.

[01:01:44] It is, the steps are in 2.5% increments, which would be, I guess, a step increase, if you want to call it that, And then from there, we looked at where the individuals were being paid today, or in FY2026. We took a look at where they would fall on the scale.

[01:01:59] If they fell on a step that would cause their increase to be less than, let's say 4%, then we made sure to go to the next step. And so we wanted to make sure that we maintained an average of 5%, that was our goal, while also not pushing or having someone get a 2% increase.

[01:02:16] And so we made sure that we didn't increase somebody less than 4% and then no one any higher than, we tried not to go over seven, nobody got anywhere close to that. And so maybe 6.5% I think was the highest. So some people are gonna be on the high end, not a lot.

[01:02:31] Most people are in the middle and then there's a few folks on the lower end in the 4% range. - Okay, so it's just the quirks of where their salary was before we had this scale and then placing out where folks now fell on the scale is where that average 5% increase comes from.

[01:02:48] Okay, thank you. I noticed also on that same slide, custodian for new Ginny Dean Elementary, so we have to, it's a bigger school, we have to increase our custodial capacity there. And what goes into teacher transition for a new building?

[01:03:04] I was kind of surprised to see that as a-- - That's a great question. Mr. Goodfellow wants to comment on that one slide. - My goal is to get him to stand up once at a scheduled moment. - And I can speak firsthand as a teacher who opened a brand new middle school. there is a lot that goes into setting up a new building.

[01:03:23] And so we wanted to build in money into the budget so that all of our teachers who will be teaching at Benedictine next year will be able to work if they choose over the summer to get their classroom set up because we're taking everything, instructional materials, everything that will be going from old Dean, we'll be going to new Dean.

[01:03:43] And so we wanna make sure that we are compensating our teachers to be able to get their new classroom set up to also alleviate stress when coming back. We don't want teachers to come back that first week in July and everything is in boxes. That is a very stressful time anyways.

[01:04:00] And so we want to make sure that we're being fair to our staff and building in money so that we can compensate them to be able to come in a few days over the summer once we have, you know, it's all new furniture, it's all new, everything in their classrooms. And so that's something we've built into the budget.

[01:04:15] - Gotcha, thank you. It's all compensation. I'm seeing a theme emerge. I wanted to talk a little bit, just a little bit more, about salary lapse since there was some misunderstanding out there about what that is and what it isn't the last time we had this conversation.

[01:04:34] Salary lapse, I'm going to describe it, and you tell me if I'm describing it accurately. When someone retires, they generally do that when they're at the top of the salary scale, and then that person comes off of our balance sheet because they've retired on their own timeline according to their own life plan.

[01:04:51] And then if we hire somebody who's right out of college, they're going to be at step one. They're going to be at the opposite end of the scale. So we're saving money in the difference for people when they retire and when they – between our retiring or leaving employees and new employees that we hire.

[01:05:10] I think that's a great explanation. That's exactly what salary elapsing is. It's not a targeted thing. It usually happens just through the normal course of the hiring process. It's part of nature. Exactly. Okay. We're not forcing anybody out. Absolutely not. Absolutely not. That's good. And then my question on additional considerations was the question that Ms. Miles asked.

[01:05:32] I just want to note for CIP that \$1.3 million, that is everything with that old building is still very much an active discussion. We are still actively considering that. And actually, if you have opinions about it, we do have a public hearing on the book. So, you know, that's part of it.

[01:05:47] If you want to come and share your vision for that old building, please come share it then. - And my last question pertains to the bus purchases. Are those, you mentioned that we were using the planning to use the fund balance for that. Is that above the percentage?

[01:06:03] Would that require a city council vote or is that below the percentage? - Well, ideally we would present the CIP budget as well and so it would be a part of that. - It would be part of that, okay. And to clarify, the buses we are looking to purchase are diesel buses?

[01:06:18] - They are diesel buses. - They are diesel buses. - Great clarification. - That's all. - Thank you, Ms. Brescia. When she was talking, it kind of came up with another one. I have a question and I think maybe this would be good for you to explain because maybe not everyone understands.

[01:06:36] How does the cost per pupil even calculate? Because I also have that written down on my paper that Manassas Park had a higher cost per pupil than the city. So I just was wondering how is that calculated? So before we go there, I do want to point out that the cost per pupil caption that you see in the presentation is from a report.

[01:06:57] It's called the Wavy Report or the Washington Area Boards of Education, thank you, report. And so it is a self-reporting report. And so we contribute to it as well and every year we give our data. And

so I can't speak to how the other districts come up with their data.

[01:07:15] Essentially the cost per pupil is the cost that we incur to teach our students. And so it's a combination of, I'm sure it's compensation as well as instructional materials and the whole gambit of expenses that are related with delivering instruction.

[01:07:30] And so again, I'd be hesitant to speak to other districts because it's a self-reported number that they use. For us, that's typically how it's calculated. - I appreciate you doing that because a lot of people may not know. And so in that way, when we look at the data, we're like, oh, this is why.

[01:07:46] The other question I had, and I'm asking this just because I've never seen this before and maybe this has happened before, but looking at the way that we're doing compensation, I've never seen support staff be compensated higher than our teachers. So I'm wondering, is this something that we've done in the past or are we doing that just to level the ground to make sure everyone has gotten the same amount over the course of 2023 to 2027?

[01:08:13] We have differentiated before, but this one came from Conversations in the Meet and Confer. I just wanted to clarify that, especially if anyone is wondering, Because I know the time that support staff, we really appreciate our support staff, our teachers as well.

[01:08:31] So we want to make sure everyone understands why we're doing that. Okay. Thank you. That's all I have. Okay. Just to reiterate, we will have an in-depth work session during our next budget work session. And I'm sure that we will be able to go into a lot of these details a lot deeper.

[01:08:48] I want to thank Ms. Lovett-Miller. It is a beautiful document. And Mr. Kelly and Dr. Quesada. And I'm very proud of our forward thinking for VAVA. I just want to say that out loud. Thank you, Mr. Kelly. Thank you. Up next, we have, under the heading of accountability, school improvement plan update for Baldwin Elementary School.

[01:09:13] Mr. Rupert, I don't have to do that then. Good evening again, Chair Spall, Vice Chair Jones, school board members, and Dr. Newman. Tonight, you'll be receiving presentations from five of our principals about their continuous improvement efforts.

[01:09:30] These presentations follow the ones made by the other four at your previous business meeting. As a reminder to the board and anyone watching, we presented performance data for the division and individual schools in September. In December, we presented accreditation and accountability data for all schools. As requested by the school board, the purpose of these school presentations is for principals to provide an update on the strategic priorities and goals that they have identified through their comprehensive needs assessments looking at multiple data points.

[01:09:55] Just like last time, these presentations are focused on the strategic work that the principals and their school teams are doing to move the schools forward. Each of the presentations follows the same format. Each presentation starts with a snapshot of the school with its accreditation and accountability status. Each principal will then share their strategic priorities and how they were determined.

[01:10:13] They will then walk through specific goals and strategies and conclude with a spotlight. These principals will be providing you with specific examples of the ongoing strategic work in their buildings to address their identified priorities, all of which are in line with the division strategic plan and priorities.

During tonight's presentation, you will hear about new strategic efforts as well as efforts that are continuing and expanding based on past successes.

[01:10:32] Before we begin, I want to highlight Weems. The Virginia Association of School Superintendents asked the Virginia Department of Education for schools to highlight and share best practices at their upcoming conference. BDOE recommended Weems Elementary School because of their success last year, especially with growth in reading, where they were ranked at the top of Region Four.

[01:10:50] The order of the present, yes. The order of the presentations tonight is as follows: Baldwin Elementary School, Hayden Elementary School, Weems Elementary School, Mets Middle School, and Osborne High School.

[01:11:07] It is my pleasure to turn the floor over to mr. Rupert for the first presentation good evening chair Spall vice chair Jones I'm members of the school board dr. Newman it's an honor to be here to share some information about our school improvement plan for Baldwin elementary and kind of give a little bit of overview dig into a little bit of

[01:11:42] the things that we're doing this year that the team is targeted okay so my name is Dave Rupert I'm a proud principal here at Baldwin Elementary this is my fifth year as principal at Baldwin my 13th in the city so it's a being in the with the being a Baldwin rocket is a pleasure if you get to walk our hall see our kids see our staff you know there's a lot of positivity in our building obviously we have a beautiful building but we have beautiful people inside the beautiful learners and people that are very dedicated so I'm proud to stand here and talk about some of the things that we're doing because we're putting a lot of work in each and every day so I want to start off we'll get into our

[01:12:22] first slide here I have a few members of our team that have joined us and stuck around so I want to I want to appreciate them and thank them so we have our assistant principal dr. Zimmerman working very hard we have mr. Maria she's here and obviously you guys know her from the MEA mr. Norland fourth grade miss Wilson our math specialist very hard worker our instructional facilitator that's the

[01:12:53] beat of our CLTs Donna, Donna Johansson-Cross, our ITTS Susie Frischkorn and our dedicated second grade teacher Jesse Radford way back in the back. First grade, first grade teacher now. We did a flop-a-roo. So take a look at our first slide here. We're very proud. We have work to do, but we're proud that our mastery score came in strong, but we have things to work on. That's what our school improvement plan is for, but we are fully accredited and working to be on track with with the new accountability system getting into identified

[01:13:30] strategic priorities um our school improvement team consists of a lot of these leaders you see here would have representation from every team in every department um even even our support employees so um in terms of instructional support employees so we get together every august sometimes in the summer if the data gets back before that and we do a root cause analysis and we take a look at our data and take a look at the reporting categories we have sol but we also have things in k-2 with valves that that's changed over from the palace testing that has a little bit more data so over

[01:14:08] the five years since coming back from the pandemic as you've seen with some of the data we've had consistent incremental growth over five years like i said we still have ways to go but we're consistently growing that mountain and i really do think that our school improvement team really targets the right

things every year we have the right discussion so it's not just um the data there's the dialogue with the team and also reflections and upon how we can bring it to the team and what's actually doable we could all do many many things right but we have to pick a few things to target and i'm going to talk about a few of those today so within our data again with

[01:14:46] the soles we've seen the consistent growth and we're seeing um you know seeing areas that we're and we're continuing to grow. But one of the things that popped out at us in our vowels data, it's very important as a fundamental piece, is the vocabulary piece in a few indicators in the vowels. Overall, our vowels data has made strong progress.

[01:15:05] But when you take a look and get into all those indicators, that's one of the places that we identified. And as you know, without academic vocabulary, language comprehension, vocabulary fluency, and background knowledge, vocabulary hits a lot of those things.

[01:15:20] and with our students that need to be speaking and speaking and listening and all those skills come together with Kagan. So you'll see Kagan Cooperative Strategies in here as well. Within math, number sense, and fact fluency, last year, this year, we're proud to report out that our four categories in math, number sense, computation, patterns, function, and algebra, geometry, and measurement, all of our reporting categories this year are pretty stable, right around the 30, the number 30, which is about the standard number for around what passes are.

[01:15:56] In years past, our school improvement team had taken a look at measurement and geometry and patterns, function, and algebra, and they've been down around 25 or 26, and we've targeted those in our school improvement plan. So feeling better about that, that we're still incorporating those things in, we wanted to attack number sets, in fact, fluency, as math is ever-changing, as we know, If any of you are parents, you send them some different worksheets.

[01:16:24] Math's being done a little bit different than the way it was back when we were doing it. So we have to really move forward. I'll talk a little bit more about that later on and how we're doing that. But so that's what we identified as our strategic priorities, getting into this overall goal with language arts.

[01:16:43] The SOL goal was to move to a 65% pass rate. And in K-2, and actually getting into third grade, Now that more people are taking the vows, we want to keep moving those risk bands there as well.

[01:17:01] So the strategies, I talked a little bit about what we're doing, but overall, we are in year two of benchmark. Year one, you guys heard a lot of it last year. It was a difficult year. We're going through that program. We're going through our materials for the first time.

[01:17:18] So as much as we were reviewing things, teaching things, going through them the first time, seeing how the kids react understanding what that is it was tough on pacing it was tough to do that some of these things really well the first time we learned a lot of lessons we had a lot of great conversations and i can report that our pacing is a lot stronger this year and i will say that that's why we wanted to get into some of the vocabulary piece is because we feel that within benchmark advanced we can really tip the scale getting deeper and deeper into the depth of knowledge within those types of things um obviously we want our kids speaking we want them listening we want

[01:17:54] them to be engaged so kagan cooperative learning structures are a focus for our school reading plans are all and benchmark advanced interventions targeted support block things that we do try to do in small group obviously these are things that we've done in prior years but every kid's different every grade's

different in education you never know what you're going to get and interventions are going to be different um you have the same structure but you have to dig it a little bit differently so um into mid-year we are seeing positive growth points in our valves data um overall the the vocabulary piece and a couple of the indicators that we have are not tested

[01:18:32] at mid-year just the beginning of the year and end of the year but we are using our strategies to go push forward with those moving on to math um again we're just getting better in our clt the The CLT is our strongest piece.

[01:18:49] Our instructional facilitator, our math coach. I really want to give a big shout out to them. Obviously, our reading team last year, we went through a lot of the stuff with the benchmark advanced and still helping our teams this year, and I appreciate them. But math this year, we're trying to change the needle a little bit more and push forward with more in-depth to the new math standards.

[01:19:08] We're obviously using Kagan to get those kids talking with student discourse with math. It's very important. modeling manipulatives through our math workshop and I'll highlight that a little bit more as we as we go forward with our spotlights so attendance we took a bit of a back road a couple of percentage last year and before we cut it from 20 to 10 we moved to 12 so this year our attendance team meets every two to three weeks and we monitor our attendance and we use celebrations we target kids and

[01:19:44] And families, to grow the awareness, the biggest thing is the awareness, even though we've been at this for a few years, it's the awareness and the balance, I think, that we want to talk to our parents. Our attendance team calls daily, and we remind when the numbers are getting up, but they'll get official types of things through our Monassau City processes.

[01:20:05] Spotlight, really like math workshop, I think that it's pretty cool to participate in our CLTs with our math coach and our instructional facilitator and the entire team. We model a lot of these strategies, taking it from the concrete to abstract to see how the kids would think about it.

[01:20:25] And it's been really eye-opening and it really has encouraged people to share more, like come in, I wanna check out, I wanna see this. And they invite our math coach in, not just the model with them, the model with the class. So I will say that Ms. Wilson is very popular around the school.

[01:20:42] They love the engagement. She gets in there and with our teachers as well. She's doing a great job. In terms of reasoning routines, I talked a little bit about how we move from reasoning routines with geometry and patterns and functions in algebra.

[01:20:58] We've been doing reasoning routines over the last couple of years targeted, we're trying to get into now more the number sense number talks there's number talks and there's math talks math talks kind of have a general more sense and number talks get into the number sense and how we grow and how we think about those types of things so there there's a couple of highlights through our CLT and math literacy again I talked a little bit about the pacing very strong in our cycle that works we work on inclusive practices and you know leading

[01:21:33] to student success with our kids all kids need help with vocabulary and vocabulary objectives to speak to not just what the language of the standard is but also how they're going to get there and how we can expose them to more and more vocabulary you know research does share that the more vocabulary that you acquire the stronger that you that you're going to be in the future so you feel it's our job to kind of

continue to grow that so that's just a snapshot of school improvement plan I'm just very proud of our team leaving the members they couldn't be here and thank you for the time thank you so much for

[01:22:13] that presentation mr. Rupert does anyone have any questions does anyone on this I just have a couple comments I noticed a couple trends that you have a school improvement team which I think it's awesome that you meet in the beginning of the year kind of throughout the year I think it's great to you know kind of have that team that has, you know, like a different grade level that's coming together.

[01:22:42] And I also noticed that you said you also have an attendance team that does daily calls, just touching base with students. So I think those are great things. So I appreciate the outlook and that it is, it's a positive one.

[01:23:02] I would say the one thing that I didn't see is maybe like a PBIS or something that you're doing with as far as like behavior and how are you working with that because I know and just in elementary grades that's super important yeah you talk about that yeah I mean I think that we do we mix our we try to keep them separate we try to keep attendance separate than PBIS because we've been moving in with our behavior solution involved when we are stars so we try to keep those a little bit separate but our P our PBIS program is very active and

[01:23:34] And our kids, we're very fortunate that we're supported by a wonderful PTO that provides us funds for resources and gives it to the grade levels to find some fun things to do or fun prizes.

[01:23:50] And they do raffles and things like that and have different parties. And we're working on our framework for our behavior solutions, which is going to be even more connected to that in the aspects of what it means to be a star. I'm sorry to put you on the spot that way, but thank you.

[01:24:08] I appreciate that. Thank you, Ms. Miles. Ms. Brescia. I hear daily about the rocket card report from my children. So PBIS is alive and well at Baldwin Elementary School. Yes, I can tell you all about the rocket cards, who gets to keep them and who gets them taken away and why.

[01:24:30] Uh-oh. But the, so going back to the snapshot for Baldwin Elementary School, your total score under the performance framework was 77.6, which got an off-track rating.

[01:24:47] What is the threshold for an on-track rating? I mean, I know it. I'm going to say 80. 80 points, yeah. 80 points, yeah. It's 80. So you were very close. We were close. We're getting there. Baldwin Elementary School was very close. Yeah. We do, this is very realistically obtainable that Baldwin Elementary could obtain a non-track status.

[01:25:07] We believe so. We believe so, good. I also note that Baldwin Elementary School has no federal designations, which is great news. All of your subgroups are performing within acceptable limits. Do you have any insights to share as to how Baldwin Elementary is able to do that?

[01:25:22] We have some schools who have not been able to do that, so that's why I ask. Yeah, I can only speak to Baldwin Elementary as I brag on my people all the time. We have a staff that's very cohesive, and I don't think there's any rocks that we leave unturned in all areas.

[01:25:41] Special education, Dr. Zimmerman's on top of things, really always working with her team. Esau, our team, works very collaboratively. So all students are our students, and through our CLT process, that's the way we view things, and that's how we push through.

[01:25:59] So talk to me a little bit about your literacy SMART goals. The Literacy SMART goals were that student performance will improve among third and fourth graders to achieve an overall 65% pass rate on the spring 2026 reading standards learning assessment.

[01:26:16] And when you go in and look at how you guys did last year, 57% of the third graders last year passed that reading SOL, so that 65% seems like a good growth target. But fourth graders last year, 64% of them passed.

[01:26:33] I'm like 65% seems like a low seems like a low goal or what we do when we take a look at our school improvement team we set one goal for the school so we do combine those two rates of 64 57 and we take into consideration that that fourth grade groups going to be that matriculating they're gonna be there's a different cohort so kind of taking a look at it by cohorts I just I want to make sure everybody is feeling challenged and that we have this growth mindset so 64% is good but I hope that the team as it's working together has higher

[01:27:09] aspirations than 65% because we can do it. Absolutely. So to clarify the literacy goals regarding VALS, your VALS goal, you want 100% of students to move risk bands? Is that the goal? Yeah we want 100% of our students to pass our SOLs as well right right well that's what I mean that's so it seemed a little as a smart goal seemed a little imprecise because the it didn't tell me the percentage of students that you were targeting to move that one risk band if they were in

[01:27:45] moderate or high risk yeah well I mean the students that are low risk we obviously want them to stay in low risk and it kind of differs by by grade level so in a general sense we're right now as we're growing and learning vowels in its second year really digging into all of the aspects of it we're happy with moving a band and it's not easy to move a band to move out of a band in a year so we just want to be moving in the right direction we do have grade levels and those discussions are had in particular with different grade levels that we're seeing differentiation of data within so I think as we grow we're having those

[01:28:24] conversations as grade levels and as teachers and as administrators as well Thank you. So I noticed as I was listening to your presentation and I noted when I was reading the presentation that there was -- that you mentioned and discussed how digging deeper into the VALS data showed that vocabulary was a real need, but I'm having a hard time relating that to the SMART goal for the SOL takers in third and fourth grade.

[01:28:50] Are the -- is it -- was the third and fourth graders, was that part of what was identified for them also a vocabulary deficit or was there something else going on there? - Yeah, I don't think that anything necessarily popped out on the reporting categories, on the SOL, that we wanna hop down a trail and go down that way.

[01:29:09] As a discussion's had, as a school, and a school leadership team, having those conversations that our students, we really feel like if they can develop this vocabulary at a stronger pace, 'cause we're hitting the things with the decoding and encoding and all these pieces. If we can hit this vocabulary, it's gonna be for the betterment of all.

[01:29:27] And within benchmark, we saw that in all grade levels, fourth grade, not getting to where we wanted to get into the pacing per se, and we're doing better with that. And obviously in hitting some of those vocabulary lessons, which before the HQIM, I don't know if we did as much with vocabulary.

[01:29:46] This vocabulary is embedded with science and social studies. It is embedded through the way the benchmark has it. And I think that that's a strength. So that's what we wanted to focus on, getting better at yeah I will say just as a little anecdote my Baldwin rocket came home with all of these facts about George Washington Carver I mean so many facts about George Washington Carver and I asked I mentioned it to the teacher she's like oh yeah well he's in social studies he's in reading and he's even in science like it's what we're getting everything is embedded and coming in together so I'm seeing that my own household did you know he made rubber We're out of sweet potatoes because I know that now.

[01:30:26] Wow, okay. So for your mathematics SMART goal, is there any mid-year data to share for mathematics? Yeah, I mean, I think overall with our math unit assessments, we're seeing growth.

[01:30:49] There's nothing I can particularly speak to. I don't have anything to speak to particularly, but overall, we're seeing the needle move in the right direction. Gotcha. So going to attendance, are you guys currently on track to meet your 12% goal? I would say we haven't had a comprehensive look into what percentage we run that right now and where it is.

[01:31:14] But at this point, I mean, we're continually doing our procedures that have worked in the past. Okay. So I sure, that's a great goal. I sure hope you meet it. And if there is, if you are running into any barriers, I hope you think about that and share that up the chain so the next time we have a big attendance discussion that we could possibly address whatever issues you might be having at the school level to facilitate you meeting those goals. And just my general observation slash question, you know, these are improvement plans, so they imply that there's something new or different about previous years that you're hoping to improve upon. And to clarify, none of the strategies in here are

[01:31:53] brand brand new it is a more of a process of deepening improving refining processes curriculum and all of those other things that have previously existed and just doing them better with more intentionality greater fidelity all that kind of stuff is that a fair yeah I'd say the math has been differentiated a little bit because in the past like I said we've worked on a couple of other reporting categories as a focus so this is more again like vocabulary is important for all the number sense it's important for all so

[01:32:28] how can we build that up so you know that's one difference and again it's the greater implementation of what we were doing you know we assess it through the school year that our team meets every month or did we we have a journey and how we move it even by monthly and even by the end of the year when we start a new thing that we did last year we have new teachers we have different kids we have different different ways and every year is different education is different every day let alone every year so we want to kind of reboot we don't want to start back at zero but you know maybe the year before if we started at 75 to 100 maybe we're starting back at 50 and just really trying to make sure that

[01:33:06] we're moving and showing that a realistic conversation and dialogue of where we are thank you Ms. Stevens thank you just a couple questions Mr. Rupert um first me being a teacher and when I look at scores out of a hundred I always mentally calculate what letter grade that is so 77.6 if you were a student would be a C plus and it would be 2.4% away from the B which is an honor roll grade so that's how I'm gonna look at it that you're really just about there and if I was your teacher I'd be like you can do it it's 2.4% that's just one assessment you can do it so I just wanted to say that right off the bat

[01:33:44] first and then I'm going to talk about vocabulary because I think a lot of people don't understand the importance of vocabulary and the vocabulary that the vows assessment measures it

measures grade level content area academic vocabulary so it's not just random words our students are being assessed on when they take the Vows assessment these are words they're going to find in all content areas in that grade and it's based on the SOL standards correct so any words they're going to be given they're likely to see in those classes

[01:34:22] Yes, and I will note that it's not just students are taking the VALS test, but we have a high L population that they need to be exposed to language as well. Right, and if anybody's never seen the WIDA test, they have practice questions online, you should try them.

[01:34:38] They're harder than SOL questions, because we were doing that the other day. So if we know our students can decode and understand VALS vocabulary, we can surmise or make the hypothesis that they're more likely to be successful in class and when they complete those SOL assessments at the end of the year, correct?

[01:35:00] - Yeah, we're trying to build the confidence in doing so. - Right. Now, the vocabulary, are you, because vocabulary's a big area where our kids need growth and we know that sometimes in certain populations, especially our English, our dual language children or our triple language children and our children with disabilities, they don't get exposed to as much vocabulary.

[01:35:20] and so they're missing out. So it's our goal as an educational system to expose them to high-quality vocabulary. So my question for you is, is your school working with cross-curricular application of academic vocabulary, where they're learning it initially in language arts, and then they're seeing it again, and it's getting reinforced in science or in social studies or in math.

[01:35:49] Is that how? Yeah, I mean, that's the way the benchmark advance is laid out. It's heavy with vocabulary, with science and social studies, and each unit per year kind of aligns itself. So you're thinking that the vocabulary that you're hearing on the first grade level is going to continue to build on in the second and third grade, and we're starting to see that again in year two of benchmark.

[01:36:12] We're starting to see, wow, now we see how this is connecting and how they're coming this way. So I think that, you know, that's, I think some of the reasoning behind some of the HQIM and some of the aspects that they have, and one of the reasons I believe that Benchmark was one of the choices.

[01:36:30] So that, so vocabulary is different, very different now than it was when we were kids. Because we would just get lists of words, and we would need to define them and spell them and use them in a sentence, and then we wouldn't see them again. But now our kidders are seeing them everywhere, every day, all throughout the school day.

[01:36:47] And that's supporting them in being better, stronger readers and being able to access grade-level curriculum, correct? Yeah, they're being encouraged to use complete sentences and use the words in context as best we can. Yeah, I mean, that's great.

[01:37:03] I think it's really important to understand. And then I just have one other question. The Vows in the fall and then again in the spring, the first time the students are assessed in the school year the last time they're assessed the school year on the Vows that's when vocabulary is done but at that mid-year assessment that's like January 2026 which I assume just happened there's no vocabulary piece at that time correct that's my understanding as well do we have anything that can kind of give us an idea of what direction our students are headed in in terms of vocabulary acquisition at this like January mid-year time so we can have an idea of where we are where we're

[01:37:42] going yeah we'll say that there's aspects in under benchmark advanced that have a vocabulary and reading portion and a reading portion and we're seeing movement there I've met with each teacher and they talked about their class they had to speak to each of their classes with those movements and we're seeing very good movement within that piece but so that's encouraging well great well thank you and remember you're 2.4% away from a V then you would be on the MCPS honor rolls so there you go so thank you thank you I just want a

[01:38:18] clarification about your attendance percentage you're trying to go fewer than 12 12 percent which is 77 there about number of students so where are you right now you're going to 12 percent or less from what percentage so we're at 14.9 14.9, okay, so you're trying to, so a 2% reduction in your attendance, okay.

[01:38:46] 3%, yeah, just about 3%. Just around 3%. All right, thank you for that clarification. So that will be about 77 of your students that you're trying to get to meet that. In regards to vocabulary, just as a general rule, this is a high, a very high leverage strategy because it improves access as you mentioned not just to content but also to thinking and the assessments because the assessments are really dense with academic language so thank you for making that a priority in the school

[01:39:24] appreciate it thank you miss Brescia I can't believe it but I forgot to ask you how this relates to our strategic plan well I mean obviously with our pillars everything leads to student academic success so that's that's what we're

[01:39:43] doing and I mean as you can hear there's a lot of things that are moving that are gonna move that needle we hope I heard a lot of inclusive and collaborative I heard a lot of quality workforce I heard a lot of strong community partnerships I heard a lot in our pillars but I do want to make sure to always ask that question I always make sure we're talking about it because if we're not intentional things fall to the wayside that's that's why we're here Dr. Jones Mr. I just wanted to say thank you for your leadership and I just ask you continue to have teachers talk about data in their CLT's and I know that's that helps

[01:40:20] our students reach their goals so thank you thank you anyone else okay I'd like to thank you and dr. Zimmerman for the 648 little souls that you have in your charge every day and this the staff that you continue to lead and your explanation of your two with benchmark advance has been very thorough so thank you very much thank you next up next up is Hayden Elementary we've got Dr. Laura

[01:40:59] Goldsung principal at Hayden will discuss strategic priorities goals and strategies and in place at Hayden for 25-26 school year thank you Dr. Goldsung Mr. Rupert left his water you can come get it I brought my own but you know what we're friends and there's chocolate in my purse for you I'm just saying good evening good evening everyone chair Spall vice chair Jones members of the

[01:41:35] board and Dr. Newman. I am Dr. Laura Goldsung, the very proud principal of Hayden Elementary School and I want to thank you for the opportunity to share a brief update about our school improvement work. Tonight I will highlight our process, our priority goals, the key indicators we're monitoring, and the targeted actions underway as we move through the second semester. Our focus remains on strengthening core instruction, accelerating growth in literacy and math and using data to drive responsive supports for students.

[01:42:11] My aim is to share some highlights of the work in progress and the positive indicators that encourage us to strengthen our resolve and commitment to our plan. Hayden Elementary currently serves

603 students pre-k through fourth grade and while we've seen achievement improve across most student groups we remain focused on identifying learning gaps by name and by need to ensure every student receives the support that they require. We are proud to be fully accredited and continue working diligently to create consistent, high

[01:42:48] quality learning experiences for all students. At Hayden Elementary School, we call our continuous school-wide improvement plan, Plan A. Since August of 2023, Plan A has led to a 20-point increase in third-grade reading achievement, a 22-point increase in fourth-grade math, and an 18-point decrease in chronic absenteeism. Importantly, the foundations of our plan have remained steady

[01:43:27] for the last three years. We believe that consistent cohesive plan that is grounded in evidence-based practices and stewarded over time creates the long-term growth our community deserves. Our improvement process is ongoing and dynamic. It's collaborative and it relies on many voices.

[01:43:50] This slide shows the key findings from our needs assessment and the strategic priorities that emerged from that work. These priorities did not come from a single meeting or from a top-down directive. They developed through a continuous highly collaborative process centered on teacher voice. A 20-member instructional leadership team representing every grade level department and support role meets every four to six weeks to review data, reflect on classroom practice, and monitor the implementation of Plan A.

[01:44:27] Through that ongoing cycle of teacher input and evidence-based reflection, four strategic priorities clearly emerged: literacy development, increased math fluency, student academic discourse, and staff supports.

[01:44:43] These priorities are all connected through our cycle that works, which serves as the vehicle driving our improvement efforts. They provide the roadmap for the slides that follow and align directly with the MCPS strategic plan pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environments and quality workforce.

[01:45:06] Our vision is for every student to become a proficient, confident reader who is prepared to engage meaningfully in work, service, and civic life. The Virginia Literacy Act establishes an expectation that all students will receive high-quality instructional materials, and that teachers are equipped with training and skills needed to deliver strong, research-based literacy instruction.

[01:45:31] At Hayden, we build on that foundation with a firm belief that literacy is the pathway to success across every academic discipline. With that understanding, we have set specific, measurable, attainable performance indicators for each grade level, grounded in cohort data and focused especially on closing early learning gaps. To monitor progress towards those indicators, we use VALS and Lexia Core 5, which provide ongoing, real-time information about student growth in foundational literacy skills. In

[01:46:07] our Collaborative Learning Teams, our CLTs, teachers unpack standards, they study our instructional resources, examine student performance data, and adjust instruction in real-time. Most recently, after reviewing our mid-year results, teachers created flexible, skill-based groups during the targeted support block, pairing students with teachers who have demonstrated expertise in the specific skills that those students need.

[01:46:38] Together, these actions keep our students learning and progressing towards literacy outcomes that we want for every child. This slide presents our goal for improving mathematics outcomes.

[01:46:55] At Hayden, we want students to develop strong numeracy and reasoning skills that allow them to solve problems, think critically, and confidently apply mathematical understanding to real-life situations that require accuracy, logic, and quantitative decision-making.

[01:47:13] With this goal in mind, we have established specific, measurable, and attainable performance indicators for each grade level. These are grounded in cohort data and designed to build deep number sense, fluency, and comfort with numbers, skills that form the foundation for strong student performance and achievements.

[01:47:36] To reach these goals, students must experience math, talk about math with one another, and build their own mental models for mathematical reasoning, and the math workshop model provides the structure for this type of engagement.

[01:47:53] Students enter at differentiated levels and work through multiple pathways to focus, I'm I'm sorry, pathways to a focused mini lesson, they explore through learning stations, and importantly, student reflection, where they think about their own learning, metacognition.

[01:48:12] Throughout the block, teachers are circulating and they're asking probing questions and they're correcting misconceptions in real time. It is a dynamic and active learning environment. For our youngest learners, pre-K through second grade, we embed daily counting routines.

[01:48:32] They are counting by 1s, 2s, 5s, and 10s, and they're counting, excuse me, various collections of items. Counting is essential because it builds early number sense, including sequence, quantity, and cardinality, which strongly predict later mathematical success.

[01:48:52] Another key strategy is grounding our instruction in the CRA model, previously mentioned by Mr. Rupert. Concrete, representational, and abstract. Students need hands-on materials to build one-to-one correspondence, to create sets, and develop multiplicative thinking.

[01:49:13] From there, we move to drawings and visual models, and then to that mental reasoning, and this progression is critical for long-term mathematical understanding. We also continue to integrate ST Math as part of the Math Workshop Model to strengthen conceptual understanding through visual problem solving. All of these elements work together to create a cohesive and responsive math block. We are very excited that in on Thursday of this week we are welcoming Dr. Jennifer Lemp to

[01:49:52] Hayden. She is going to join us to support teachers during CLT with professional learning to deepen the quality of our implementation of the math workshop model and all around these strategies previously mentioned.

[01:50:13] To strengthen student discourse, we are using three foundational strategies across all academic areas. Oral language development is essential for improving student achievement and is truly the bedrock of literacy as we have previously spoken about tonight.

[01:50:30] According to the simple view of reading, students must combine strong word recognition with strong language comprehension in order to become proficient readers. That means the way students learn to speak and listen and construct language directly impacts how well they will learn to read and ultimately how well they will access grade level content.

[01:50:56] When students enter school with limited oral language exposure, particularly multilingual learners and our students who have fewer early literacy experiences, they often face challenges acquiring

literacy at the same pace as their peers.

[01:51:14] For this reason, Hayden is deeply committed to intentionally building oral language skills across every content area, not just during literacy instruction. The three strategies on this slide represent the keystone practices that are supporting this work.

[01:51:31] First, we will use cooperative learning structures to create intentional opportunities for student-to-student discourse. During the CLT planning process, teachers select structures that match the academic purpose of the activity, ensuring that every student has a meaningful opportunity to talk, explain their thinking, and engage with their peers' ideas.

[01:51:56] Second, we are going to provide strategic vocabulary supports, right? the theme for the evening, which is essential for all learners and particularly beneficial for our multilingual learners who need repeated, authentic opportunities to practice that academic language.

[01:52:13] And third, we are emphasizing a balance of the four domains of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. So our ESOL teachers collaborate with the classroom teachers to strengthen Tier 1 instruction that multilingual learners experience rich, language-engaged learning.

[01:52:37] And we're also building in more oral rehearsal, allowing students to organize and verbalize their thinking prior to writing, sort of a pre-writing activity. Together, these strategies embed oral language into every classroom and every content area, giving students the linguistic foundation they need to grow as readers and writers and thinkers and problem solvers.

[01:53:09] This slide outlines the four primary avenues through which we support teachers at Hayden, all of which are designed to strengthen the instructional practices that advance the priorities that we have discussed: literacy development, math fluency, academic discourse, and the consistent use of a cycle that works.

[01:53:30] First we embed professional development during CLTs that ensure teachers have ongoing differentiated job-embedded learning that is tied directly to our instructional resources. It's tied to our division priorities and to the differentiated guidance provided by our content specialists.

[01:53:50] This approach allows teachers to learn in context, to plan together, and then to immediately apply new practices to address student needs. Secondly, student-centered discourse among staff keeps our conversations focused on the impact of instruction on learners especially those facing our greatest barriers so whether teams are working in clts or they are engaging in coaching sessions collaborating informally

[01:54:24] standing in front of the water fountain the emphasis remains on the evidence that improves outcomes across content mentorship mentorship on multiple levels provides teachers with a network support through our divisions teams program as well as formal and informal relationships within the school teachers receive guidance that is content specific and context specific and responsive to their particular experience level this structure is essential for developing teacher

[01:55:03] confidence refining practice and fostering long long-term success in the classroom and finally clear communication of expectations around instructional models, around master schedules, professional learning, and operational systems. That creates stability and coherence. All four staffing supports work together to build both collective and individual teacher efficacy, which research shows not only drives

sustained improvement in student outcomes, but also strengthens teacher retention and fosters a healthier, more

[01:55:40] positive school culture. By investing intentionally in these structures, we are strengthening the systems that help teachers grow, collaborate, and feel supported, ultimately ensuring that our students benefit from high-quality instruction every day.

[01:56:01] This slide highlights the essential role that teacher leaders play as the driving force behind school improvement and student learning. At Hayden, our culture is rooted in shared leadership because we know that lasting, meaningful change occurs when the people closest to the students are empowered to lead to innovate and to shape our work tonight i want to emphasize how hayden teacher leaders invest in their own professional growth and sustain programs that strengthen our school culture and improve student

[01:56:35] achievement over time we are proud to have mrs amy keen who's with us tonight she is the 2026 mcps Mary V. Bocavaris Teacher of the Year. Her 30 years of experience guide her work in strengthening instruction, mentoring new teachers, and modeling the habits of strong practice. We are also very proud of Dr. Tori Savas, our reading support teacher and fellow nominee who, along with Mrs.

[01:57:10] Keene, guides CLTs in ensuring consistent, high quality instruction for our third and fourth grade teams they some we have teachers who support curriculum adoptions we have teachers that complete additional training who advocate for their colleagues across the division their leadership strengthens our collective capacity and directly supports the priorities we've shared throughout this presentation teacher leadership also sustains programs like morning boost our targeted literacy intervention led by dr. Savas and our ESOL department leader Mr. Gomez.

[01:57:50] Their work provides intentional data-driven instruction designed to close gaps. At the same time, other teacher-led initiatives offer enrichment through arts and music and interdisciplinary projects and celebrations of our diverse learning community.

[01:58:09] Teacher leadership is truly the engine that drives sustainable school improvement. These structures aren't just supports. They are what make our school-wide priorities live and breathe in classrooms every day.

[01:58:25] Thank you for the opportunity to share this update on our instructional goals and strategic priorities. As we move swiftly through the second semester, our focus remains steadfast on student learning and how our daily actions shape both their current success and their long-term future.

[01:58:43] I appreciate your time and partnership and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you, Dr. Goldsong. I'll look to my right now. Thank you for the presentation.

[01:58:59] Real quick, I know I missed the numbers. Can you repeat your really positive statistics so we can write them down? Because those are some pretty impressive statistics. I'm happy to repeat those. Thank you. But I want to get them right, so I'm going to look. OK. 20-point increase in third-grade reading achievement.

[01:59:19] Now, this is over a two-year period, from spring of '23 to spring of '25. 22-point increase in fourth-grade math and an 18 point decrease in chronic absenteeism thank you i think those are really

important to think about because sometimes when we see you know what it used to be is a credation status now it's um performance category sometimes we don't focus on all the steps that have been taken

[01:59:54] and all the growth that has been seen and when you look at that growth you know the 20 point increase the 22 point increase the 18 point decrease that really says you're on the right track and that the kiddos are moving in the correct direction and I think that's really important and you need to talk about more like have a big fancy slide that says that because it's a really important piece and and we are talking about it more right now so thank you for that um and the subject of vocabulary comes up again and I already spoke my spiel about it because it is so very important um can you talk to me for just one minute what is the math

[02:00:31] innovation grant so the math innovation grant to my understanding because I'm we are so excited to have dr. Jennifer Lemp she is the researcher she is from George Mason University and she is she is the one who is articulating the importance of math workshop to my understanding the math innovation grant is paying for her and a colleague to come and work provide differentiated professional development to our teachers because we got to say what we thought

[02:01:08] how would did we think that Hayden would be best partnered with dr. Lemp and because of the sort of agent stage of our staff we said really what we need is for her to come sit with us and sort of do those mini lessons provide us some direct instruction some examples she can do some modeling for us that's going to happen in CLT you know we had the opportunity to talk about maybe doing walkthroughs but that isn't going to be as valuable for us right now because I our teachers especially our early career teachers need to learn how to implement

[02:01:46] with fidelity and you know really keeping to what the evidence-based practices are of math workshops so I need them to learn those and it's there is no one better to teach them than Dr. Lentz so and the math innovation grant is paying for all of this, and I think we have to use it by June or July, something like that.

[02:02:06] Well, that's really exciting, and if you could share more as that moves along, I look forward to hearing about it. And realistically, those are my own questions, so thank you. You all are 2.34% away from a B. We are. We're going to stick to Plan A.

[02:02:23] Okay, Plan A is working. Plan A is working. People ask me, what's Plan B? Do more of Plan A. Just do it better. yeah so thank you for presenting tonight I don't want to be biased so I'm not gonna ask any questions because Hayden is my happy place I just want to say I had the pleasure of visiting Hayden last week so I actually got to go to CLT and I saw the teachers talking about the vows and the benchmark and Alexia and they

[02:02:59] were changing what they were doing and grouping students because of looking at the data I got to see the support to the target support block I saw a math workshop in practice and I saw students who are actively learning so it's our schools are doing what they need to do so I know the increase will come thank you thank you thank you for your visit yes so I wanted to speak about what you said about oral rehearsal and the pre-writing activity that is I just cannot tell you how much that is it's just so good for our students or ESOL

[02:03:37] students because I always tell my students if you can say it you can write it so we can talk about it and you can write it you know so I think that's great that you're doing that and just the collaboration that

you have with your ESOL teachers is so important with the classroom teachers and having that is just key so keep that don't you know change that and I heard you talk about hands-on learning and I liked how you detailed the math block so it shows a lot of structure which is really important for our teachers yeah to know minutes yep this is what right right so I thought that was great um and I I

[02:04:14] loved the comment that you made about closing early learning gaps that is so important you know and when you see those gaps just understanding that we have to close them as soon as possible so that when they go to Mayfield or Baldwin they don't have those anymore so just keep up the good work it looks like you're going in the right direction plan a is working but but I just think and seeing all your your collaborative teams having those as well that you're not just talking about academics because you're you're making sure to take care of that the other part of the students and the and the staff as well so thank

[02:04:47] you thank you thank you so much you know I think you're actually being a little bit modest because it is true that there's been a lot of double digit gains at Hayden recently but actually last year you improved in every category by six points or more and so it's not just very deep levels of improvement in certain isolated places like overall there has been a lot of improvement so I want to make sure that that comes through as well that teachers working for those kids so improvements in every category I would love I would love I would love to

[02:05:24] see all of us do that all the time I also note that Hayden also does not have a federal designation which means all of your students subgroups are performing with unacceptable limits do you have any insights to share you know your success there you know mr. Rupert said you know he can speak to what's happening in his school I can speak to what's happening in mine but I'm starting to hear some similarities I think it's really important we go to the CLT we go to the collaboration who is sitting at the table we've got our sped teachers at the table we have our ESOL teachers at the table and everyone is

[02:06:02] listening and participating and evolving around planning high quality Tier 1 instruction. And what does that look like for students by name and need? So we've talked about academic vocabulary.

[02:06:19] We talk about multiple opportunities to practice, multiple answering modalities. Are we doing pre-writing with, you know, by practicing by speaking first? We all, you know, we have work to do in our subgroups, but I think that if I had to go down to one thing, I think it is building that collective teacher efficacy at the CLT table, and all students are our students, and all teachers belong at that table.

[02:06:49] I really do think that has to be where it is. Well, it's not just sitting at the table, it's participating in the process. Yes, ma'am. Because we can lock anybody in a room, but that doesn't do anything unless you are actively engaged in the process. Well, thank you for those insights. And just to clarify, the mid-year data reviews that you did for literacy are showing that you are on track to meet your SMART goals for literacy?

[02:07:14] So. Or that you're not in adjustments where it's required. We are making growth, and we're making growth. So, you know, the vows is little because that mid-year assessment doesn't measure everything, right? We had from fall to winter, we especially in second and third grade, students are showing growth in VALS. I tell you, it's Lexia is where we're seeing the most growth. We measure and monitor student progress using multiple data points, so it's hard to point to one measure. We use VALS, we use Lexia. We also use two reporting categories

[02:07:51] or strands within our benchmark advanced unit tests that's measuring informational texts, literary texts, reading and vocabulary, and language use. And so depending on what grade level if you were in you're monitoring those and we are showing steady growth and improvement so yes I guess the long answer to your question is looking at all of these data points I'm confident in saying that our students are learning and growing and making progress and making progress towards our smiles so as you were speaking under your improved literacy outcomes you were speaking

[02:08:29] talking about your flexible grouping during targeted support block and it sounds a little bit like that was brand new this year what were you doing so I think that it wasn't as or you know like kind of like you said earlier it's like we're not really doing anything new we're just doing it better we're doing it with more fidelity we're doing it with more purpose we're doing it with more intention and that is what because flex grouping has been around for intervention right forever we've done it in one one way or another we're looking at our specific data points we're looking in Lexia we're looking in benchmark and then we're identifying as a grade level these students are under

[02:09:07] this skill and then how are we going to because age and stage of child really matters here because you can you can lose a little bit of your TSB block if you've got first graders six-year-olds trying to you know have massive amounts of kids moving from one classroom to another to be with a teacher so we have to be strategic and I need to work with these these three kids and you need to teach this skill group so we're just going to switch a few but I would say that yes the flexible grouping is not new we're just being more strategic more purposeful and more intentional about it so going flipping over now to

[02:09:46] mathematics the is there any mid-year data on mathematics so we're counting right again counting nothing new under the Sun but what we know about oral counting is that that really builds that foundation for long-term mathematics success and so one of the things that we're monitoring is in first grade is students who are able to count by ones from 1 to 110 and in the fall 52% of them could do it and now 55% of them can do it right and that's it's

[02:10:24] actually they get stuck right right at the 80s are you 79 and then right at 80 in second grade we you know we've upped the challenge and that is that you have to start at a number other than zero and reach 120 right so we're starting to build that understanding of how numbers work together and in the fall 61% of our second graders could do that and in the winter now we're at 66% of them can do that so once they master this this very important skill right then that

[02:11:01] has an echo effect in all of the other great then we start to see that in their ability to solve word problems or task problems or you know addition and subtraction those those numbers all really clarify things for me and where are they in relation to each other right so speaking going to the mathematics SMART goals you know obviously the SOL exam pass rates we can see that on Virginia quality profile right now but we don't necessarily see the division division assessment for and performance task for so and we don't

[02:11:38] necessarily see the you know early mathematics assessment subtest benchmark of the Virginia kindergarten readiness program so I'm wondering how much of an improvement if you if you actually hit that 90% of first and second grade students we actually hit that 90 percent of paid in kindergarten students how much improvement would that warrant year over year like how did we do on those previously we've done i believe so when we have our kids come out of pre-k and we look at last year's emos we had a strong showing in strong

[02:12:13] and growing and then had 89 of students in our kindergarten who were strong showers or were on track in emos so how do we improve that that starts in pre-k that starts with any kid and any kid who needs to register for pre-k needs to come our pre-k we're very proud of the scores that we just received at hayden yesterday for our pre-k program in terms of the division assessment four when we looked at that goal and it was the goal was for eighty percent of a percentage of students

[02:12:51] to reach 80 percent or better we didn't quite make that we had 35 percent of students had 80 percent or better in first grade and 39 in second grade what is positive is when you look at how many scored 70 percent of it how many were almost to that goal and in first grade we had 78 of our kids scored 70 percent or better on division assessment four and 56 percent of second graders scored better than 70 percent on that division assessment four why did we pick that because

[02:13:27] division assessment four is summative of all of the skills that are taught across the year so uh thank you thank you thank you so some of your goals were very precise and numeric and a certain percent will do a certain percent of things by a certain time but some of your other goals like increased student academic discourse and staffing supports were uh not numeric so how are you you baselining those goals? How are you measuring the improvement for in those areas?

[02:14:00] So when we talk about student academic discourse and both of those things, stabbing supports and really oral language development and student discourse, those are the strategies by which we are going to achieve literacy and mathematics achievement. How are we measuring that? Well, So when we talk about our kids talking, right?

[02:14:23] So are we purposefully using cooperative learning structures? That can be monitored through teacher observations. Many teachers use checklists to make sure that, but accountability and simultaneous interaction is built within the cooperative structure so that if you are in a class and you are doing a cooperative structure, you are being held accountable for talking.

[02:14:49] So teacher observations, also looking at formative assessments that's really designed those that are designed to sort of capture student explaining their thinking and that can be done with an exit ticket it can be done through student work products we're talking about the writing sort of that pre-writing for staffing supports that's the teacher evaluation process it's also administrative attendance in the CLT because participation is how you get the most out of that and if I am at the the table or Mrs. Short is at the table engaging in that conversation with

[02:15:29] teachers that's really how we monitor that but ultimately it's in the student achievement data that's where we'll see it thank you for that your final question is how does this relate to our strategic plan I don't have enough time Dr. Tassada is gonna start giving me the hairy eyeball but certainly inclusive practices inclusive learning environments quality workforce I would go so far as to say that this is a caring right that we're it's a culture of caring right when we meet teachers where they are so that teachers can meet

[02:16:08] students where they are we have created a culture that is based on treating each other with kindness and creating really great humans and supporting student academic success which is and supporting success hopefully with more of those returns okay miss miss Brown yes I just want to mention that what I've seen at your school is that you guys have really understood the basic knowledge that

[02:16:47] before anyone can learn we have to meet their needs and so I want to give you an opportunity so that you can elevate how your staff has truly adopted that idea of Maslow before Bloom's ideology to respond to student needs because I'm in awe of what you guys are doing I think that I can briefly tell a story about our student support teams on Fridays we meet with our attendance officers with a group I'm an interdisciplinary team at the school we invite parents whose

[02:17:23] students are showing patterns of attendance that might lead to chronic absenteeism we invite them to come in and meet with us and the first question we are asking is what's happening is there a way that we can support you is there's something going on at home right it's not why aren't you getting your kid to school it's what kind of barriers and challenges are you facing as a family that we can help with what supports can we offer and the people at that table have a lot of they are that you know we've got ever Sally Contreras who is our family liaison is there, the nurse is there, our attendance officers are there,

[02:18:03] but we might have the school social worker there. And these people are resource superheroes. If you have unstable housing or you have unstable access to healthy food, like we can help, clothing, right? And maybe somebody in the home is sick and needs to be connected with resources in our community.

[02:18:27] that is the the front row seat to looking at how our student our our teachers help our community maslow before they can bloom thank you miss brown miss miles um i would be amiss to not mention this i know you have the dual language program at hayden yes we do and i just want to ask how is that attributing to the success of the students of hayden first of all it is we we two years ago i i think a year ago, maybe two years ago now, we, as a division, sat down and said, we want this program to be sustainable.

[02:19:06] We want this program to develop. The goal of the program is to develop by literacy. That is literacy in English and literacy in Spanish, reading and writing, speaking. In order to do that, we have to set criteria.

[02:19:22] We have to set what are the metrics that we're going to use to measure that. And in doing that, their current enrollment in our dual language program, they are high-performing students at every grade level. What we see is a true cultural appreciation.

[02:19:45] I think that it brings an authenticity to breaking down some of the barriers and assumptions that we make about each other. It celebrates multiculturalism, and also it's giving our students a real leg up in, you know, I think we can all agree that being bilingual in this world is an advantage.

[02:20:06] And there's just an enrichment in literacy. There's an enrichment in the quality of the friendships and the social connections that they're making. So outside of academics, I think it's a real shining star. Thank you so much for that.

[02:20:25] Okay, I just want to thank you and Ms. Short back there. She's just nodding away and smiling. She's my partner. Your team is amazing, and I appreciate you teaching 603 students by name and by need.

[02:20:41] Thank you so much. Every day. Thank you for the time and the opportunity. Yes. Next up, we have Ms. Hupman, principal at Weems Elementary School, and she will discuss her strategic priorities, goals, and strategies in place for Weems for this 25-26 school year.

[02:21:05] I'm so sorry the night's dragging on but we're really doing a good job of learning and understanding so we just had a lot of people so I apologize for I'll just talk really fast yes ma'am and it'll be

fine good evening chair Spall vice chair Jones school board members and dr. Newman thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on school improvement efforts at Williams elementary school i'm michelle huttman the principal of weems elementary as you can see

[02:21:40] weems elementary is currently fully accredited and designated as on track with an overall school with an overall school performance and support framework score of 82 out of 100.

[02:21:59] this score reflects strong balanced performance across all measured domains when we break down the components of the school performance and support framework our mastery score reflects that a majority of our student population is meeting or exceeding established grade-level benchmarks. While these results underscore a strong instructional foundation, they also represent a strategic opportunity for continued academic advancement as this metric, which holds the most weight of the components, captures student proficiency in the core curriculum

[02:22:33] that we deliver throughout the academic year. Our growth score is a significant strength. This near maximum score demonstrates that students are making substantial academic progress year over year, including those who may not yet be fully proficient.

[02:22:50] This suggests that our instructional strategies and targeted interventions are effectively accelerating learning. In readiness, we earned 8.67 out of 10, indicating strong preparation and key readiness indicators, which for elementary school is a reduction in chronic absenteeism.

[02:23:11] With no federal designation assigned, the data affirmed that Weems Elementary is in good standing. Overall, the performance profile reflects that our school is moving in the right direction with particularly strong growth outcomes and we will need to continue to focus on increasing overall mastery to further strengthen our total performance score.

[02:23:36] To continue our improvement efforts, we have identified our strategic priorities for the current school year. Near the end of the last school year, our school-based leadership team engaged in a structured needs assessment process. We analyzed preliminary academic and attendance data, reviewed subgroup performance trends, examined growth and mastery indicators, and gathered input from teachers to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

[02:24:04] Using this analysis, we developed a comprehensive needs assessment outlining our priority focus areas. after the summer break we reconvened in august to review updated data refine our findings and align our goals and action steps for the current school year this ensured that our continuous school improvement plan was data-driven collaborative and responsive to the most current student performance data our needs assessment identified three primary areas for improvement reading math and attendance a review of student performance data and attendance

[02:24:42] trends indicated the need for strengthened core instruction consistent data analysis practices and targeted strategies to increase student engagement and daily attendance in in response we have established clear strategic priorities first we are focusing on high quality evidence-based core instruction to ensure that tier one teaching is rigorous standards aligned and meeting the needs of all learners. Strengthening core instruction is foundational to improving outcomes in both

[02:25:18] reading and math. We are deepening our commitment to effective collaborative learning teams. These teams are using structured protocols based on a cycle that works and student data to monitor progress, identify gaps, and plan targeted interventions. To further support inclusive practices, we have

prioritized dedicated planning time for co-teachers, ensuring alignment and instructional delivery and differentiation strategies. This is vital for our English learners because co-teaching provides immediate in-class language support while ensuring access

[02:25:55] to rigorous grade-level content as our students acquire language. The ESOL teacher supports language development while the content teacher delivers core curriculum allowing students to learn academic English in context. Additionally we are placing a strong emphasis on data-driven decision-making using formative and summative data to guide instructional adjustments and resource allocation. In addition to SOL and VALS data we use many other data points to address the instructional needs of our students. At the beginning of the school year we use

[02:26:33] We use WIDA can-do descriptors to map out each of our English learners level of language proficiency in each of the four domains of language to ensure that we provide adequate scaffolding for students as we deliver grade-level academic content.

[02:26:50] At our monthly MTSS meetings, we triangulate ELA data to drive instructional decisions. By integrating growth data from Lexia, unit assessments from Benchmark Advance, and VALS progress monitoring, we build a comprehensive picture of student achievement.

[02:27:08] We discuss students by name and need, implementing targeted interventions to strengthen foundational skills and close learning gaps. We follow a parallel process for mathematics, utilizing OREGO assessments, division assessment data and performance tasks.

[02:27:26] To continuously improve our instructional practices, our instructional leadership team, In partnership with the district coordinators for ELA and math, conduct pedagogical walkthroughs to gather data, foster reflection, and enhance student learning.

[02:27:44] These walkthroughs provide real-time data on student engagement and ensure consistent, high-quality teaching through immediate, non-evaluative feedback. The team analyzes this data to identify school-wide professional learning needs and pinpoint additional classroom supports. Finally, in conjunction with the Office of Professional Learning, we are refining our practices around school-wide cooperative learning strategies to increase student engagement, academic discourse, and overall participation, which also supports

[02:28:20] improved attendance and classroom climate. We have grown our team of cooperative learning coaches from four to eleven educators, including one from central office, who have provided quarterly coaching to every classroom teacher and encore teacher in our building.

[02:28:38] Together, these aligned strategies directly address our identified needs and position us to accelerate growth in reading and math while improving overall student engagement and attendance outcomes. These specific priorities connect to the strategic pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environment and culture of caring and quality workforce.

[02:29:05] We have three goals and our first one is improved literacy outcomes. Our broad goal is to increase reading achievement across all grade levels. To support this goal, we have set two SMART goals. For SOL performance, our goal is to have 65% of students score 400 or higher on the spring SOL assessments.

[02:29:26] For Lexia growth, kindergarten through second grade, our goal is to have 75% of our students advance at least five levels in Lexia. Key strategies include strengthening Tier 1 instruction through effective CLT collaboration, increasing co-teaching in all classrooms, using the observation feedback cycle, which is embedded into our teacher performance evaluation system, and engaging in data-driven discussions with clear action steps.

[02:29:57] Third year Lexia data shows strong progress with a 34% drop in students performing below grade level and more than 100% increase in the number of students working on or above grade level. This particular goal area and the strategies around it connect to the strategic pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environment and quality workforce.

[02:30:25] Our next goal area is to improve mathematics outcomes. Our overarching goal is to increase student achievement in mathematics. To support this, we have established a SMART goal that 70% of students will earn a passing score of 400 or higher on the spring SOL assessments.

[02:30:45] To reach this target, we are strengthening Tier 1 instruction through effective CLT collaboration, implementing the observation feedback cycle, which is embedded into the teacher performance evaluation system, engaging in data driven discussions with clear action steps, and providing after-school tutoring for students who need additional math intervention. Winner VGA or Virginia growth assessment data show modest growth in math achievement compared to the fall assessment with an increase of 20% of students scoring in the generally well-prepared range, indicating progress

[02:31:22] while highlighting the need for continued focus and support in mathematics. These priorities connect to the strategic plan pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environment and quality workforce. And our third and final goal area is improving attendance. Our goal is to reduce chronic absenteeism to support students' academic success and social development.

[02:31:47] We aim to improve overall attendance so that 12% or fewer of our students miss 10% or more of the school year to achieve this we are increasing student engagement through cooperative high-interest learning experiences strengthening communication with families about the impact of absences and while at the same time providing support and resources to families who need them and recognizing and celebrating strong attendance current feedback indicates positive progress students understand the connection between attendance and

[02:32:24] learning and parents report that students are motivated and do not want to miss school these priorities connect to the strategic plan pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environment and strong family and community partnerships and finally I want to shine a spotlight on co-teaching co-teaching is near and dear to my heart and something that I have been working on at Weems since day one and I think that we the work that we've done this year deserves to be

[02:33:02] spotlighted co-teaching is a collaborative instructional approach where two educators share responsibility for planning delivering and supporting instruction in the same classroom different models allow teams to adapt instruction based on student needs lesson goals and classroom dynamics to further support inclusive practices in our schools the office of professional learning has provided explicit training and co-teaching to content area teachers ESL teachers and special educators through structured professional development that focuses on collaborative planning varied instructional

[02:33:40] models and shared responsibility the training has been ongoing allowing for reflection and strengthening our team's co-teaching skills throughout the year So the image on this slide shows six co-teaching models that we are using at Weems. One Teach, One Observe is where one teacher leads instruction while the other collects data on student learning, behavior, or engagement.

[02:34:03] It is useful for assessing needs and informing instructional decisions. Station teaching is where students rotate through learning stations led by teachers or complete independent activities. This model supports small group instruction and differentiated learning.

[02:34:21] Parallel teaching is a model where the class is divided into two groups and each teacher delivers the same content simultaneously. Parallel teaching reduces student-teacher ratio and increases participation. Alternative teaching is where one teacher works with a small group for targeted instruction, enrichment, or remediation, while the other leads the larger group.

[02:34:46] this model is ideal for addressing specific skill needs teaming or team teaching is where both teachers share instruction equally often presenting together or taking turns team teaching models collaboration and provides varied perspectives and then finally one teach one assist is where one teacher leads instruction while the other provides individual or small group support this This helps teachers monitor understanding and provide immediate assistance.

[02:35:18] Although our ESL teachers and our special educators collaborate with our teachers in developing lessons within the collaborative learning team, instructional needs differ across classrooms and subject areas. A major strategy we employed this year to strengthen co-teaching has been increasing dedicated planning time for classroom and ESL teachers to collaborate and explicitly plan for the best co-teaching model to use based on the grade level lessons that the CLT has developed.

[02:35:49] This collaboration time is made possible by providing recess coverage for all content area teachers to give them an opportunity to meet for 30 minutes a week with their ESOL partners. This intentional effort has resulted in more individualized attention for students, improvements in flexible grouping and differentiation, increase instructional expertise in the classroom, improve data collection and targeted support, and stronger inclusive learning environments.

[02:36:19] These priorities connect to the strategic plan pillars of inclusive and collaborative learning environment and quality workforce. And so in closing, I just wanna say that our focus remains on strengthening instruction to ensure learning, using data to drive decisions, and fostering a positive, supportive environment for teaching and learning.

[02:36:43] While not specifically covered in the previous slides, it is worth mentioning that we have had high levels of teacher retention during the past two school years. When I became the principal at Weems, we had numerous vacancies across the school, which resulted in our having virtual teachers in many of our classrooms for my first two years.

[02:37:01] I'm pleased to say that we were fully staffed last year, we are fully staffed this year, and we expect to be fully staffed next year. This stability has most certainly strengthened instruction in our school and is evident in the gains our students are making.

[02:37:18] We're proud of the progress we've made and we remain committed to continuous improvement to ensure every student at Weems reaches their full potential and I am eternally optimistic that we are gonna continue to stay on track.

[02:37:39] - I left, Ms. Miles. - I just have some things to point out. I think it's awesome how you have dedicated planning time ESOL teacher 30 minutes a week it's so important and I love the creative way you've done it with the recess that was really cool um and just looking at the co-teaching models the spotlight it is so important I mean I can't emphasize that enough that's how we get too inclusive right we co-teaching is and just knowing which models that work for your classroom where another model might work for another classroom and just having it set out and it looks like you just have that plan and it's very evident with you know how your school is

[02:38:17] running so I think that's awesome and connecting with the families and I noticed like with your attendance how you said your goal is 12% or fewer and you have steps to get there just like the high interest learning experiences also connecting with families because of course students want to come because you're saying they have the learning experiences the high interest but then also celebrating those who are coming which I think it's great and I pointed out or I wrote down that uh the rigorous and the standard aligned which is very obviously very important and using the WIDA can do's um in the beginning of the year and showing teachers where

[02:38:56] their students are in the four languages domains is is awesome um and your monthly MTSS meeting I wrote that down too which is so important just kind of targeting you know what those students need so and I looked I look up the schools just to see the population and all of that and you know when we look at all our schools it's so similar so it's just different techniques the principals are using so I really appreciate the things that you're doing so keep up the good work thank you thank you miss miles miss pressure thank you thank you for that presentation I really enjoyed

[02:39:33] it thank you for linking it to the strategic plan and student academic I always love to hear that. So I want to first congratulate you on Weems' on-track status, but I also want to expand the discussion a little bit, because when you get 23 out of 25 growth points, the first 20 points of growth you get are fairly easy, but the next 20 points or the next 10 points are harder.

[02:39:59] It's a logarithmic function. Anybody who remembers their logarithms. So this means that you're probably not going to get 23 out of 25. You're probably not going to get a near-perfect growth in that specific category next year, just probably not, just by the way that growth works.

[02:40:21] So in order to stay on track, you're going to need proportional growth, you're going to need proportional increases in mastery and readiness of which attendance is a part. So are you optimistic that you're going to get there and stay on track? I am. I think we have a lot of things in place that are increasing student engagement and making the children want to come to school.

[02:40:43] After my first year at Weems, we had nearly 28% of our students chronically absent. Last year it was, I want to say like 13.4, so we had a huge drop. We don't get the other numbers if we don't get that attendance fixed first, and we don't get to mastery if we don't have growth and we have a long way to go and we realize that.

[02:41:04] So our being on track, I am optimistic that we'll stay there and being recognized by the state while very exciting, it's a nice place to visit but we know we're not going to live there. We have to do some other work and we're ready to do that.

[02:41:20] I think we have some good things in place to do exactly that. Thank you. One thing I wanted to highlight that you were talking about in your presentation, I really appreciated how scaffolding is a device

to get students to the grade level content and And I think there's a lot of misunderstanding as to what scaffolding is actually for.

[02:41:37] You're not actually supposed to go down there and stay below the grade-level content. It's supposed to bring you up to the grade-level content. And I appreciated your emphasis on that. So your presentation used the phrase effective CLTs a few times.

[02:41:53] What makes a CLT effective? When I came to Manassas City Public Schools, I came from a place that did CLTs very well. And so I was excited that we were embarking on that when I got here.

[02:42:10] And so what we do is follow the process that has been outlined very clearly and articulated very clearly around the cycle at work. So we are unpacking standards so that we can figure out what we're going to teach in each of the units that we have to teach.

[02:42:29] And then we frame lessons. And then we put those lessons into place. and then we come back and we talk about data. And I think that some places where people miss is when you talk about data, you also have to have some action out of it.

[02:42:47] And I think we've evolved and gotten much better at that. So I think that's something that has helped us move ahead. Love that. Thank you. Yes, data, action, these things that go together. But harder to do than sometimes.

[02:43:03] Easy to say. Easy to say, hard to do. So glad that you are doing it. So, throughout these presentations, you've heard me ask the question, you know, when you talk about an improvement plan, people think, expect to hear something new because you are improving. So, something tells me what, you know, kind of embedded in that concept, is there something new moving into this, into your plan?

[02:43:25] It sounds like a lot of what you are speaking about was, you know, more plan A, as Dr. Goldsing so eloquently put it, a refinement on existing processes. but it sounded like maybe the dedicated planning time for the co-teaching that that was new is that brand new we started doing that this school year this school year because we've been trying to do co-teaching since my first year at weems and we were just stuck it was really happening very well in some specific spaces but not school-wide and then coming into this school year there was some specific emphasis emphasis placed on it by the office of professional learning which was certainly

[02:44:05] missing piece and then I think the other you can't ask teachers to do another thing unless you give them space to be able to plan to do that thing and so that is new we did start doing the research recess coverage this year great that's all the questions I've got okay thank you Ms. Brescia and Ms. Stevens thank you Ms. Huffman for your presentation when we look at your accreditation status and your performance category where you've got

[02:44:40] growth which is a 23.09 out of 25 that score is indicative of how much growth are your students are making correct yes so if we take that score and we apply it to mastery we could possibly make an assumption that are that your students are moving faster and closer to mastery because of that growth score but that makes sense that makes sense it's hard to explain I I would say that we have a

[02:45:15] long way to go we have a lot of growth to make so I don't know if we can say it's going to directly go from one to the other because we do still have a lot of we still have a big number at the top and they are definitely heading in that direction and so I think I mean the overall score is great it's an 82 out of

100 so i think that's something to be very proud of and to also be the school with the highest score in the fourth what was that that was spoken about originally about where you are in reading i have

[02:45:53] to tell you i don't really know for reading growth that's that's pretty phenomenal and that's that's a really great thing and i have to say i think this speaks to you as a principal and i'm going to tell a little story that you may not know that i kind of know your first year as principal i'm driving home from my school, and you're walking down Liberia back towards Weems with a really little person with a backpack on his back. And I called Dr. Neumann. I'm like, oh my gosh, what happened? Oh no, this kid ran away from school. I was envisioning the worst possible thing ever. And the story was this little person had gotten on the bus and taken the bus home,

[02:46:32] but they weren't supposed to take the bus home. They were supposed to wait at school for someone to pick them up. And instead of you saying to the parent, too bad, so sad, you went to that child's house you picked that child up and you walked him back to school and i was watching you take your time out of your day to go the extra step for a little person for a student and to me i was very moved by that because there are a lot of people who wouldn't who would simply say well i guess your child is at home but you took the time to walk to that child's house and walk that child back to school so to me that speaks a lot to

[02:47:11] who you are and your dedication to your students to your school and your division so I have to say thank you and so that tells me that this progress is not a big surprise because that's what you were doing and that tells me you go out of your way for our kiddos so thank you anyone else we are incredibly proud of of weems and i was just speaking to a former teacher last night and she i mean had no way of knowing about this presentation but told me she thought the secret could be co-teaching

[02:47:48] so i'm really delighted to hear you know that with your data-driven decisions um you know gives us a lot to be very proud of and so we thank you and your staff thank you for all that you're doing thank you okay i think i used the word drag on last time i apologize for that all of this has been riveting and we are so proud of all of our schools and all of our teachers and all of our principals so next up I am proud to announce Miss Finnegan principal at METS discuss

[02:48:27] to discuss her strategic priorities goals and strategies in place at METS thank you thank you good evening Chair Spall Vice Chair Jones school board members and Dr. Newman I am Juliet Finnegan the very proud principal of METS middle school tonight I will share an update on our school improvement plan specifically in our work in literacy mathematics English learner progress and our system of data-informed interventions our focus this year has been strengthening tier 1 interventions and instructions sorry while building a structured responsive intervention system around it METS

[02:49:07] serves 1099 students and is supported by a strong and dedicated administrative counseling and school staff team we do not have a federal designation and we are on the off-track performance category earning 72 total points out of 100 possible points based on our comprehensive needs assessment in August we identified three strategic priorities that guide our decision teacher clarity data-driven instruction and co-teaching our staff feedback from our comprehensive needs assessment revealed a strong need for greater instructional

[02:49:46] consistency stronger use of data to guide decisions and improved support structures for diverse learners teacher clarity data-driven instruction and co-teaching are not new initiatives they are direct responses to staff identified needs and assessment data and are designed to improve alignment

access and achievement across all classrooms these priorities work together to strengthen the instructional core the instructional core being the relationship between students, teachers, and the content that is being taught and

[02:50:22] learned, and we believe that task predicts performance. First, teacher clarity. Our walkthrough data last year showed inconsistency in how clearly learning targets and success criterias were communicated. Some students could complete tasks, but they could not often articulate what they were learning or why. Research, including John Hattie's work, identifies teacher clarity as a high-impact instructional practice when students understand the goal engagement and achievement increase this year our walkthrough data has shown over 87% of

[02:51:01] our classrooms consistently post and review content and language objectives supporting teacher clarity and student clarity second data-driven instruction previously we have analyzed data usually after major assessments now we analyze during instruction using weekly micro data discussions and CLTs which allow teachers to regroup students immediately and adjust instruction in real time. This year we have embedded it at the start of each CLT meeting to ensure we are addressing students by name and need. Third, co-teaching. Given the

[02:51:38] needs of our diverse learners, especially students with disabilities or English learners, strengthening co-teaching ensures access to rigorous tier one instruction inside the classroom and not just remediation outside of it. All three strategies align to the strategic plan. Pillar number one inclusive and collaborative learning environment under instructional planning and delivery a cycle that works and inclusive practices.

[02:52:06] If we ensure teacher clarity with content language objectives purposeful cooperative learning structures and high quality evidence-based tasks aligned to SOL rigor then students will demonstrate understanding of goals and expectations, engage actively in discourse and collaboration, and apply knowledge at the appropriate level of rigor. This is about reducing variability between classrooms and making learning visible and predictable for students. Our first goal area is improving literacy outcomes. Our literacy goal is a 20% overall growth in reading from spring

[02:52:45] 2025 to spring 2026. We chose our strategies intentionally based on our spring 2025 SOL analysis and our school our school improvement plan walkthrough data we have developed exemplar writing tasks after identifying inconsistencies in rigor across assignments by planning backwards from SOL expectation and curriculum standards teachers now design tasks that mirror assessment demands and require deeper thinking we are also focusing on the analyzed

[02:53:21] level of Bloom's taxonomy because our SOL data showed students struggled most with the analysis-based questions, so tasks now require justification, text evidence, and reasoning and not just recall. A key strength in this work is our partnership with central office.

[02:53:39] Our English coordinator actively teams with us, attending our CLT meetings, engaging in student work analysis, and supporting teachers in aligning tasks to SOL rigor. This ensures our literacy work is vertically aligned to district expectations, SOL expectations, and also grounded in best practices.

[02:54:01] She's also leading our professional development in our after school literacy labs where she models strategies such as read aloud, annotating, and I do, we do, you do models. This is so that teachers

can support students interacting with texts, making their thinking visible, and engaging in purposeful academic discourse.

[02:54:23] In our CLTs, we analyze formative student work by name and need, allowing us to adjust instruction immediately rather than waiting for assessment results. This work directly aligns to MCPS's strategic plan, priority of high quality instruction and professional growth.

[02:54:41] Just to note, our VGA data is showing a growth of 8%, putting us on track to meet our goals. So currently we are at a 57.5% pass rate which is growth and our goal currently is 60%.

[02:55:00] Our next goal area is improving math outcomes. Our math goal is also a 20% growth from spring 2025 to spring 2026. While our long-term vision is 100% student success, responsible school improvement requires ambitious, measurable, and attainable annual goals that produce sustainable gains.

[02:55:23] Our current baseline in several math reporting categories range from mid-30s to low-40s. Moving these numbers by 20% in a single year represents significant instructional acceleration. Research on school improvement shows that sustainable annual gains in high-need schools typically fall within this range when strong Tier 1 instruction and targeted interventions are implemented with fidelity.

[02:55:51] So our 20% growth target reflects strategic acceleration in all math reporting categories, a focus on rebuilding foundational number sense and algebraic reasoning, strengthening tier one instruction, data-driven small group interventions, and a multi-year pathway towards long-term 60% plus or greater proficiency.

[02:56:15] To move towards our goal, one major shift has been requiring students to show their thinking. Previously, multiple-choice responses masked misconceptions. Now teachers can see exactly where reasoning has been breaking down.

[02:56:31] Daily small group instruction is provided by our math support teachers for targeted students. Groups are flexible and adjusted weekly based on data. Last year, we placed greater emphasis on supporting teachers. We have redesigned math tasks to align to SOL rigor, emphasizing reasoning, modeling, application rather than procedural recall and this is with the support of our math coordinator. She consistently attends our CLT meetings, supports with lesson plan development, and ensures that she creates district assessments that

[02:57:09] aligns to our curriculum standards. This year our walkthroughs by admin and central office focus on student discourse. Who is doing the thinking and explaining and what is the level of rigor of the tasks students are being asked to perform as task predicts performance the addition of our after school tutoring also provides a structured reinforcement and a focus on student accountability so therefore through focused CLT collaboration and targeted feedback instruction has become more aligned and rigorous students are increasingly explaining and defending math reasoning small groups are

[02:57:47] responsive and fluid and teachers are using data to adjust groupings immediately this work directly aligns the Manasseh City Public Schools strategic plan, priority of high-quality instructional planning and delivery, and equitable access. Also strengthening Tier 1 clarity while building teacher capacity across classrooms. Our current data is showing growth in math categories. In measurement and geometry we have had a 2% increase, number and number sense, computation and estimation, a 5% increase for seventh grade. For eighth grade we have had a 3% increase in measurement and geometry and a 6%

[02:58:26] increase in number number sense computation and estimation our last goal area that I will share tonight is our English learner progress our goal is to meet the federal target for our English learner progress this year being at 58 percent we continued to implement summit k-12 after school to provide structured language language practice tied to academic vocabulary and content this This year, we have also included Summit K-12 for students during the school day.

[02:59:00] In our Academic Language and Learning classes and our English Language Development classes Level 1 and 2. To date, 84 students have participated in our After School Summit K-12 program and 122 students have received support during the school day.

[02:59:16] Our Academic Language and Literacy classes focus on sentence structure, academic discourse, language modalities reading, writing, speaking and listening. They utilize the STAR-E program which helps ELLs or English learners by building background knowledge, breaking text into smaller chunks, and providing multiple opportunities for oral language. Last year, 50% of our students in the academic language and learning classes made the required composite score gains. Actually, they surpassed the district target at 54 percent by having 56 percent. Our ELD level one and two

[02:59:55] classes for all of our level one and two kids provide foundational language development and with the addition of our cooperative learning structures it has increased increased oral language production. So in 23-24 the composite proficiency level gains for access was 37 percent.

[03:00:14] Last year, it was 55% and this year our goal is 58%. I also want to note that from the year prior, four students exited the program. Last year, we had 22 students who exited the program.

[03:00:31] So we're gonna continue the good work that we've started to support our English learners. This work directly aligns to the Monassah City Public Schools strategic plan of inclusive practices. So our spotlight is on our data-informed interventions.

[03:00:48] this year we have refined our Mustang block we have asked ourselves what change can we make that will result in improvement so we are following the plan do study act model using data to drive improvements we have built intervention time by grouping students in a focused area of need this school year so of our seven Mustang block teachers 3.5 of our Mustang block teachers support reading they serve students who previously have not passed their reading sol these students are assessed using vowels twice a year once at the beginning of the year and mid-year

[03:01:26] and using um information from lexia power up this has guided the formation of small group interventions and has informed their individualized reading plans through lexia we have seen measurable movement across literacy domains. So in comprehension, nine percent of students have moved into either intermediate or advanced levels since they were placed at the beginning of the year.

[03:01:55] In word study, which is where we're seeing our strongest movement, 29 percent of our students have moved into the intermediate or advanced levels. Grammar, six percent of our students have moved into the intermediate or advanced levels. While progress is steady, this domain remains an area for continued focus. We also have three and a half Mustang block teachers dedicated to math. They provide small group instruction informed by ongoing assessment and adaptive learning tools such as math space. They work and

[03:02:31] operate in a workshop model with learning stations and teacher-led small groups. Students work collaboratively whether in pairs or trios. You might see them working in different areas of the room

and also independently practicing their math in math space. This model ensures that students have consistent opportunities to not only work independently but also work in teacher led small groups. In addition to the Mustang block interventions during the school day weekly CLT micro data discussions are taking place to ensure regrouping decisions are immediate. Also our reading and math support teachers

[03:03:08] provide small group pullout based on specific foundational gaps and this This takes place during their math class. It is during the independent work time after students receive their focus lesson. Support teachers also are paired with math teachers and they create schedules to maximize their instructional time.

[03:03:29] In addition, we also provide after-school interventions, which have supported student ownership of learning, success, and accountability. Students with grades less than a C are required to attend after-school tutoring. this next portion isn't mentioned on the slide I do want to mention that we do what is required and needed to meet kids where they are and with me with that being said we added a new position this school year teacher on special assignment and this is specifically to support our special education and our special education teachers department and students miss Marshall has been

[03:04:07] critical and collaborating with central office and med school staff to streamline streamline needs and support she has built a collaborative staffing model designed to support academic achievement and inclusive practices she leads monthly department meetings that provide structured opportunities to analyze student performance data review effectiveness of accommodations collaborate and calibrate grading practices strengthening transition planning and ensures alignment with division initiatives there's many other things that she does and I won't go into right now unless you have specific

[03:04:44] questions. She also has created these meetings where it has been an opportunity and has created a space for problem-solving around individual student cases, ensuring proactive academic and behavioral intervention. This work directly aligns with the Manasseh City Public Schools strategic plan of high quality instruction, inclusive practices, and supporting professional growth. This is just images that represent what our work looks like for our spotlight: teachers attending

[03:05:18] optional after-school PDs, math students explaining reasoning, small group based on formative analysis. At METS Middle School, our work is intentional and aligned. Our work aligns directly with MCPS's pillars of a strategic plan: inclusive and collaborative learning environments for inclusive practices a cycle that works and focus literacy quality workforce for coherent systems of professional development and accountability for professional growth by strengthening teacher clarity embedding structured data cycles and

[03:05:54] enhancing co-teaching we are reducing the instructional variability increasing engagement ensuring all students have access to rigorous learning thank you for this opportunity for sharing our progress thank you so much Miss Finnegan Do I have questions to my right?

[03:06:20] Okay, to my left? Okay. Ms. Brescia. I will go first. Thank you for your discussion of the strategic plan. Love to hear it. And I do note, you noted in your presentations, noted on the first slide there, that METS does not have any federal designations.

[03:06:43] This is, what you didn't say is this is actually an improvement for METS that occurred from the year prior. that it used to be that METS had a very long list of student subgroups that were underperforming so I want to glow you up a little bit like congratulations on getting out of that federal

designation and I also want to give you the opportunity to talk a little bit about what you attribute that success to.

[03:07:08] Since coming to METS last year there are many areas that we knew we need to focus in on. First being kind of shifting the culture for students with student code of conduct safety and behavior and that was something that we began last year put processes in place and we're very consistent with follow-through that really created an increased sense of belonging for our students which also led to a degree a decrease in chronic absenteeism so all of that combined kind of creates that foundational platform needed for our students to not only be

[03:07:48] school but to feel safe enough mentally emotionally physically to learn so I can't take that outside of my response to why we are where we are right now obviously that's coupled with the work for student success right our planning in our CLT meetings we talked about teacher clarity the data informed cycles that we go through all of those pieces combined support the change and shifts that we're making and change does take time and i do know that um i always say like three to five

[03:08:24] years but i believe the foundational pieces have been shifting to create and build from there that was going to lead to the academic success success that we know that we can achieve the other thing i do want to mention is in our clt meetings we ensure that both our special education teacher and our l teacher are in the meetings for that content and grade level because we know It's that work and the collaboration that even the other principals have mentioned that need to take place for us to provide quality Tier 1 instruction in the classroom for all of our kids.

[03:09:02] In addition to that, our SPED department is really working on specially designed instruction, which is specific instruction for our students with disabilities tailored to their specific needs. Now, specially designed instruction isn't something for every student.

[03:09:17] specific for the students with IEP so that piece is also supporting the growth in that area and you did mention your BGA growth that you saw in for literacy which is great and I might have just missed it because you know it is after nine o'clock now but do you have any mid-year data to share on math are you guys and I shared it by reporting categories for math okay I'm being informed I missed it I'm sorry that's gonna make you repeat it so so we have several reporting categories but for seventh grade in measurement and

[03:09:53] geometry we have seen a 2% increase in number and number sense there's a 5% increase for seventh grade and then in eighth grade we have a 3% increase in measurement and geometry and a 6% increase in number and numbers now does that translate to being on track to meet the SMART goal yes yes we have continued work to do yeah the so at the beginning of the presentation you clarified because to make these presentations useful for people who might be you're concerned about Mets middle school and wanting to know what

[03:10:31] is actually being done to assist Mets middle school and just for all of our schools an improvement plan implies that there's something different and what is new and what is different about this school year that's going to make the difference and a lot of that is more plan a as dr. Goldson said but it did sound like there actually were some like brand new things that were going on at METS as I was listening to you talk. It sounded like the exemplar writing tasks, for example, was brand new this year and wasn't happening previously. So some of those strategies within the content definitely shifted based on data, but the overarching strategies that I mentioned with

[03:11:09] teacher clarity, data-driven, you know, interventions and co-teaching, that hasn't shifted. it's not new we're just deepening our practices we definitely refined some of it based off of what happened last year what was effective where do we need to shift a little bit so those are shifts but not new initiatives but within the actual content yes based on SOL data and analysis we saw specific areas that needed more attention right so it used to be the math test multiple choice and you have to show your work so they actually do both yep they have a multiple choice performance

[03:11:49] matters but for me it's critical that the kids have it on paper as well and they show their thinking otherwise kids can just click through a test and we have no idea what made them click a versus b and did they even have thought behind it or they just want to get done so it slows them down it makes them have that time to think and process and then teachers can also see kind of where are those misconceptions where can we support to the question about the evolution of Mustang block because as Mustang block has been in Metz's school improvement plan every year that I've been on the school board and so it's

[03:12:27] always included some kind of a what we're gonna use this time to target and to target students and intervene with them academically and I'm having a hard time understanding what is different about this school year with the Mustang block then what we were trying to do with the Mustang block last school year so last year well all of our students have a Mustang block in a sense and last year you know we came in and we just knew that all kids need to have a Mustang block right so we ensure that they had a class where they had time to work on Lexia or ST math whatever that specific intervention was for reading and math

[03:13:05] but it wasn't targeted this year based on data from last year's SOL knowing where kids were in reading we we group them so that we have specific Mustang block teachers supporting just that area so now it's very structured if you're walking into a Mustang block it's very structured and targeted because those kids who are in there as I mentioned they didn't pass the SOLs last year and they all have individualized reading plans so they have specific goals they're working on so that's paired with Lexia and so that's the work our Mustang block

[03:13:42] 3.5 Mustang Block teachers are doing to support reading. And then we have another set of kids in Mustang Block to support math. So it's very targeted and specific this year. And therefore, we are seeing a lot of growth, as I shared, in our Alexia data. So I wasn't clear also that you have support teachers that are doing small group pullouts for foundational skills, math small group pullouts. Is that happening during the Mustang Block? Or is that happening?

[03:14:12] so it's during class and so the teachers are our support teachers are paired with our math teachers they know when the teacher is going to have the focus lesson when there's independent practice time during that time the Mustang block the math support teacher will pull students out based on data for that week or whatever the score is for to support and provide intervention gotcha all right that's all for me thank you thank you thank you Ms. Brescia Ms. Stevens

[03:14:42] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Finnegan, for your presentation. One thing that jumped out to me right away that I really think is important was teacher clarity and aligning instruction tasks and student actions so learning is transparent and visible. And that really means the students know what they're learning and they know why. And that's where we get the buy-in. Because when the students don't know

what they're learning, they have no buy-in, but then they don't know why they're learning, they don't realize the importance.

[03:15:13] so it seems like a very small thing but I think it's really important that you make that all students know what am I learning today what is the expected outcome and why it's important so I really appreciate that that is an identified strategic priority because I think it's really important and it also brings me brings back into my mind and we're all getting tired but this is only your second year at METS and you've come a long way in two years because METS was really struggling.

[03:15:47] And every year around this time, the subject of METS would come up and what's going on at METS and what's going wrong at METS. So you've really made a lot of changes and you're turning that ship around. And so we're seeing a lot of positive things start to occur.

[03:16:05] And I know it's hard and that change is difficult, but I think we're starting to see the difference that's being made. And then I did want to say, I think it's great. 22 students exited the EL program, as compared to last year, there were only four.

[03:16:22] I hope you had celebrations for each of those 22 kids. I had a kid who exited out this year and everyone cried. And it was happy tears. Coming out of the principal's office, everyone's crying. Everybody's thinking, oh my god, the world is ending. And we're all happy crying. But 22 kids to exit EL services, that's just-- that's huge.

[03:16:40] That's phenomenal. And that talks about the growth that those students experienced and how they're now being set up for success and they're doing really well so kudos to that and really thank you for all you've done and for getting the path getting on the path in the right direction to where we want all our students to be so thank you we appreciate the work that you've done and are doing and will continue to do thank you thank you miss Stevens anyone else mr. Brown could you talk to me a little bit about the walk through the walk

[03:17:14] that you have completed have they been in regards to when you used to look force are they in regards to fidelity to clarity alignment or are they for engagement what does that look like well or what have they looked like you just mentioned many pieces of our walkthrough the teacher clarity is a piece of it our teachers posting the content language objective or then the next level is are Are they stating the objective out loud to the kids?

[03:17:48] The kids then have an opportunity to either state it back or read key words. So it does break it down so it's not just on one surface level. It's not just as it's posted. It goes deeper into that. We also look for cooperative learning structures for those opportunities for kids to be able to share their thinking process and share their ideas with their classmates in a structured setting, in a structured format.

[03:18:16] also look at when we're looking at the content language objective is it aligned to the level of rigor of the standard and is that actually what the kids are doing when I say task predicts performance you can have an objective written the board but if you're walking the classroom and you're observing a lower level of a balloon but it's supposed to be analyzing whether it's identifying that's going to predict their performance they're never reaching that level so that's something that we're always looking for and we comment and talk to the teachers provide coaching afterwards those are just some

[03:18:56] pieces we're always asking ourselves also what is the teacher doing what is the student doing so that kind of encompasses where our walk thank you Miss Brown anyone else okay miss miles okay I had to

ask this question I'm looking at the performance framework and I noticed that we're so close to to readiness like to meeting that out of 20. So could you kind of break down for middle school because I know elementary school is different the way they look at it. We got almost there.

[03:19:31] So what does that look like and what is it measured? Yeah sorry. So at middle school so at elementary school and intermediate school for us that's just attendance chronic absenteeism at the middle school. The reason the success that METS had was it also includes advanced performance in mathematics and so METS earned like 96% of the possible points in that component of it because the students who are in advanced mathematics meaning students finish eighth grade with successful performance on an SOL in at least one high school mathematics course so that was something that was the big

[03:20:09] success so that's the big push and the decrease in chronic absenteeism so those two things together why they got a big chunk of those points okay great I'm I'm glad to see that. And, you know, with the growth, obviously, you're doing the right things. You're pushing towards growth.

[03:20:24] It's really tough, I think, in just those great levels. But seeing the Ls grow is very promising. So hopefully you'll have that 58%, and that will push the growth up as well. I think that was all I – but I know that my son is enjoying his experience at Metz.

[03:20:42] So thank you for what you're doing. Thank you. We are so proud of your L growth and a lot of things that you are bringing to the table in your second year. We have had a lot of schools tonight, but to me it's interesting how many, how similar the goals are, you know.

[03:20:59] But the thing that really seems to be different is as you scale up, you know, now you're adding in, and I can't wait to see what Osborne says, but this component of team or teacher clarity, you know. I mean you're just it is it is a bigger building it's harder to just keep that that goal and that communication open and alive so we know you're the person to do it we do appreciate Miss Jones and dr. Jones and mr. Miller got him but at you know almost 1,100 students it's it's just a different ballgame isn't it I'm sure it's much much different than what was happening at Baldwin Intermediate

[03:21:37] so we know you're of the people that went tonight you're the earliest start date so again apologize that the night is long but we very much appreciate you sharing so much so last but definitely not least is dr. Chapman principal of Osborne high school to discuss her strategic priorities goals and strategies in place at OHS for the 25 26 school year bringing home dr.

[03:22:12] Chapman thank you guys for having me back this year all right I am dr. Chapman in my second year at Osborne High School and we have a lot to cover today so I am gonna keep speeding through for us just because we're such a comprehensive school we have a lot of programs we want to make sure we highlight all of them Osborne High School is fully accredited and has the performance designation of being on track this school year with 82 out of the total 100 performance framework points earned this year under the new system so I'm gonna walk you through how we got to our plan to develop what

[03:22:51] we're gonna actually do at the school this year and it really started last year our process to plan started in April when my administrative team started our beginning retreat to identify what are the data points that we are going to need to examine this year to really have an understanding of how we're performing and what our next steps are so we started building that list we work with central office to make sure that by June we had access to most of those data points and then we scheduled a two-day instructional retreat with our administrative team and our teacher leadership team in June to dive into

[03:23:29] what our data from last school year had said because we had such a large group working on that we were able to do very precise dives into specific data points we were able to perform root cause analysis in that meeting we were able to identify what our strategic priorities were going to be for the next school year based upon our performance from the prior year with that we then build a process that throughout the school year our instructional council continued to meet every two weeks to both review operational items at the school and to progress monitor our performance in meeting those goals that we set up so

[03:24:09] throughout that process what did we identify as our areas well it's really threefold we have three big things that we have to work at at our school first we have to get the students there because no matter how great the instruction is if they're not there to experience it we're not going to make the achievement gains for them we're not going to set them up for success in their future so we continue to have a huge goal on student attendance both partial and full day we also wanted to look at how we could optimize the instruction that the students would get that is a heavy investment in having a quality workforce and making sure our teachers were prepared to provide high

[03:24:45] quality tier one instruction to all of our students but with that that doesn't solve all world problems we had a lot of students who already were not performing on grade level so we also designed a very specific and strategic structured tier two and tier three interventions to help address our students who were not yet performing at the expected grade level in the next few slides we're gonna deep dive into what some of those strategies specifically were that we then dove into support in our areas overall our areas that we had

[03:25:19] to support an instruction or literacy and mathematics and then to support school achievement we also needed a focus on improving attendance rates again as well as having an on-time graduation and reduced dropout rate so let's start with talking about literacy at the high school we have two large metrics we use to measure our literacy performance which is a reading and a writing SOL so we focus our strategies to meet the reading needs of the students and to meet our writing needs starting with reading we I'm gonna actually begin by sharing with a process we brought in this year that does impact outside of just reading

[03:25:59] in English but it started with the focus on our English classrooms and that's the instructional rounds process which built into collaborative walkthroughs which is like a mini version of instructional rounds that we can do with CLT teams and then a priority partnership which is partner observations with ESOL and English administrators or central office support all with the hope of expanding opportunities for staff both instructional and supervisory staff and our teacher staff that are in the buildings to get into multiple classrooms to see what's happening outside of their own classrooms and then participate

[03:26:37] in structured data dives about what they saw to identify school-wide trends and patterns. We do ground all of those processes in the instructional core, which you'll hear some overlap from what MET's work is doing too, which essentially takes a laser focus on what is the student doing, what is the teacher doing, what is the designed instructional task, and what is the alignment to all of that with the content that's supposed to be being taught at the time.

[03:27:05] That was a critical step, actually, in increasing staff buy-in with our identified professional learning opportunities that we then wanted them to engage in to improve Tier 1 instructional practices.

[03:27:20] And we've seen a lot of very positive feedback on staff from having that process happen at the school. And I now have a wait list with staff trying to get in on the next one because they heard about what their peers did, they really enjoyed it, and they want to be part of that team, too. So we're trying to build them.

[03:27:37] That hit the whole school but started with an English focus. Now drilling down into the specifics within our reading skills, we utilized, again, specific data points to identify not just that we needed overall performance in reading, but what were the actual reading skills that we needed to improve in.

[03:27:56] And one of the pieces of feedback that we saw based on our student performance by question results was that paired passages was a strategy that needed to be incorporated significantly into our reading classes. Essentially, that has students review two different passages, synthesize the information together to then answer a set of questions versus working with just one passage and trying to connect that on.

[03:28:19] So all of our English classes from nine through 12 incorporated that strategy into the learning. The English assessments are actually a comprehensive measure of students' understanding as they take them in 10th grade for reading and 11th grade for 12th grade, but they measure what the student learns from ninth grade on up.

[03:28:36] So again, we applied the strategies across the board and not just in the class that they were going to be assessed on. We also saw a lot of positive feedback from students who engaged significantly with Lexia. So we increased in Lexia engagement in every single English classroom and our literacy support classrooms.

[03:28:55] Our students who engage more with Lexia, as some of our students get it in two classes, both the literacy support and the regular English class, are showing the greatest movement in their skill sets. and then that allows us to gear some instruction towards students' individual needs and not just the whole school patterns that we need as well.

[03:29:14] Additionally, we did incorporate a new bell schedule this year, which you'll hear about multiple times how we use Nest Block, but we'll start here with specifically how we use it in English. Our new bell schedule designed a 45-minute segment every single day where students rotate back to a class that's in their schedule.

[03:29:34] That time, however, is reserved for no new instruction and teachers can only work with students on either intervention remediation activities or extension opportunities that would be ungraded but would give a kid a chance to explore something more in depth.

[03:29:49] Or for students in good standing and meeting their academic goals, it gives them an opportunity to self-direct where they wanna use that time and they can go get help from another teacher at that time. In English, that gave us an opportunity to really target the needs of our students with disabilities by taking those students who are in a self-contained English class, which would primarily be with just a special education certified instructor, and partner them with our general education English teachers to do individualized and small group specific targeted support to help build their test taking strategies, as well as general remediation on the current learning skills that they were not keeping up to date with.

[03:30:28] That block allows us to meet a lot of immediate needs students when they have low performance on formative and summative assessments get the skill up versus waiting until the sol at the end of the year where we see what the gaps are to further support literacy we also have a lot of writing specific strategies that we are employing to support the overall achievement of our students as well as our specific subgroup achievement so we have expanded the use of the vdoe writing rubric on commative assessments in all of our english classes so again

[03:31:04] previously there was a focus on just english 12 which is the year the students take the writing assessment but as that is a comprehensive assessment we're starting it in english 9 so students will utilize that same rubric in 9 in 10 the students will be really familiar with it the teachers will normalize their grading practices and then they'll get better at providing really growth producing feedback to students so they can approve from one assessment to the next on writing.

[03:31:30] We have also outsourced some of our writing support to our social studies department. Those students additionally have a very writing heavy curriculum. Their LAA that they take for verified credit is a writing intensive activity. So our social studies teachers have partnered with our English teachers and they've utilized the teal paragraph structure in their writing instruction.

[03:31:52] So again, our students see consistency and they're getting reinforcement with these skills now in two of their core classes and not just one that provides them an opportunity to learn the same thing instead of feeling like they're learning a new thing and it's making really specific connections for our students on setting up a writing paragraph and approaching assignment in there.

[03:32:16] To specifically support our ESOL and students with disabilities, our CLTs are again using that critical planning time to make sure that we are identifying specific writing scaffolds for students that allow the assignment to have the same level of expected rigor in the outcome but provide multiple entry points for students to get to the assignment based upon where their current ability is at we did some strategic planning with our master schedule this year and the utilization of of our co-teachers in both special education and ESOL to partner them with specific departments

[03:32:56] instead of spreading them across multiple departments, which then allows our ESOL teachers and our special education teachers to be in the CLTs and have, again, that identified planning time that we realize from other schools is critical to make sure that the instructional activities are not just planned with the broad focus of all students, but they're focused with specific strategies already in place to help support our students who need differentiated instruction as well.

[03:33:25] Moving on to mathematics, I would love to cheer on my mathematics department. That is our area at the school that showed the highest amount of growth last year. And we actually hit double digits in many of the individualized test areas of growth in that year. So part of our, again, plan for mathematics is more of plan A in many areas because what was working was working and looking at where can we expand some of those strategies.

[03:33:50] and then identifying where did we not see growth and where do we need to refine at. So diving into some specifics. Seems like a simple one, but we had a lot of effect with it last year, so we expanded it to the entire department, which is calculator usage.

[03:34:06] We have limited Desmos online calculator usage to now all students in mathematics by making sure that we have the handheld traditional graphing calculator that many of us used when we were in high

school prior to Desmos coming out as the accessible tool for students.

[03:34:22] So we still have the tool, we train them on that, but we're using it for students as a supplement. And to repeat what Ms. Finnegan had shared, we are shifting the focus to the process in mathematics and not just the outcome, not just getting the answer.

[03:34:39] So with that, we have also designed specific tasks in mathematics that require students to provide either verbal or written justification of their steps or a review through the procedures they used and the decision making they used in the mathematics versus just focusing on, well, what was the answer you got to the question?

[03:35:00] We provide them the handheld calculator to help them with the calculations if we have lost some of our number sense since we have been focusing on that in middle school, but we don't have the Desmos calculator at the time that can sometimes replace the entire process for them.

[03:35:16] We're still gonna make them familiar with Desmos. They will still get access to that in preparation for the SOL because we want students to be comfortable with learning the tool they're gonna have on the test. But we saw from last year with our Algebra I focus on that, the students actually performed higher by not having that tool throughout the year.

[03:35:36] And that was our biggest change we had in Algebra I last year, so we expanded it. Math department has also used that nest block again. We use that C metric to identify students need specific remediation and for students who are consistently performing below a C average on summative and formative assessments those students are assigned to come to required remediation and activities with their nest teacher we have also utilized that activity to prepare our students who need to retake SOLs and did not pass them the first time

[03:36:09] to have opportunity to prepare multiple times in advance for that test during that on top of that our students who we identify that are under that C we are making sure they are scheduled into either our learning labs after school which is a required small group intervention learning or we have an ESOL specific learning center on Mondays and Wednesdays that focuses on math and English skills for students and partners the content specific teacher with the ESOL teacher so we're providing remediation activities for students with the same ESOL supports that they would get in in their class also.

[03:36:48] With our ESOL and SPED students, again, this is something that we saw in another area, but we made that targeted building of the master schedule to make sure that we are partnering our teachers within a specific subject area, so they are present in the CLTs.

[03:37:04] They're not teaching a class in history when they're supposed to be with math, helping plan for instruction, and providing the scaffolded activities in the CLT we are planning for the common activities the common learning tasks within those now we know we can have fantastic instruction our goal is to build our workforce to have a point where we are offering exceptionally high quality tier one instruction to all students in all occasions but if our students aren't here in the classroom that's not going to move mountains for them so we continue to focus on getting our students into school while we have seen progress with our

[03:37:43] English monitoring, our writing achievement, our reading achievement using our Lexia data, using our screeners that we utilize for the common assessments in writing, and in math using our division benchmark assessments. We have been making progress as we've gone on. Attendance is the one area that

we are not yet on track for this year and I will be transparent about that. We saw a dip in quarter two. As a rollout told of that, we didn't accept it and say okay let's just keep going we adjust it and so we added on some more intensive intervention activities

[03:38:17] one of the biggest ones we did is we expanded just the full day intervention process to partial day absent frequent weekly interventions for students because we all know that partial absenteeism is just a gateway to full day absenteeism once you get a taste for it so we want to early intervene with students and prevent them from getting to that point.

[03:38:40] So I'll get into some specifics so you can follow along with our terminology, but we did add processes to look at students who we consider to have skips. A skip would be you're present for some part of the day, you did attend some class, but for another class in that day we have an unverified and we didn't know why you weren't there.

[03:39:00] We also have a process for cut or PNR means you actually were present for the class at one point but for a significant portion of it you were not present most often our split lunch block classes a student may be there before lunch but after lunch they do not arrive back in the classroom or of course our tardy process which means we got to the class but we didn't get there on time and again that's all missed instructional time so what do our students need when they miss instructional time they need time to make up that instruction we added a new process that based on tardies cuts skips weekly a student's data is pulled they

[03:39:37] are scheduled into an academic support program after school the following week they're communicated to their parents they are partnered when they get there we have teachers from all four of our cores that support it so the students are put into a specific learning group based on the area of need that they have and they get a chance to get additional academic support to help them recover from the missed instructional time the prior week while that started as a very large process because it did start that some weeks we have 400 students scheduled into this and we need to get all of them notification we had significant

[03:40:14] amount of students showing up to it and we had a significantly heightened amount of communication between our parents and the school in a positive manner so an unintended consequence was that was a significantly heightened amount of parent engagement that we got and once parents found out they were getting academic supports at it. It was not a consequence for them, but it was instead an intervention to help them stay on top of the academics and encourage the continued attendance to class.

[03:40:41] We have a lot of parents with a high level of support on that. We monitor those on a weekly basis and so the students could be there every week. Some students graduate out of it but still touch base with their teacher that they had in their after school support who follows up with them on how they're staying on top of their attendance. We also expanded our program that that we piloted at the end of last school year which was partnering with our coaches they get provided with attendance and grade updates of all of their athletes and if their athletes are showing low performance in a class and have significant amounts of missed schools they require their athletes to

[03:41:19] again attend one of our after-school instructional recovery programs that we have that was very successful last spring so we have now expanded that to not just athletes year-round, but we added in some other of our extracurricular programs to providing those supervisors and sponsors the same reports

and using that relationship building to really move the students into engaging in the full level of services we provide at Osborne and not just the athletics or the activities.

[03:41:49] All of these programs, as well as our academic intervention programs, do support a comprehensive, flexible instructional recovery time, which is reportable to the states, but most importantly, it's helping students stay on top of their academics, which is keeping them on pace to meet their academic learning goals by getting them recovery time in real time when they need it.

[03:42:11] And then the last big thing we did in attendance that we've significantly expanded this year is we leveraged our positive peer role models. So we took our students who are all doing the right thing and we made them celebrities at the school. We planned many events where we acknowledged them.

[03:42:27] Our very first one we had, we had community partners donating free wings and sliders. It was awesome. We had 174 students with perfect attendance. I'm telling you, not even one tardy. That we celebrated, we did in a very public way. So students were walking by going, what's going on? How can I get in on that?

[03:42:43] We're expanding our access to SOAR cards in the SOAR store for positive attendance. We're doing a grade level challenge where they're gonna get a little mini field day at the end of the year for the grade level showing the most improvement. And we're really trying to help get the students support each other to again maintain those positive habits and creating a community where we see kids who go to class not we see kids who go to Benny's right and we're having a lot of movement in that area particularly with the new interventions that we have started to put in mid-year all of this comes together and gets us to our ultimate goal which is our last big focus which

[03:43:20] is reducing our dropout rate and really making sure our students are hitting an on-time graduation metric. So to reduce our dropout rate and support that culture of on-time graduation, we have expanded our early identification of at-risk students to include 11th and 12th graders.

[03:43:39] We're not waiting to 12th grade year to see what are you missing and not going to meet at graduation. We are starting in 11th grade year with our early intervention to see what you've completed and what you need, and then scheduling appropriate student support meetings as needed and connecting students with the interventions and supports that they need.

[03:43:56] We've really been able to utilize our nest block a lot to provide those students with that targeted academic supports they need. We just went through our senior SOL winter testing and we were able to prepare a lot of students for that class. We saw really good positive pass rates for students who had to take that test in that mid-year data to show that they were prepared, they were able to get it out of the way and now that's one last thing that we're not waiting to last minute at graduation to get them across that stage.

[03:44:25] We're also looking to expand our process next year into the tracking of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. So really coming out of ninth grade year, if you didn't hit your metrics ninth grade year, we have you on a plan starting on 10th grade year to early make up and fill those gaps of what we haven't met towards graduation so it doesn't become overwhelming at 12th grade year.

[03:44:46] We have also really focused on what do we have control with within the building. So we can't control what happens to our students outside of the building, but we have complete control of what their experience is when they walk in the door at Osborne and what opportunities we provide them with.

[03:45:02] With that, we have significantly expanded our use of alternative routes to graduation for students and helping our students find the path that is right for them. We do now have Pathways which has been huge for us. We have Edmentum which is a blended learning option that allows students to self-pace their learning and sometimes take an extra class during their regular schedule.

[03:45:24] We now have VAVA that we can use for some of our students who that's more appropriate for. Our evening school right now is pretty much at capacity though Dr. Fincham keeps finding space for more students. We have 74 students in evening school and we've already had three of them this year finish all of their needs for graduation we have another 11 that within the next month we'll meet that because they're now to the point where they just need tests and we have to get to our next testing window to get them through their final needs for graduation so that has been an incredibly successful program for us we've partnered with central office to revamp our GED program and we also are expanding our opportunities this summer for summer school and what

[03:46:04] that looks like to provide support for students to again try to keep students on pace at the time they go off pace instead of waiting till the end to now get them back on track and have a farther distance to recover for them. After our math expansion last year with mid-year SOL testing of students who had not passed, we had a lot of success with that.

[03:46:24] We have expanded that to reading test and our science test and expanded the opportunities for students to in the mid-year here, even not as term grads, have the opportunity to retake an SOL to again keep them on pace to get to graduation I'm going to use my last couple minutes to just spotlight and bring us back to our beginning which was our three core focuses that we were looking at we have pictures from our first all-star attendance celebration the kids really enjoyed that they didn't know what to walk into at first but we have expanded our karaoke setup we're doing another one Thursday if anyone wants to come and join and sing along

[03:47:00] with them because they liked it our instructional rounds process the picture on the left it was also ugly sweater day so you guys missed my my Excel based sweater which is beautiful and that had our teacher teams right working together and looking at what they've seen in the classroom we've done two instructional rounds and my favorite part of them was that both teams came to the same outcomes did not know the outcome of the prior one so our teachers are really getting good at using that data figuring out what the patterns are and then helping us build our next steps for how we're going to address them and then we have some of our evening school workers there, which is also a great place for our students

[03:47:40] to build relationships with staff because it's smaller group setting. And some of our kids report that their evening school teachers are again, their trusted adult and the person that they have the closest relationship at the school, which keeps them coming back for more. So we, this year at Osborne, we have been all about facing our data head on, collaborating with all critical stakeholders.

[03:48:03] You don't just have to be in our building. Anyone who wants to work with us and help support us, we will work with you and building highly structured systems that support change while utilizing all available resources, even many of our central office supports who came and covered classes on a day we did instructional rounds so we could pull our teachers out to participate in that data dive.

[03:48:25] And then monitoring, monitoring and monitoring some more, celebrating our wins and adapting when we haven't quite gotten there yet. All of that ensures that our students meet their academic

and personal goals and graduate from Osborne High School on time with the skills to engage in the boundless opportunities they can face in their high school in their future post high school.

[03:48:51] Who's got questions? Who's ready for bed? Is this to look anymore? Okay. Ms. Brown.

[03:49:07] Sign me up for karaoke. Can you tell me? I would also like to come visit the evening school so I'm gonna put that on my things to do but tell me a little bit more about the SOAR card is that something that we can support to so we actually have a big solicit we're gonna put for that soon so we've always had the SOAR store our SOAR store our SOAR cards is one of our PBIS processes we have a couple of other ones but essentially our teachers can hand them out to students when the student is meeting one of our you know above and beyond behavior metrics every Wednesday

[03:49:45] are actually our adaptive special education program runs the soar store in the cafeteria where the students can spend the cards for gear we really went to the students on that got feedback from them miss Browning our new Dean did a lot of heavy work and research what do you want what would inspire you what would motivate you and significantly expanded the size of that program and trained our teachers on getting those out right here's what you should look for giving them a lot of visuals a lot of tools to say here's your goal this many cards a day let's get them out to students let's really catch students in the moment doing the right things and positively reinforce those those skills

[03:50:22] so I do have a wish list coming out we funded it with some baseline stuff but we're gonna put it out to the community to just keep the stuff coming in that our students will like for that so look for our social media posts thank you everything that you do. Thank you Ms. Brown. Ms. Stevens. So thank you for the presentation and there are a lot of changes that have been made at Osborne in these two in this not even two years yet about 18 months and you know there are a couple things you said that really I thought were great for our special education students working on those test taking strategies for them sometimes

[03:51:01] it's and also for our EL students it's not that they don't know the content if they don't know how to take the test and they don't have the stamina to take those larger high-stakes assessments and so they need the strategies and I think that's that's so important people don't think about it very often but it's not just what you know it's being able to show what you know so I think that is so important and I I love that you're moving away from the Desmos for every day because quite often the student will put the problem in Desmos and the Desmos will solve the

[03:51:35] problem and the student will have no idea what processes or what steps were taken to get to that problem so i think that's another great thing because that goes to that math reasoning the understanding the why and the how and that brings us with the buy-in and the number sense and then um i would love at some point to have an update on evening school we haven't had evening school for a very long time and it started out very very small and from what i'm hearing tonight it's really grown it's busting at the seams yeah yes so i would love and i'm sure everyone else on this

[03:52:13] dais would love to see a presentation on evening school because we haven't heard about it very much and it's making a difference for some of our kiddos i know several of us were able to visit when it first launched and they're rolling a few students started out very small but it was making a big impact for them and it was really bringing about changes in their lives and getting them to see a positive future as opposed to the opposite so thank you on that and then for some of the after school things how are our teachers volunteering and i'm sure they're getting

[03:52:50] paid to stay after school but are they volunteering to do it i mean so we do have a fair amount of paid positions to support our structures that we have set up we do pay our learning labs teachers we pay our after school reset teachers who are the ones that are doing the attendance-based students who are scheduled into it, as well as some different remediation opportunities.

[03:53:12] We do have a significant amount of our staff who just stays after with their students and provides opportunities for students to get extra help, but I will say for those staff members who can't stay after, they have to pick up their own children, and for our students who can't stay after, because we do have a lot of students who work and they can't stay after, adding that nest block in the day where students can also flex and go to the teacher they need specific support from has been very positively received from our student body I think we need to say thank you to the teachers as well because it's not just admin it's not just the kids it's the teachers as well they're

[03:53:49] putting their take going the extra mile for our kiddos and I think that's really important so please on behalf of us tell them thank you for the work they're doing because nothing can happen if we don't have that so thank you thank you miss - Ms. Stephens, Dr. Jones.

[03:54:07] - In reference to your walkthroughs, are you sharing that information, all of the findings with the entire staff or at least the team members? - So we do in different ones. Most of it we start by sharing with our instructional council as that has representatives from each department and then they are the reps that take it back to their teams.

[03:54:24] We also do spotlights in our faculty meetings to show them kind of large, broad overviews that go on. And that's actually why we, The instructional rounds is a very large-scale, like full-day process with a limited group that can do it, but we use that to create a mini model, which is the walkthrough, which is done within CLT teams and small groups in CLTs that now provides an opportunity for all of our teachers to participate in that action and then focus on findings in their specific area of domain that they can work on as well.

[03:54:57] - Thank you, Dr. Jones. I think Ms. Brescia was first. - Thank you so much for that presentation. There was a lot I liked about it, that you shared your data and you shared your status in terms of if you were making progress towards your goals.

[03:55:16] And I appreciate your honesty with your attendance data that you were not on track. I really appreciate that. I'd rather hear it in February than be unpleasantly surprised in June. And I also like that you clearly delineated what is new, new, and what is an improvement and a refinement on older processes.

[03:55:39] I appreciated all of that, but there's one thing that was missing, which is the collection to our strategic plan. There was a bird holding up pillars. Where is it? Where is it? Oh, yeah. No, we'll go back. Yeah. Oh, there he is.

[03:55:54] Okay. All right. Thank you. I could have comprehended the eagle there. Yeah. We need to talk about intentionality. Intentionality. We have a strategic plan for a reason. We've got to work in those grooves. Anyway, I wanted to ask you about nest block because I believe nest block used to be eagle block, and I believe eagle block was eliminated because students were cutting eagle block.

[03:56:21] The structures weren't in place. Okay, so tell me the evolution of eagle block. So our nest block is a little bit different. I believe, and I wasn't here for eagle block, so I'm going on to that that was a non-

credit-bearing class that students had at the time that had the flexibility to class elsewhere we did it a little bit different where ours is a rotation back to their class so they're with their teacher who they already have accountability with attendance is taken separately from the other regular the period that they are scheduled to that day so there are one class a day kids get attendance taken twice so they have lunch block they actually have taken three times but and then within that we

[03:57:00] did incorporate one part of the rotation that is an advisory so that is a part where we do full school-based lessons. We'll do things like our, you know, Virginia School Safety and Climate Survey with getting ready for course selection, course fair.

[03:57:15] And then that's an advisor where they will stay with all four years, but they see that person about once every other week 'cause it's every nine rotations. That one's not credit-bearing, but that's then their group that they'll carry with, they'll build that relationship and they'll do the school-based structures with.

[03:57:31] All of the other periods, they go back to their teacher where they already have. Much of the work they're doing is for that teacher. You need to do a retake, we're gonna do the retake now. You need to do the test corrections, we're gonna do it together there. So because there's a direct tie to their instruction, we have found far better attendance at it.

[03:57:48] And we as the adults who, you know, when students sometimes work with their not fully formed frontal cortex and make a decision that wouldn't be adult appropriate, make sure our security staff or administration staff is very visible at that time of the day to set the expectation that when we're in the building, we're in our classroom learning.

[03:58:06] So that's where we started our tardy sweeps is during that block, so students got into that block, and then it became a habit, and then it was easier to maintain. Okay. Well, that's all very good to hear, because Eagle Block has, like I said, it's evolved over time. So I want to talk a little bit about the alternative routes to graduation.

[03:58:26] At Momentum, we've had that. VAVA is new. Evening school has evolved, and I agree. I second the suggestion that we get an update on that. I'm also curious and I'm going to suggest that you mentioned that a revamp of the GED program.

[03:58:42] And maybe this is a whole presentation's worth topic or maybe you could give us just a-- - I can give a quick one on the GED. I do think probably evening school valuable just because they're doing, we're actually doing a lot of our best instructional practices in evening school. So it's really good to highlight the work those teachers are getting in.

[03:58:59] GED we're switching to a cohort based model. So students will come in in a cohort with an expected timeline for outcome. This is really similar to what a lot of surrounding school divisions have. And what we have found is we got some students in our GED program that many of those students are balancing many life pulls.

[03:59:21] They're working actively. They have a lot of distractors from school. So sometimes they start in GED, they think, I'm gonna just take this test and be done with it and realize, no, there's still a lot of learning that needs to happen before we're prepared to do that. So we're getting the students on very structured that the first two weeks we're gonna focus on this need, we're gonna get that one done.

[03:59:40] The next two weeks we're gonna focus on this need with the goal of each of them getting through in approximately an eight to 12 week time period and then we'll have a new cohort start where those students will sort of work as a group still on their individual needs but with very specific pacing to get them through.

[03:59:57] Now we've just started that, so we're gonna have more outcome data after we've gotten our first cohort through it. So if you graduate high school with a GED, do you count as an on-time graduate? So you don't count as an on-time graduate. From the federal focus, and I don't know if Dr. Casado wants to share a little bit more, you do get some credit, but you're not going to get the full credit that you would for an on-time graduate.

[04:00:21] For summer school, you mentioned that you were going to expand it. How are you expanding? So we're in development right now. There are some shifts we're making actually with the incoming 8th graders who would normally do summer school at METS in shifting them to doing a freshman jumpstart at the high school so we can start normalizing those students on the high school expectations, what strategies are gonna set them up for success.

[04:00:44] So again, that early intervention of students who are already identified as at risk and giving them those additional supports, that is one big one. The other thing we're looking at expanding in summer school is how we do our SOL bootcamp with students who passed the class but did not pass the SOL to expand opportunities for students to get through and get through their SOL in the summer.

[04:01:06] Previously, we had one week, whoever signed up for it, comes, we staff how we, this year we're doing a focus with teachers or with parents and making it closer to a level of requiring that if your student does not pass the SOL, you need to come during one of these opportunities to get them through the SOL that summer versus having it being an ongoing requirement that we now have to find another time to try to pull the student from instruction to prepare them to take this test that they didn't pass yet.

[04:01:37] - Thank you, I think those are all of my questions. - Thank you, Ms. Brescia. Ms. Miles. - So Ms. Brescia asked one of the questions I had about the GED, so I won't ask that. But the one thing I will say is I am excited about the new bell schedule that you decided on.

[04:01:57] And I wasn't as familiar with the Eagle Block, but I think what you have in place is great. And just making sure they're having either extension or mediation, going to another teacher, and just giving them the help they need. The one thing that I was also, I would say, pleasantly pleased with hearing is that you're doing an afternoon reset, I guess that's what you call it, with the academic support program because you're targeting those students if they're skipping, cutting.

[04:02:28] So my question though is to you, have you seen a decrease in the students missing class knowing now there's consequences for their actions? - So we have. From the point where, like I said, we noticed an uptick in class absenteeism during our second quarter.

[04:02:45] Once we identified it, we started putting these in, and now we're seeing the downtick. Right, and I should take that back with the consequence, because like you were saying, we don't want them to see it as a consequence, but it is a result. Well, and that's, we're doing a lot of education with our students about that, too.

[04:03:01] We're telling them, you don't need, the attendance is not just to meet a school requirement. The attendance is because that's what supports achievement. and achievement is needed to graduate. And

graduation and a diploma is needed to be a successful adult. So we're really always using that through line of conversation with the students so they understand that and we can get them there.

[04:03:20] A neat data point is of our first group that we looked at the data one week of all of our students who qualified for after school reset based on attendance habits. And then we were gonna remove the students from the list who were getting a C or higher in all classes. It removed six kids, that's it, six.

[04:03:38] So that really reinforced to us, we have the right mission identified there. We have to get you here to get the achievement going on. - 'Cause there's a correlation, definitely. So I think that's awesome. And leveraging the positive peer model and letting them see if you're coming to class, this is what we're giving these students, I think is great 'cause it's just positive reinforcement.

[04:04:00] And you smell that, oh, I want those wings too. Maybe that'll be motivation. - It's a little lot for a free wing, that's amazing, you can come to class. And let's see, I would also like the update about the evening school, and also like to visit, because having 74 students, I mean, that's quite an achievement.

[04:04:18] The one thing I had to ask, though, about that is how do you identify these students? Is it self-identification where they're like, I work this particular job, so I want to finish, but can I? There's a variety of staff members that would be on the identification team, so we're going to rely on our counselors, our administrators, to really identify students.

[04:04:36] Normally that's gonna be a decision after multiple student support team meetings. So we're gonna try all the opportunities at day school first. And once we start seeing that we're getting one of two things, we're either significantly off track to graduate on time and we just need a different model to recover in a more speedy manner, or a student has a life event.

[04:04:56] So evening school I think actually started targeting with some of our students who were young parents that needed to balance career, childcare, and provide another opportunity. But what we also found is for our larger group that's in it now, they're just students who needed a different instructional model, who maybe got so far behind their freshman year, but then pulled it together, but now they're looking at five years to get there, and they needed a chance to, again, recover in a quicker pace to get them back to that on-time graduation and get to their future on time.

[04:05:29] - Do you think it's also a word of mouth thing where the students are kind of saying, hey, you know, this is a path that you could take, maybe you should talk to them about that. - I think we see the success of students there. We do have very high pass rates on our kids who take their SOLs coming out of there because of the targeted supports we're able to give them in small group instruction for them.

[04:05:45] And we also, again, with that, see a high pass rate on the classes that they're taking while they're in there too. - That's great. And I really do like what you're planning on doing with the freshman jumpstart, starting them early, and also requiring them to work on their, passing their SOL in the summertime.

[04:06:01] So you're not at grad, you know, two weeks before graduation and you can't graduate 'cause that happened and we know this. This is something that has happened in the past I know. So thank you so much. - Thank you, Ms. Miles. - Yes, Ms. Brescia.

[04:06:18] - What time is karaoke on Thursday? - It's during Nest. Nest starts at 11:12. So we're actually pulling the kids down a little early because we want the kids there prior to transition. So when the kids are

transitioning, they see the fun happening. Very strategic, again, structured plan.

[04:06:33] So if you get there around 10:45, you can get first dibs on the karaoke machine. - Is it every Thursday, no? - No, no, no, this is, we have one a quarter. So our first one was the attendance all-stars. It was perfect. This is actually targeting students who've shown improvement in attendance habits from first quarter to second quarter.

[04:06:52] And then we're doing an alternative one for our kids who are still maintaining that perfection. So we just keep expanding. And again, we're trying to bring in more students who are showing they may not have been there to start, but they got there, right? We're showing the improvement. We're moving in the right direction. Oh, I'm not sure if I can make 11, 12 a.m. this Thursday, but next quarter.

[04:07:10] We'll have another one. Okay, thank you. I have so many notes here, but I love, you know, the whole idea of catching kids being good, unpaced efforts, so many interventions, instructional recovery, small group instruction.

[04:07:28] All of it's just great. The class swap, I call that class swap. I think it's called instructional rounds. We fly out of Nest. Oh, the class swap is the viewing. Nest, when they go to their other thing, they're flying. the paired passages sound really cool you know bringing back calculators skip cut tardy parent updates a collaboration all of it sounds really great and we thank you and your staff for all that you're doing on a consistent basis you know to help our kids get where they need to be so thank you so much thank

[04:07:59] you don't worry there's not another presentation I just wanted to take the opportunity a lot of things came up about growth tonight just to remind you have a couple of things one that growth is measured at the elementary intermediate and middle school level at the individual student basis and so it is possible to show significant growth in multiple years because it's a whole new cohort of students and the way the state is measuring growth for this next year is completely different than the way they did it before so it's kind of a

[04:08:36] reset and there's actually it seems like more ways for more for us to get credit for more students showing growth so growth especially you'd mentioned it with weems so it is possible weems is not capped that they won't possibly be able to do as well again because it's a whole new group of students and at the elementary level it was really only fourth graders because you need two points in time and so and the stage looking at it very differently so there may be more ways to capture the growth that students are making that's it that's my update thank you for that clarification and now the man who brought

[04:09:11] us a cycle that works and all of our Jenny Dean updates that people don't get the joy of hearing but you're here and we're here so thank you not sure if I said hey good morning or good evening right good evening again chair Spall vice chair Jones members of the board and dr. Newman I don't have many I'm getting very close to not having to give updates as we as we get closer to the opening of the new Jenny Dean elementary school so I'm happy to give an update on

[04:09:46] on the construction of the new Jenny Dean so as you know and no surprise that January was a challenging month for us with the snow and the sustained cold temperatures they posed some particular challenges to our construction particularly the exterior work that was happening during this time frame but I do want to let you know the team adjusted the sequencing of some of the things that were happening over there implemented a recovery plan and as a

[04:10:17] a result the project remains on time and on budget yeah we we still will have substantial completion of the new jenny dean sites in june and so we're excited about that we are marching ever so quickly towards the opening so despite the weather challenges progress across the site has remained steady in terms of some of the site work the subgrade water line installation including the The hydrant supply lines is complete.

[04:10:50] The contractor has been preparing to mobilize for site fill operations, so some of the grading that's going to start happening over at the site if it ever dries out a little bit. It's a little bit of a muddy mess right now. There's been, again, close coordination with the city and our existing administration at Ginnydean and our contractors, highly collaborative and very smooth to get this project completed.

[04:11:17] Inside the building, there are significant milestones that have been achieved. The steel and masonry work are complete in the kindergarten, the administration, and the kitchen areas. And you're going to see some pictures of that tonight. The window insulation and the final brick facade work are ongoing.

[04:11:32] And the manpower is concentrated on remaining on the critical path areas, including the gymnasium and the second floor instructional wings. The classroom build-out continues with inspections that are scheduled to begin this month. The administrative suite has received initial coats of paint.

[04:11:50] Dr. Newman and I were over there, and they had a drywall up, and you can see some of the construction paint that's happening. And the kitchen equipment has been installed and is nearing completion, including the walk-in freezer, the refrigerator, and the associated mechanical systems for the kitchen for some of the cooking that we will do on a daily basis there.

[04:12:10] Contractors have begun coordination meetings to align on the sequence of work and prepare for the interior finishes. In terms of the workforce levels, that has remained strong and consistent. We've been averaging about 120 to 130 workers on site each day.

[04:12:26] Planning is also underway with Skanska, RRMM, and a design team, along with our MCPS team, to ensure a smooth transition for staff and students this summer. There was a meeting last week to talk with the furniture vendors and a moving company to relocate the things from old Dean into new Dean.

[04:12:45] So all of this work is happening and will begin in the beginning of June after substantial completion of the new site. So in short, just to summarize, while January weather required some careful management and schedule adjustments, the project has been, the team has responded proactively.

[04:13:07] And again, we are on schedule and on budget. So with that, I just want to share a few pictures with you. So this is inside of a few of the classrooms that they're starting to enclose. You can see here the roof has not been completed in this area yet.

[04:13:27] This is inside. You can see the framing that's happening. That will have drywall, insulation drywall on there. When Dr. Newman was over there in December, they were installing, in a very similar area to this, they were installing insulation.

[04:13:42] So you know that you're getting really moving quickly when you see some of those things happening. this is the front office so this is the administrative office you can see the windows there and you can see the paint that's on the walls and the finished paint there this is the kitchen area and so you'll

see the walk-in freezers are installed there which is exciting looks like a kitchen you can see the outside brick facade that's happening there you can see that's the final with the final look of the building would be in terms of the brick color

[04:14:16] And just a picture of the overall building from the back side. And that is the end of my report. I'd be happy to answer any questions. Any questions? Yes. It wouldn't be fair to everybody else who had to answer this question if I didn't also ask it to you.

[04:14:37] How does this relate to our strategic plan and support our student academic success? Well, I think it connects to all of it, particularly when you think about inclusive and collaborative learning environment. The thought that has gone into the instructional spaces in this building.

[04:14:54] When we talk about, when I gave a presentation regarding how it connects to the curriculum, the water cistern that will be there, the water features, the greenhouse that's going to be there. When you think about student academic progress and you think about the learning environment that students need to be able to be successful, supporting our staff and quality of work in our partnership with the city and partnership with our community that are helping us to build this project.

[04:15:22] So I think it incorporates all of them. Thank you. You pass the test. anyone else thank you mr. capella thank you so much now it's time for board member comments and we had asked miss breeden and mr. emoon if they'd like to submit their comments they may because we haven't heard from them the last two meetings because they've gone kind of late so up with miss Stevens first since we're all tired and it's 10:15 I'm not gonna make any comments tonight next would be miss miles I'm gonna keep them pretty short I wanted to say thank you

[04:16:00] so much to the Osborne High School choir I know it wasn't all the choir but all the ones that went to district choir and also those who represented are gonna be representing Osborne in all state beautiful voices beautiful songs so that was very much a surprise and thank you to our baskets I was definitely not expecting that so thank you for that this is very kind of you and I want to thank all the principals that gave presentations tonight who stayed I know have families and you stayed to really get in-depth with what you're doing to make your schools the best they can be and how you're working with your staff

[04:16:39] to do that so I really appreciate that I wanted to make sure to give you guys thanks on that I really I want to just talk about the event that we had this past week I really enjoyed going to it thank you to all those who put it together seeing the videos about their experiences with Jenny Dean whether it middle school elementary school before it was integrated it was just it kind of brought tears I was trying not to cry but brought tears in my eyes just hearing about their experiences that I don't have so just hearing firsthand experience is definitely so much better than reading in a book so thank you to

[04:17:17] all those who participated in that and I'm I'm very thankful for all the things that we've learned during Black History Month from Dr. Jones to some things that found on the internet that I posted so I hope you enjoyed celebrating black history month and actually Mayfield has a great celebration on Friday happening in the morning from 7:45 to 8:30 so I know I watched it last year and it was really good so I encourage anyone who's looking to see some of the talent that we have here in at Mayfield to come on out to it it's 7:45 for the first show

[04:17:55] and I think they're going to be doing another one I think at 8:30 but that's all I have thank you thank you miss miles miss Brescia yes thank you I do have to make a report to the board because the governor's school joint board met on Thursday February 19th so I'm going to update all of you on what happened there miss Seabrook is also one of the appointed liaison so she might have something to add and chair Spall was a silent observer so maybe she'll have something to add but this is my synopsis for you this February 19th two meetings a year on the joint board we get to hear from presentations from our gov school students and this was one of those meetings and the kids do

[04:18:34] truly incredible things at Innovation Park watch out for them there's a Nobel Prize winner in there they're going to change the world one day so it's always really great to be able to see and it makes me proud every day to be able to extend this opportunity to our students as part of our strategic plan supporting student academic success particularly inclusive but particularly the pillar of inclusive and collaborative learning environments.

[04:18:58] The students have some exciting opportunities coming up. They will be visiting the Dahlgren Naval Weapons Lab, but also more locally Aurora Flight Sciences here in Manassas to see some of those science careers in action. So it's good to see. The joint board also got a report on efforts to increase the governor's school pipeline by visiting elementary schools, building relationships with counselors.

[04:19:20] We did receive a report on Manassas City's applications for the upcoming class of 2028. We had 13 applications for our 20 slots, so I was happy to hear that there were efforts underway to improve that pipeline because I would love to see a full suite of demand for those slots 'cause it really is an excellent opportunity for the kids who are able to do it.

[04:19:44] And one announcement we heard was that they are going to be swapping electives instead of offering bioengineering as their online-only elective. They are instead going to offer introduction to forensics, which sounds like an exciting opportunity. So other than that, I would like to congratulate our choir students who are so well decorated.

[04:20:03] I went up to them before the meeting and I was like, so what is it this time? I feel like you guys are here a lot. It's a really excellent program, good to see. I want to extend my appreciation to our clerk and to our deputy clerk who is in bed on this occasion of Clerk Appreciation Month.

[04:20:21] So thank you for everything you do. So many things that you do. You hold us all together, and I really don't know where I or my keys would be without you. And in honor of School Board Appreciation Month, I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues. It really is an honor to serve with each of you.

[04:20:38] This has been an extremely challenging but rewarding experience, and it wouldn't have been the same without each of you. So thank you, everyone, for all the work you do. Thank you, Ms. Brescia. On to Ms. Seabourge. No comments this evening, Mrs. Spall.

[04:20:54] Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Seaberg. Ms. Brown. Yes, good evening. I would like to echo the thank yous that board members already shared, but I would like to add a huge thank you to our student representatives for your service.

[04:21:11] You are the future leaders of the city, and you are leading already by example. And thank you to Ms. Glomb and the whole choral team for La Serenata. It was very nice, very unexpected, and thank you for the joy baskets.

[04:21:30] I'm beyond moved by this unexpected kindness, so thank you so much for that. I want to make two announcements. Save the date for March 14th. We're going to have the annual Pancake Supper. The Manassas City Public Schools Education Foundation will be sponsoring that.

[04:21:49] It will be from 4 to 6, and this time will be at Osborne High School. so make sure you make a note of the location and the date I also have 20 tickets to sell board members so I will be passing them out and then the 2026 scholarship season has begun and applications are being accepted now until March 19 so I am encouraging all Osborne high school seniors to apply right away You can go to mcps@foundation.org/scholarshipoffers, and you may be surprised to see

[04:22:29] that there are two new scholarships there for \$1,000 called the Brown Scholars Community Excellence Scholarship. So go ahead and apply. There's tons of opportunities to get some money as you transition to your next leg of the journey.

[04:22:46] Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Brown. Dr. Jones. - I first want to congratulate our core students You did an outstanding job tonight. I want to thank my fellow colleagues on the Monassie City School Board for your continued commitment to our students and community.

[04:23:03] The work takes time, but each of you share the same goal, to increase student achievement and ensure our students are prepared for life after graduation. Also, I want to thank our outstanding school board clerk for her dedication and organization and her assistant who's always ready to step in whenever needed.

[04:23:20] In addition, our student representatives continue to actively participate in meetings and consistently bring an important student perspective to our discussions. I'll skip down a little bit. Also, I heard nothing but great comments from those who attended the honoring Jenny Dean program, so I thank the school board for doing that program.

[04:23:43] And the official celebration of Black History Month ends on February 28th. It's lessons to be honored 365 days a year. And I just had a few quotes from Jesse Jackson, who recently died, who I think we should share these with our students, because he helped popularize many powerful affirmations, one being, I am somebody, which he turned into a rallying cry at the mass meetings in the 60s.

[04:24:09] And in 1972, he spoke in on Sesame Street. But many of you remember, I am somebody. I may be poor, but I am somebody. I may be young, but I am somebody. I may be on welfare, but I am somebody. So those are words we can give to our students.

[04:24:26] He's also encouraged young people to carry a diploma in one hand and a voter registration card in the other. So we need to remind our seniors that as they graduate, that that gives them the opportunity to have civic responsibility. He often said, tears and sweat are both salty.

[04:24:44] They bring different results. Tears bring sympathy, but sweat brings change. last but not least he urged students in Cambridge to dream boldly remembering that when young people move the world moves so this semester still calls out to us keeping that we need to keep teach our youth to keep striving and keep believing and what and they will achieve so thank you thank you Dr. Jones I think I'll close just by saying I think the breadth and scope of the presentations tonight speaks for itself so thank you all for all that you do I guess I just

[04:25:22] just can't not say how great it was to be honored in the way that we were it really was nice so thank you everyone is there a motion to adjourn chair I move that the school board meeting adjourn second okay I have a motion by Stevens seconded by Brescia I'm writing on it that the school board of the city of Manassas adjourn is there any discussion all in favor any opposed the motion passes. Thank you, everyone. We made it before 10:30. That was okay, I guess.



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