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## Manassas City School Board Meeting - April 14, 2026

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[00:00:08] Nice full house and we've got lots to celebrate. I'd like to ask everyone to stand for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:00:50] Madam Clerk, could you please call the roll? Yes, ma'am. Chair Spall? Present. Vice Chair Dr. Jones? Here. Mrs. Sieber? Here. Mrs. Stevens? Here.

[00:01:06] Mrs. Brescia? Present. Ms. Brown? Ms. Miles? Present. Ms. Breeden? Present. Mr. Emun? Here. Thank you. Madam Chair, we have a quorum. Thank you very much. Dr. Newman are there any additions or deletions to our agenda tonight? No ma'am. Okay. Could I get a motion to approve the public meeting agenda?

[00:01:31] Chair I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented. Second. I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All those in favor say aye. Anyone opposed? The motion carries 7-0.

[00:01:52] We'll now hear superintendent's announcements and spotlights. Ms. Radford you have the floor. Thank you Chair Spall. Good evening to all other members of the board and good evening to everyone that has joined us tonight. I'm very privileged to stand before you to present some wonderful spotlights for the evening. So those who will be joining us down front you can come right on. We like to kick things off

[00:02:28] tonight with the RISE award. You can see our beautiful table here with our awardees. The RISE award honors classified school employees who play an a central role in supporting student success and keeping our schools running smoothly.

[00:02:44] From paraprofessionals and bus drivers to custodians, administrative professionals, and technical staff, these individuals make a difference every single day. Tonight, we proudly recognize the following RISE Award honorees.

[00:03:01] We'll begin with Weems Elementary School, Wendy King. Ms. King is recognized for her dedication and versatility as a library media assistant, excuse me, Supporting everything from instruction to school-wide events, she consistently steps in wherever needed, ensuring the library remains a vibrant and welcoming space for students and staff.

[00:03:34] Her positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond make her a valued member of the Weems community. Ms. King's commitment creates an environment where students are excited to learn and explore. Congratulations.

[00:03:50] Also from Weems Elementary School, Hira Panth. Ms. Panth is honored for her initiative and commitment to supporting student learning as an instructional assistant.

[00:04:07] She takes the time to study curriculum, collaborate with teachers and provide meaningful support to students in every setting. Her flexibility and eagerness to help inspire both colleagues and students alike is commendable. Ms. Pant's dedication strengthens the instructional environment and contributes to student success.

[00:04:28] Congratulations to you. Now from Baldwin Elementary School, Michelle McKenzie. Miss McKenzie is recognized for her leadership and attention to detail in supporting attendance, safety, and daily operations.

[00:04:55] She works diligently to ensure staff are prepared, students are accounted for, and families are supported with care and professionalism. Her calm and steady presence helps maintain a safe and organized school environment. Miss McKenzie's commitment ensures Baldwin continues to run smoothly each day.

[00:05:14] Congratulations. I'm now from Hayden Elementary School, Maria Martinez-Cortez.

[00:05:32] Ms. Martinez-Cortez is celebrated for her outstanding work in maintaining a clean, safe and welcoming school environment. She leads with a positive attitude, responds quickly to school needs, and supports both staff and students behind the scenes.

[00:05:48] Her attention to detail ensures that spaces are always prepared for learning and community events. Ms. Martinez-Cortez's dedication helps Hayden shine each and every day. Thank you so much.

[00:06:09] From Jenny Dean Elementary School, Pearl Ellis. Ms. Ellis is honored for her leadership and reliability as head custodian at Jenny Dean Elementary School.

[00:06:26] She consistently ensures the school is prepared for daily operations and special events while serving as a role model for her team. Her positive spirit and strong connections with students make her a beloved presence throughout the building.

[00:06:41] Ms. Ellis' dedication helps create a welcoming and supportive school environment. Congratulations, Ms. Ellis. Also from Jenny Dean Elementary School, Carla Ratana.

[00:07:05] Ms. Ratana is recognized for her commitment to supporting students and fostering an inclusive learning environment. She demonstrates professionalism, positivity, and a strong work ethic in her role as a paraprofessional. Her ability to build connections with students and colleagues enhances the overall school community.

[00:07:24] Ms. Ratana's dedication helps ensure all students feel supported and valued, congratulations. Also from Jenny Dean Elementary School, Rosanna Katala.

[00:07:45] Ms. Katala is celebrated for her longstanding commitment to early childhood education and her impact on students and families in the pre-K world. She creates meaningful relationships that foster trust and support for young learners.

[00:08:01] Her enthusiasm and dedication are evident in the way she engages students every day. Ms. Katala's work helps lay a strong foundation for student success. Congratulations. Now from Osborne High School, Juana Batras.

[00:08:25] I think she couldn't be here tonight, but she's the head. Oh, is she? I'm sorry. Well, let's welcome her. Ms. Batras is honored for her leadership and commitment as head custodian at Osborne High School.

[00:08:42] She consistently supports staff and students while ensuring the building remains clean, safe, and ready for learning. Her dedication and teamwork exemplify the importance of her role in the school community. Ms. Batchelor's efforts contribute to a positive and productive environment for everyone.

[00:09:00] Congratulations. From Osborne High School, Paula Erickson. Ms. Erickson is recognized for her exceptional organization, initiative, and care in supporting the school counseling office.

[00:09:22] She anticipates the needs of students and staff, ensuring that everyone who enters feels welcomed and supported. Her strong relationships and willingness to help strengthen the entire school community is commendable. Ms. Erickson's work plays a vital role in student success and well-being.

[00:09:41] Congratulations. From Round Elementary School, Channa Richett. Ms. Richett is honored for her dedication and problem-solving skills as a school administrative associate.

[00:10:02] She consistently goes above and beyond to support students, staff, and families with professionalism and care. Her ability to remain calm and helpful in all situations makes her a trusted resource in the school. Ms. Richards' commitment helps ensure the school runs efficiently each and every day. Congratulations.

[00:10:22] Also from Round Elementary School, Lily Orquera. Ms. Orquera is recognized for her exceptional work in supporting communication between families and staff.

[00:10:42] She ensures that families fully understand important information and feel connected to the school community her dedication as a translator and interpreter is to Inclusivity and advocacy and it strengthens relationships and support student success Mr. Kara's efforts to help create a welcoming and supportive environment for all families is Something that their her school speaks highly of congratulations from round elementary school Sandra Lacey

[00:11:18] Ms. Lacey is celebrated for her leadership and commitment to maintaining a clean and safe school environment. She sets high expectations for her team and leads by example through her strong work ethic.

[00:11:36] Her responsiveness and positive attitude ensure that the school is always prepared for learning. Ms. Lacey's dedication supports a positive and productive school culture. Congratulations.

[00:11:52] From the Transportation Department, Krista Stanley. Ms. Stanley is honored for her leadership and dedication within the Transportation Department.

[00:12:08] She ensures that students are transported safely while supporting drivers and communicating effectively with families and staff. Her positivity and commitment to service are evident in all that she does. Ms. Stanley's efforts help ensure a smooth and safe transportation experience for students.

[00:12:26] Congratulations Ms. Stanley. Also from the Transportation Department, Susan Lester. Lester is recognized for her dedication as a bus driver and trainer, supporting both students and fellow drivers. She consistently goes above and beyond to ensure students arrive safely and on time. Her mentorship and willingness to assist others strengthen the entire transportation team. Ms. Lester's

[00:13:01] commitment makes her an invaluable asset to MCPS and the Transportation Department. Congratulations. We have another employee from the Transportation Department, Ruthie Tyre. I think she could not be here tonight, but she was being celebrated for her attention to detail and commitment to maintaining safe and clean transportation for our students. So congratulations in her

[00:13:32] absence. Next from Mets Middle School, Anna Seeger. Ms. Seeger is honored for her exceptional performance and dedication as an instructional assistant. She works collaboratively with staff and families to ensure every student's needs are met.

[00:13:55] Her professionalism and commitment to student support set a high standard for others. Ms. Seeger's work makes a meaningful impact on student growth and success. Congratulations to you. Also from METS Middle School, Brittany Sherrick. Ms.

[00:14:20] Sherrick is recognized for her leadership and commitment to supporting students, families, and staff. She builds strong relationships and goes above and beyond to ensure students receive the support they need. Her dedication to communication and collaboration strengthens the school community. Ms. Sherrick's efforts help create a positive and inclusive learning environment. Congratulations to you. I know it's a long line, isn't it? This

[00:14:50] is great. Also from Mets Middle School, Roy Snyder. Mr. Snyder is honored for his expertise and dedication as a technology specialist. He ensures that systems run efficiently and support staff across the division when needed. His willingness to share knowledge and assist others strengthens teamwork and reliability. Mr. Snyder's work ensures uninterrupted learning for students

[00:15:23] and staff. Congratulations Mr. Snyder. From Mets Middle School, Vicki Nixon. Ms. Nixon is celebrated for her commitment and professionalism as an instructional assistant. She consistently takes initiative to support students staff and school-wide efforts. Her calm presence and collaborative approach make her a trusted member of the school community.

[00:15:55] Ms. Nixon's dedication helps create a supportive environment where students can thrive. Congratulations. From Mets Middle School Yolanda Reyes Andrade. Ms.

[00:16:15] Reyes Andrade is recognized for her dedication to maintaining a safe and supportive school environment. She consistently takes the initiative to assist others and ensure the needs of students are met. Her attentiveness and willingness to help make her an essential part of the school community. Ms. Reyes-Andrade's efforts contribute to a positive and caring environment. Congratulations. And last but not least, from the central office, Ruth

[00:16:49] Dixon. Ms. Dixon is honored for her expertise and commitment as a senior technology specialist. She consistently goes above and beyond to ensure systems are not only functional but optimized for success I am a witness her collaborative approach support staff across the division and enhances overall efficiency miss Dixon's work plays a critical role in supporting teaching learning and communication throughout MCPS congratulations miss

[00:17:25] Dixon Wow so congratulations to all our rise honorees tonight's recognition really does reflect the many individuals across our division who go above and beyond in service to our students, staff, and families.

[00:17:43] And from this outstanding group, we are proud to announce the division's 2026 Recognizing Inspiring School Employee Award winner. It is Ms. Katala from Dean Elementary.

[00:18:13] Wonderful, congratulations to Ms. Katala. We will have a, all our honorees will be recognized at the MCPS evening of excellence on April 23rd so there will be some additional hardware for you to receive that night but we hope that you all really understand just how important you are even if you work in the background to how our school system runs we could not do what we do without you teachers couldn't teach bus drive all of you you just do such a wonderful job in helping us to do what we do here in Manassas City so thank you all very much and

[00:18:48] And congratulations, Ms. Catala. We need to somehow get a group photo, and I think we're just gonna kinda get over here

[00:19:00] and stack and repeat, so let's .

[00:20:08] I'll move out of the way. Yes, everybody's proud of you. I know, good, okay.

[00:20:26] Congratulations, everybody,

[00:20:28] and if I can get Ms. Catala to stay.

[00:22:07] Thank you all for your patience.

[00:22:25] Again, congratulations to all of our RISE Award honorees, and especially to Ms. Catala. So as you know, this is Autism Acceptance Month, and so we have Ms. Erica Loesch is here with me tonight.

[00:22:42] She's going to share some information with you. She is our Special Education and Related Services Director, and so I'm going to bring her up at this time.

[00:23:06] Good evening, Chair Spall, Vice Chair Jones, members of the board, Dr. Newman. Thank you for the opportunity to recognize Autism Acceptance Month.

[00:23:26] So autism is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects how a person communicates, interacts with others, learns, and experiences the world. It is called The Spectrum because it includes a wide range of strengths, abilities, and challenges that vary from person to person. And just like everyone

else, every autistic person is different. This heartwarming story, *Uniquely Wired*, a story about autism and its gifts by Julia Cook, is told from the perspective of Zach, a young autistic boy.

[00:23:59] He explains how he experiences an often overwhelming world of bright lights, loud sounds, crowds, and physical touch. Zach helps readers understand his differences while teaching lessons about empathy, patience, fairness, curiosity, and independence.

[00:24:21] And so in your bags, there is a copy of this text if you want to follow along. But I'm just going to read a really short excerpt of this story. I am Zach. I have autism. Some people say I have a disability. I don't see it that way at all.

[00:24:44] I'm uniquely wired. I don't see the world the way most people do. I have an incredible brain and I have lots of gifts to share. My memory is amazing. When it comes to things I'm interested in, I used to be into trains. I mean, really into trains. I had train brain. I can tell you everything and anything about trains. A few years ago, I grew out of trains. Now I'm into watches.

[00:25:18] I mean, really into watches. I currently own 379 of them. I can remember everything I've ever learned about watches. Watches fascinate me. I love to see the hands move. I always know what time it is. I love to see the gears turn. I love to see the numbers. I love to hear my watches tick.

[00:25:44] I can be with my watches for hours and lose all track of time. Hey, that's funny. When it comes to my watches, I hold them, listen to them, smell them, and if I could, I would eat them. When I go to bed at night, my watches go to bed with me.

[00:26:02] Sometimes I don't sleep. Neither do they. If you ever want to teach me something, try doing it from a watch's point of view. Then I just might understand. Zach, if a watch falls to the ground, it might break.

[00:26:17] Then it won't be able to move because its insides will be broken. If you don't wear your seatbelt in the car and we get in an accident, your insides might get broken. Then you won't be able to move. I never get tired of talking about my watches.

[00:26:34] Ask me anything. It's not fair. How come Zach can take his watches to bed with him, but I can't take my toys to bed with me? Because Zach's watches help him feel comfortable enough to fall asleep and your toys might keep you awake.

[00:26:50] Because of Zach, I have learned that fair doesn't always mean equal, and that's okay. Thank you, Zach, for sharing your gifts with me. Throughout the book, the character Zach teaches us, everyone experiences the world differently.

[00:27:11] Sounds, lights, crowds, and touch can feel much stronger for some people with autism. Coping behaviors have meaning. Actions such as flapping, spinning, or avoiding touch can be a person's way of helping themselves feel calm and safe.

[00:27:27] autism looks different in every person. There is no single way to be autistic. Each person is unique. Kindness and patience matter. Understanding comes from slowing down, being patient, and showing empathy. Fairness means giving people what they need. Treating everyone fairly doesn't always mean treating everyone the same. And listening helps us understand. Learning from autistic voices helps others better understand and accept differences. Autism has become the number one disability

[00:28:06] category served in Manassas City Public Schools. We have about 200 students who are receiving services for autism, and that does not include the total number of autistic individuals within our division. Autism acceptance means understanding and respecting people with autism for who they are, not just wanting to know that autism exists. That's awareness. We want to be kind, patient, and include everyone, even if they move, think, or communicate differently. Acceptance means saying

[00:28:40] you belong here just the way you are. So to help you celebrate Autism Acceptance Month, you've each received a Be Kind to Everyone shirt. If you aren't familiar with Jordan's summer shirt program project, what started as a fun summer project to help a family's daughter, Jordan, who has autism developed job skills has turned into a fun family adventure aiming at creating a positive more inclusive world that provides opportunities for everyone the shirt you're receiving today represents autism acceptance valuing and including people for who they are it reminds us that

[00:29:18] kindness patience and understanding help create schools where students belong just as they are thank you thank you miss loesch um at this time as i go back to take my seat i'm going to turn this over to miss stevens and she's going to close us out for our spotlight thank you miss radford um this month and every year we have celebrated autism acceptance month with an autism acceptance

[00:29:56] month proclamation the manassas city public schools autism acceptance month proclamation autism acceptance month reflects a shift away from autism awareness with an understanding that acceptance requires the promotion of inclusion of and collaboration with autistic individuals in Manassas City Public Schools whereas autistic individuals are community members neighbors students co-workers friends and family whereas many members of the autistic community prefer to prefer identity first language autistic person over person first language person with

[00:30:33] autism. Whereas, autistic individuals are neither high nor low functioning, but have differing ways of processing and interacting with their environment and the people in it. Whereas, many autistic individuals do not see autism as an illness to be cured, but as a neurotype to be appreciated and accepted. Whereas, just like all people, there are no two autistic people who are exactly alike in their strengths needs and preferences whereas autistic voices must be included in any decisions and discussions related to their lives and experiences whereas

[00:31:09] the infinity symbol best represents and celebrates the talents skills and achievements by autistic people that make MCPS a stronger more vibrant school division now therefore be it resolved that the school board of the city of Manassas, recognizes April 2026 as Autism Acceptance Month in Manassas City Public Schools, celebrates the achievements of our autistic students, and honors the efforts of their families to ensure autistic voices are heard and respected this month and every month throughout the year. Thank you, Ms. Stevens.

[00:31:47] It was a very good presentation and it gives us a lot to think about and remember as we're traveling through our days, but no two people are alike and that's the point we should take away. At this point, I think it's time to move to board committee reports. Do we have something from Ms. Seberg? The Educational Support and Finance Committee met on April 7th to consider a facility-related matter, the future of the old or current Jenny Dean Elementary School, in advance

[00:32:26] of a forthcoming school board decision. We discussed the city's historical report and the city's special use permit for new dean as it pertains to demolition and or possible building use for old dean. The committee recommends a community forum to be held at Jenny Dean Elementary School. The forum is

intended to both inform the public of key considerations identified by the city and the schools and to provide the city and schools with valuable input on the community's priorities and perspectives related to the old Dean property. Community members and other interested stakeholders

[00:33:04] are encouraged to attend and provide input regarding future use or disposition of the building and site owned by the school board of the city of Manassas. The date for the community forum will be June 8th with a start time of 6 p.m. Individuals wishing to present are asked to submit materials to the clerk by June 1, 2026. Submission of materials is encouraged but not required for participation and a flyer will be coming out soon thank you miss Seberg and for all of those that didn't catch that that quickly it's June 8th

[00:33:43] 6:00 p.m. those individuals means me thank you at this time we welcome members of the public who wish to speak about services policies and affairs of the monasticity public schools because we have an agenda to complete we ask that comments be limited to three minutes we appreciate the time you've taken to be here and we treat public comments as a public hearing and do not engage in conversation with speakers the lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern please be

[00:34:22] respectful when presenting your comments we have one person signed up right now which is miss Anna Demeria good evening dr. Newman school board members the VEA and the MEA have shared a petition with the community asking the school board to reconsider its decision to schedule spring break for the week after Easter in the 26-27 school year. This misalignment creates real and immediate challenges for staff, forcing many to choose between their professional

[00:34:57] responsibilities and their families and children. The result will be predictable: increased staff absences, added strain to an already limited substitute pool, and the reassignment of staff away from the students who rely on them the most. The Academic Committee has already reviewed this concern and recommended maintaining the current calendar, citing a desire to honor the will of parents, staff, and community members who completed the calendar survey in 2024. However, it is important to acknowledge that those participants were not given complete or transparent information.

[00:35:33] Both calendar options had spring break the same week, meaning there is no meaningful choice on the issue. It was also not made clear that the suggested spring break was scheduled for after Easter. Staff also have not been clearly informed that the division is moving toward a fixed spring break, no longer tied to Easter, despite the MEA having been told that this was the reason for the change. Staff have raised these concerns directly to this board and their responses have been insufficient. One board member suggested that employees move their children to MCPS

[00:36:08] or that staff may have to take leave without pay. Uprooting children and creating financial burdens for staff are not appropriate solutions, especially when this is a problem that was created by the division. The topic is scheduled for discussion during Thursday's work session.

[00:36:25] We urge the board to take a closer look and consider a solution that reflects both transparency and respect for all staff. This is not simply about a calendar. It is about whether staff feel heard, valued and supported. Right now, many do not.

[00:36:40] Contracts will be coming out soon. Neighboring districts offer more money, a say in contracts and breaks that align. That might sound very appealing to many staff members. Thank you.

[00:36:56] - Thank you, Ms. Demeria. The next item is the consent agenda. These items are considered routine and may be approved by a single motion unless a board member requests an item to be removed for separate discussion.

[00:37:12] - Chair, I move that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the consent agenda as presented. - Thank you. - I have a motion made by Ms. Brescia, seconded by Dr. Jones, that the School Board of the City of Manassas approve the consent agenda. Is there any discussion?

[00:37:29] All in favor? Any opposed? I have a 7-0 vote. We will now move to the discussion agenda. The first item is student achievement. We will hear from Ms. Laura Emden, Pre-K 6 Literacy Coordinator, and Ms. Ami Durand, 7-12 literacy coordinator, who will provide a K-12 literacy update.

[00:37:52] Thank you for being here, ladies. - Good evening, Chair Spall, Vice Chair Jones, Dr. Newman, and other esteemed members of the board. My name is Laura Emden, and I'm the pre-K-6 literacy coordinator. - And I'm Amy Durand, the 7-12 literacy and languages coordinator.

[00:38:19] - As we wrap up year two of implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act, we wanted to update the school board on the implementation of the division literacy plan and the growth we have seen due to the literacy programs in our schools. Our overarching goal to have 80% of students in K-2 meet the literacy benchmarks and 80% of students in grades three through 12 past the reading SOLs are supported through the work that we will share on our focus on literacy in the learning environment and our coherent system of professional development mapped out by our division literacy plan.

[00:38:49] - Our K-12 literacy vision as taken from the VDOAE and displayed here makes it clear that our work propelled by legislation, ensures that literacy instruction isn't left to chance. It's aligned, research-based, and intentional across every grade level and every classroom.

[00:39:08] At the end of the day, this is about outcomes, making sure our students can read, write, think critically, and communicate effectively in whatever path they choose.

[00:39:24] - In the fall of the 2024-2025 school year, we kicked off the implementation of a one-year state-approved literacy plan with new ELA standards of learning in K-12, required high quality instructional materials, or HQIM, for core and intervention, and a new early literacy assessment, the Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System, VALS.

[00:39:45] In order to provide a coherent system of professional development for the MCPS staff, we partnered with the University of Virginia, Benchmark Education, and Lexia to ensure that teachers had access to research-based learning around the necessary shift in instruction. We work closely with the professional development team to align the Canvas course modules with training and model sessions from Benchmark and Lexia by planning application sessions to help teachers make direct connections between the UVA Canvas course learning and instructional routines within Benchmark and Lexia.

[00:40:16] We also utilize the professional learning provided from our HQIM purchases to bring in program-specific consultants to walk teachers through the initial trainings, provide live grade specific models in classrooms in all schools a session focused on ESOL supports and scaffolds and a self-contained sped session at Mayfield our end-of-the-year implementation survey showed that 88% of teachers felt prepared to use benchmark advance and 92% of teachers felt prepared to use the Lexia platform for instruction after our professional learning across the year this fall the division moved into refinement and alignment with the approval of a two-year literacy plan that ensured sustained and compliant

[00:40:56] implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act for grades K through 8 VALS assessments and student reading plans continued across K through 3 and were introduced in grades 4 through 8 allowing schools to monitor progress and adjust instruction based on student need additionally in anticipation of the state's requirement of approved HQ IM for grades 7 through 8 study sync was used as the primary resource for the METS ELA program this year we emphasized full implementation and consistency. To that end, the VLA Canvas course is active

[00:41:34] and ongoing. Additional benchmark training for grades K through 6 and StudySync support for grades 7 through 12 has been provided to increase instructional depth. We partnered with the professional learning team and benchmark education to provide school-based literacy liaison teams that will be able to differentiate and address school-specific HQIM professional learning starting next year after school training opportunities for ELA teachers at METS has provided continued support in research-based instructional

[00:42:08] practices and a new k-8 implementation survey will ensure fidelity across schools and classrooms this year in literacy we are pulling data from both sides of the reading rope to ensure that we have a comprehensive understanding of students strength and weaknesses across word recognition and language comprehension this diagram illustrates Scarborough's reading rope a visual representation of how good reading skills are built imagine reading is a strong rope made of many smaller strands twisted together each strand is necessary in creating strong readers there are two main sets of strands the word recognition skill set includes letters and letter sounds blending

[00:42:48] sounds together to create words segmenting sounds to break words down to their letters and recognizing words automatically the language comprehension set includes components that allow readers to make sense of language word meanings, grammar, background knowledge, text structure, metacognitive strategies, and reading skills. As readers grow, the strands twist together, making reading fluent, automatic, and meaningful. We are sharing the reading rope to help anchor our literacy work in the various strands and to show how we cannot focus on one without pulling on the others as well. We will be sharing how we use the data from VALS to understand the word recognition skills of MCPS

[00:43:24] students and data from the Lexia platforms to understand both language comprehension and word recognition skills. The combined data allows educators in MCPS to make instructional decisions at the school, grade, classroom, and student levels. Last year, VALS replaced PALS as the required literacy screening tool for Virginia. It provides data on the word recognition strands of the reading rope to identify foundational reading strengths and weaknesses and also looks at fluency and language skills. In K-3, VALS serves two purposes. It is primarily a screener for

[00:44:01] identifying students at risk for reading difficulties. Students who are identified as high risk receive reading plans and protected intervention time through the Early Intervention Reading Initiative. Its secondary purpose is to help identify areas to target, both for reading plans and class level instruction for on-grade level remediation. VAL screening data for K3 is showing consistent gains in the percentage of students in the low risk bands, as well as a decrease in the percentage of students in the high risk bands. As our core instruction in the word recognition strands of the reading rope are strengthened through professional learning and familiarity with benchmark advance and lexia our percentage of students falling in the low and moderate

[00:44:41] wristbands is increasing this also results in less students requiring reading plans this work cannot be done in isolation though and must happen simultaneously with the language comprehension strands of the reading rope vows four through eight is different than its k through three counterpart given only twice a year it's a diagnostic required by the VLA to drive instructional decisions in the fall and winter. It's for all students who score below 400 on the spring reading SOL or earn a passing score with the read-aloud accommodation. It's used to identify

[00:45:15] relative strengths and weaknesses in specific literacy skill areas including both code-based skills and language comprehension skills. It's designed to provide a better understanding of why students are experiencing difficulty with reading comprehension in grade-level text as indicated by their reading SOL performance. The data from VALS is used to develop specific reading plans for students by name and need according to three areas of reading: phonics, fluency, and/or comprehension. In MCPS, about 50% of students in grades

[00:45:53] four through eight currently have reading plans and receive targeted intervention in order to see whether our students are applying the phonics skills we need another data point lexia the lexia programs core five and power up utilize a blended learning model where students engage with online learning independently and small group instruction with a teacher both groups help students become stronger readers but they differentiate for grade levels and needs core five is for students in k5 and help students practice letter sounds phonics vocabulary and basic comprehension

[00:46:29] it also helps to fill in learning gaps for so students don't fall behind teachers play a vital role in the use of core five as they monitor the weekly data and provide small group instruction when students are flagged for lessons power up is for students in six through 12 and provides students with online practice that strengthens reading fluency and comprehension and improves vocabulary and academic language. PowerUp also relies on teachers to monitor the data and provide targeted small group lessons to ensure transfer of skills. Lexia data allows for both satellite and street view data when considering instructional decision making. Lexia is currently being used by

[00:47:07] all students in K-12. In K-8 it is used as the high quality instructional material or HQIM for intervention from the approved VLA intervention list for students working below grade level. for students working on grade level material it serves as our approved supplemental high quality instructional material used in conjunction with the valves data lexia allows us to track which students are working in grade level material at the appropriate rate so we can target intervention effectively core 5 is the program used for k5 and it covers all strands of the reading rope by

[00:47:43] allowing students to work at their level and provide teacher provides teachers with daily intervention lessons and skill builders to ensure transfers of skills in core 5 the program will not move forward unless all components have been completed in a unit. Students can choose the order they work in but must finish work in all strands of the reading rope before moving on to the next level. At the division level we can see how many students are working in grade level material and the probability of scoring in the low and moderate risk bands on vowels or passing the reading SOL. At the teacher level the data drills down to target students specific areas of need. Our core five data shows that more students in K1 are working on

[00:48:22] grade-level material than their 2-5 counterparts. This is to be expected as they are the first cohorts to receive evidence-based literacy instruction through the HQIM for their entire school

experience. Our older students are showing growth, but their gaps are harder to close.

**[00:48:40]** Students switch to power-up in sixth grade. Lexia shifts the program model into three main components, word study, grammar, and comprehension. This is different than Core 5 because it allows for targeted progress through the program based on identified needs. Teachers can choose to prioritize one of the three strands to target an area of need. In sixth grade, Lexia shows us that our students are progressing through all three strands and making gains towards grade-level material with the biggest gains being seen in the K-2 foundational skill zone for phonics and word study. In terms of next steps, year three of VLA implementation will include a focus on

**[00:49:18]** instructional routines and data analysis for the targeted support block with walk-through look-fors and collaborative discussions at the team and school level. Reading support teachers will support staff in how to intensify Lexia phonics lessons for students who require additional repetitions of content in order to master skills. Teams will also be discussing student progress to ensure that they are working through the grade level material in a timely manner. METS uses Lexia power-up as supplemental support for students working on grade level material in ELA blocks and for intervention for students with reading plans.

**[00:49:54]** All students are expected to spend 20 minutes in each ELA block working within Lexia. This time may be spent with students working independently on any one of the three strands online or working offline on Lexia lessons delivered by their teachers one-on-one or in small groups or showing their transfer of knowledge by completing Lexia skill builders.

**[00:50:18]** In addition to the supplemental time, students with reading plans are placed in Mustang Block. This elective is taught by trained support facilitators who work with students every other day. These Mustang Block teachers monitor the student reading plans using the Lexia data and provide the small group instruction for Lexia.

**[00:50:38]** At the middle school, we also use the Sunday System One, which is a state-approved, multi-sensory, sequential structured reading intervention program designed for beginning or struggling readers who need foundational support. Grounded in the science of reading, it provides explicit systematic instruction in phonics, decoding, spelling, and fluency. Our reading support teacher uses the Sonde system with 57 students diagnosed by vowels as having the greatest needs in

**[00:51:11]** word study or decoding this includes 37 eighth graders and 27th graders who she pulls in small groups of two to five students for 30 minutes every other day additionally mustang block teachers who were also trained on sunday are expected to provide one 30-minute sunday lesson per week to those who are not responding to lexia finally i'm excited to share that mets administration has reconfigured their staffing for next year to support another recently hired reading support teacher so we will double the number of students receiving that intensive explicit small group

**[00:51:50]** instruction our seventh and eighth grade lexia data shows met students are demonstrating measurable growth across all three domains with the strongest gains being made by those in foundational reading skills major gains are being made in word study which includes decoding word recognition and vocabulary foundations as teachers have made word study a priority believing that if students can't decode words they can't read independently in the future we do aim to adopt a more balanced approach to ensure all three strands of Lexia and all strands of the reading rope are being

[00:52:30] supported through students time using Lexia. At the high school use of Lexia continues across both English blocks and literacy electives classes ensuring all students receive targeted skill based support. Teachers are expected to implement Lexia with fidelity guiding students through all three strands until skills are fully developed and they complete the program sequence. Lexia also serves as the core instructional program in our remediation electives courses developing and continuing literacies these elective courses are

[00:53:07] designed to close foundational skill gaps so students can fully access grade level tier 1 instruction over the past four years placement criteria for these classes which are capped at 20 students and this year include 206 students has evolved to now include not only SOL scores WIDA levels students grades teachers anecdotal notes and parent permission but vows data and progress on student reading plans which will allow us to more precisely target students

[00:53:43] diagnosed needs Lexia data for our current students shows consistent growth in all three strands with the majority of students moving from the foundational to the intermediate however 35 students have moved into the advanced level for word study 13 into advanced for grammar and 24 into advanced for comprehension and to ensure consistency in intervention and to better meet students needs our Osborne reading teachers are being trained it's actually tomorrow in the Sunday system to provide aligned structured support before we conclude we

[00:54:21] want to invite you on April 25th to the Manassas reads at Baldwin from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. where we will be giving out brand new high quality and high interest books for students in grades 5 through 7. We hope you will join us. To wrap up this evening we will return to a slide you saw at the beginning and now highlight next steps. In K6 we will continue to work closely with Benchmark Education to provide train-the-trainer sessions on all components of the literacy block using Benchmark with our literacy liaison teams. Literacy liaison teachers will receive one-on-one coaching from our Benchmark consultant to help build leaders and model classrooms in each school. Through

[00:55:00] With collaboration with the instructional facilitators and school teams, this will allow each building to have a trained group of educators who can support ongoing professional learning. Best practices and intervention will also become a focus area next year so that we can ensure that our HQIM are being effectively used during the targeted support blocks.

[00:55:19] Walkthroughs with intervention-specific look-fors and collaboration on next steps will happen alongside core instructional walkthroughs. will also collect data from a year to implementation survey this spring that will help direct our work for the 2026 2027 school year our professional learning for 7 through 12 will focus on the instructional moves that have the greatest impact on student literacy especially for our developing readers first and fluency will support teachers in implementing structured research based strategies like repeated reading with modeling phrase queued text time practice with feedback, and accountable partner reading. In word study, we'll deepen instruction

[00:55:59] in morphology, helping students break down and understand complex academic vocabulary through Greek and Latin roots, syllable patterns, and explicit decoding of multisyllabic words, always grounded in authentic texts. And in comprehension, we'll focus on ensuring access.

[00:56:16] That means supporting teachers in chunking complex texts, pre-teaching critical vocabulary, and consistently modeling fluent strategic reading so students can see what strong comprehension looks like in action. In oral communication, we'll continue to support structured discussion and academic talk

as begun with our Kagan training so all students can clearly express and refine their thinking. And in writing, our professional development will focus on going beyond helping students organize their ideas to explicitly teach them how to elaborate, support, and develop their writing and their thinking.

[00:56:55] Across all areas, our goal is clear, to equip every teacher with practical, high-impact strategies that make rigorous learning accessible for all students, so that they can be confident, capable, and successful in their learning.

[00:57:13] Thank you for your time and attention. If there are any questions, we're happy to answer them. - Thank you, Ms. Emdim and Ms. Durand. Do we have questions to my right, Ms. Stevens? Thank you. I just had a quick question. The programs, everything that we're doing now is still relatively new based on legislation that came down from the Virginia General Assembly a few years ago. My first question relates to our high school students. You have in your slide that we're looking at legislation coming down from the state regarding reading instruction for high

[00:57:49] school students. Is Lexia used with our high school students? Yes, ma'am. So do, is it, because they know you know you have the the core five and then you have power up is there an additional platform for high school or are they still using power up our students are using power up until they pass out okay and so then what happens is if it because with power up you have your three strands what happens when a student gets through all the all the platforms or or graduates from one of the strands but still requires the support what do we do that still

[00:58:28] requires the support for their reading yes yes well and those students who are passing out of Lexia power-up probably would not be candidates for our two electives classes okay those are for our much lower struggling readers okay so those who pass out that's why it's so critical that we continue with our professional development for our teachers so that they know how best to scaffold those difficult texts for students that they understand best practices which is why I gave that long laundry list of what we're planning to do for the professional learning right and that is quite a bit now with Lexia if I recall correctly because I've used it in the past instructionally there's

[00:59:06] independent work there's group work and then there's a one-on-one work with the teacher so there can be okay when students need individual lessons it's It's very easy for teachers to often group students based on similar needs.

[00:59:23] And during that one-on-one time, pull a small group. Okay. Maybe a student's getting a review. Maybe they're getting a preview. But that way you can work in small groups and not just always the one-on-one. Okay. Okay. And then on slide nine, where you kind of laid out for middle school students, I want to say it was seventh and eighth graders.

[00:59:43] There we go. For seventh and eighth grade literacy intervention, you have all some few. And I'm assuming, so please correct me if I'm wrong, that the students who fall in the few are going to be our Tier 3 kiddos who need the most support. And they're going to get few, some, and all.

[01:00:00] Correct. So they're going to get all of the above. You are absolutely right. So all means, regardless of who you are, what your SOL test score was, you're going to be doing some work in Lexia. If it was below a certain score, you're going to get some more. Okay. I think that's great because, you know, there didn't used to be this recognition that some of our kiddos are so far behind and we have to work two

times, three times. It's hard to get them caught up. So I really like that we're doing this and I like that it really fits the tier three, you know, the three-tier model.

[01:00:35] Can you, and you may not be able to be really specific on it, can you briefly talk to us what a reading plan might look like for a K-5 kiddo? What is a reading plan?

[01:00:51] So the reading plan looks at the different dimensions of literacy, so looking at their decoding skills and encoding skills, and then also their language comprehension, and it lays out in a way that names the goal and then names the words, the actions that you're going to take in order to meet the goal.

[01:01:18] So in Manassas City Public Schools, as suggested by the state, we have our main goal that's identified by VALS for K-3. For 4-8, it looks a little different because it's not as defined as the one K-3 is a screener and four eight is a diagnostic so like we have different types of data that comes out of them but they both end up with a goal and then the steps that you take underneath it and kids can have multiple goals and in fact we try not to put more than two or three goals on a reading plan at

[01:01:51] a time because it gets overwhelming and hard to track so there is the instances where some kids go through their goals they've met part of their goals and then they get a new goal that comes up underneath it because that was also flagged from vals so the goal because yeah i'm a special education teacher so when i think goals i think an iep which is an annual plan for the reading plans are those kind of on a rolling basis that once that student hits the goal you update the goal once they hit the goal you update the goal you don't have like a set timeline so we our hope

[01:02:25] is to update them after like twice a year so that we have that enough time between the progress monitoring to actually see what has happened um it depends on what the goal is though like comprehension goals take a lot longer to master and move forward than decoding goals decoding goals can often if they're written at like the level in like an iep that's saying we're working on blends and digraphs that one might be mastered a lot quicker than comprehension goal um so yes so that that they are similar in that fashion and especially in the wording because we try to make

[01:03:01] sure that they are smart goals that are tied directly to a specific progress monitoring piece and that they can be trapped in that way okay and then my last question for you and thank you for answering my questions I really appreciate it how are parents communicated with concerning their students progress in Lexia my daughter comes home and she just tells me about it because she's like yeah and Lexia and with the reading program how often do you communicate with parents and how do you communicate with the parents so with lexia that is there's lots of um ways within lexia that teachers can communicate that out

[01:03:40] um every time they finish a little unit chunk they can print out teachers can print out a certificate they can go home and it lets parents know it has like all the things they worked on and then like things that parents can do to help them too um that pops up during their five minute lexia check-in all of our schools and in their clts spend five minutes at the beginning of clt doing alexia check-in with the protocol established by alexia it's a dashboard with four tabs across the top and one of them says skill builders and celebration i can't remember exactly what the word is but when

[01:04:17] they click on it it tells them who needs to get their certificates printed and a lot of our schools are doing different kind of like incentives and things celebration around the celebration with the reading plans we update them through power school okay and then parents are notified that it has been updated

and they can go log in and see the reading plan the power school also allows in the browser to hit translate that was the question my next question we are doing it through power school because translating the amount of plans that we have right to different

[01:04:54] languages know that that's great and I appreciate that because I had said I was on my last question but then I thought about translation for our Spanish speaking families so I appreciate that it's available in power school and then it can be translated for parents because that increases the opportunity for parent engagement involvement so thank you and thank you for sharing the PowerPoint and everything that you all are doing we look forward to hearing what comes up at the high school level next so thank you. Anybody else on this side to my right

[01:05:27] anybody to my left? Ms. Miles. So I have a couple questions thank you for your presentation first off so I know that you've talked about Lexia and Ms. Stevens alluded to the fact that this is new how long have we been using it as an intervention and a supplemental? So last year it was written into our one-year division literacy plan as our intervention this year we added it in as our supplemental as well because we were able to provide it for all students last year it was

[01:06:03] only for kids who were on intervention reading plans and we only had licenses for those kids in the beginning and we added more as more funding came in and we had more capability this year we started from the day one with k-12 every student had access to lexia and so we added it as a supplemental HQIM from the approved list. Okay, great. So the other question, I have a couple other ones. So I know that, you know, they're doing it 20 minutes a day. How is this, how are we seeing the improvement in our reading, in our students' reading? Like, I know that you have the

[01:06:41] computer database, but do you have any numbers that you could tell us, like, our students started here and now they're here? Sure, we can bring that back to you. I don't have it in front of me at the moment yeah that's fine information yeah I think it's just important to know that and I know a lot of people will say like oh our kids are on the computer all the time you know so obviously it is a good program but having the students on computers consistently throughout the day sometimes can be a lot do we also are we also targeting parents and families that may not have access to books are we sending home books as well so getting books in their hands are we doing that

[01:07:19] as well. Not besides the Manassas Reads, but consistently. Yeah, so many of our schools have programs that are working to send books home. I know I was working at a school just the other day that was, had used some of their money to buy additional decodables to send home. And then Benchmark also has take-home decodables that many schools use and send home. So yeah, they are using and sending home books to read. Okay, that's good to know. And then I know you spoke about Sunday system one and how 57 students I think are receiving that 30 minutes every other day in the high school correct middle school middle school sorry middle

[01:07:58] school is this computer-based no it is not okay no it's very it's based on Orton-Gillingham procedures so it's all one-on-one interactive with like I said groups of two to five students very small numbers and we will be able to implement it for those students who are currently in the program next year at the high school okay great so it's going to follow them okay and is this something that was included like in I know you said that we added Lexia as supplemental is this something like we added to like a grant or something that we had or something that we were given money for or it was something that was previously

[01:08:37] used for some needs in the elementary school and it also happens to be part of the approved HQIM of the list and so it was something that we use the funding this year okay gave us some money to support the middle school and the high school okay great and do you are you seeing more progress than that with these students as opposed to putting them on Lexia is this is this more profitable it depends I can actually get for you the data of the progress for the students

[01:09:12] on Sunday and then you can give you the Lexia data you can see and it really for the students who Lexia wasn't working the Sunday isn't working but we have some students who are making terrific progress on Lexia right because it works for them right and when you do Lexia this is a I see you say English instructional time is this specifically away from like say you have it built in the schedule or is it like in the whole group instruction like how are you able to do a lexia the 20 minutes every day like where is it well it's every ELA

[01:09:48] block and it's really up to the teachers as some teachers like it as because it kind of centers students quiets them as they come in so they begin with their lexia and then they're pulled for their small groups other teachers like to use it as a break in the middle of the block I mean they the teachers can really put wherever they need it okay so they're not specifically pulled away from the

[01:10:23] classroom it's done in the classroom okay okay that's good now and and the last question I have I wanted to ask this because I know vowels I know specifically is not going to be used for fifth fourth and fifth the test that they normally give them in the beginning in the middle of the year so in our district are we do we use a reading test from benchmark that we specific show growth beginning middle and yeah so progress vowels for four through eight is not a progress monitoring tool at all it is a diagnostic so we don't give it

[01:11:00] the spring because we wouldn't have time to address anything at that point the window closes may 15th and at that point what are you you wouldn't have time to take action on any of that data so what happens is that throughout their reading plans they have progress monitoring that they are doing constantly that continue past the valves windows so the progress monitoring will continue so they can track it that way we also have lexia data to show the progress that's being made and we have benchmark data from the main dashboard to show the big strands with all the sols so we are using multiple data points to target it instead

[01:11:37] of just looking at a single data point gotcha the only reason why I ask that question is I know in other curriculums they have like a test that they give in the beginning the middle and end and I just wonder specifically I'm not as familiar with benchmark if they give a beginning of the year reading test to all the students and then you see like their growth so benchmark is actually the dashboard's really cool in the sense that it it's cumulative and it builds over the entire year and takes all the strands and puts them into big buckets so instead of giving one in the beginning middle and end of the year every week kids in first through sixth grade have like either a

[01:12:14] regular weekly test or on the third week they have a unit test and as the year progresses it continues to drop all of those standards that every time they account they encounter them into buckets and so when you look at the data dashboard it's always showing you the most updated version of where the class and the kid and the school and the team level are it builds as it goes so instead of just comparing it from beginning to end you can see the movement and track it as it goes live in the in the data platform okay that's good no thank you so much thank you for

[01:12:47] answering my questions thank you miss miles miss pressure thank you thank you for the presentation miss Stevens touched on this a little bit in her questions but i was struck our you know the audience that we have here tonight is i mean mostly at school employees who are physically here but yeah the intention is to educate the public about what we're up to and the uh i noted in this presentation that we started talking about the vla without discussing what that was and what its significance is so if you could uh please do

[01:13:24] that for the benefit of the public which for the record i know what the vla is and its significance But I think that some of the significance of this presentation might be lost if we don't give the beginning of the story here. So the VLA or the Virginia Literacy Act was an initiative or legislation that went through that is aiming to create strong readers within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[01:13:51] It requires that schools choose from high quality instructional material lists. there's a core list for k5 there's intervention lists there's supplemental lists and so you have to lay out your division literacy plan with what materials you plan to use who uses who's going to access them how they're used during your day and then have a cohesive professional development plan that runs alongside it our division literacy plan is posted online on the instructional page you can see it anybody can see it it's also on the videoe's website and we worked together to

[01:14:30] create that plan with a team of teachers from and educators from across the division at the same time that we were selecting our hqim and getting new sols so all of those things kind of led into the what the bla looks like inside manassas city public schools thank you for that that that was very clarifying so the intention of this presentation was to update us on the status of the implementation of the our reading plan basically as required by the VLA and the conclusion we're supposed to draw is

[01:15:06] that that this work is ongoing it's proceeding on as scheduled and as hoped for and that students are making progress is that fairly stated have I really stated this? Yes. Okay. So moving through the presentation here, there's a lot that we've talked about, Lexia, Core 5, Power Up, all this kind of stuff. StudySync was new to me. Speak a little bit more about StudySync. StudySync's the online textbook that has been approved as an HQIM

[01:15:39] for grades 7 through 12. Part of Benchmark. It is part of Benchmark? No, it is not. It is not. it is separate from benchmark a separate online textbook that is an eight seven and eight and it actually we adopted it years ago I don't recall the exact number of years before my time and we were thrilled to realize that it is one of the approved hqims and so once we realized that as

[01:16:14] were creating our two-year plan we okay since we have it let's really double down and make sure the teachers are using it trying to be proactive it is the contract for study sync is up in 2027 so we'll either be renewing study sync at that time or looking for another hqim for grades 7 through 12. thank you for that uh the i want to make sure i heard you correctly as we were talking about it was under the grades four through eight slide that 50 percent of our students are on

[01:16:50] reading plans roughly 50 percent right now in grades four through eight or fourth okay so that is um that's that's very high the so this is also part of what i'm struggling with a little bit is that some some data is provided and is specific you know a certain percentage of kids are doing this certain percentage of that kids are doing that but some data was referenced but not provided such as you know kids in this grade or upper level grades are making less progress than kids in lower level grades and it just is as a piece of feedback going forward it would be good as

[01:17:28] miss miles was getting to in her remarks good to see that and engage with that because it helps us paint that full picture because um 30 is a lot the last question that i had and i was writing very quickly so you might have stated this already for our developing literacy class at the high school developing literacy's class at the high school how many are on track to graduate out of

[01:18:04] that we don't know yet i'm not sure at this time i didn't give those numbers and it's not really graduate out it's a conversation between the student the teacher their parents their overall

[01:18:19] performance but once we do finalize the scheduling for next year it looks like there are big benefits from using Lexia and we very much appreciate your report tonight thank you ladies we appreciate the work that you're doing it's

[01:18:51] meaningful and significant okay so now we have dr. Sarah Burkhead pre-k math coordinator and miss Sarah Elizabeth Susco 712 math coordinator who will provide an update on k-12 math teaching and learning so it was nice to see you guys again thanks for coming good evening chair Spall vice chair Jones dr.

[01:19:21] Newman all the members of the school board my name is Elizabeth Susco and I'm the 712 mathematics coordinator and presenting alongside me this evening is Sarah Burkhead the pre-k six mathematics coordinator. The purpose of this presentation is this evening is to provide you all information and updates regarding the mathematics innovation grant, the mathematics program in Manassas City, and STEM and math night in our community. Our work in mathematics is intentionally anchored in our division strategic priority of student academic success and more importantly it is aligned to our division school. We want our graduates to be critical and creative thinkers, collaborators, and

[01:20:01] communicators. Our K-12 mathematics vision is one of the primary ways we bring that goal to life. By shifting from traditional instruction to a student-centered approach, we are asking students not just to solve problems, but to think, reason, justify, and communicate their ideas. These are the very skills outlined in our division school. In this way, mathematics becomes more than a content area. It becomes a vehicle for developing the competencies we expect in all MCPS graduates.

[01:20:35] This vision is also deeply connected to our supporting pillars. Our focus on student agency and discourse naturally creates inclusive and collaborative learning environments where all students are engaged in meaningful mathematics and have a voice in the learning process.

[01:20:50] To sustain this work, we prioritize a quality workforce by providing teachers with ongoing professional learning, coaching, and collaborative planning structures, ensuring that they are equipped to facilitate the level of rigorous student-centered instruction.

[01:21:07] And as students engage in authentic mathematical thinking, we strengthen family and community partnerships by helping families better understand how students learn mathematics today and how they can support their learning beyond the classroom. So our mathematics vision is not separate from our division priorities, it is the direct reflection of them in action.

[01:21:27] Together, this alignment ensures that we believe about student success that is consistently reflected and what students experience every day in our classrooms. - To understand where we are going, it is essential to look at the foundation that we have been building over time.

[01:21:43] Our approach to K-12 mathematics in Manassas City has not been a series of random pivots. Rather, it has been a steady integration of high leverage research-based practices designed to shift from rote memorization to deep conceptual understanding.

[01:21:59] The bedrock of this work is the NCTM's Principles to Actions. For the better part of 10 years, these eight effective teaching practices, such as posing purposeful questions and supporting connections between different representations have quietly informed our professional development.

[01:22:17] While these principles have long underpinned our K-12 professional learning, we have transitioned this year into a phase of explicit implementation with our secondary teachers. Parallel to these pedagogical shifts, we recognize a need for consistent instructional structure.

[01:22:33] And in late 2018, leading into the 2019-2020 school year, we began our initial rollout of math workshop anchored in the teaching practices and structures outlined by Jennifer Lemp in her book. As we all know, the pandemic disrupted that momentum.

[01:22:49] Between 2022 and 2025, while the spirit of the workshop model remained, its application was a bit more piecemeal as we navigated the challenges of learning recovery. However, we viewed this year, the 25-26 school year, as our moment for decisive reset.

[01:23:05] We have executed an intentional relaunch of math workshop for grades K-6 and a formal launch for grades 7-8 using the new text geared towards secondary teachers written by Jennifer Lemp and Skip Tyler. This moves us toward the goal that every student in Manassas City, regardless of their grade level, will experience a math classroom that is student-centered, differentiated, and grounded in the best research our field has to offer. To move from vision to reality, we've been intentional about investing in the right support for our teachers. One of the key ways we're doing

[01:23:41] this is through the virginia department of education's mathematics innovation grant this competitive statewide grant is designed to support school divisions in strengthening tier one mathematics instruction through the adoption and implementation of high quality instructional materials or hqim paired with aligned professional learning in fall of 2025 the virginia department of education announced this opportunity and mcps applied with a focused goal to build a strong foundation of student-centered mathematics practices that would support our implementation of new high quality instructional materials. In February 26, we were proud to be named a

[01:24:17] grant recipient receiving almost \$87,000 to support this work. The heart of this grant is ensuring that our math educators are fully prepared to implement the new instructional materials in ways that align with our division's vision of teaching and learning. To do this, we have partnered with national experts Jennifer Lemp and Skip Tyler to provide job-embedded school-based professional learning. Our approach is intentionally differentiated across grade bands. For K through six each school received one full day of on-site professional learning for grades seven through twelve each school received two full days of on-site support in addition to a collaborative professional learning day

[01:24:54] later this month where all secondary educators will come together there will also be an opportunity for professional learning for teachers in June this grant allows us to accelerate our work towards consistent high-quality mathematics instruction in every classroom ensuring that all students have access to meaningful engaging and rigorous learning experiences part of our mathematics and event innovation grant work we began by grounding our efforts and data to ensure our professional learning is

both targeted and responsive to teacher needs in February we conducted the division-wide needs assessment with 247 teachers providing input on areas where they would benefit

[01:25:33] most from professional learning from that data several key priorities emerged with over 60% of respondents identifying the need for support in implementing learning stations, leveraging scaffolds to meet diverse student needs, facilitating small group instruction, and designing and implementing rich mathematical tasks.

[01:25:52] What's important is that this work did not stop at the division level. Each school received its individual data and used those results to identify and prioritize their own focus areas for collaboration with our partners Jennifer Lemp and Skip Tyler. This ensures that professional learning is not only aligned to division goals, but also responsive to the unique needs of each school community.

[01:26:14] As we move forward, we're also being intentional about measuring progress and planning next steps. In May, we will administer an exit survey to teachers, math leaders and administrators to better understand the current state of student-centered instructional practices. This data will help us evaluate our progress, identify for continued areas of growth and inform our implementation of new high-quality instructional materials for the 26-27 school year.

[01:26:40] Then in June, we will offer an additional professional learning opportunity with Jennifer Lemp for K-6 and Skip Tyler for grades 7-12. These sessions are designed to deepen teachers' understanding of student-centered instructional practices and expand our capacity across the division, serving up to 60 teachers. Together, this cycle of listening, learning, applying, and reflecting ensures that our work is not only strategic but sustainable, ultimately strengthening mathematics instruction for all students. On the current slide and the following two slides, you will see examples that showcase some of the work taking place in our schools through

[01:27:17] through our partnership with Jennifer Lemp and Skip Tyler. These snapshots reflect blur learning experiences that we've been facilitating alongside our teachers, highlighting how student-centered instructional practices are being brought to real life in classrooms. What you'll notice is a focus on the very areas our teachers identified through the needs assessment, such as small group instruction and intentional scaffolding to support all learners.

[01:27:42] These slides represent where we are in the work right now, early implementation and action, and provides a glimpse into how our professional learning translating directly into classroom practice. While this slide provides a high-level overview of the Virginia Growth Assessment, I want to take a moment to briefly explain how the assessment works.

[01:28:04] The VGA is aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning and uses SOL test items, but what makes it unique is that it is built on a vertical scale which allows us to measure student growth across grade levels over time. It is also an adaptive assessment, meaning that students receive questions based on how they respond.

[01:28:23] As a result, each student's experience is individualized, giving us more precise information about what they know and are ready to learn next. In the fall, students are primarily assessed on the previous grade level's content. This helps us understand their starting point for the year.

[01:28:39] This is true for all grades except grade 3 since there is no grade 2 standards of learning assessment. In the winter, the assessment shifts to focus on current grade level content, allowing us to

examine how much progress students have made during the school year. The VGA is not designed to evaluate whether a student is passing or failing, nor to aggregate data. The results provide teachers and school leaders with detailed standard aligned data that help identify where students are demonstrating mastery and where they may need additional support. This allows instruction to be adjusted to best meet students needs. In addition we can use the Virginia growth assessment to help monitor and reinforce progress within key strands throughout

**[01:29:16]** the year. In the elementary grades focusing on number and number sense and at the middle grades patterns functions and algebra. These particular content strands serve as foundational building blocks for mathematical understanding as our students progress. Another source of information on student growth comes from our supplemental program ST Math. In grades K through 8, ST Math is a tier one supplemental math program used by our students and teachers. Instead of starting with abstract math language and formulas, ST Math introduces mathematical ideas through puzzles students explore and solve. This approach

**[01:29:53]** builds the conceptual understanding students need to make sense of math and support strong conceptual mathematics in a way that is aligned with how the brain learns and eliminates language as a barrier to math content. Used alongside any core curriculum, ST Math strengthens conceptual understanding, builds persistence, and develops the problem-solving skills students need to access grade-level content.

**[01:30:15]** In ST Math, beginning in second grade, students take a pre-quiz and post-quiz for every objective they complete. On average, our MCPS students have an increase of 8% from pre-quiz to post-quiz after completing a content objective in ST Math. At each grade level, there were some standout topics where students made grade improvements up to 25% from pre- to post-quiz.

**[01:30:37]** Computation and estimation skills with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals consistently demonstrate this strong growth across grade levels. In grade 7, where ST Math is utilized to support our English language learners, integer operations and proportional reasoning both reflect at least a 15% increase from pre-test to post-test.

**[01:30:58]** Spawn to data on student needs at METS, the slide outlines how we are providing supports for students in grades seven and eight through a structured tiered approach. At the foundation, every student receives high quality tier one instruction during their core math course. This instruction is delivered by our math teachers using our division curriculum and products created by the collaborative learning teams during their team meetings.

**[01:31:21]** For students who need additional support, they receive targeted support during Mustang Block, facilitated by our student support facilitators. As part of this support, we are currently utilizing MathSpace, a supplemental program that offers personalized, adaptive online learning and acts as a digital tutor, offering step-by-step feedback rather than just final answers.

**[01:31:41]** Students began by taking a discovery check-in, which is a diagnostic assessment that provides insight into their strand level of mastery aligned to the Virginia standards. From there, students take ownership of their learning by engaging in assigned tasks and completing ongoing skills check-ins to monitor their progress.

[01:31:59] This support occurs for 60 minutes every other day. For a smaller group of students, They participate in pull-out instruction led by math support teachers, where students receive targeted, data-driven lessons aligned to student-specific area of need. Student groups are fluid and flexible, allowing for movement in and out of support based on ongoing data.

[01:32:19] These sessions occur for 20 minutes every other day and are designed to address specific skill gaps. This framework ensures that all students receive strong instruction, while also providing increasingly targeted support based on individual student needs.

[01:32:35] Also, at the secondary level, Manassas City continues to expand access to advanced mathematics opportunities, including honors courses, advanced placement courses, and a growing range of mathematics electives. Over the past several years, we have seen significant increases in advanced course enrollment across the division.

[01:32:52] At the high school level, advanced placement has increased by 73% from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2025-2026 school year. Additionally, enrollment in pre-calculus with trigonometry has more than doubled during the same time period.

[01:33:07] At the middle school level, grades six through eight, we have seen a 55% increase in advanced course enrollment, reflecting an expanded access and opportunities for students to engage in more rigorous coursework earlier in their academic careers. These increases are a result of both our intentional division enrollment practices, grounded in a whole child approach, and the Virginia Department of Education's acceleration initiative under House Bill 2686, which supports increased access to advanced mathematics pathways.

[01:33:37] Our Division's enrollment process incorporates teacher recommendation, student goals, multiple data points, including classroom and state assessment data, as well as parent and student input. House Bill 2686 provides a directive for any student in grades 5 through 8 who score in the top quartile on their end-of-year mathematics standards of learning assessment, are automatically enrolled in advanced or accelerated mathematics courses the following school year.

[01:34:05] Finally, we continue to expand our course offerings to meet student interest in workforce relevance. This year, we introduced Data Science as a new course, which has had an enrollment of 47 students. Together, these trends reflect a strong and growing commitment to ensuring all students have access to challenging, meaningful mathematics experiences that prepare them for future success.

[01:34:28] And we do not only support mathematics during the school day. We also partner with federal programs and CTE to put together a division-level mathematics program for families. Last Tuesday, April 7th, we hosted our fourth annual Math and STEM Night at Round.

[01:34:43] The goal of this night is to take STEM out of the classroom and put it in the hands of our students, showing them how these concepts live in the real world. 121 students and their families were able to interact with 25 community partner organizations and businesses who showed students the various ways they use mathematics in their work and lives.

[01:35:02] One of our new community partners told me how much they enjoyed the event and how wonderful it was that our students were being exposed to why math matters. The event supports our students in seeing math as more than a classroom subject and building a positive relationship with mathematics. Thanks to Kurt Emel and our Title I programs, we were able to send every family home with

math activities that support students in thinking mathematically and practicing fluency skills through games.

[01:35:28] Additionally, students received a STEM kit to grow radishes and watermelons, integrating science and mathematics skills through activities monitoring the growth of their seeds. We are grateful for the support of our community partners and all the volunteers and staff who made this night possible as we continue to find creative ways to make mathematics both accessible and inspiring for all of our families.

[01:35:49] Thank you for your time this evening, and Elizabeth and I are happy to take any questions. - Thank you, Dr. Burkhead and Ms. Esco. Do I have questions to my left?

[01:36:05] - I only have a few. I had looked over your PowerPoint before and everything's really nice, but thank you for sharing all this. I noticed, though, I know we're excited about the advanced math enrollment and advanced placement and everything.

[01:36:22] But the one thing I wonder about that is, does that increase our SOL scores? I mean, yes, we want students to have access, you know, to higher math. But are we seeing those students excel in those classes? Or is it just to introduce it to them and then they're not passing?

[01:36:41] You know, like, what is the data behind that? - So the increased kind of placement right now, since I've been in this position, our new pathways have just started my second year.

[01:36:57] So in the 20, 22, 20, 23, 23, thank you, 23, 24. So within that and those adjustments, we've seen scores in that parallel and that creasement even out. This year with the House Bill 2686, with having some of those students placed automatically just based off of their SL score alone, which that score comes from the state, like mid, late July, to provide to schools.

[01:37:28] That is just only that one data point, where ours, when we're placing students, we're looking at a multitude that's there. So while students are doing well in those courses that have been placed by House Bill, we won't really know the outcomes and the longevity of those outcomes until a few more years when those cycle through.

[01:37:44] - Okay, that's good. you for sharing that um i know even my own son like i was like oh you're gonna be in an advanced placement it was because of his sol score um but i do think it's awesome um because with advanced math it's just giving everyone an opportunity um to you know have more rigorous math which is great but i really didn't see anything else that i had a question about um i was just really excited about st math um because i know um and i wondered even the school that i work at if we use it and we don't but i think it's just wonderful um that you remove that barrier the language barrier and allow

[01:38:21] our students to problem solve because i know um especially the sols they're always saying we want them to think we want them to think it's very hard to think in another language thinking that way you know so when you're learning it in the beginning so i just think that this is great that we're using it k through eight especially with our population um so i'm hoping that it's going to show you know fourth dividends from that and it shows I you said eight or more percentage points pre-lesson post-lesson and is this something that is optional the teacher uses or it's it's kind of like embedded in your class so the

[01:38:57] expectation K6 is that students do an hour to 90 minutes of ST math a week and just as ELA was mentioning that's up to the teachers where and how they fit that and at seven eight it is a supplemental resource so it is optional for the teachers to kind of use as Sarah mentioned our English or ESOL

mathematics classes are primarily ones utilizing and supporting that and seeing that growth but an individual teacher can also use that in any way shape or form that they would like in our classroom as a supplemental well I'm glad that we've spent the money on that because I've heard that it's pretty pricey was the

[01:39:37] reason why our school isn't using it so I'm really grateful that we took the time to make sure we have resources for all of our students so thank you that's all I have thank you thank you miss miles miss Russia yes thank you for the thank you for the presentation so the tell me a little bit more I tried to follow the timeline that you were talking about Jennifer Lemp and skip Tyler and all that kind of stuff and it was we were gonna be doing this math

[01:40:09] workshop thing in 2018-2019 pandemic happened so that didn't really happen but now we're resetting it with the support of this innovation grant so the jennifer lemp and skip tyler and the math workshop approach that is i this is not like the virginia literacy act where we've been given like we had an internal process to select uh those that approach and those resources so math workshop is It's a set of structures and philosophies that take all of the learning that we have

[01:40:46] around student-centered mathematics and put it into a, the goal being to put it into a way that is manageable and structured for teachers, and I think at this point, it's pretty much accepted that Math Workshop is generally the way to do math. We, in Manassas City, chose Jennifer Lemp's model, and we were lucky enough, she is actually a Fairfax resident, and so we were lucky enough to have her come in in 2018 when the book was published and start that work with us and then unfortunately you know that sort of fell apart we did continue using math workshop as the expected structure through the next set of years but we didn't really have enough

[01:41:22] training to help make sure teachers are successful with that and so we were able to remedy that this year we're really excited gotcha so are we on track then with the everything sounded like it was on track just wanted to check in on that the other question that I have so okay sorry when the right side goes first it makes me a little bit more organized the so for the VGA you there was a bullet point in here and you said it verbally the majority of students in grades three through eight have shown growth from fall to winter this is another part where I wish I could see

[01:42:00] this visualized because growth can be small or growth can be big and growing does not necessarily mean you're on track to meet your grade level requirements so I wish if you can tell me a bit more about it now that would be great but I wish I could see more from a data perspective just as a general piece of feedback so I don't know what kind of growth are we seeing so do we have a goal for growth that we're supposed to you are we meeting our VGA

[01:42:33] goal do we have VGA goals are we meeting them the short answer is that the VGA serves two purposes right at the individual student level to track where the student is moving over time and at the instructional level for teachers to look at okay what types of items in what areas are we doing well with or do we you know need to intervene with more there is not a passing score on the VGA so the individual is so it is not pass fail there is not anything like that it is very individualized to give a point of reference and in past ways like two cycles ago with the accountability system the data was used to help determine if students were making growth and may be used again as part of that

[01:43:12] but there is not a nice way to aggregate it that's not its purpose right its purpose is really individualized or and that's why they talked about like the instructional content strands right that's what its

purpose is we do provide the schools with and these wonderful content coordinators with here's the types of items that more students are getting correct or incorrect and things like that, but there's not a percent correct because each student experiences a different assessment based on the adaptive nature. Does that help?

[01:43:43] Yeah. I mean, yes. I do feel like we used to get VGA results presented to us at some point in time years ago, but maybe I'm mistaken. There was a whole bunch of testing that was happening right when kids were returning to learn, so maybe it had something to do with that that I'm thinking of. So similarly with ST Math, average growth of eight or more percentage points. I mean, I don't really, like, it sounds good, but I don't know, like, is that the expected amount of growth? You know, I don't know the baseline. Yeah, that's a great question. I never

[01:44:18] asked ST Math that. Every time I do talk to them, they get so excited. We have had one of the most impressive implementations that they've ever seen, and our impact numbers are higher than most than they usually see, so, you know, that's really all I can go by as far as, again, I don't know how you would define what the right amount is, right? And I think it's also important to keep in mind that this is not, ST Math is not a program like Lexia where teachers are part of it. I mean, yes, if a student is stuck or needs help, teachers step in, but this is completely independent and the only intervention that the students are having is the program. So, by itself, going from, it's all set

[01:44:58] up in islands. Going from the start of this island to the end of this island, right? We're seeing that growth. And that's the students doing that all on their own, right? Taking in the content, solving the puzzles, figuring out how it applies to the symbols, and then being able to make that transition. So I think any growth is super impressive, personally. But I think in particular what I look at is the places where we have a lot of students have completed a particular objective because students go at their own pace and those ones that I mentioned the computation the comparing numbers right those are the ones where we're seeing the biggest growth and those are

[01:45:36] the ones that most of our kids have completed so pretty exciting so I do recall for our advanced math enrollment going through the division went through a purposeful restructuring of that but I was never really clear what the goals were and if we even had a goal for like targeted in Korea the percentage of increase that we wanted to see for kids enrolled in advanced math courses and Did we have them? Did we meet them?

[01:46:02] So there was not a percentage or a targeted goal in what we wanted to do. The intent of when we looked at revamping the kind of mathematics pathways as a whole was really just opening up the access and the opportunity for students to have that ability to have many multiple on and off ramps in their mathematics journey.

[01:46:25] Just because like anything, mathematics isn't linear. They can go up, they can go down, and just giving them those larger opportunities. I would say if we did kind of, when we first started this, truly set a goal of a percentage or expectation, I would say for what we're seeing right now, we're definitely meeting or exceeding those, even without House Bill 2686.

[01:46:48] Right. So thank you for all of that. So the conclusion I'm supposed to, so thank you for stating your purpose verbally. three purposes were to update us on the math innovation grant on the math programs generally and on how STEM night went and it sounds like the conclusions that we are supposed to draw is that the math innovation grant is going well and is on track and is supporting a student centered

math workshop learning model that our math programs are with that we have a lot of evidence of progress for our math programs and that STEM night was a

[01:47:20] success is that fairly statement thank you thank you again to my right I will We'll ask Ms. Stevens. Thank you, Ms. Brescia, and we'll go to Ms. Stevens. Thank you, Chair. Thank you both for the presentation. And I'm going to point out, just like on the reading presentation, your slide 11, which had all, some, few, which was the three tiers of support.

[01:47:44] So students, everyone is at all. Some students are at all and some, and then a very choice few are at all, some, and few. So if you are a student who's in the few category, you get all the bells and whistles.

[01:48:01] You're not losing anything. You're getting everything. So the level of support and instruction you're receiving is the highest possible, correct? Yes. Yeah. So I really appreciate that. I think that's a really important piece for us to acknowledge and recognize. And I did for just a moment, and I hope I word this correctly because this is working in my brain.

[01:48:22] I don't know if it's going to come out of my mouth correctly. But Ms. Brescia spoke to goals for math. Now, each of our schools has an improvement plan. Each of our schools has a school improvement plan, and one of those improvement plans relates to math. So what you're working on and the programs you're developing, overseeing, training, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, really funnel into those improvement plan goals, correct?

[01:48:47] So we're not just out here saying we want to do better, but we don't know how much better we want to do. We have these goals we want to achieve, and each school has a different goal, and some schools have different goals at different grade levels. So we really have something to measure, but, you know, with House Bill, and I don't remember what the number is.

[01:49:09] 2686. Thank you. 686, that really changed quite a bit because what it meant was that students who are in that top quartile are automatically opted in to an advanced math class.

[01:49:25] Now, I think I know what the number is, but do you know what that top quartile low cutoff is? So it was, I don't know the exact ones off my head, but what I can say is that each grade level, for the most part, for 5, 6, 7, and 8, were different cutoff scores.

[01:49:42] So grade 6 was a different number for a cutoff versus grade 7 and 8. They were in the upper 400s. If I had to give a range like a 420 to a 440 range or a 460.

[01:49:58] Because a 420 is not really – because a 400 is basic pass. So a 420 – They based it off of all – Virginians. Yeah. Okay. and what and you may have said this and I'm sorry if I if I didn't hear it or I tuned out for a second what has the percentage increase been say at the middle school level for students in advanced math classes so I can get you those numbers as I mentioned because the three years ago we kind of changed what that looked like I do have that just not with me tonight but I can share that with you okay great and then you mentioned this as well and this is a

[01:50:38] quick question what is the difference between an advanced math class and an accelerated math class they really are one in the same it just depends on how the division or a district chooses to use that but an advanced an acceleration as a whole is just representing that a student is taking a grade level content outside of what they would traditionally be taking. So for example, for us, we have a course

[01:51:13] for a sixth grader where they can take math seven content. So they are taking a grade level that is above. So that could be considered acceleration, which puts them on where you get to those advanced mathematics courses, which are like your AP, your honors courses, which then fall in line with that track okay yeah because I really I wasn't quite sure on that one and then you mentioned data science a new course that's being offered can you give us a little summary of what it is sure so data science is a combination of mathematics computer science and data so it's very different than at the

[01:51:51] computer science courses that students might take within CTE it's looking at how all of those are interconnected and so they're doing a lot of work with data sets how to clean the data sets how to represent that data in different mathematical ways and then bringing a lot of like project-based connections to that that's there so they're learning a lot of the what I would say introductory skills is if they were going to maybe pursue a data science career field in college as they move forward and data science when you're talking about data sets because I do I have taught middle school math that's going to be just a

[01:52:29] little bit different than our basic like math computation that that's that's moving math in a slightly different direction and what grade levels is data science being offered so data science is being offered for any any student essentially as a 10th 11th or a 12th grader that's there I believe primarily Primarily, the 47 students that are currently taking data science are juniors and seniors.

[01:52:57] But I don't have those exact goes from front of me. But I think the primary enrollment this year are juniors and seniors. And then, is data science considered an elective, or does it count as a math credit? It is considered. Any course above Algebra 2 is considered kind of an extra fourth credit mathematics course.

[01:53:16] So it is considered at or above the level of Algebra 2. So along with pre-calc or any of our AP pre-calculus courses that fall into there. Okay, so that, I mean, that's great to know. So, well, thank you very, one quick question. S&T Math Supplemental.

[01:53:32] All teachers are eligible to receive professional development on S&T Math? Yeah, so we actually have incorporated S&T Math Professional Learning into our professional learning plan for our teachers over the last two years. We haven't figured out exactly what it looks like going forward because most of our teachers are pretty competent now.

[01:53:50] so um but uh we there's also embedded on the platform options for teachers if they need additional support okay great so thank you for the presentation and thank you for all of the additional information and i look forward to seeing the long-term impact of house bill 26 86. i look forward to seeing the long-term impact because that is a very big change and and that top quartile number will change every year yes it will change every year so thank you you very much for the presentation you gave us a lot of food for thought thank you anyone to my right else okay thank you so much for being wonderful content

[01:54:29] coordinators we are a small division I'm just curious I don't already know the answer to this question but who may we thank for writing a successful grant for this innovation the math innovation okay but it was it was our content coordinators that's amazing so thank you again for just you know looking out for us and making all these opportunities available to us so thank you both okay

[01:55:01] can I now get a motion to move to our action agenda chair I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the adoption of Savas Envision math textbook for grades kindergarten through

grade 12 second okay I have a motion by Miss Stevens seconded by Miss Brescia that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the adoption of Savas envision math textbook for grades

[01:55:35] kindergarten through grade 12 is there any discussion no okay I'll say that the new resources do look like they will be a major enhancement to math instruction next year so thank you okay so all in favor any opposed the motion carries 7-0 so we move to board board member comments that time miss breeden you're

[01:56:12] up. Good evening, everybody. First, I would like to say that I appreciate Ms. Siebert, the Educational and Finance Committee, for taking the time to hold a meeting for the public to discuss what we're doing with the old journey dean. I think that's a great way to deter unhappy citizens with whatever outcome happens. It will adequately address concerns of people in the community and allow their ideas to be heard. So I think that's a very productive

[01:56:50] way to handle that situation. As long as it's promoted adequately, so every passionate person knows, I think that that would be a great way to handle that. And then all I have to say is that Special Olympics is next Friday, April 24th. I don't know the exact time frame. I want to say it's from like 10 to 1 p.m. 10 to 12. Okay, 10 to 12 p.m. So please come out, support. It's at Osborne Stadium, if I didn't already say that. And that's all I have for tonight. Thank you.

[01:57:23] Thank you, Ms. Breeden. Mr. Eamon. Hello. Hello, everybody. Congratulations to our RISE Award nominees. We all immensely support and appreciate the work that you put into our schools. I'm so glad that we shed some light on Autism Awareness Month. Autism really is a gift, and we should all use this month to appreciate our neurodivergence.

[01:57:47] I look forward to seeing Chair Spall and Ms. Seberg at the RSVP tomorrow. Thank you, too, for taking the time at your busy schedules to come and talk to us. We all really appreciate you. And also, thank you to Ms. Brescia and Dr. Newman for attending the past RSVP leadership.

[01:58:04] The leadership class can't thank you guys enough. I hope to see more of you guys there, too. If you have the time, I'd recommend you guys come see the Osborne Theater Department's Mama Mia. They have put in so much work and dedication to this project, and I know it will have you entertained.

[01:58:24] And if not, you guys can come to me. I'll give you a full refund. Tickets are \$10, so if you want to support our theater kids, consider coming. It is this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7 p.m. Yeah, that's all I have. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Eamon.

[01:58:43] Ms. Stevens. Thank you. i just wanted to make comments on a couple topics um first the seaak meeting special education advisory committee meeting unfortunately i was not able to attend but i wanted to introduce miss rebecca loesch as um erica loesch i don't know why i literally haven't written erica and i decided your name was rebecca so i do this ask miss seberg i renamed one of her children it it's an i've renamed my own children multiple times and they just say as long as you don't name us after the dogs were good so thank you miss loesch for joining us i'm very excited to have

[01:59:21] you on board and i love the t-shirts and i'm actually going to take the book to school to share with my own students as miss breeden said this friday the feet meet is at osborne high school from 10 to 12 and then on the 18th and i actually have to pull up the flyer so that i can do it justice so on the 18th the fourth annual anything's possible festival and 5k race which makes service dogs accessible to children's disabilities will be held from 11 a.m to 4 p.m

[01:59:56] there's a chip timed 5k free festival kids activities raffle and silent auction dozens of vendors food trucks and drinks dog friendly fun and more and you can actually sign up for it and i believe 9101 prince william street manassas virginia i believe that's in the old town manassas so please join us it looks to be a lot of fun um i do know that service jobs are vital to many individuals lives and especially to some of our children and then i did want to speak for just a moment um about reading in virginia miss um it was mentioned that 50 of our students have reading

[02:00:35] plans in mcps but i want you to know that that is not an issue that's unique to the city of manassas if you go to any website or you even type into google students reading below grade level across the united states or in virginia the numbers you are going to see are shocking they really are alarming numbers and some of it is because of the pandemic what was lost during the pandemic but in going to reading is fundamental and depending upon what website you go to or what source you go to this numbers might be a little bit different so according to reading is fundamental

[02:01:11] virginia fourth graders the percentage of students who are performed below the basic reading level was 42 the percentage of students who performed at the basic reading level was 28 the proportion the percentage of students in fourth grade who performed at the proficient level was 22 i believe this is for the 24-25 school year the percentage of students across the state of Virginia who performed at the advanced reading level was 9% the numbers go down for 8th grade the percentage of students who performed below the basic

[02:01:48] reading level 40% for 8th graders the percentage of students who performed below at the basic reading level in 8th grade was 29% the percentage of percentage of students at 8th grade who performed at the proficient reading level was 23% and the percentage of students in the eighth grade who performed at the advanced reading level was just 8%. So if we really want to talk about reading, reading is a hidden pandemic and our children are not successful. You can go in and you can look at the statistics for adults

[02:02:26] who are reading at a proficient level or who are reading at a sixth grade level and it's shocking. That's part of the reason the Virginia Literacy Act was put into place, was to start addressing these deficiencies. That's not just in our school division, but that's across the state.

[02:02:44] And if you expand that to the national level, it's across the nation. It's an epidemic that we aren't talking about enough. So I appreciate the discussion that took place today. I appreciate the knowledge that 50% of our students have reading plans, because we may think of that in a negative light, but I'm gonna look at that a positive light in that 50 of our students we recognize need support need extra instruction and we're doing that we're providing them that support we're providing them that reading instruction and we're monitoring the progress and that's how we get our kids where we want

[02:03:20] them to be and finally i did want to speak on something else that takes place this month that we don't talk about enough we talk about autism acceptance month which is a pet project of mine It's near and dear to my heart. I know and love many autistic individuals who are in my life, who have made profound impact on my life.

[02:03:40] But I also want to talk about how this month is Arab American Heritage Month. Arab American Heritage Month celebrates the history, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans to the United States. Nearly 3.7 million Arab Americans live in the United States, with roots in 22 different Arab countries across the Middle East and North Africa.

[02:04:00] Arab Americans have enriched society through contributions to science and mathematics, such as algebra and early medicine, literature, art, business, education, and public service. The Arab American community is diverse and includes people who practice Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and the Druze faith, reflecting a wide range of traditions and beliefs.

[02:04:23] Celebrating this month promotes understanding, respect, appreciation for the diversity and strengthens our communities. So as we think of celebrating this month, let's remember it's Arab American Heritage Month as well. So thank you. Thank you, Miss Stevens. Miss Seabird. Thank you, Chair. Congratulations to all that were honored here tonight. And thank you to Mrs. Loesch for the t-shirt and the book. I can't wait to wear it and share it. I also want kudos back to Mr. Emun and all your friends at the National Honor Society

[02:04:59] that washed my car on Saturday, you guys did a great job, and I hope the fundraiser was successful for you. Great. Good job. I had the best day today, spending time with our ESOL team at Osborne High School. I had the opportunity to explore several features of Summit K-12, including growth reporting and to see English, language, development, instruction brought to life in many meaningful ways through technology, classroom discussion, hands-on activities, project-based learning, personal writing, and student presentations. I also had the chance to connect one-on-one

[02:05:38] with a student who shared her thoughtful perspective on academic rigor and policy. In a level one ESOL government class, I participated in a student-led campaign activities for president, followed by a class vote. Out of eight candidates, the winner was Emily's candidate, somebody named Katie Johnson. Throughout the day, I witnessed strong student engagement and genuine effort. Thank you to our Osborne students for your dedication and hard work, and thank you to our incredible teachers for the important work you are doing. Ms. Fabiola Parker, Ms. Sharon

[02:06:16] Fitzgerald, Ms. Adebola Akintunde, Ms. Kathy Dawson, Mrs. Alyssa Love, and Ms. Rebecca Karofilis. Thank you for welcoming me into your classrooms. I'm excited to participate in RSVP Tomorrow, which is a program that brings together student leaders to grow and learn what it means to lead.

[02:06:37] And I'll echo the comments about Osborne Theater presenting their spring musical, Mamma Mia! Showtimes are 7 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. It's free to educators, and I hope that everyone had a great spring break and you're ready to knock out these last seven and a half weeks.

[02:06:56] Thank you, Chair. Thank You Miss Seberg Miss Brown okay Thank You Miss Brown Miss Miles I hope everyone had a good spring break and Easter celebration for all those who celebrate I want to congratulate all our rise award nominees just as I was listening to all the wonderful things that they were saying about these nominees I just wrote down some things and things that stood out to me strong work ethic building connections with colleagues positive impact on students

[02:07:33] and families leadership and commitment exceptional organization anticipating the needs of students and staff problem-solving skills goes above and beyond so these the people that were nominated obviously do so many things for our schools so I'm just thankful that they got that recognition that they so much deserve so I was able to attend a few events this past few weeks stem night at round I enjoyed meeting staff members from all the elementary schools and seeing all the families who brought their students out to participate in math, science, and technology activities.

[02:08:09] It was a great group of people, and it was wonderful how we had bus transportation, too, for those families who were not in walking distance, so that was wonderful. I was able to attend the All-City Band Concert. My son actually was in it as well, so I was there for both as mom and school board member, but it showcased the talents of our students from Mayfield, Baldwin, Intermediate, Mets, and Osborne, And we have some talented, talented students and hardworking teachers who get them to that.

[02:08:39] It was wonderful because usually I see my son doing one song, but I was like, you did two. And I know being a band student myself years ago, it takes a lot of work, especially, you know, practicing that one song over and over and over again, and then you show it to your family.

[02:08:56] So they did a great job. I also had the opportunity to read two books to second grade students at Hayden. It was wonderful to be a part of bringing reading to life for our students. So I was very grateful to be able to have that opportunity. Some things that I want to remind you of on Thursday, we have the ELPAC meeting at six o'clock at the middle school.

[02:09:20] And if you're a parent of a multi-language learner, make sure you attend if you're able to. It is a time for us to connect with you and to give you information that will make your student even be more successful. I'm also planning on attending Mamma Mia.

[02:09:37] I love Mamma Mia, all the songs in the show, so I'm excited about seeing that. I'm going to go on Saturday night, so if you haven't gotten your tickets, make sure you do. But before I go, my comments are pretty short tonight, but I just want to encourage everyone. We have less than 35 days left in the school year.

[02:09:56] Attendance is so crucial, so crucial to ensure your students get all they need from their teachers in preparation for SOLs and AP exams that are coming soon so you know set those alarms get a good night's rest so that we can rock those SOLs and we can see those scores and see them go up thank you thank you miss miles miss Brescia thank you chair I was actually not planning to make any comments tonight but while we were on the topic of the 50% of our students on reading plans I wanted to make a few things clear I agree that it's positive that the

[02:10:35] students have been identified who need as needing help are going to now be in a position to receive that help and get on grade level but the and it can be true that there is a big issue with reading all across Virginia and all across the nation but we here in Manassas City need to be concerned about we are responsible for our students and it is the goal in our strategic plan that 80% of our kids will read on grade level by actually the end of the next school year so that is my expectation that our students will get there I'm glad that we have identified the students that we need help and the other point I'd like

[02:11:15] to make is yes we are experiencing a reading crisis and those were the results of decisions that were made at that time during the pandemic so those are you know this isn't as articulate as it would otherwise be but it I did want to make that clear that we need to stay focused on our on our goals and you know the context is important and I don't want to diminish that but I want us to deliver for our kids and get there thank you thank you miss special dr. Jones um good evening I want to first offer an additional thank you to all of our

[02:11:54] awardees tonight the rise awardees play an important part in our schools the autism acceptance is a guide for us all to live by, be kind, patient, and include everyone. Since the last board meeting, I read to students at Hayden. I went to the STEM and math night at Round Elementary and

attended the All-City Orchestra concert. Our students are very talented, so I suggest you support them whenever possible. I also encourage all of our students to attend the Manassas Read on April 25th, where your children can pick up free books because reading is so important and the more books they have in their hands i think the more they'll read so please

[02:12:32] make your time and make plans to go to the manassas read please take a look at the manassas city public school's local plan for the education of the gifted it outlines how our school division identifies and serves gifted students including program goals instructional services and support to meet the needs of advanced students this year the local plan for the education of the gifted has undergone a comprehensive review and update to ensure alignment with current best practices and state regulations as well as to reflect the needs of our students

[02:13:06] and community your voice is important for this process so i please ask that you go on the website and look at the draft of the local plan and provide your feedback by friday april 17th there's a survey that you can fill out to give your input and i'll end with the poem small steps big wins. It's not about how fast I go, but that I keep on moving slow. A puzzle piece, a word, a line. I'll get it right in my own time. I may get tired. I may take rest, but I will always do my best. My heart is strong. My aim is true. I'm proud of what I do. And this is for Autism Month.

[02:13:45] Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Jones. Before we adjourn this evening, I just want to take a moment to recognize a few important things first next week is National Library Week I want to extend our appreciation not only to our own school librarians and library staff but also to our city of Manassas library partners libraries are such a vital community space and they support literacy learning curiosity connection for learners of all age we are grateful for the partnership between our schools and our city library and helping foster a love of reading and lifelong learning I also want to acknowledge autism acceptance month I don't want to

[02:14:21] just beat a dead horse but this month is an important reminder of our commitment to inclusion and belonging across division across our our division every student brings a unique strength talent and perspective and those contributions enrich our schools and our community we are committed to ensuring every child feels seen valued and supported I'd also like to remind seniors and families that Usborne Alumni Association scholarship applications are due this Friday. I'm sure lots of scholarship applications are due very soon, but I encourage all eligible students to apply. This morning I had the pleasure of

[02:14:58] attending the Prince William Chambers Education and Workforce event, where the conversation focused on preparing students for tomorrow's opportunities. I especially want to give a nod to our own Amelia Breeden, who served as a panelist and represented our educational community so thoughtfully and in that discussion. The conversation was a great reflection of the important work happening through our career and technical education pathways as we continue to shape the workforce of tomorrow and ensure our students are prepared for college careers and civic leadership thank you all for your time

[02:15:30] and your continued commitment to our students and our schools does have we told everyone that Amelia has made a college decision is anyone curious where Amelia will be going and I'd like to say good luck at mama mia to mr. emoon because we see you we see you coming up so um thank you have a good evening

[02:16:10] everyone oh yeah okay is there a motion to adjourn chair I move that the school board meeting adjourn second I have a motion by Miss Stevens seconded by Miss Brescia that the school board meeting adjourn is there any discussion all in favor any opposed the motion carries 7-0 thank you everyone



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