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[00:13:58] Okay, good morning. It's 11.06 a.m. Sorry, we're a bit behind this morning, but I will now call this meeting to order. And I don't believe we have anybody participating remotely this morning. Is that right, guys in the back? Nobody? Okay. And so all of that being said, we would like to begin this morning with Item A presentation from SHEV's Executive Director, Scott Fleming.

[00:14:30] Oh, I'm sorry. Dwayne's coming first. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning, President Carisi, members of the board, and Superintendent Gullickson. My name is Dwayne McClary, Deputy Superintendent of the Division of Innovation, Student Pathways and Opportunity.

[00:14:48] I have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Scott Fleming. Scott Fleming joined the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia, known as SHEV, as executive director on May 25, 2024. Prior to joining SHERF, Fleming was a chief strategy officer for Teaching Strategies, one of the nation's leading e-learning organizations.

[00:15:10] In addition, he was a 2023 appointee of Governor Youngkin to the SHERF Council and resigned this appointment to serve as the executive director. Scott has held substantial careers in education sector, leveraging his expertise across public, private, and non-profit organizations.

[00:15:30] As a staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, and Labor and Pensions, he led the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 2005 and the Carl D. Perkins Technical and Vocational Act in 2006.

[00:15:47] His efforts shaped policies to enrich educational opportunities and workforce development. After serving several years on the Hill, Scott transitioned into a management consulting and subsequently leadership roles in renowned education companies.

[00:16:04] Before Scott comes up, I just would love to say that the VDOE fully supports Chev's direct admissions initiative because it represents a bold step towards expanding college access for all students. By removing traditional barriers to post-secondary enrollment, this program empowers students to see college as a real and attainable option.

[00:16:26] In alignment with our shared commitment on opportunity and workforce readiness and lifelong learning, we are proud to stand behind efforts that simplify the path to higher education and to help more Virginia students recognize their full potential. I would now like to turn it over to Mr. Scott Fleming.

[00:16:44] Good morning. Members of the board, Madam Chair and Madam Superintendent, thank you for the invitation to present today.

[00:17:03] I'll certainly answer questions as we go, as they come up, so feel free to interrupt if something strikes you as an opportunity to ask a question. But I thought I might begin just by setting the stage a little bit. As the board certainly knows with the recent changes to accountability framework the emphasis on pathways to either meaningful employment enrollment or enlistment is a signal an important one for the commonwealth of Virginia and where we stand and what we are currently working on

[00:17:41] at the state council of higher education is how we get more students prepared and into post-secondary pathways and the reason for that is not just because we have uh as you know the enrollment uh future enrollment graduating seniors from high school will decline over the next 15 years we have currently experienced recent increases modest increases in uh total post-secondary enrollment our combined annual growth rate over the last five years about 0.6 percent uh just you'll see on slide two so that's not uh it's not really rapid growth but given where we were

[00:18:16] during covid and subsequent years that's a reasonably modest growth the reason that that is important as you look in these are national numbers although there are a number of Virginia state agencies that will present data about the needs that we have for post-secondary credentials in our own workforce the country and Virginia will experience substantial need across education health professions and management that are associated with bachelor's level programming These are what the Georgetown Center on Education and Workforce considers good jobs.

[00:18:51] And as you see, the percentage of all jobs that will require a bachelor's pathway between 2021 and 2031 will grow by 7%. In fact, the total proportion will be 7% larger. The growth will be much higher than that. So of bachelor's degree jobs, those pathways that position individuals for employment with a bachelor's degree,

[00:19:14] Almost 80% of those will be considered good jobs by 2031 compared to high school or lower credentials that will be half or less likely to be what is considered a good job by the Georgetown Center of Education and Workforce, which is a job that can sustain a family at some degree of comfort.

[00:19:32] So that is the national picture. Here in Virginia, since July, we've had 220,000 open positions, and the job rate of 4.9% was 14% higher than the national average of 4.3%. Our ratio of individuals, unemployed individuals, to job openings is 0.7, which means we don't have enough people to fill available jobs is the easiest way to read that.

[00:19:58] We will fall 19,000 credentials short of what was intended in the 2011 Top Jobs Act. So these are credentials required to meet the employment requirements of those higher quality jobs. And while we have expanded the number of credentials provided to Virginia individuals, we are still behind where we need to be relative to the goals that were set in that 2011 Act.

[00:20:23] Some of these barriers are going to be familiar to the board. so the limited social family capital adequate academic preparation complexity application process we are not able to solve all of these at one point with one solution so what we are trying to do and our council has endorsed budget and policy recommendations and among those is an approach that would create a much lower friction entry point for Virginia students at public institutions to enroll in Virginia post-secondary programs so for students attending public school divisions in the Commonwealth, how do we make their entrance to post-secondary

[00:20:59] education and training much easier? One of the points of friction that we believe we can help solve for is that application process. So right now, as you would anticipate in the research from Sue Danarski and others in this space, have identified a number of barriers, but that application process being a significant one, particularly for students who are first-generation, lower income or perhaps from communities that have lower participation rates in post-secondary education generally. So by simplifying that application process, we can create a much more direct, streamlined admissions process for students in the Commonwealth of Virginia. So

[00:21:38] Virginia, the goal is to have Virginia students attend Virginia institutions. We've begun some work on this. We have actually some fairly interesting findings from work we did over the summer 77% of our survey respondents said that their number one source of information about their future path is family and that could be a good thing but for most students that's probably insufficient given the amount of data that is out there the amount of information available that is a fairly limited and narrow scope of what they're saying is most important what we've learned is that part of the challenge is that the information is it's too

[00:22:17] much there is simply too much information for students to make an effective decision so how we influence them and how we provide more personalized recommendations as part of our approach so can we simplify the admissions process can we simplify the application or maybe even remove the application process altogether and can we provide personalized recommendations for that student so that instead of choosing from one of a hundred options they have perhaps three or four options that could be best fit for a student with their their characteristics 84% this is not surprising said that cost is the most important factor in their choice of potential pathways. However, the cost of attending higher

[00:22:55] education has actually declined over the last 10 years. This is not the popular opinion because the headlines, and I'm sure most of you in your Google news feeds are seeing cost of college is higher than ever. In dollar terms, real dollar terms as a percentage or a proportion of income, it is less expensive to attend today than it has been in the last 10 to 15 years. Also, a number of institutions, both private institutions in Virginia and elsewhere have begun what they call a tuition reset, which is that they are

reducing tuition rates, the published tuition rate, so that it's much more transparent as to what students might not actually pay.

[00:23:29] And so the headlines that are prevalent today perhaps don't reflect reality, that it is actually easier and more affordable to attend post-secondary education than it has been in some time. And then the other potential challenge that we have right now, As of the 23-24 ASCA report, we have in Virginia 288 counselors to one student, which is a little bit higher than the 250.

[00:23:53] I know that the Commonwealth is intending to get to that 250 to one ratio that's recommended by the Association of School Counselors. So this data is now two years old, and so I expect we probably made progress since then, but this is what we had at the time of publication. So as we get into the solution, so that hopefully provides a little bit of context for the need for what we're talking about, we get into the direct admissions approach.

[00:24:21] So direct admissions is a process whereby students can receive a letter of admission earlier in the process, where if they meet certain academic criteria, they can receive admission to certain institutions. a number of national organizations are already piloting this some have incorporated this a lot the for example the common app is one that will do that niche is another that will do that and so institutions will set their criteria and students that meet that criteria will receive an admissions letter instead of having to go through the application process number states have already done their own system so you've seen Idaho Georgia Indiana have direct admissions

[00:25:00] programs a number of others California just recently signed into law a direct admissions approach, Illinois, Tennessee, and Alabama and Connecticut are all pursuing different approaches to direct admissions. The research on this has been fairly positive, I would say overall, not just in terms of the results for students, but in Idaho, which began this process almost now 10 years ago, their in-state college enrollment grew by 6 to 12 percent after implementing direct admissions, which is a pretty significant increase. Now, we have a higher college-going rate than Idaho did so i'd expect our our impact to be perhaps more modest than that but still given the the

[00:25:36] results it's worth we believe uh worth pursuing uh other examples you know tennessee's approach is perhaps problematic from an experimental design because students will receive different interventions and so it's not perhaps not a model that we would follow what we intend or what we have presented to our council and our council has endorsed is an approach whereby we would create an in-state portal for parents and prospective students to explore Virginia institutions and that with a data sharing agreement with we have with the Virginia Department of Education that their academic data could be ported over to their profile where instead of self-reporting which is a point of

[00:26:16] friction in the application process their profile would be pre-populated with their academic history and that pre-populated academic history then would present to Virginia institutions students in Virginia that would be eligible to attend based on criteria set by the institutions. Now we have worked closely with a number of institutions already on this. We intend to continue that work into the coming year. Our goal is to have a pilot with at least a number of our public and private institutions participating for the fall 2026 enrollment cycle. So in just nine months time we would have our first Virginia students receiving some direct admission offers from Virginia

[00:26:53] institutions. So if we're able to do that then we expect to be able to offset some of the potential demographic declines that we are expecting over the next 15 years. Virginia is in a little bit better position

than some other states relative to that demographic decline, but we still expect a five to six percent decline in graduating high school seniors over that 15-year period.

[00:27:14] So given the needs of our workforce, given the population declines, any effort to increase the number of students who are completing a post-secondary program of study will help meet the needs of the state's economic development so our work so far has begun we have now and we will expect an initial release in February now of our first what we refer to as a minimally viable product which will allow students to create a profile and begin to populate that profile and explore career and academic programming options that's built on a mobile first design given where students are these days most

[00:27:52] of the computing that happens happens on a mobile device so that was important for us and then as I mentioned the data sharing between Department of Education and SHV which we already have a terrific relationship around BLDS but this additional layer of data sharing will create individualized profile for Virginia students and that will that will create a high fidelity between their reported GPA and test scores and other academic data points that will help institutions decide on who is a good fit for enrollment at their institution so So what we think makes this interesting is it is a single point of entry, it is verified

[00:28:31] and validated data, it is not self-reported, and it removes the friction point of the student having to create an application. So that's the biggest difference that we see between our proposed approach and other approaches like the Common App or Niche or others. With the Common App, you still have to create an app.

[00:28:47] You still have to create an application and that's what institutions would review. In this case, we propose creating a data lake of student data that would be available to Virginia institutions to recruit from directly. So there is no application process. There is simply an admissions process for students that meet sufficient academic criteria.

[00:29:05] What the advantage is to this is that students that may not be thinking about post-secondary opportunities already will not have to make the decision whether college is correct for them or not. They can receive admission to a post-secondary institution where they may not have ever gone through the application process otherwise.

[00:29:23] The research on that has been pretty consistent, that students from first generation college families, lower income or minority populations do much better in a direct admissions environment and are much more likely to enroll. And even in 2025, when headlines suggest otherwise, a post-secondary credential is still the fastest path to economic mobility in our current economy.

[00:29:45] One thing that we do need to incorporate into this is much clearer net price and aid opportunities. is consistently one of the complaints that we hear from families and parents is that they just don't know how much they're going to have to pay so we are working on a solution within the platform that would identify not just what is the net price but what is the potential aid package that students might be able to receive so they can begin to plan and and part of it is telling the story that college is more affordable than than you might think and then finally we are not going to ask all institutions to participate in the same way some of our selective institutions may not participate at all they have enough applications that they don't they don't need this approach but for our access oriented institutions we believe this is

[00:30:23] a much easier path for them to enroll the target incoming classes both for the community college system as well as our public four-year institutions that are focused on access so that will give the

institutions flexibility over their participation as well as a robust set of options for students that choose to participate as well so that's our intent that's our proposed timeline like i say our council did endorse a budget and policy recommendation for the general assembly as part of chev's legislative recommendations and we've been up making noise about that already with members of the general assembly so happy to answer any

[00:30:58] questions miss mcpherson um so as i i think i understand it a student would actually receive from every college for which their profile met certain requirements they would get a letter from each school saying you can be directly admitted to our institution and is this with an application fee or no cost you're waiving all of that as a part of the platform and they just get the letter

[00:31:32] yeah the intent would be to waive the application fee we have you know some of these details still need to be worked out but the intent is to reduce as many points of friction as possible application fee is one. And it will discuss with them as far as the platform can determine what the potential financial aid package would be? Yes, based on some information that they're, that's the one piece that the student and the family would have to populate is some information about their financial situation to get a more accurate picture. Now, is there a max limit for

[00:32:11] each school so say for instance if it was one particular school does the platform set say for instance if they get a hundred students that that's their cutoff point or if they could potentially feel populate their whole open enrollment through the platform that's something we'd have to evaluate as we go I'm not sure that the institutions are going to be able to effectively capture a hundred percent of what they need any particular population yeah those institutions in Virginia that have had some direct admissions have found a much higher number of applications but

[00:32:49] that hasn't always translated to higher yield and so I think that's more indicative of national direct admissions programs than what we're anticipating with a Virginia specific one and so some of this will have to evaluate as we go and can you like send us the schools that are participating in the pilot program we will certainly yeah we certainly would like to see of. And one other, the data I might be interested in is what is the actual profile? Like, you know, if you've got certain parameters that say this is what we're looking for, we're looking for only

[00:33:25] the students that have a 3.0 embedder or a 2.5 embedder, so if you could send me some info on the profile that was being used. Yeah, that'll be up to each institution, but some have identified a 3.5 as the cutoff. Others have said for transfer students it may be 2.5, and so that'll be up to institution and as we gather that we have it for the schools that are participating in the pilot program what their criteria is we do for some already we will for yeah as we go whatever you have let us thanks mr. Hanson thank you thank you Scott I think I saw an announcement from

[00:34:03] the department the other day about some of the data that they're going to be putting out on cost and debt burden and other things is the data that they're going to be putting out or the whatever delivery mechanism that is going to be aligned to what we're doing here? And I don't know if you saw the same thing or not, but I just wasn't sure if that's going to be. We don't have all the details what the U.S. Department is going to be using. My assumption is that they will use the same data sets that they've used historically. So whether that's iPads

[00:34:36] or a similar SPS, some of the student data surveys that they conduct, we are an active partner with the Department of Education on those data collections, so I anticipate that we will be able to

incorporate those data feeds once there's a little more clarity.

[00:34:58] Anyone else have questions? Mr. Monk? Just a few. Thinking about student, when do you anticipate students utilizing this within their path? So what age, what grade sequence? So currently, our access programs begin in middle school, and so that's where we would begin exposure to this as well.

[00:35:18] So parents and prospective students would have access to it as early as 8th grade. Got it. And you mentioned community college, so I want to applaud the integration there. Can you talk to me a little bit more about what that looks like from the workforce side as well?

[00:35:34] We know most of our community colleges obviously have the academic components, but how does this navigate a learner through making that decision of whether maybe a certificate program or a two-year component, or they need to further beyond that? So it is a great question because there are many post-secondary pathways that lead to good employment, and not all of those are bachelor's programs, although the majority of bachelor's programs are leading a good job.

[00:36:00] So we have incorporated a career assessment, interest assessment, into the prototype of the application already, aligned with the Department of Labor data around potential occupations. And so we align that with the education required for a particular role.

[00:36:19] So if somebody's interest is a data center technician for which one of our community colleges offers a program, it's not a bachelor's program. It could be a certificate or it could be an associate's program. Based on the student's interest, we would identify that as a potential program offering that they could pursue.

[00:36:36] Our expectation is that most students will find, and this is where the data is just very, very clear, that most students have no idea how to get from education to career. And as a high school, well, teaching a religion class to high school seniors, that was the thing that they were most concerned about, is making the wrong decision about their future.

[00:36:59] But they had all this information and no way to actually crystallize it into a decision matrix. So what we hope to do is provide, based on their interests, a set of recommendations that they could choose from. And if it doesn't feel like a good fit, they can continue to iterate until they find something that sounds interesting, whether that's a certificate two-year or four-year program and make recommendations accordingly so we expect that some percentage of the students will pursue non-baccalaureate post-secondary credentials if i may just a few more really want to applaud you know the parent component of this as a first-gen student i think my parents would

[00:37:36] have wished to had some of the resources that would be available here just for you know helping their child through this process and then kind of on the back end and the data you mentioned I'd be interested to see, you know, after a couple years what data this presents is, you know, thinking about regionally, is there a trend where students are more interested in this?

[00:37:59] And then at our secondary level can go in and maybe adjust course offerings based upon that, availability of those courses, what my teacher's turn up looks like. just because if we've got students that are highly interested in areas that maybe our K-12 isn't offering, that will, I think, inform some of that.

[00:38:19] So can you speak to maybe what the data sharing might look like between agencies and on the back end? Yeah, I think that's one of the advantages that we expect to be able to show is that once we've,

now that we have a data sharing agreement between Department of Education, we already collect information on enrollment across all of our public institutions and most of our private nonprofit institutions as well.

[00:38:38] so we can identify students from now k-12 into higher education where they end up and we have a more complete picture of their their academic pathway and we are working on and connecting that to employment as long as they're in virginia or one of the neighboring states where we have a data sharing agreement we should be able to see not just where they came from in terms of k-12 experience where they went to in terms of post-secondary experience and then where they landed in terms of the workplace. And so that is going to be, if we're able to connect all those dots, which we are in the process of doing, that would put Virginia among a very small number of

[00:39:16] states to have that visibility into how our education system is performing against the needs of the workforce. Got it. Thank you. Great work. I appreciate it. Superintendent Gellickson. Executive Director Fleming, thank you so much. Can you just level set for the board here? We'll hear a little bit more about it later on your backpacks that are live on the site. The board has talked about their dream vision for our school quality profiles moving forward is that because of data sharing agreements and more collaboration across the education pipeline agencies that we can better show post high school really did you really deliver on that

[00:39:52] promise of readiness. So you already are really leading on the institutions and now our next step is to close that information gap. So we'd love for you to just remind them about what you've done. Yeah. So, thank you, Superintendent. For those of you familiar with CHEV, we have decades of data on our post-singularity outcomes, and it's all lived at a site that was research.chev.edu that had probably dozens of monthly visitors.

[00:40:19] We have now transformed that into a digital, we refer to them as sometimes the fact packs, but that first slide that I showed you is an example of what we have just to produce in visual format, much clearer understanding of what's happening across all of our public institutions.

[00:40:36] So research.chev.edu still exists. You can go and you can dive very deeply into any of the issue areas that are of interest. But the fact packs provide a much easier at-a-glance understanding of several important key indicators for what's happening in Virginia education, higher education.

[00:40:53] So enrollment is just one example. We have financial indicators. We have retention and completion indicators. We have information on retention broken down by demographics so that you can see across institutions how they're doing at retaining different categories of students and ultimately how those students are doing against credentials and graduation.

[00:41:14] And we also have the connection between high-need occupations in Virginia and the number of students graduating from a public institution that are heading into some of those high-need occupation areas as well. So we've spent the last two years really getting this into shape, and I think what now exists at collegeoutcomes.chev.edu is a much easier visualization of all the data that we collect.

[00:41:40] Other questions? Ms. McPherson? When the letters go out to the students, is there any indication or have preparations been made for the guidance counselors, say, for instance, to get the data about their particular school?

[00:41:59] So say if I got 19 letters and I'm like, okay, this is what I want to pursue, is there still going to be that interaction? So will they get that data along with their superintendents about the students and who's applied? Yes. So as we've been prototyping the platform, we've worked with students, parents, and guidance counselors to understand what their different needs are. And what we hope this will do is facilitate, you know, if you have 250 students to one guidance counselor, their time is obviously going to be limited. So how do we make sure that they make the most of that time? And if you don't know anything about that student, those first 15 minutes might just be understanding where they're

[00:42:37] coming from. And so can we provide data that provides a lot of information about the background of that student and those types of questions where are they getting admitted to what does their current academic status look like and just have that ready for the guidance counselor so that they can focus that limited amount of time on the most productive questions so yes that's a long answer to your question but yes their questions I just have one for myself I know you talked about the debt burden and being very transparent with families about what that looks like just want to clarify that that's not just the entry point debt burden but the debt burden over the course of

[00:43:15] four years or to reach that bachelor's level degree because I do know that you know we talk to all of us talk to high school seniors and you know we talk to so many who maybe are in college and or in higher education at some level whether it's in a college or university public or private whether it's in community college and many of them talk about not being able to know whether or not they can afford it in the in the future years what's the what is a more

[00:43:54] robust plan that I'm sure you all have to help support that because I mean that that's clearly a burden and a friction point as well so I think that's of high importance to us yeah well Well, institutions have a number of tools at their disposal when they're creating an aid package, including state financial aid.

[00:44:16] So the state spends several hundred million dollars to provide financial aid for students attending public institutions, and we also have the tuition assistance grant for Virginia institutions, who are private institutions enrolling Virginia students. And so that is part of the overall financial aid package that we hope to help clarify for students, is what percentage is grant aid, what percentage might need to be loans, and We have a number of institutions in the Commonwealth that have adopted a zero-debt burden commitment.

[00:44:46] If you are a family with an income below a certain level, you will graduate from that institution having never borrowed a penny. And I'm not sure that message is getting out there as much as it should. The other thing to take into account is that most individuals view debt as kind of a big negative thing, but they're also willing to go into debt for a vehicle, a used car.

[00:45:09] And so when we look at the average debt burden for a public four-year graduate, there's around \$30,000 in Virginia. The economic benefit of that degree is likely to be at least a million dollars compared with a high school degree over their lifetime. And so you can buy a used car for \$30,000 or you can buy a four-year degree for \$30,000 of debt.

[00:45:30] One of those will pay you a million dollars over your lifetime and one of those will depreciate the moment you drive it off the lot. And so those are the types of decisions that we want to try and encourage people to be considering. It's not necessarily just about the debt. It's about the debt and what comes behind it that is more meaningful.

[00:45:48] Just to follow up, I guess as I am the mother of a high school freshman and start looking towards what my daughter's future looks like, I would, as a parent, want to be able to see, okay, I know I have to pay this in my first year, but what do those subsequent years look like?

[00:46:12] And so is that planning mechanism in place is, I guess, what my biggest question is. Yes. So we hope to be able to estimate that. And part of that is being able to predict what those aid packages look like, not just for the freshman year, but as parents of college students know, and there's a joke that I would tell if we had time for it, that the recruiting process is always a little bit different.

[00:46:38] Once you've made the decision, then things look a little bit different. And so being able to predict that is, I agree, would be important. And so to the extent we can, we intend to do that. Superintendent Gellickson.

[00:46:54] Can you speak briefly more? You hinted at it. Are the private Virginia institutions going to be able to join? Yes. So I've had extensive conversations with the private nonprofit institutions, and they're very excited about the possibility not just to be included, but because this is an approach that they believe will help their enrollment targets as well.

[00:47:17] And I think for a standard of fairness across Virginia, we should be including private institutions. We have a number of public institutions that do very well. I would argue that Virginia has the best higher education system in the world, and that includes our private institutions. And so we do want to include them.

[00:47:33] They want to be included, and so yes. Great. And then one more question before I make a closing comment. Can you speak a little bit more on the transferability? Shev's already been a great partner with the Virginia Department of Ed on this, but how you're thinking about that for the portal for costs and planning purposes?

[00:47:53] Transferability of? From institution to institution. So like a high school senior might start one path, and that plays into some of the costs that you just addressed? Yes. So there are tools already in place in Virginia that intend to try and show the cost of transfer.

[00:48:14] it does get tricky because a transfer pathway already has more complexity to it than if you were to start and finish at the same institution and so trying to anticipate that together with some of the financial assistance that's available for transfer students it that that picture is more complicated we hope to plug into existing platforms you know the virginia transfer portal transfer virginia has a lot of information about that and we want to make sure sure that we're leveraging available data to the extent that we can we really don't want to recreate anything unless there's a significant value to the student or to the parent in doing so well I just want to speak on behalf of

[00:48:53] the agency we are so grateful for our partnership with chef our office of advanced learning benefits greatly from that partnership and we really feel like this is gonna take us to the the next level with our 3E readiness and really eliminating unnecessary access barriers and trying to make it as simple as possible for families whether they are first-generation student or a multi generation student just to simplify even further and make that as seamless as possible so we can't thank you enough we know your agenda is packed this time of year so to you and the council we really value your time and know that

[00:49:29] those tuning in in the field will appreciate this information as well thank

[00:49:33] you madam superintendent thank you board thank you so much okay item b is next up so good morning

[00:50:28] board members i am tiara booker de wire deputy superintendent of student outcomes and school quality and i'll be co-presenting with the chief chief operations officer christina berter and we are going to discuss teacher salaries and over and get provide an overview of teacher vacancies When you go to slide two, what you'll see is a link to a dashboard.

[00:50:56] This dashboard has comprehensive information on teacher vacancies across the Commonwealth. You could drill down by region. You can even find the vacancy rates for other positions within the school. And so while I'm providing you this high-level snapshot of teaching vacancies, this dashboard, you can go deeper with all of that data.

[00:51:19] On slide three, you'll see that for the third consecutive year, Virginia has decreased teaching, statewide teaching vacancies across the state, which that means that every student is starting that school year with a teacher in the classroom.

[00:51:41] And that makes all the difference when you talk about, when you think about student learning and ensuring that they have those quality educators in front of them. You never want to start with a high vacancy rate, and the fact that Virginia's rate keeps going down is truly, truly wonderful.

[00:52:02] On slide four, you'll see by region the teacher vacancy rates, and you'll notice that most of the regions overall, their teacher vacancy rates went down. There were a few regions where it went up just a little or remained the same, but overall, our regions are doing a really great job at recruiting educators and working to retain their highly effective educators.

[00:52:28] And we are doubling down on some research-based practices to support this reduction in the vacancy rate across the state. So, number one, we have expanded the licensure pathway.

[00:52:44] We know that just having that traditional route could be a barrier. We have career switchers. We have people who already have their bachelor's degrees. We have paraprofessionals that may want to advance into a teaching role. So, there are pathways for all of those options, and I'll show you in a few slides that it's not just pathways, but there's funding to support those pathways.

[00:53:07] So there's a ton of financial investment in supporting the cost of licensure assessments and supporting the cost of tuition. All the things that are barriers to entering the teaching field, we have lowered them across Virginia.

[00:53:25] And a key item is this climate and working conditions survey. We want to know how do teachers perceive their experience in the school building? because we know teachers are not going to stay where they don't feel welcome where they don't have the resources they need where they may feel the the conditions are not great and so annually this survey goes out and we hear from our educators and we are able to use that information to inform some support to our teachers i'm going to bring up chief burda who's going to talk about

[00:53:58] the the salaries thank you miss booker dwyer good morning president creasy members of the board superintendent Gullickson now we'll shift to look at salaries and on slide six what you will see is a capture of the investment that the commonwealth of Virginia has made in compensation supplements

from fiscal year 22 to 2026 and it is a 23 increase in compensation for state employees including teachers with the timing and the compounding of these increases it actually

[00:54:31] represents a 25.27 percent increase in compensation. Of those actions between fiscal year 2022 and 2026 that were actually signed into law by Governor Youngkin, teacher salary increases have increased 18 percent, which is a compounded growth rate of 19.3 percent across the last four years. Moving to slide seven, we wanted to give you an analysis of what those increases look like from fiscal year 22 to 26 by region and pleased to report that the majority of our regions are outpacing the statewide increase in the same period. So the majority of our regions have

[00:55:10] increased greater than the 23 percent compensation increase. Looking at one other piece as you move to slide eight, you will see a snapshot of the five-year analysis with the top 20 compensation increases between fiscal year 22 and 26. This is quite the representation of small-medium and large school divisions, as well as rural and urban school divisions. Many of the divisions and the localities provided additional funding to support compensation increases in their own communities that exceeded what the state contribution was. Grayson County increased

[00:55:47] 35.93 percent, while Tazewell was second with an increase of 34.2 percent, and Norton City increased 33.81% inclusive of the 23% salary increase from the state. That represents the top three school divisions across the last five years. I'll now turn it back to Ms. Booker-Dyer.

[00:56:08] So in addition to those increased salaries, there's a ton of grant opportunities that our aspiring educators can take advantage of. And so listed on slide nine, you'll see just a snapshot of some of those those funding sources and so you have the the Virginia teaching scholarship loans and that helps to cover the tuition of aspiring educators you have the the grant for that specifically spoke focused on special education personnel and once again this is given to higher

[00:56:47] ed and they help to prepare more special educators there's a residency partnership grant and that helps to to help to prepare and to help the harder to staff school divisions find and support aspiring educators on the next slide you'll see the fifty thousand dollar grant to help to support those licensure assessment fees and then there's also a grant to help to support stem teacher recruitment and retention we know we always need more math and science teachers there's a grant

[00:57:22] for the hometown teacher grant and what the research shows is that teachers who are who are from a school division who grew up in that school division went to school in that school division and then teach in that school division they're more likely to stay in that school division and so you won't have that turnover um it helps with that retention so the homegrown teacher grant is very important and then we have the six million dollars state apprenticeship expansion fund and that helps increase the number of it helps to really build that pipeline of educators

[00:57:55] preparing to be teachers and also we have one that supports leaders. On slide 11 you'll see the outcomes of the survey results so I mentioned earlier about the the survey on the Virginia school survey of climate and working conditions and the great thing is is that 90.6 percent of the survey respondents who were elementary and middle school teachers they want to they want to stay teaching they they are having they're experiencing great working conditions and they

[00:58:31] they want to stay in the classroom and that means a lot to have experienced qualified teachers in front of our students we have a small percentage of them that want to leave the state and that's okay

they can take what they have learned in virginia and spread it nationally because we have some of the best teachers here in virginia but overall the teachers in virginia do want to stay in virginia and teach and so with next steps we are not stopping here we're actually doing a deep dive a whole overhaul we're looking at every part of our educator preparation of our office of

[00:59:07] of educator and preparation to ensure that we are maximizing all of the opportunities for educators to earn their license to be supported in the same thing for leaders and so you heard into a previous board meeting that we have added the the praxis bridge program we're modifying the early childhood special special education endorsement we are expanding grow your own models we're adding a new mathematics assessment for middle school teachers in geometry and we are looking to simplify our licensure process as a whole so we

[00:59:44] we are actively working to look to see what what are the requirements in the license and what are the things that we don't really need in that license application and how can we vary how can we streamline and simplify it especially for those who already have a teaching credential from out of state that they're out of state they want to come teach in Virginia and and they have an active teaching credential how can we ensure that that barrier for them is lowered so that qualified teachers from other states can come and and teach our students in Virginia so we had so so be on the lookout we have a lot more that's coming from our office of educator

[01:00:23] preparation and we look forward to continuing to come back and let you know of all the great work that will be happening question i have one um so if you go back to the uh what slide is this slide 11 um where you talked about continuing teaching in a state other than virginia and i see that being that one percent or just less than one percent i mean is that is that generalized movement in and out of the state that's

[01:00:57] based on a desire to leave the state to teach somewhere else or is it because you know we have a lot of military communities. I don't know whether I'm staying in the state or I know I'm moving out of state. Like that's not a huge number. I get it. However, you know, what do we know about that data? Right. That's really what I'm trying to get at. And so that is one of the things we do want to go a little bit deeper with this survey and refine some of the questions. We know that naturally teachers are, especially as you said, in a state that's heavy military, you're going to see this kind of entrance and exit of educators but we want to dig deeper to

[01:01:36] find out why and so that is that is on the horizon now other questions here yes you mentioned the workplace culture analysis is there a time maybe we can see that as well yes we currently have the team now analyzing all 110 questions So it's a ton of great data from that survey that's administered, and we just have to present it in a way that everyone understands it, and then that we can make that data actionable.

[01:02:12] We know this survey has been going on for years and years and years, but you've never really seen the responses to all of those questions presented in a way that we can then say, okay, let's dig deep here or there. So that is what we are working on moving forward.

[01:02:27] So another data point that has really become common practice in the business world is they're called stay interviews. You might be familiar with that. It would be really neat to take our top performers, especially with some of this growth data we have now, and ask them why they stay in the field and kind of, you know, how do we keep the best.

[01:02:47] I mean, surveying, everybody's great. But as you know, surveys go sometimes the people that answer them have the highest, you know, emotions around things. So, but to kind of target our, you know, maybe teacher award winners or some of these, some of the data we're getting back and ask them, why do you stay?

[01:03:04] What is it about your school or Virginia that you want to teach here? I think that'd be pretty powerful data, so. Definitely. We want to work more with our teachers of the year, principals, our distinguished principals, principals. We want to work more with all of those groups because there's so much to learn from them.

[01:03:20] Thank you. Pearson? I just had a comment. I wanted to give a shout-out to Taiwan and Eastern Shore on the percentage of reduction in their teacher vacancy rate. And also, because it was one of the highest areas, and also the Chesapeake City and Norfolk on the five-year trend of them increasing their teacher salary.

[01:03:47] Yes. Other questions? Superintendent Gellickson. Chief Berta, can you speak to the two attachments? Because those are also on our website, just to draw attention to.

[01:04:02] So thank you for that reminder, Superintendent. There is a full list of all school divisions. One is an alphabetical order for you that goes highest to lowest, and that's where you'll see the majority are trending above the state average compensation increase of 23% in that time period.

[01:04:19] You will also see the highest to lowest percentages. So where we pulled that chart to show you the top 20, you will also be able to see all those, and the public can see all of those in that attachment. there are two attachments on the board agenda also that show all 131 districts thank you anyone else superintendent gullickson well thank you to both of you and for drawing attention to this um a huge testament to our leadership and school boards for prioritizing teacher pay we're so grateful to for the governor and his priority on raising teacher compensation in partnership with

[01:04:59] the general assembly and you will continue to get more updates on some great teacher pathway stats into the January 8th meeting as well as on deck on the educator prep programs and so there's more to that because you certainly can see some places where vacancies no longer exist at all which is great and so those are some of the places that we are doubling down on for our newest office of Office in Excellence and Best Practices in partnership with our

[01:05:33] educator preparation team to make sure that we are learning from those folks who are down to zero. Mr. Hanson. I'd just like to echo Superintendent Golickson's comment, and I think the shortage as well.

[01:05:50] When some of us joined the board three and a half years ago, it was really a critical issue for us. And so just thank you for the data points to be able to show the progress that we've made. Maybe just for future considerations as well, I know a couple of the presentations we've received the last couple of months from some of our outside data partners.

[01:06:14] But maybe distinguishing the teacher data from the non-teacher data and just also I know from the areas of growth there's been a higher level of growth than the non-teacher employees.

[01:06:33] But, and also just maybe some of the future demographic data of maybe the aging of our teachers, but also the enrollment trends for students in the next 10 years. And then also just any sectors

like special ed that we've always focused on, but just, and I know you probably got it, but I just think it would be helpful to continue to understand what's before us as well.

[01:07:00] Definitely. I think, too, another piece of that that I'd like to piggyback on is I know that you guys have this data, but those teachers that are waiting to retire at full retirement or those who are taking early retirement and thus also taking, you know, a retirement cut, I think that would be some data that would be an interesting place to.

[01:07:29] I mean, I know clearly the pandemic had a lot of impact on early retirements, but how is that sort of leveled out at this point, and what does that look like in the last year or two years?

[01:07:48] Other comments or questions here? Thank you, ladies. Appreciate it. We are going to do item C, and then we'll take lunch after that.

[01:07:59] Okay, so in keeping with this theme of educator preparation and teaching vacancies, we have Dr. John L. Torbert, who is our director in our Office of Educator Preparation.

[01:08:29] She is responsible for all things that have to do with the quality of our educator preparation program. So all of those reviews, every time I come in, she's on her computer working through a review that has just been done. And so she is going to share the whole review process and some information about how we ensure the quality of our programs.

[01:08:50] And she is an expert in all things, so please ask her lots and lots of questions. She can handle it. And so I'll turn it over to her.

[01:09:06] Good morning, Superintendent Gullickson and President Creasy and board members. I'm not even sure if it's still morning, but either way. As the Director of Teacher Education, I'm delighted to share an overview of what guides our Virginia Educator Preparation Programs, also known as EPPs.

[01:09:29] In Virginia, there are 36 EPPs that produce highly trained educators for the Commonwealth, from teachers to school counselors to principals. As a semi-product of two Virginia EPPs, I can speak candidly and personally about the colleges and universities in Virginia.

[01:09:50] There are many, many pathways in Virginia. We're fortunate that we just don't have our traditional pathways for in Virginia. So in Virginia, we have several different pathways that allow you to become a teacher in Virginia or educator. I'm gonna talk a little bit about the teacher residency program and apprenticeship.

[01:10:09] Both of those programs fall under the traditional process, pathway for teachers because you have to be enrolled in an approved program in order to be eligible those particular pathways. The apprenticeship program is sort of like our grow your own and allows aspiring educators to complete coursework while gaining teaching experience.

[01:10:32] Then we have our teacher residency program which I consider every time I hear residency I think of a doctor. So these are the doctors in the field learning how to do what they do in that year's residency. Then we have our universal reciprocity and that allows individuals from other states to come in that are licensure that are licensed teachers in other states then through an easier process and we also have our alternate routes we have several different alternate routes in virginia we have our career switchers we have i teach and we also have teach for america all of

[01:11:07] those programs have additional requirements in addition to just be being admitted into that particular program. And our last and our traditional, our last pathway is the traditional, which is our EPPs, and that's kind of my home and where I lie with the traditional programs.

[01:11:26] And those are our completion of state-approved educator prep programs in an accredited college or university. And in order to be considered a completer of an educator prep program, you You have to complete coursework, practicum experiences, and assessment.

[01:11:43] So those are the three things that are really important for us to understand, and when we consider a traditional program, it's just not taking coursework. You have to do all three of those to be a completer of a traditional program.

[01:12:07] Our office is driven by the regulations that govern the review and approval of education preparation programs. I eat and sleep the regulations because that is what drives everything that we do. And so within our regulations, there are seven areas that we look at.

[01:12:24] But today, I'm going to specifically talk about two, four, five, and six, and seven. Accreditation, standards of the biennial approval process, and the professional education program accountability, and competencies for endorsement areas.

[01:12:44] So in 2018, the approved regulations were amended to allow accreditation through one national accrediting body, which is the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation, which we know is CATE.

[01:12:59] Prior to this change, Virginia had several different ways that we could be accredited. We could be accredited through N-CATE, NTE, or Board Accreditation. With those different three pathways, this posed variation with accountability and measures and program requirements.

[01:13:17] So Virginia adopted the CAPE accreditation process for all EPPs in '18. Per our current regulations, all programs must be accredited by CAPE to be considered an approved program in Virginia, which means that they must adhere to the requirements of the CAPE-Virginia Partnership Agreement and the competencies of the state of Virginia regulations.

[01:13:40] CAPE and DOE, they have an agreement, which we call our CAPE Agreement, and is revised every five years. The current agreement is from August 1, 2022 to July 31, 2027. To be a member of CAPE is voluntary. And again, Virginia volunteered to participate with CAPE, but is now part of our regulations. So we really don't have any other option other than CAPE. I will say this over the last 14 years with working with CAPE, they have streamlined their process to a whole

[01:14:15] another level that allows for EPPs to actually demonstrate what they're doing initially when we joined CAPE. It was a little roller coaster, but that was again 14 years ago. But we have now transitioned to a smooth, I would call it carousel ride, that we know what we're doing and EPPs are aware of the requirements for CAPE. So our CAPE visits are conducted every seven years. Prior to the pandemic's visits were conducted in person and so it was a three-day visit so we actually or rather I and the team will go to the university and we would spend three days with the universities

[01:14:53] looking through documents and reviewing the data interviewing teacher candidates interviewing staff and so now post-pandemic we have transitioned to virtual visits which is still three days and but everything is done virtually online and so we're literally there online interviewing meeting with

staff all the two three days and meeting as a team to discuss the evidence that is presented from that particularly EPP the bit our visits are joint visits which is unusual there are not many states that have a joint visit so that means that we have volunteers from other states that

[01:15:32] are trained in CAPE and they participate in the visit and we have one representative from Virginia from a Virginia EPP that serves on that team and so they write to a standard just like all the other volunteers on Cape train visitors on that team and I also serve on the team kind of sorter but I serve as the state consultant so I interpret anything and everything as it relates to Virginia because what you'll find is Virginia is unique and I heard this said before in everything that we do and so we try to interpret to make sure that they are clear in what the requirements are for Virginia.

[01:16:11] On the team there are five members, it could be anywhere from five to six members depending on the size of the EPP. Our particular CAPE agreement has that we can have one to two state representatives depending on how large that EPP is and so if it's a larger EPP like George Mason, Liberty will have two visitors to serve on that particular team.

[01:16:35] In the joint agreement, we also have our state addendum, and within the state addendum, there are different requirements that align with the CAPE requirements, but also align with what Virginia requires of our EPPs. So when we look at the requirements -- when we look at what we're doing with our EPPs, the education of PrEP must be accredited, and I've already shared that one with you.

[01:17:01] Oh, my little slides. CAPE has five different standards that they require, that the EPP must show evidence that they have met. First standard is content and pedagogy knowledge.

[01:17:18] Second standard is clinical partnerships and practice. Our third standard is candidate recruitment, progression and support. And standard four is program impact. And standard five is quality assurance system and continuous improvement.

[01:17:33] So while we are going through our CAIT review process, the state review process is doing going concurrently. So two processes at the same time. Our office, or rather me, I'm doing the state review process and the team is completing the CAIT review process.

[01:17:50] And so those two, and I serve when the CAIT team is meeting as well, to participate in those conversations and discussions. I want to note that, and I'll talk a little bit about this, the state review process in a later slide so you can see what is actually happening at the same time.

[01:18:13] On our next two slides it just gives an overview of what's going on through the CAPE review process. First we have our data collection. We collect data all year long so it's not something that stops. The CAPE review process is continuous because they're focused on continuous improvement.

[01:18:32] That data collection starts years out because you have to present at least three cycles of data in order to represent for CAPE. Then we have our self-study report. The self-study report is written by the EPP, and that shows evidence in the supporting documentation as it relates to the five standards for CAPE.

[01:18:55] Then next we have our data collection. Within the CAPE review process, there's a data collection, and they have to include all different types of evidence that is showing that they are actually doing what they're doing. We're just not talking quantitative, we're talking qualitative, we're talking all different types of evidence.

[01:19:14] And I'm going to show you a couple of samples of evidence that EPP would submit. Next you have your actual visit. During that visit we will have meetings, we will have interviews, we will have team discussions, we will review data sources, not only for the CAIT review process but the state process.

[01:19:32] The good thing with me serving on the team, if there's something that they miss and I know that it's there. I can point out to the team and say, hey, this is an evidence 102 AP. You need to take a look at it. Or you can go to the state addendum, and it's within the state addendum.

[01:19:51] Lastly, after the visit, recommendations are made. The team does not make a decision. The team makes a recommendation to the council. The council actually makes the actual decision whether or not that EPP is accredited or not, whether they're accredited with AFIs or stipulations.

[01:20:11] Now, when we talk about AFIs, those are areas of improvement. There's nothing wrong with areas of improvement because everyone needs growth. A stipulation or two will require an additional visit in two years, and that EPP will have to show evidence of how those stipulations were addressed in that two year cycle and so we have not had many of those I would say within the last five years I've had a one that we've had to go through no two two we had to go through with stipulations but I consider that okay because they were going through transition with leadership

[01:20:50] which spoke to the reason why some of the pieces were not in place when they went through their initial visit. Here I have a sample of data collected from Radford University. And in this sample, this sample is collected by our VEAC. So just to talk a little bit about VEAC, VEAC is our Virginia Education Assessment Collaborative. What we found was Virginia offers, well Virginia, the Department of Ed offers very little data to our EPPs. And so the Virginia EPPs got together and develop this collaborative group.

[01:21:29] And from this collaborative group, what they do annually is they have a universal survey that is sent to all school divisions in order to collect data to support the CATE process. Rather than having 36 EPPs send surveys to our school divisions about their program completers, it's one collective now.

[01:21:51] And what they do is they collect all the data, they share it amongst all the different EPPs, So each EPP has a different set of their data collected from the VAC, and what this shows is a comparison of VAC averages and that particular EPP that I have in there.

[01:22:09] And it goes through the different criteria questions about whether or not your completers are effective in the classroom, just a host of different areas. And this particular -- and all of those questions align with the CAPES standards, so there's a correlation between the two.

[01:22:29] The process for collecting data, as I shared before, is done -- that one of the processes is done through the V-Act. And you know, I'm very appreciative of the V-Act because without the V-Act, I'm not quite sure that the data would be there for our EPPs because it is a big overhaul that they are taking on.

[01:22:50] And they have expanded. They started out very small, and so they've expanded to the point now that all EPPs are a part of it, because all EPPs were not initially a part of the VEAC, and I could see the work that they're doing consistently, specifically this semester I had five visits of five of the largest EPPs in Virginia.

[01:23:13] And so, but you could see across all the data points that they had, that they had collectively work together and that this data from VIAC really supported the work that they were doing.

[01:23:29] The next slide also just shares some more information about VIAC for you and just another note that the information that is collected from VIAC is not only aligned with the standards for CAPE, it's also aligned with the Virginia Uniform Performance Standards because we need that's important because that's another measure that they use in order to show effectiveness of a teacher and then the in task standards when we look at the

[01:24:07] state addendum again this is all going on at the same time we're collecting the data from Cape we're collecting data for the state addendum within our state addendum we collect information on practicum experiences contribution to pre-k student achievement and partnerships collaborations and the Virginia statutory requirements and one of the biggest pieces that spent I spent all year looking at is the are that our state approved programs so during this process we review all of the state approved programs again and and I'm it's

[01:24:44] not a touch point we actually review them and look at them and make changes updates and we provide feedback and when I say we the content area specialists at department of the individuals that review myself and another individual in my office reviews all of the programs the content the endorsement areas and the professional standards and so this is a good time if an EPP wants to make change to a program or to make updates they can do it at this time and they can ensure that we will lay eyes on it now that EPPs are open to make revisions at any given time during the year and for a review, but this review process is really

[01:25:24] thorough, and this is one of those that I'm looking at trying to tweak because for capacity reasons in the offices, because when you have a semester of five EPPs, that's a lot in one semester. I don't know if we've ever put it all together, but my mom was Karen Parker back in the day.

[01:25:51] she would actually when it was too full she would be a state like knighted person to do that yes when you had five in one semester so i don't know if that's still a possibility or something that's still being practiced well right now no i'm trying to put in the word for you a little bit and i do have some other um staff members have that that have been trained yeah um but again that they have other they're in other offices and so they have other workloads and so typically what i do if there's a conflict with me or something happens they will fill in but in order to do it effectively

[01:26:29] you kind of need to be there from the beginning throughout the conversations and so that's the piece that always um kind of hiccups if you're not there when they begin the conversation and to look at the reports then you come in at the tail end and again not opposed to it i am open to having a clone or twin or whatever to support the work that we're doing yeah she brought me a a couple times it was pretty neat experiences and very thorough as you said and she kind of even had a bit of a specialty with the HBCUs when they when they started requiring their accreditation part of it yes because their numbers were small yeah and to get them to be able to get the data

[01:27:05] and be accredited that kind of was I think mostly when the Virginia Department of Ed brought her alongside to kind of help but anyway just a suggestion I know it's a lot and I'll take it So let's look at the state review process, and again, the state review process is conducted concurrently during the CAIT review process.

[01:27:27] And so when you look at the state review process, I will tell you this, the state review process is the same process that we use for new endorsement requests. So when we do a new endorsement request program, that is the same process that we use to review those programs.

[01:27:43] The review process begins with the EPP updating the programs to align with any current changes, standards, state law. It's ongoing. EPPs submit programs to the department for review. The programs are assigned to a content specialist and instruction. If program competencies are met, then they are approved.

[01:28:02] If programs are not aligned with the competencies, the information -- additional information is provided and feedback, and it is returned back to the EPP for revisions. And so our specialists are very good about providing specific feedback in order to assist the process.

[01:28:20] There are -- I've had very few instances that an EPP would not comply or make those changes because they want an approved program. Overall the process -- the program reviews revealed that EPPs have strong partnerships with school divisions, development of programs are in line with the standards of learning, The creation of programs are driven by needs and of local school divisions.

[01:28:44] Additionally, programs are developing and making adjustments to programs based on the feedback of their partners and the content specialists. Delivery types of practicum experiences are wide in range within the programs. Overall, there are 30 new program requests annually estimated.

[01:29:02] We typically have about 30 and we typically have about 20 modifications annually and that That is submitted in the spring for our specialists to review. For this semester, this was an unusual semester, we had over 325 programs for the state review process to be reviewed.

[01:29:21] And that includes not just the endorsement area, but it actually includes the professional studies competencies as well. And if you look, this is my schedule for the last four years for reviews.

[01:29:40] And again, there is, you know, someone says, well, why don't you move them? You can't because they're on a seven-year schedule. Unless they request special permission to extend their year for whatever reason, if there was transition with CAPE or something of that nature, this schedule pretty much stays the same.

[01:30:00] So typically in any year, I can have anywhere from three to eight visits in a year during the spring and the fall semester. so let's talk a little bit about our accountability reports that we have our EPPs to complete there are two specific reports we have a biennial report and our annual education profile our biennial report is reported every two years and we are just collecting the data right now for this year's biennial which I'll probably be back in a few months once that information is solidified and what we look at in our biennial reports we have the candidate

[01:30:38] progress, structured and field experiences, and it also looks at the pass rates for the assessments that the candidates have completed for each endorsement area. We are looking at 80% to be a pass for your pass rate. If they do not meet the 80% threshold, that EPP has to create a corrective action plan that our office will work with them in order to get to that point. Have not had that happen in a while and at a glance looking at the data I'm I'm hopeful that it won't happen this year as well so all EPPs are required to submit the

[01:31:14] specific reports per the approved regulations sections four or five and six address the reports required additionally there are some other reports outside of these that are not in the regulations they have their title two report and they also have a cape annual report that must be completed as well the other report that we have is the annual education profile and that is submitted annually and that outlines

is a comparison between the enrollment of students at each university to the enrollment in the School of Ed and it

[01:31:51] looks that it gives you a comparison of you know I have X amount of 10,000 students but I might have 20 that are in the role in in the School of Ed and it also offers up completers and non-completers. All of this information is currently on our website.

[01:32:09] The biennials reports are listed there. The annual education report is listed on the website in an interesting way that you can manipulate the data that you can look at as a Build-A-Table, and so you can compare EPPs to EPPs. You can look at the specific endorsement areas to figure out how many completers they have each year and so I like data and so it's interesting to kind of compare the larger with the smaller and to look at the growth of programs if I look at a comparison four years ago when we look at the special ed add-on endorsement we had three

[01:32:47] and now we have over close to 30 add-on endorsement programs across the state so I So I like to look at the growth and the trends with those particular data sets. So if you have any free time, go check out the Build the Table. The next slide that I'm going to talk about is our accredited programs that must align with the standards of learning.

[01:33:09] And so I know previously there were some questions about how our programs are designed and whether or not they address the standards of learning, and they indeed do. And so when you look at the different list here I have, what I've included are the different competencies and programs within the regulations.

[01:33:28] And this is just a snapshot. And if you go in and you click on those links, you will see that they reference the standards of learning throughout the different endorsement areas. And these regulations, competencies right here is what our programs are built off of.

[01:33:45] And so our EPPs have to create their programs built off of these competencies. And so when we talk about the standards of learning, they're embedded in all of the different competencies and any other trends that we have. For example, on the next slide, we have VLA alignment and the science of reading.

[01:34:04] We just recently amended our regulations to address the VLA. We had several work groups in order to look at the language in the regulations so that it could align with the VLA. So next steps for our office and all the different projects that we're working on. We are continuing with our VLA work group because right now we are working on the self-assessment to which we're like this close to having complete and so I'm kind of excited about

[01:34:39] that particular initiative. We have five visits for this fall and then in the spring we have several spring Kate visits that we are prepping for and I keep saying we are but our office and then we have our new endorsement and training and reviewers so before EPPs actually submit new programs I have a training for our EPPs so they have some give them some points on what to include in their programs in addition to that I have a training with our content specialists so they're aligned so that they know what to look for and we are in the process of

[01:35:16] developing specific tools in order for them to use to make it a little easier during the review process and the first tool is that self-assessment tool that we will be using across all of the different disciplines for the virginia literacy act in addition to that we have cape training for our new volunteers and so we're hoping we hope each year that we can get at least five volunteers to participate in training because

our volunteer list is kind of it's decreasing because it is a lot of work and in addition to being a volunteer for Virginia when they sign on for training to be a cape volunteer they actually have to do visits at other other states

[01:35:53] as well and so they have a believe it's a three visit requirement annually that they have to participate in we're also looking at redesigning the training and the review process for new state endorsement programs we currently use our content specialists in the office but we know they are far and few and they have a heavy workload as well and so what we're proposing is looking at a peer review process across the EPPs train them in order to do a blind review process for the different programs which would be a help to kind of expedite it and move it along a whole lot quicker because it

[01:36:32] literally takes months because specialists are doing this in between their regular what they normally do and then we also have the development of work groups for our new endorsement areas for the early childhood special education program add on and the geometry and the algebra and then the review of approved program regulations for alignment needs.

[01:36:54] We are always looking at the regulations to make sure they are aligned with the current trends that are going on in Virginia and so they are ever changing and I know our regulations we don't change them that often but our EPPs are required to go along with whatever the state is requiring of us so I have a little cheat sheet of notes so then when those regs are open I can say hey can we make these changes in these particular areas in order for to be in line with what's going on and so I end this presentation I know it's a lot of information that I shared and I've had more because initially when I asked I said we can do a four series of workshops

[01:37:34] one presentation. But again, I'll be more than happy to take any questions if needed. I have a question. Can you talk to me a little bit about how the review process, pros and cons, how the review process has changed for good and bad since you've switched from in-person site visits to virtual visits? I will say it's still labor intensive.

[01:38:03] The good is that you're not traveling. And so I literally, when we would do visits, they would start on the Sunday, Sunday. They were Sunday, Monday, Tuesday. Then you would travel Saturday to get wherever you need to be, and you'd be there for the three days. And so it kind of ate into your work week.

[01:38:19] And when we are doing them virtually, I can kind of pick and choose when I pop in, pop out, ensure that I'm there at the team meetings and they have myself. that up you know and then with the virtual visits they've just become more streamlined um more efficient in how they do the process everybody you know is very regimen it's not um when we would go in person visits it was a lot of show but with the virtual it is strictly you know we're reviewing

[01:38:51] the data we're completing the interviews it's just it's it's a better process and it allows you a little bit of more autonomy to look at all the data because all the data is centrally located online. When we were face-to-face, you would have actual crates of records that you would have to actually look at and go into the record room to do the particular reviews. So I would say it's better. It just makes for a long day because you will, in the virtual visits, you will start in the morning and you will end probably in the morning as well. And it just continues just like

[01:39:26] that dr ackerman i actually was briefly cape trained pre-covid so pre-virtual visits but to echo what she's saying everything was was put on digital prior to that so um they so that the reviewers had

access to all the data all the evidence even before showing up in person um so in a lot of ways the person ones like you said ended up feeling like more of the wine and dine type events yes um and while you still sat in front of the computer with all the virtual data

[01:39:58] even then. Other questions or comments here? I have some more. Just one more, I think, if nobody else has anything. How are we capturing the data of the percentage of completers once they get to, in a traditional EPP, once they get to their clinical experience? So do they finish their clinical experience, number one? And secondly, do they then transition into a school number two how are we capturing that data so if they do not finish their clinical

[01:40:36] they will not be considered a completer so that's the first one we do provide our EPPs data on individuals that are first year out of college that apply for a license and what they do is a cross check with the school we provide them with the list of those particular individuals and where they're teaching so that they can track them in the school divisions and so that's one of those hit or miss because the individuals need to report that you know it's kind of self-reporting in most cases but we do provide them those names if they are in a public Virginia school division

[01:41:12] if they're not in a public school division we don't have a way of knowing. And are we capable I mean I guess really only in a renewal phase would we be capable of determining if let's say that completer graduates moves on to you know public school division x in Virginia takes off two years comes back to public school division Y the only way we know that is if through the renewal process when that paperwork is sent to the department is that correct yes and no because you wouldn't and they would have to upload in the system to identify that and then we would need to go to this

[01:41:51] into the system to say but they would not be identified in this particular list because they're not a new teacher so it would be a renewal so it would be ideal that we would have a system that would track our teachers with you know a little identifier and saying they've traveled from this school divisions hint hint to this school division and so that we could provide that to the EPP so that they can see their progress as far as working as a teacher yeah I mean I think that think that that in all honesty it speaks to the support and the education

[01:42:28] that a teacher who graduates from an EPP has received during their entire journey through the EPP that shows the longevity. What was, if a teacher goes into their first year and then leaves the profession entirely, you know, that tells me 30% of an EPP is graduating and progressing into their first-year teaching leaves, or do 60% of their first-year teachers leave the profession?

[01:43:02] I mean, I think that holistically that's also something that I think is valuable to a self-study, because in self-studies it's a reflective process, of course, that I think schools, EPPs, colleges, universities that host those EPPs that house them there really could use that data and that information to help them better their program and the support mechanisms. I'm just preaching to the choir that might be out there. They have asked and we have

[01:43:37] that's why the Virginia the VEAC has been created for this sole reason. Many a smaller EPP has an easier way of tracking their candidates but those larger EPPs when you're producing hundreds and hundreds of graduates, it's virtually impossible unless you make them and you have some kind of relationship in order to make the connect.

[01:43:58] I reflect back when I finished my initial program and they would send me those emails. I didn't know what that was about. And I did not complete the survey. But now I understand that how important and valuable that information would have been had I completed and started answering questions to those surveys.

[01:44:16] But it was not clear. But most EPPs, there are a couple of states that do have a system that aligns and tracks their graduates so that it can hold, I would say, not hold the EPP accountable, but it would be nice to know which EPPs are doing a really good job so we can use their programs as best practices and kind of share what they're doing and vice versa.

[01:44:41] And specifically when you're looking at a teacher that is doing phenomenally and their students are making progress I want to know where that teacher came from yeah preaching to the choir just more echoing what you said and she said I was gonna say that's why the act was created because we don't have that and when I serve on Cape for other states they could link their college to their state assessment scores I mean that would be phenomenal to be able to know and not in an accountability got you sort of way but not at all who's doing it right like who's getting it done or or maybe we'll find out that they are but I think

[01:45:16] think it is a best practices reflective mechanism more than anything else like you said not a gotcha but more reflective and how do we better our program um in order not just to have the best teachers come out but also to recruit more more teacher candidates number one um but uh you know this is kind of a place in my heart that I really feel very strongly about because I do feel that um we need to do a better job holistically at supporting our early, our early profession

[01:45:51] teachers, especially those who have given four years and their undergraduate years to this practice and this profession. And so, you know, I'd love to see us, I mean, I'm sure you've heard me talk about how I'd love to see an increase in clinical placement hours throughout, you know, required by every EPP in the commonwealth um throughout every course that they that they provide to those teacher teacher candidates um but I I'm I'm hopeful that we can we can do things

[01:46:27] that more robustly support teachers so that they don't smack a big concrete wall when they hit that first year teaching and I do think maybe this provides an opportunity um to talk with HR departments and local school divisions to say, hey, how can we help you all facilitate some, at least some data gathering with your teachers that are years one through three at least? Yeah, maybe they leave the school division after year one and go to a different one. That's altogether possible. But how can we sort of work together and work on that data capture? I totally agree

[01:47:07] with you. And I think one of our brick walls that we hit is when we get to the school division and they say, oh no, we cannot, when I say we, EPPs, we cannot provide you this information. And so EPPs are left to either create case studies, track down individuals, teacher candidates that can complete their program to provide them if they're willing, you know, their scores and blindly use them.

[01:47:31] But again, those are typically our smaller EPPs and you really can't use that because if you don't have that number of 10, you know, then it kind of tells you who's doing what. So there are so many things that I can dream of that we could probably do to make Virginia even better than what we are as far as this data and working with EPPs.

[01:47:51] So you guys are more than welcome to help me. I will receive it. Any other comments or questions here? Thank you so much for this presentation. We really appreciate it. At this time, we're going to take a brief lunch.

[01:48:06] We are going to take a lunch until 1.10. It's 12.40 now. We'll take a 30-minute lunch, 1.10. Thank you.

[02:06:17] We are back and we are ready to move into item D and that is Deputy Superintendent Booker Dwyer

[02:24:29] and Mr. Jennings. Hello again. We are excited to do the deep dive on the school performance and support framework results. We are going to walk you through. We'll give some background on the development of this framework just to ground everyone and then we're going to dive right into the data and some supports and next steps and so I am going to turn it over to Mr. Jennings who's going to give us all the great background information to lay that foundation for us to build

[02:25:05] all the data off of good afternoon everyone thank you president Creasy superintendent Gellickson board members we are very excited today to share with you the results we want to lay the foundation as we know people are watching online and viewing the slide deck so we'll watch walk through the slides with you and then pause for any comments reactions as the school divisions and the state our families our stakeholders are looking at this information as well so on slide two our overview we're going to share how we engage Virginia in the development of this accountability system

[02:25:41] over a four-year span how guiding principles were used to focus on the work we'll talk about that bifurcation of accountability and accreditation sharing the results from the 2024-25 school year and then identifying resources and supports for schools. You see our timeline here. And in that timeline, it talks about at the bottom, this timeline is beginning at 2023. And just to keep the slides condensed to, you know, the actions, but you see the note there in the left corner, going back to the beginning prior to 2023 and noting here our commitment to Virginians,

[02:26:18] which was an excellent document that put out the goal around aligning our standards, our assessment practices and our accountability. It also highlights that the board heard numerous presentations from national experts on accountability systems as they began to think about what they would want to see in accountability system. And then we get to the 2023 and really picking up momentum. We did a number of listening sessions around the nation around the state rather in each region to hear from stakeholders. And that brings us to today where we're presenting to you the results after the first year of implementation.

[02:26:56] So I mentioned the guiding principles and that's what you have here. And these guiding principles are always good to revisit. The North Star being the high expectations for every student. We see that in our accountability system. We see that in our proficiency levels that the board adopted recently.

[02:27:11] We see that in our rigorous standards. We see that consistently in the work the board is doing. Transparency and access to actual information. We're already hearing so far, you know, with the information we put out, how to use the data how you can take that and you know schools will be better equipped to make decisions divisions will be better equipped families and other communities number three the importance of yes academic growth and proficiency but this system is very much prioritized as having students demonstrate that proficiency and so we incentivize the proficiency and also moving

towards advancement and there were point values given to demonstrate that number four you see again these words

[02:27:50] transparency concrete easy to understand reporting and that's what we're going to present to you today and then number five stakeholder input is critical so through the process of development multiple stakeholder engagement with different associations and groups and it's ongoing we're still you know as we talk through the first year of implementation we meet with different associations i had the privilege of meeting with the elementary principals on monday to talk through with them so the implementation of the framework and get their ideas about any sort of proposed revisions to it. And on slide five, you do see the two systems, the accreditation and the

[02:28:25] accountability with that bifurcation or decoupling was making clear that accreditation will look at compliance measures, accreditation designations to be fully accredited, conditioning accredited, accreditation denied, which is rooted in state law and board regulations. And on the left side, what we're going to talk about today is the school performance. So we're looking at performance and the support framework. So performance, and all of this is about a continuum of support.

[02:28:52] Where do schools need support? Where do student groups need support? And that's what this overall system is looking to do. It is also a coherent system. So it's our state system and federal system wrapped into one. And so as you walk through it, you see the arrows going down.

[02:29:09] We've got, you know, a framework score that leads to a performance category. The performance category and the well the framework score help us for federal identification help us with identifying any student groups and then you see at the bottom public reporting resources and support I wanted to share with you in slide six the weights the overall models those three models and the values that are used out of a hundred just to sort of lay out we do have three other models and that may sound complex but the schools very much appreciate it because what that does is schools are being more equally fairly compared so elementary school you know

[02:29:46] we look to see that you serve certain student populations middle school high school we also have combined schools so an elementary middle school would be combined to an elementary middle school and then a middle high school you know they'd be combined they'd be compared as well and then we have some k-12 schools they would be compared to each other you see on slide 7 our indicators through these three models each component growth mastery readiness we have graduation as fourth component, all the indicators in those. You see consistency and mastery throughout all the models. You know, they all have reading, math, science, English

[02:30:22] learner progress, chronic absenteeism, across and readiness. Middle school picks up advanced coursework and then high school has the 3E framework focusing on, and you heard the presentation earlier, enrollment, employment and enlistment. We do use a four-year graduation rate that is required by federal law and so you'll see that in our graduation information today. And growth is used in elementary and middle school, both in reading and math. And so schools are placed in one of four categories. They're not labeled. It's not something that we do. It's something that based on their data is that's

[02:30:57] where they're placed. And so if we start at the top, the 90 points and above is distinguished. The 80 to 89 is on track. 65 to 79 is off track. And then 65 for needs and attempts to support. there is an important note at the bottom and this was a decision by the board through the regulations excuse me that schools that are identified through the federal system as targeted or additional targeted support and those

words are important you're targeting support to a student group then they would have their performance category lowered by one so we do not change the framework score if the school earned 80 points and it's on track but it's also targeted

[02:31:36] support then the school would be lowered one to off track and you also see the regulations cited there for comprehensive support and improvement schools our CSI schools cannot be categorized as distinguished so if that did happen a distinguished CSI school would be moved to on track the rationale behind that was as the board had conversations that I referenced earlier they heard of schools in our old system that were doing very well in the old system level ones green fully accredited but students were being neglected there were students who were not you know receiving the

[02:32:12] services they needed and so the board talked through we didn't want to have a distinguished school but maybe a student group's not doing well and sort of you're just masking it and so the board you know they wanted to address that and so the regulation states this this lowering of one performance category so that the school would see it needs to be addressed you might be doing very well overall but you do have a student group or two student groups that you need to serve and make sure that they're doing just as well and so this information you'll see moving on to the next slide is the overview of federal identification on this the slide here can look a little overwhelming

[02:32:50] what i want to share with you is that every three years we do this process and it is fall of 2025 this would have happened regardless of the framework we are required by federal law the the Every Student Succeeds Act, to identify schools for comprehensive support based on the lowest 5% of Title I schools.

[02:33:09] And so we look at that by school type. We do that by elementary, middle school, and high school. We also are required of any high school with a graduation rate below 67%, they will also be identified. And then the last one, again, this is all federal law, but it's required that a school that is additional targeted support and improvement, If they do not improve after three years, which means they cannot exit, if they're Title I, then they would become comprehensive support.

[02:33:39] You're looking at that slide, and you're going to see a couple times, and I'm saying the word Title I, Title I. This, Every Student Succeeds Act, this piece, our accountability system lives under Title I legislation. And the goal was to provide Title I schools additional resources to have support.

[02:33:56] And so when you look at the schools and you look at maybe the economically disadvantaged category, you look at sort of, you know, the demographics, you're going to see more emphasis of schools of that type. That's done purposefully. It was designed by federal law to ensure that those schools were getting additional support.

[02:34:14] The every three years you see at the top, the additional targeted support, that was not done this year. There's a mechanism there that you need targeted support first. And so we had approval from USC to not do that till 2028. So what I'll say to you is later when I say we have eight schools, additional target support and improvement, they are not new schools.

[02:34:35] These are schools that did not exit, but they were carried over from the prior system. And then finally, annually, a state is required to identify schools for targeted support and improvement. So it's in the name. I mean, these are federal terms.

[02:34:51] These are nationwide. You're targeting support for a student group. So a school that has a student group that is performing below a certain threshold by school type. And the thinking here is that if the student group is performing below a certain threshold, if the entire school was made of that student group, then the school would be a comprehensive support school.

[02:35:13] And so they're trying to, again, the federal law, working with nations, developing these policies, the intention was looking at student achievement gaps. I mean, so that's the mechanism at play here. And we color coded it. A yellow is sort of a flashing warning light. And that's what it's intended to do. And so I hope as you heard that, I know it's quite a bit of information. I'm trying to show the alignment between our state system and federal. They're very cohesive. They work together in partnership. And this year's results, because we carried over the prior system, which we were required to do, you might say there's some misalignment. And that was to be expected. We knew that because you had to carry

[02:35:50] over prior schools, but the framework is doing what it was intended to do. And so now we're going to look at the results. I'm going to invite Deputy Superintendent Booker Dwyer back and she'll walk through the results with you. And so before I get deep into the results, we wanted to have a transparent process. We wanted to give the school divisions multiple opportunities to review their data. If they saw any discrepancies in their data, we wanted to give them multiple opportunities to address that before we came out with these results school divisions are

[02:36:25] required to sign off saying all of my data is correct and so that helps us to move forward with the understanding that okay we have accurate data as verified by the school division to move forward with these results listed on the screen are all the dates upon which we gave the opportunity for school divisions to review their data. There was technical support sessions held. I know there were a lot of there were some lunch and learns and so we really wanted to be as transparent as possible in this process and so it was you know from August all the way up until the end of October school divisions had

[02:37:03] the opportunity to review and revise their data. We then sent that data to Old Dominion University for the validation process. And this validation, this is an important piece, especially when you're rolling out a new accountability system. You want to ensure that what you're doing in-house, someone else can replicate it. And this process was very important for us because it shined a light on some areas that we can improve with our business roles and our coding. And then it also,

[02:37:39] it's going to help us strengthen our process overall and so we were very excited to to work with ODU on this and to have them go through the data and then and then to ensure that it is validated and then we shared so before we publicly released this data we shared it the the outcomes with school divisions and once again they had the opportunity they were this was almost a stress test we wanted to see did you are you in agreement did you see does your data were you able to predict these results and what we found was that some school this accountability system it's truly

[02:38:17] designed to see every student which means that a school division has to code every student if the school division did not code a student if a student was missed they saw the impact on their scores that could have made them they could have had slightly more points but it dropped them to tsi and so we got some calls from school divisions saying hey we forgot to code these students or hey we forgot to enter in these associates degrees that our students got and it truly impacted their scores and so we recognize that this is the first year of implementing this accountability system and that there's going to be lessons learned and so every school division that has sent us any type

[02:38:57] of hey we now realize we didn't do this or if it was on us if they said hey it looks like something's off here, we are investigating that thoroughly and we will follow up with school divisions because we want to make sure that they are accurately represented in this accountability system. It was only a handful of school divisions that have reached out to us. I mean, a lot of times it was coding issues. Um, and then in one case, there was a denominator issue that we're looking into. But overall, this data is valid. We stand behind it and we will and you know we're still continuing to work with Old Dominion University as

[02:39:32] these as the coding errors are being addressed with some of our school divisions we are going to continue that work with Old Dominion University to make sure that everything is validated I just want to reaffirm though that the results were validated and that divisions had months to dig into the individual student coding and so we have documentation of divisions signing off on their results correct correct correct and so one of the great things

[02:40:12] that we've seen from this framework is that most of our schools across the Commonwealth two-thirds of our public schools are identified as distinguished or on track so this was very exciting to know that our schools they are exceeding or meeting that state expectations for achievement graduation growth and readiness 23 of those schools were identified as distinguished and 43 on track when you go to slide 16 you will see that there are pockets of excellence in every single

[02:40:45] superintendent region every region had a distinguished school we were so excited about that we are very excited that our superintendent sent personalized letters to every single distinguished school principal and and we want to learn from those schools those pockets of excellence how can we elevate and learn from what you are doing to scale across the commonwealth so this creates an even more transparent system this accountability framework and how the data has come out and we are just so excited to go to all these different regions and start to visit some of these

[02:41:20] distinguished schools and learn from the from their leaders and their teachers our high schools are taking advantage of that 3e framework they are ensuring that our students are having the multiple opportunities to earn credits and industry credentials that matter and so what that translated to is that you saw most of our high schools are distinguished and this directly speaks to the opportunities that these high schools are providing for our students we want to recognize that they have worked hard to ensure that these pathways are down are are available to

[02:41:57] our students and we want to encourage that for them to continue to offer those pathways and those opportunities for students. When we look across the state, we saw that regions 2 and 7 had the highest percent of on-track schools and that is also commendable.

[02:42:17] That means that these schools are meeting expectations for all the different indicators that we are looking for within the framework. middle schools had the highest percentage of on-track schools and this was directly connected to the advanced coursework so if you remember back in September when we presented that trend data analysis and we showed how there were there how many middle school students are engaging in advanced math coursework and they're passing that was that was just truly exciting so that has has been reflected in the outcomes on this framework the middle school students

[02:42:57] they are coming to school they're the decline in absenteeism at the middle school level so they are showing up ready to learn and taking that advanced coursework and then you see some some improved reading outcomes as well so this the all of this contributed to middle schools being on track our

four-year graduation rate remains stable so as we look across the you know over the last few years we've Virginia has always been around at the 88 percent 89 percent a statewide range and so we saw that again this year with the 89.5 percent statewide graduation

[02:43:35] rate for our four-year for the four-year cohort and when we look at the region so once again superintendent region seven had the highest four-year graduation rate so we know that that there are some some great things happening down in region seven that we want to learn from and region four had the highest percent of students earning an advanced diploma and so once again that that's very commendable and we want to make sure that we are learning from from what they are doing so that we can uh ensure that we are scaling that across the state and when

[02:44:11] we look at our six-year graduation rate so this map it shows for all the different regions is six year graduation rate and you will see that um region four it had the highest increase between the four and six year graduation rate at about four percent what is truly what is truly interesting is what is happening at our elementary schools we are seeing student growth in reading and mathematics and this is you know this is why when we look at all in virginia and the virginia literacy act this is a testament to its working and we're seeing that growth in our elementary

[02:44:49] schools we know in our middle school that they have some growth they can do better and in our middle schools as well the math growth there's some growth there but we really want to get those numbers up it just demonstrates that when you make those strategic investments in what works you'll see that the results are improved student outcomes so we are very excited about this there are some superintendent regional snapshots that I'll have Mark come up to to share and walk us through we're very excited to present these snapshots and what we're sharing is available

[02:45:26] to the public the board is looking at them now this can screenshots cannot capture the depth of the snapshots and there's more information that's going to be coming and so what we wanted to do is really look at data as we said make it actionable make it transparent and so I'm going to give you an overview here and some key takeaways but I'm encouraging the public the board to really look at each region there's multiple pages for each region that really highlight the success that you're seeing and so that the region can look at neighboring schools and learn from each other regions can learn from other regions and that's the intent here behind the snapshots. And so as we begin here looking at Region 1, we

[02:46:06] wanted to have some key takeaways. We looked at the regions based on where a region might be excelling in the state, and so more students graduate in four years with an advanced or IB diploma, 51%, than a standard diploma in Region 1. That stood out when we looked at our statewide data, and so Region 1 is to be commended for that. You see on this slide what Region 1 is. We talk about these superintendents regions and what does that mean and so you see it highlighted on our map. I really appreciate our communications team for developing these materials. You see each region numbered and you see the on the side there the table. When we look at their overall data you

[02:46:42] have that how many schools were distinguished on track off track needs intensive support for the region. You also see their federal identification and so for region one they have 35 comprehensive support schools. It's 14%. And then you also see, you know, just overall the support they'll need.

[02:47:00] But I also want to draw your attention that more than half of the elementary schools are demonstrating growth at or above 70%, another area to be commended for in Region 1. So we're definitely

seeing growth in Region 1 through these takeaways. We'll talk about Region 2. And you see the list of our 15 divisions there. They have the lowest average chronic absenteeism rate in the state.

[02:47:24] So we looked at chronic absenteeism across the board as a K through 12 measurement. Region 2 had the lowest average. When we look at the highest average, and that's a good thing. So low chronic absenteeism is good. People sometimes get confused on that. You want low chronic absenteeism. And then we have the highest average of 3E readiness enlistment in the state.

[02:47:43] So our 3Es, enrollment, employment, enlistment, and we look to see sort of where the points were coming from in performance. Region 2 had the highest when it came to enlistment. So we wanted to give them kudos for that work. Region 3 stands out.

[02:48:00] They were the only superintendent's region with all high schools having points in the enlistment section. So while Region 2 had the highest number, the highest average, Region 3, every single high school had students participating in enlistment. So we wanted to recognize that. And then when we looked at the performance data in math, reading, and science, all of them were 90% or above.

[02:48:21] And so, again, the system is set up that if you have students scoring advanced and getting 1.25, you know, you're going to get higher scores. And that's what you want. And you can exceed, you know, even with 100% there. So having above a 90% is very remarkable.

[02:48:39] And so we want to commend them. Region 4 has the highest percent of students graduating with an advanced diploma in the state. So what you heard earlier about the four-year graduation rate, region 4 stands out among the students who are earning an advanced diploma. They have the highest percent of distinguished schools in the state we've done separate materials just on distinguished schools and you can see the percentages there region 7 as you heard was very close but region 4 stands out with their distinguished schools and so you see the breakdown their federal identification only nine comprehensive but you see the number of targeted

[02:49:14] schools 20% really looking at student group performance but you see the 173 three distinguished schools, 224 on track, and then the rest of the information. Region five, you see the list there of our schools are 20 divisions, and 60 percent of their elementary schools are demonstrating growth at or above 70 percent. And then when we looked across the state, when it came to middle school advanced coursework, they had an average of 97 percent in the region, which was higher than the other regions. So they're, you know, finding students who are ready for advanced coursework. There are students who are taking those courses, taking end-of-course

[02:49:52] SOL tests, high school level tests, and being very successful in them. And so we saw very high levels of performance in Region 5 across the state. Region 6, more than half of their elementary schools are demonstrating math growth at or above 70%. And so we're really looking at reading math, these key areas, looking at growth, that something was very important to the school divisions post-pandemic. And so we wanted to commend them for the growth that we're seeing. And so 71% of Region 6 schools are distinguished or on track. So we talk about the state average is 66%. They're exceeding that in Region 6 with 71% of their schools

[02:50:31] distinguished or on track. Region 7, when it came to the middle schools, their English learners are demonstrating progress in the English language proficiency at 66%, which exceeds the state average of 50%. We're roughly 50, 52%. And especially at the middle school level, this is to be commended. We look to

make sure when we did this data that we're looking at a student size of a minimum of 15 students. So to have this, it's not, well, I've got 10 English learners or five English learners. No, we're looking for a minimum of 15 and that their middle school English learner

[02:51:07] indicator score was greater, 66% or greater. We're looking at the average there. So very, very well region 7 is done there and they had the highest average of 3E readiness framework score in the state so region 7 certainly took advantage of all 3Es we saw high points in enrollment employment and enlistment and when we looked at the average of scores region 7 had the highest average across their their high schools and so they're certainly be commended for embracing 3E

[02:51:39] and giving students multiple opportunities. And Region 8. Region 8, 75% of their high schools had 100% or higher in 3E. Again, going back to the theme of exploration, you know, having kids demonstrate through multiple paths there. 75% of their schools are having all students participate, not just participate, perform. And then super intense Region 8 has had the highest decrease in chronic absenteeism. So they had a 40% decrease since 2023 than any other region.

[02:52:13] So we wanted to see again in these key indicators where regions are having success across the state. And so Region 8 is to be commended for really getting students back in the building 2023 to present, a 40% decrease. And so we wanted to recognize Region 8. All of this information is available on the DOE website. And our next slide actually shows you where to find that information and also shows you, you know, I just share with you a quick overview. But if you in these documents, you keep scrolling, you would see, you know, the top five elementary schools, the top five middle schools, top five high schools, and then every indicator we shared with you, where the top five

[02:52:53] performances, you know, what's on my screen right now, I just, you know, picked region six, and we look at Botetourt County. I see them for elementary schools. I see them for middle schools. I see them for high schools. And so consistently across that division, I'm seeing high performance across the three models there.

[02:53:11] And you can look and see by indicators. And the goal of this, again, was that schools and divisions could reach out to each other and say, you're having success in an area where I'm struggling. What are you doing that's working? And so we're gonna continue to do this and look into other information, other data, make it very transparent, and that helps our support staff to know where to go instead of regional meetings and pull people together and just learn from each other that we are having success in Virginia and that the data shows that. And federal identification? I'll turn this back

[02:53:46] to Deputy Superintendent Booker Dwyer. So once again, we have an accountability system where every student is seen. And so what you'll see is there were more federally identified schools with this under this accountability system than the prior accountability system.

[02:54:05] And this is directly because we lowered the amount of students that we are counting. So we went from an N of 30 until you missed some students to now an N of 15. And so that allows for more students to be included in this framework in the student count and to have supports targeted to them.

[02:54:28] And so when you look at the table here, you'll see elementary, middle, high, and elementary middle schools. And you'll see the number of schools that were identified for comprehensive support and improvement. And once again, when you're looking at comprehensive support and improvement, this is all students. So these schools, this is an all student thing.

[02:54:46] Targeted support and improvement, there are certain student groups. And so that's what we're digging into with these targeted support and improvement schools. And the additional targeted support and improvement schools, so this number of eight, as Mr. Jennings mentioned earlier is a carryover from the last year's system. Every superintendent region has federally identified schools. So as you look across the regions, you'll see every school could use, every region has schools that could use some additional support. And we also recognize that

[02:55:23] there were schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement under in 2023-2024 that are demonstrating some significant progress however it is a federal requirement that they have to demonstrate two years of consecutive growth to exit comprehensive support and improvement status so when you look in the framework at some schools and they may have a high point they may have a high level number of points but they're still CSI it is because you have to have two years of consecutive growth and so so this is why you may see some comprehensive support

[02:56:02] improvement schools as on track. I mean, that's what we want to see. We want to see these schools growing and moving out of off track or needs intensive support. And so that is what we're starting to see now with some of the comprehensive support and improvement schools. And we have about 24 of those schools that are demonstrating progress this year. And if they continue on the track that they are on, they should exit by the time we do this data again. There is a ton of support that will be provided to federally identified schools and so this is where our office of school improvement is it's going to be reaching

[02:56:39] out to school divisions we wanted to make sure that school divisions had time to look at their data to really analyze it and now we are kicking off our intensive support to school divisions and so in we're going to be releasing the school improvement grant in December direct student services grant in January And leading up till that, there's a series of trainings and support sessions that are planned to help with the needs assessment, the multi-year support plan, resource allocation review.

[02:57:11] All of that, our Office of School Improvement will be leading that charge. And so this is going to be their busy time digging deep into supporting these schools, especially as we start to administer these funds. The Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant, so the \$7 million, when our teams were looking and using the rubric to analyze these applications, these proposals that were sent in from school divisions, they did look at and give additional points to those schools that were identified for needs-intensive support or off-track.

[02:57:48] And then the math innovation grant as well. We're looking at those schools that have, or the divisions that have more needs intensive support or off track, they will get priority. And then we have about 1 million in state funds that we're going to use to support teachers and leaders in some of our schools that are in most need of support.

[02:58:10] And that'll be through principal leadership and teachers in action network. so stay tuned you'll hear more about that and we look forward to collaboratively planning with our school divisions on all things around that work there are a ton of resources available online right now so that you can dig into this data you can see the regional snapshots so as you look at at slide 41 you'll see just a screenshot of the website and then as you scroll

[02:58:42] down there's the regional snapshots and when you and this slide 42 has the link to get to that site and um and so that you can navigate and find all the resources that you need and we are still

populating resources within our family supports page and so if any parents want to understand oh you know well what does this designation mean for my school um what if from label targeted if the school is categorized as targeted support and improvement, what does that mean?

[02:59:16] And then also other resources for families such as what should your child be expected to learn in math class and what are those major milestones for children at each grade band. So we encourage all families to go and look at these resources on our website.

[02:59:32] And then there's also support for educators. We have updated this website. There are links to different resources that you can use. there are also some ways that you could, there's some talking points and some resources that can help you explain to your families what the different school designations mean. So all of that is on our educator support page. And so next steps, we are already planning for the data collection cycle for next year. So we are going to continue to communicate on the data collection

[03:00:08] process we are looking to refine our business rules and so as concerns are coming in or hey we didn't know about this we're going to clarify our business rules and we want to really work closely with school divisions to ensure that they understand and that they can use these rules to predict the outcomes from the on the framework and then we're also going to really work closely with our school divisions and even internally on all of our data collection process everything from collecting the data cleaning validating analyzing and reporting we want to proactively start to prepare for the next data cycle and make sure that we are applying lessons learned things that worked well we want to make sure we

[03:00:47] continue to do that how are we strengthening our coding process how are we supporting school divisions strengthening their coding process so we want to work hand-in-hand with our school divisions on all of these things in preparation for the next data collection cycle and so you can look forward to some specific training to and some technical supports that directly to school divisions that that's going to help to support ensuring that data is accurately coded we're going to work on just every piece of this system so that we can continuously improve and then data having the data is one thing now making it actionable is something totally different

[03:01:27] and so we want to double down that this data is out how and we and we hear it all the time that oh the data it's you know it's it's it's out past it's from last year and you can use that lagging data to inform future progress and that's what we want to double down on we want to see what are the trends what are the the how can you gain more points in certain areas how can we offer more opportunities to students what are some things that maybe you need to stop doing so that you can take those investments and allocate them somewhere where it may get you a bigger return So that is what we are looking forward to coming up throughout.

[03:02:02] This is what you're going to see from throughout December all the way through next year. With that, we'll open the floor up for any questions. Questions or comments here? Dr. Ackerman? This is maybe one of those loaded dissertation defense type questions, but what would you say was your biggest surprise or opportunity now that you have all the data and you're looking at it?

[03:02:26] So I think there's two things. Number one, communication. It can never be enough communication. and so we have to regularly communicate with our school divisions with families with principals with teachers like we cannot stop at the division level we have to do more with our professional organizations to make sure that they have the information you can never over communicate and so that is something that we want to do we want people to get sick of hearing from us then that's when we know

we're doing it right we want to make sure that all that information is there and then really using this data taking this data and just making it

[03:03:02] actionable there are so many bright spots across our state that is now really being elevated we need to go to these schools and see what's working how did you do that what is your recipe how can we replicate that in other places and that kind of led to my part two communication being so key what are you hearing from the field um now that they have it what type of things that you think would be helpful for us to know now rather than later that you're hearing from them and so we're hearing we didn't know that that was how you were supposed to do it in the when we were working with our data we didn't know that that was required or we didn't know that and if they didn't know I look at it

[03:03:42] like that's on us because we didn't communicate it clearly and so um so we we heard a lot about that And Mark, you want to jump in? Because I know you have gotten most of the calls. I get CC'd when it gets elevated. But so, yeah, Mark, you want to jump in?

[03:03:58] Yeah, I mean, so it's twofold. I think with this system, and Deputy Superintendent said it very well, it's predicated on the individual child. Previously, you know, you would get 90% of our schools are fully accredited. You know, and you had good scores. You look for the greens on the school quality profile. Kids were missed here or there. Now they're seeing every single child matters.

[03:04:16] And if you didn't code a child correctly and the child was, you know, did not assess in reading, then they probably didn't assess in math and science, which means you also don't have scores for reading and math growth. That's five data points where you got a zero. And so what we're hearing from divisions is really they're meeting with their data analysts and going, we've got to code our students correctly, which goes down to the school level.

[03:04:36] The other piece on the instructional side is we looked at the data is definitely drilling into our student groups. You know, for the past four years, as we've had these conversations and designed this system, we heard very much concerns around English learners. When you look at the data, there's work to be done, especially in learning English language, but it's nowhere near the alarm that people had around how English learners were going to perform.

[03:04:59] When you look at our target of support and improvement, it's students with disabilities as our primary focus. Across the state, there's need there at the elementary and middle school level. It's really across the board. We talk about the importance of literacy, but you also are seeing it in science as well. And we know the importance of literacy for science, but they need the science content as well.

[03:05:19] And so, you know, as I meet with divisions already and looking at the data, sort of some of those spots are standing out as far as the analysis of what they're seeing. Student groups are surfacing. 15 students versus 30 is what we had before, really puts a spotlight and says you need to look at the groups and you need data.

[03:05:35] So if the students aren't testing, we don't have information on how are they doing. So, you know, we've gotten mixed responses on it. Like I said, the student group piece came out, but I'm also overall, you want accurate data, then you need the coding piece comes up. And so to what the deputy superintendent said, we're going to be working on training, working with divisions, helping them with training.

[03:05:56] Because, again, the data comes to us from them. We don't create the data. And so we want to make sure it comes to us and then we can use it to provide information back to them. You spoke all the words I love, the each individual child, special education, all those things. and that's phenomenal and um and since so much of this and again and my trying to reassure people because there's always angst and change it's this is going to resource you this is going to resource you like that's the messaging how is that impacted by adding schools to it or did any of our schools get surprised by doing well for example now what they thought some monies might

[03:06:30] be coming and now it's not is can you speak to some of the how the resources are going to impact what we know now and so we get a certain pot of money from the federal government right and so that can only be divided in so many slices right and so that is so as we have identified more targeted support and improvement schools more comprehensive support improvement schools but the federal slice has not gotten larger so we know that it's we still have you know this finite amount of federal dollars but what's great about Virginia is that there are all these other state supports and so we want to ensure that number one the foundational elements are right are you using

[03:07:08] a curriculum that's aligned to standards and that your teachers are actually actually implementing as intended and so the the grants that the state provides to ensure that that you have those foundational pieces and then you know and as i go through just all the different other state grants it's about looking holistically at all the funding sources so don't just depend on the school improvement grant that's just one piece you have to look holistically at these are all the different funding sources that i have this is how i can leverage them to think holistically about my school and really move things forward and so when we think about school improvement and this is why we have shifted our model from into school improvement from it being isolated in one office to

[03:07:48] this is the work of the agency so every grant that comes through every division that needs to be looked at as this is going to help to improve our schools so we want divisions to look at it through that lens and while our office of leadership our office of school improvement is still the point on all things school improvement federally identified schools needs assessment multi-year improvement plans all of that every single office within this agency has to be a part of this school improvement process because you can't do it alone and even though we're hiring and we have brought on more staff we need

[03:08:23] the whole agency and so I'm so glad that we have that work structure now where we are truly working across offices I mean we went out to school division and and we go out in a team and we sit with their team and it's just it's a beautiful thing that happened so we are loving this new approach to school improvement yeah I love it I mean I'm the newbie to it all so I'm still trying to understand it all um and so for example i was i was also um my understanding and what i've interpreted so far as one reason we changed it all is to better have that transparency of what's

[03:09:02] happening at the federal level right like the federal that like our data matches what we think is happening and so i don't know if we could sometime get a report on that or mark's ready yeah absolutely because i remember those board conversations and i'll never forget and i worked in the office of formerly called school quality and would sit with superintendents who had schools comprehensive schools in the lowest five percent of the state but were fully accredited level one green and when i said to them you have elementary schools in the lowest five percent forty percent pass rates and they were like do i i mean and and not you know disparage them but the data from the

[03:09:40] state side was hiding so many students and there were so many ways to you know move this and do this that there was just such a disconnect so this system the deputy superintendent said you know you i wouldn't use the word misalignment because of the old system we have to carry that over federal law is clear on that so you could see some pieces where csi schools are on track they need to show two years of growth but the system is doing as it was intended to do that your comprehensive schools are needs intensive support so the federal dollars are there state dollars are there to help them

[03:10:10] And so the two pieces are aligned, whereas I said before, they were completely, and honestly, it helps too, because with the old system, on the state side, they had to do all this paperwork, all these plans. Then they had the federal requirements, and so they were doing two plans, two this and that. It's one system now.

[03:10:26] And so I think people are starting to see that with this data this year. It's going to be streamlined, one plan, one data source, and they're learning that system. Other questions or comments here? Ms. McPherson.

[03:10:46] So in rolling it out, how well do you think schools are understanding that we're looking more at the performance as opposed to just accreditation? Because, you know, obviously they're going to be quick to say we're a fully accredited school.

[03:11:02] And obviously what we're really looking at now is performance. And we, you know, the numbers are going to be telling us where there are performance issues, even though they may be fully accredited. So I think both of us can speak to that, but I'll begin by saying our communication campaign and our communications team is here is working very hard, you know, through our Department of Education website, trainings we've been doing ongoing, what we've shared out.

[03:11:29] We sent communication toolkits to division superintendents. I do weekly trainings with division leaders is really understanding that bifurcation. And if you look at the school quality profile, there is still accreditation information because it's state law. there's requirements and then but everything else is very much on performance it's based on scores and here's part of going back to Dr. Ackerman's question we release in August by federal law you have to share what we call in Virginia pass rates how students did who took the test we shared that with the board and there was a press release how do people do and this connects to that so if your

[03:12:04] school was not performing well on the pass rates in August yes with the framework some students since we're advanced and get some points, we can do some partial credit. It shouldn't be that far off. So if the public, I mean, if you're a principal and you're, you know, sharing with your schools how you're doing and you had a 50% pass rate in August, there's only so much, you know, it's the same data source is what I'm trying to say. So we've been communicating that. We've shared resources with division leaders, but also principals to say when you have your back to school nights, really you want to use the terms correctly. Accreditation is about compliance, accountability,

[03:12:37] the framework. We encourage the terms performance and support and really so that they use those and see how the two go together. And we've gotten some feedback from parents who've said, hey, you know, I went to my child's back to school night, you know, back August, September, and they were using some of the materials that we provided to help the public understand.

[03:12:57] It's going to take time. You know, for decades, Virginia's used the term fully accredited. It's in our understanding. I have media people reach out. I mean, people who even people at the department it's just we've used it for so long and so people think my school is fully accredited means this that's good you should be fully accredited but we also want to look at the performance and with those resources you're in compliance how are your students doing and so that's where we really want the conversation to be and then drill deeper and make sure all students are getting what they need we can expect that the next data is going to show us where they were

[03:13:31] right now plus the data compared to the approaching and then the full proficiency so we'll have each one measured right absolutely using the new cut scores you'll see um how that would factor into the system um you can analyze it that way i mean this year being a full year of implementation you're getting the baseline data to sort of see where things are you know i bring back up growth because people really want to see more growth in the system in our mastery index if a student's not successful. In the old system, they got zero points. In this system, if I was below basic,

[03:14:07] I get a quarter of a point. If I'm basic, I didn't pass, but I'm close to passing, we gave you 0.75. And so that's helping the scores too. But that helps us to analyze data and sort of see where are you. And the goal is if a child didn't pass last year, they pass next year. And so that would show up in growth as well. So we'll take all that information and process it and model it for you. Other questions or comments here? I think the part that I'm most excited about as we look at these results is truly what we are able to see, that we are able to see every student.

[03:14:47] Our goal of transparency has seemingly been achieved here, and it's not just transparency for gotcha. It's transparency for growth, transparency for continuous improvement, transparency at the end of the day to ensure that every student is accounted for and gets everything that he or she needs in their academic career to make them the most successful that they

[03:15:21] can be, period. And that is where we all as education professionals and adults should have our focus is ensuring the very best outcomes the very best for our students academically and from an overall life perspective we have them for 13 years in our possession to do just that and and i shouldn't say it that way in our possession but in terms of their academic piece of their life

[03:15:56] is is so critical to their life holistically and 13 years is a huge time and it's the most developmental time in a human being's life and for us to not do everything that we can do to make it the best that it can be for them is just not doing what what we are all called to do ethically

[03:16:26] And so I'm thrilled at what we see here. I'm thrilled for the strengths. I'm thrilled for the weaknesses because we all have to start somewhere. And so that's what we always tell our students in our classrooms. We all have to start somewhere and we can all only continue to go up.

[03:16:47] So I'm very appreciative for this presentation and look forward to continuing to see and hear feedback, both from you all and I'm sure more in the media. Superintendent Gullickson.

[03:17:03] Thank you. Well, first, I want to say congratulations to the team. This has been a four-year process with the board's partnership to get here. and just exceptional on all cylinders from our data team to obviously our accountability office to our comms team and everyone in between and so there were a lot of hours clocked so the team will be sleeping by Friday and so just wanted to give a nod there we have already received lots of

[03:17:42] positive messages on the regional snapshots including from assistant principals and principals who have said thank you for this recognition where we are really exceeding in our community on growth or on this particular indicator and so that is really the goal as we continue to build out our office of excellence and best practices to come alongside this accountability work and make it as easy as possible to scale these evidence-based practices and what's working and there are great resources on the bottom of this deck for those who

[03:18:20] are just tuning in and so we will continue to call attention there that we are really making this as seamless as possible for you to get the support that you need so that we can prioritize resources where it's needed most now that we can see that as the team so beautifully elevated and i am just so excited about what this means and possibility for every student so congratulations to the team we've got more on deck here momentarily but we are really excited to continue to dig in you'll get even more snapshots

[03:18:58] by the next meeting i have quite a fun list for the team of things that i want to see in a snapshot So this will really be a living site, so definitely tune back in regularly. Our Road to Readiness Hub continues to expand with supports, and so we are thrilled.

[03:19:16] And with that, Madam President, back to you. Are there any other comments here before we move to the next item? Miss McPherson, anything else here?

[03:19:39] Okay, thank you. We will go to item E. Okay, so item E is right on track.

[03:19:57] It's a great segue into all of our work for school and student supports.

[03:20:17] And so when you go to slide two, you'll see that overview of every month coming to the board to, you know, in August laying that foundation on where we were looking to go with school improvement. In September, looking at the organizational structure and how we're supporting that continuum of support across our agency.

[03:20:39] at the october board meeting we were preparing for the federal federally identified schools in november we we gave that high level overview of the memorandum of understanding history and proposed modifications and today we're going to give some more updates around school supports and we're going to discuss the graduation requirements substitute tests and support specifically for middle schools on slide three you'll see the four-step process that we are using to support school success and there's a link to the school improvement webpage where it provides a lot more detail on these four steps but what we

[03:21:19] want to do is first just recognize where students where the school that its current state and not just coming at it from a deficit mindset where what do you need you got to do this needs assessment we want to know what it what's going well what can we build off of those strengths how is the the how is your division performing and then what are some of the challenges that we need to dive deeper into we're also looking at planning and prioritization so you can't make everything a priority because then nothing is a priority and then the school doesn't move because everyone is just spinning their wheels trying to fix all these priority items and so we really want to support true

[03:21:58] prioritization and looking at what is going to get you the the largest return on investment and doubling down on those effective practices we are going to build in this monitoring and accountability cycle so that we're not waiting until the results from the school and performance framework come out to realize oh you need support we want to ensure that we are constantly reviewing that data and it's never a

surprise when state data is released because you have been watching your data all the way up until then so we're going to really help with that and then this progress reporting and reflection we want to ensure that school communities

[03:22:36] parents the state board knows what's happening so what's the progress that schools are making and where are where could they use some additional support and so our support resources we are start we're being very strategic about how we are rolling out our school improvement strategy we're not trying to dump a whole bunch of templates on people at once we really do want to be thoughtful and mindful about how we're rolling things out so that it just doesn't feel like just do all of this paperwork because that is not the approach we are trying to take and so we know that there are some people some organizations are like well you don't have this posted yet it's coming but we

[03:23:15] are not going to be rushed we are going to do this strategically and we're going to do what's right for the schools and so you'll see the needs assessment template is posted we are launching the training on completing the needs assessment template the multi-year support plan will be coming out shortly and and we are continuing our content specific professional learning series so this is led by our office of instruction and you will see specific content areas that are in the dates that they are occurring and we in there's even more detail so I'm giving the high-level overview but for the literacy sessions

[03:23:53] for instance they are broken out by grades so grade 5 grade 7 grade 8 so we really do encourage school divisions to look out for when this is released in newsletter we back in september we talked about hiring and expanding teams and we are well underway there had been two new team members added to the office of school improvement and we have one more that may be joining uh we're waiting on that one um we have interviewed for the math director position which was just we have some phenomenal people that interviewed i want to hire them all um but we don't have that many positions we can only hire the one math director

[03:24:29] so we are in the process of working on that we had some great middle school math specialist interviews once again wanted to hire them all all phenomenal people right from virginia that really knows math and so we are in the process of working through that and then we will begin interviews for the math regional coordinator and specialist position so we are well underway with building our math team and it's not just my team there's other offices and divisions that are also building their team so we are all working together for slide five what you'll see are all the different diploma options available and I've hyperlinked

[03:25:09] to the you know if you click on that advanced studies diploma you can see all the requirements so at the state level for that advanced studies 26 standards credit five verified credits a standard diploma 22 standard credits five verified credits and then we also have applied studies we have in other diplomas and certificates of completion and students they must earn standard and verified credits to graduate and this slide on slide six it just provides that definition of what it means to have to

[03:25:47] be a stand have a standard credit and a verified credit and the the key difference with the verified credit is that there is a corresponding end-of-course assessment and you must achieve a passing score on that test and locally awarded awarded verified credits they can also be used to meet graduation requirements and so what you'll see on this screen is just that definition of locally awarded verified credits and in what how what the criteria that the student has to complete in order to earn it and so you'll see that they have to pass the

[03:26:26] high school course and right now our current cut score is 400 but if a student scores within the scale range of 375 and 399 on any of those standards of learning assessments after taking the test at least twice then they can earn that verified credit now what you will see tomorrow is a recommendation being presented based off the recommendation of our Technical Advisory Council to modify this scale score range to within 25 points of the passing score and so you'll see that recommendation tomorrow as part of the superintendent's

[03:27:03] recommendation and then they also have to demonstrate achievement in academic in the in the content then as we are the next slide you'll see the the number of students who are using locally awarded verified credits for graduation so these are so what you have for the 2023-2024 school year so we went from 2021 to 2022 all the way up to 2023-2024 and on average about half of that

[03:27:38] cohort they're using the verified credits for graduation slide nine has substitute tests that can be used for earning verified credit so you don't just have to depend on that standards of learning assessment there are a number of other assessments that can be used there's a whole list that is made available on our website that are that would be acceptable and you'll see the scores that are associated with them so for a lot of the AP test if you take the AP test and earn a score of a two then you can get that verified credit so

[03:28:14] definitely look at the comprehensive list of options that students have and when you look at the next slide you'll see the students who use the substitute test to earn verified credits so that all the numbers in this table they mostly represent seniors and you can see the number of students that passed or failed a substitute test in reading or mathematics for that they wanted to count for graduation and so you can see that it's a handful of students most of our students are taking the standards of learning assessment they are passing

[03:28:49] the that assessment and then when you have the you know a handful of students are using the substitute test slide 11 goes through all of the course requirements to earn a diploma and and so for each one of these so when it says english there are a number of different approved courses for english and so for we're giving you the high level subject area but know that there's a whole list of courses that can that a school division can select from and you'll see the number of standards credits that they must earn and the number of verified credits that they

[03:29:24] must earn on that next slide you'll see the the link there's a link to the comprehensive list of course options that can be used to meet graduation requirements and then on top of that so you have your credits that you must earn your verified credits your standards credits and then all of the bullet points that's listed here I mean students they have to be trained in emergency first aid and CPR they have to demonstrate the five C's they have so you see all these additional things on top of the 22 or 26 credits and the five

[03:30:04] verified credits that they have to earn and so so that's one of the big picture for graduation and we want to set that picture up for you especially as we start to talk more about the implementation of cut scores but you'll see there's there's quite a number of courses that students have to take and there's quite a bit of credits that they have to earn and then a lot of other must-dos and looking at our data we you know the outcomes of the school performance and support framework and especially looking at the growth data we

[03:30:41] know that we could increase the support for middle school students and we are doing just that and so when you look at the the comprehensive list of professional learning options that we have offered to our school divisions and the ones that are coming up so I mentioned the January sessions that you'll see is specific for grade six seven and eight so that it's very tailored to to what their grade level needs and then on slide 14 you see some additional support just not for english

[03:31:14] language arts but we are supporting in mathematics in world languages in science so our teams at the department we are working very hard and we're using data to inform the type of professional learning that we are providing we're digging deep into the data and seeing where are the where's across the state where is it going well and then where can we really improve and so that's what's reflected in the list that you see here and so we are going to continue to provide support to all grades to improve student performance and we're going to continue to expand our school improvement resources

[03:31:49] and support so we are we're very excited about this new approach to school improvement and how we can and how we can use the outcomes from the framework where we're seeing each and every student to then target support to our divisions questions or comments here Dr. Ackerman hi there thanks for this by the way this is really exciting on so many levels I've talked in the past about differentiated instruction and needing different types assessments so allowing some flexibility on what how we define a verified

[03:32:23] credit allows for that I think and I also really excited that it's not I want be careful because obviously students with special needs need their accommodations but when we start making special exceptions for that population that can take us back to where we also give them some of the exceptions of the supports that they deserve right so I'm happy to see we're kind of doing it seems like this is all kids all the time but I just want to make sure I understand it correctly so on page I mean not page but slide seven when it gives those options there's no

[03:33:00] amount of times that can be used do I understand that correctly I feel like if I understand it correctly historically you've been given a limit yes so there there are limits so you can't have all of your credits be locally awarded verified credits and so there are limits to the number and it varies it does vary but there is a limit okay so is that described somewhere here yes so if in And Mark, let me know, correct me if I'm wrong.

[03:33:31] So I believe it was, it's seven or five or the number of locally awarded verified credits that can be used to meet the graduation requirements. Yeah. Okay.

[03:33:47] Okay. Other comments or questions? You still processing? I'm still not sure where that is clear, and I didn't understand that in some of the other things that I read.

[03:34:07] Okay. I was hopeful we were going to make it unlimited.

[03:34:26] Yeah, I don't know if other people have comments or questions, but here's my concern. So I've done a lot of studying and reading up on states who have raised their bar, and they ran into problems. So you can look at Texas as a model, and they saw their graduation rates drop 10%. And once that happened, they did something.

[03:34:43] What I was hoping we were suggesting was giving the verified credit alternatives for all students, all times. And so that's how Texas changed it, how they chose to handle it. All of them did it differently.

[03:34:59] You know, I talked about the number of states last month, and 10 of the states still use them, only 10 of the 50 use it for some type of graduation requirements. So 5 of the 10 then just made it a percentage of the grade that they earn, which was another way to not have a drop in graduation rates.

[03:35:20] So I just want to present to the board that there's a real fear here. especially if we still don't see that data on how this is going to impact graduation rates, if it will impact graduation rates. So when I read the recommendations from the superintendent and what we're going to vote on tomorrow, I was hopeful that we were allowing this type of verified credit, alternative credit across the board.

[03:35:43] So we're happy to share that data again around the projected impact of the revised cut scores. So we're happy to send that. Again, I know we presented it to the board twice, and then we had the one-on-one meetings with board members.

[03:36:01] So we're happy to provide that information again. And when we look at states like Texas, so this is why we're looking at just a real strategic approach to it and adding that approaching category.

[03:36:17] And I know we'll have deeper discussions about that tomorrow, But we did take a deep look at what worked well in those states and what didn't work well. And what makes Virginia so unique are all these other substitute tests that can be used. And you have your locally awarded verified credits.

[03:36:35] And, I mean, it's really wrapping support around the students and making sure that there are multiple options to get to graduation. So we can dive deeper into some of that tomorrow, I'll make sure I pull that data for the board members and again I'm good like so when I read slide 7 it seems to be that it's used anytime and if that's the case that's great I'm good like but if it's only being able to use once out of my understanding five options on a verified standard diploma now I do think we might see an impact on our graduation rates which I just want to cautious

[03:37:13] cautious us about and then maybe I'm the only one which is fine. Mr. Jennings would you be able to speak to the retakes which is a different component for the Commonwealth of Virginia than many of the other states on how many times a student can take an assessment and then also

[03:37:49] what the board has made clear on the score that you're taking that retake in comparison to? Yes So I do want to go back to the comments. 2017, the regulations, when the board adopted those, they wanted to make graduation more stringent.

[03:38:05] And so in those regulations, they did limit the number of locally awarded verified credits for all students, and they went to one. Previously, it had been more. Students with special needs, again, can have more than one. And so I wanted to kind of lay that foundation. So in place, students who are unsuccessful in a testing attempt, they can retest.

[03:38:23] They can do that multiple times during a test administration, actually up to five times. And then we look at if it's another test administration, we have special designations for students to continue to test for the purpose of graduation that we provide. To receive the locally awarded verified credit, I mean, we're looking at the range of the \$375 to \$399.

[03:38:42] And so the proposal tomorrow is to sort of, with our recommendation from TAC or Technical Advisory Council, is to keep that 25-point threshold. And so what you're looking at is students who are not completely proficient, but sort of like the approaching proficient or on their way there, that they'd be able to have the locally awarded verified credit.

[03:39:00] But with the multiple retesting attempts, what it's allowing is for students, again, to test, get data, individualize reports, see what needs are needed, and then provide that intensive support as needed, especially if you're a junior.

[03:39:16] then you know got another year to work on those and then uh you know test and see again how successful the child is and again if more is needed you can continue uh the substitute test you heard from the deputy superintendent uh the work keys the reading work keys is one that's used most most often in a reading uh for math it kind of varies between different assessments sometimes just the sat there but math also has other assessments you know in our program we have algebra we have algebra 2 we have geometry but for reading it is just the EOC reading test and so then that substitute test becomes another factor

[03:39:50] okay thank you miss McPherson thank you can you tell me how that factors in between the four-year graduation period and a six-year graduation period I mean is it just the matter of retesting retesting so we called if a student is only needing to test to graduate we called them term graduates and that's all they need to do and sometimes what they do is some divisions will have basically they can come into the school just to test and they get tutoring things like that and sometimes their school divisions have centers just for

[03:40:27] that purpose so that we code them as a term graduate for our purposes of data and you go back to federal the four years that's what we use when we report the data to you earlier today with reading math science we're using for high school it's a cohort calculation and we're only using the four years six years is what we allow for graduation we want the students to be successful and so it still counts you know we still use in this student would still have a diploma and we provide for you the six-year graduation rate but as far as the data we give to the cohort is around that four-year other questions or

[03:41:02] comments I mean I think I know all I need to know right now I I do think I I mean, the ultimate, I appreciate in 2017 they wanted to make graduation more stringent, but now we're in 2026 with new test scores.

[03:41:26] And so while we look at the reports of only a handful of people use verified credits, we need to remember that was on the old test scores. So I just think we need to be cautious that we could be impacting graduation rates if we don't consider some alternative options for our students.

[03:41:43] but I am happy about the year of transition because I think then we would have some of that data and this is maybe something we can revisit after seeing how the data impacts graduation rates so I'm really thankful that the board gave that year for us to collect that data and see but yeah, I don't need to beat a dead horse with it anything else here before we move on?

[03:42:07] alright, we're going to take about a 10 minute break is that right? you have enough time? a 10 minute break we're going to move item G up ahead of F

[03:42:15] just so everyone's aware for timing. Thank you. Ms. Verda. Good afternoon, President Creasy,

[03:54:54] members of the board, Superintendent Gullickson. This afternoon, we have a presentation to share with you regarding re-benchmarking and the process for the 2026 to 2028 biennium. Before we begin the presentation, I would like to take a brief moment to extend my thanks to the department's budget office, namely Emily Booth and Stephanie Caldwell, who have been the primary staff support for this re-benchmarking cycle, and Sean Nelson and Justin Newhouse, who have also provided support for

working files needed to complete this important process. Also, I would like to thank Ed Lanza, Director of Budget, for his leadership and oversight of this important

[03:55:32] process. Just as an entry point for you all, the biennial re-benchmarking process began on April 7th and concluded on October 15th. We are literally trying to condense six months of work into a 20-minute presentation today, so the information that we will be sharing with you is very high level. We have provided additional information about re-benchmarking and the process and data in the appendix of your presentation slide deck. It is important to note that we still have three school divisions, Norton, Essex, and Northumberland, that have not submitted their fiscal year 2025 annual school reports. This annual reporting cycle is critical for the department's

[03:56:11] work in providing complete information for policy and decision makers. While this doesn't have a direct impact on this process today, as fiscal 2024 data is used for the re-benchmarking process, it will have an impact on our upcoming General Assembly reporting requirements that the department has. We remain in contact with these specific divisions in an effort to get their information for inclusion in the General Assembly reporting. The context for this presentation today is informational only. No formal action is required by the Board of Education. The results of the biennial re-benchmarking process will have been made as of November 1st by the Department of

[03:56:50] Planning and Budget and its annual report and updates on standards of quality. While this report also includes some details of technical updates since the completion of the re-benchmarking process, this presentation focuses solely on the re-benchmarking process. I'm going to play teacher for a moment and going to respectfully request I'm going to play teacher for a moment and respectfully request that you do this okay do not click through slides ahead of where Mr.

[03:57:24] Lanza is going to walk you through it's really technical in nature and I don't want you to get lost now I'm going to introduce deputy superintendent of budget and finance Stacy Longest and director of budget Ed Lanza who will share additional information with you regarding this important re-benchmarking process. Thank you. So on slide two, good afternoon, President Creasy, members of the board, and Superintendent Gellickson. On slide two, the state budget

[03:58:00] development process is managed by the Department of Planning and Budget. VDOE's role is to assist DPB by performing the calculations necessary to update the direct aid for the governor's introduce biennial budget. This process begins with biennial re-benchmarking for the direct aid budget. The re-benchmarking process represents the continuation of the cost of direct aid to public education from the base year FY2026 into the next biennium by updating the input

[03:58:36] variables that drive costs. It's the same recipe but with the freshest ingredients. This process is run every two years, summer of odd numbered years, leading into the governor's introduced by Neal budget. Changes to input can either increase or decrease the state's cost of direct aid. All updates in re-benchmarking are technical in nature and do not involve policy actions.

[03:59:03] This means that the calculation methodologies remain constant. On slide three, the re-benchmarking process is performed incrementally in order to isolate the state impact on a specific factor.

[03:59:19] Examples would be enrollment, inflation factors, and prevailing salaries. Based budget development occurred in April and the first official increment of the biennial re-benchmarking process was run in May. VDOE completes a 28-step process to get us to the October date. While the majority of the

data used in re-benchmarking resides on the VDOE databases. We also receive data and assistance from the Department of Taxation, Department of Planning and Budget, the Virginia Lottery,

[03:59:57] and the Virginia Retirement System. SOQ programs represent over 75% of the total direct aid budget. The largest state impacts from the biennial re-benchmarking process will affect the SOQ programs.

[04:00:13] President Creasy, members of the board, Superintendent Gullickson, good afternoon. My name is Ed Lanza. I'm the director of budget. I'm going to take you through the remainder of the details of the presentation beginning on slide four, which you're going to see there as a graphical representation of our attempt to show you what an SOQ update looks like.

[04:00:41] It's going to start with, as Stacey indicated, the isolation of a particular factor, whether it's funded salaries, inflation factors, or support costs. And then what that'll do is impact likely one of the primary SOQ cost components, whether that's instructional salaries, positions, support positions, and non-personal support costs.

[04:01:03] And then once one of those items is affected, there will be an effect to the generated SOQ per pupil amounts, which you can see at the bottom of the triangle chart. So generally speaking, what we're doing is we're combining these per pupil amounts with our projections of ADM and in the end our final ADM figures to determine the total cost of a program and then using the composite index to determine the state and local share of those program costs.

[04:01:34] Moving on to slide five. During re-benchmarking, we generate our original projections of enrollment. We're going to apply SOQ standards to those figures to generate funded positions. We're going to use those funded positions combined with salaries and benefits costs to come up with program costs.

[04:01:56] After we're finished with that, we're going to use those original projections of ADM, and that's going to help us generate our per-pupil costs for SOQ programs. By combining those SOQ per-pupils, the projections of ADM at the composite index, V2E can begin to generate the initial state and local costs, the initial estimates of those costs paid to local school divisions. Then after March 31 ADM is finalized in the spring student records collection, final state entitlements will be paid to school divisions based on those final ADM

[04:02:35] figures. Keep in mind, final payments will always be based upon final March 31 ADM. Moving on to slide six. Biennial cost of re-benchmarking for the upcoming 26-28 biennium is \$1.2 billion.

[04:02:54] We show the breakdown by year right there. There are three of the, I want to highlight a couple of factors that contribute to the increase in the cost. Primarily the non-purposal support expenditures recorded by school divisions. We've got the state salary increase. There was a 3% state-funded compensation supplement in both FY25 and FY26.

[04:03:17] The cost we recognize in re-benchmarking is the continuation of that salary increase policy. And then another one being identified student percentages. That's a relatively new factor in the re-benchmarking process. The General Assembly has used this factor as a replacement for federal free lunch in the at-risk add-on, which is a nearly \$1 billion program now.

[04:03:41] Also going to highlight a couple of factors, decreasing costs, enrollment trends are going down. This is an item that we highlighted for the board two years ago in our presentation about re-

benchmarking. In addition to that, increasing ESSER and other federal funds that are used in the calculation of the federal deduct.

[04:04:01] Moving on to slide seven, the next four slides I'm going to zip through pretty quickly. These show the incremental details of the re-benchmarking process. What I'm really going to focus on at this point is just the general flow of the process, starting with the first few steps.

[04:04:17] We're removing one-time programs, single biennial cost-type programs. Beginning in step five, we move on to enrollment-based programs. Moving on to slide eight, we do that for a few more slides. Beginning in slide nine, we begin using some of the financial data certified by school divisions in their annual school reports to DOE. That would include factors such as prevailing salary updates, non-personal support cost updates, health care cost updates. Moving on to slide nine,

[04:04:52] we continue with those types of updates until we get to steps 18 and 19, which are inflationary based, non-personal support cost inflation, and salary inflation, which again, that's the realization of the continuation of the state compensation supplement policy from the previous biennium. Beginning at step 20, that's when we start updating for individual program-based variables. That would include things like the new ISP rates, Virginia Preschool Initiative per

[04:05:28] pupil amounts, as well as the brand new special education add-on, which was just funded by the General Assembly in the previous session. Just highlighting for the board in step 20, due to data availability for English language learners, we worked with DPB and came to agreement that we should hold off on that update until the final data was available in the fall. That will be incorporated in the governor's introduced budget. Moving on to step slide 11, what you see in front of you, I need to be up front, is a completely subjective list of buckets of re-benchmarked costs. I'm sure if you had five, six other people do this, they have their own list,

[04:06:08] but this is my list to just give you an idea of just kind of the magnitude of some of the costs. Instead of looking at 28 steps, maybe it's a little bit easier to look at eight items. You can see at the very top is non-personal support costs, something I highlighted a few minutes earlier that that represents about 42 percent of the cost of re-benchmarking. It's one of those items we're going to have our eye on. FY26, the current year, will serve as the base for the next re-benchmarking cycle two years from now. We're very interested in seeing how local expenditures track for that cycle. We've also highlighted here identified student percentage.

[04:06:46] I talked about that earlier. A couple others I want to highlight for you. First, VPI non-participation rate uh as a matter of the practice we remove vpi non-participation rate um and that will be reintroduced typically as another policy decision by the governor's office that'll show up in the governor's introduced budget so you see it as a cost here historically when that's reintroduced it comes back out as a savings so just keep that in mind second there's i want to also highlight the the the outlier here at the bottom is the salary update um it's it's a bit of a you know it's a

[04:07:21] a bit misleading because it's fully representative of the way in which the General Assembly funded compensation supplement in FY24. There was a 5% compensation supplement effective July 1 and a 2% effective on January 1. So on the school division books, that 2% increase only exists for half of the year. So that has an effect on the calculation methodology for salary updates. So it hasn't gone completely away. It's still, you know, it's still going to be baked into the numbers and it'll really be apparent two years from now when we go through this process again.

[04:07:55] Those things will be baked into those updates. Moving on to slide 12, we talked a little bit earlier about March 31 ADM. What I'm going to talk about briefly here is how we put together a projection of March 31 ADM.

[04:08:13] Each fall, we're going to calculate ADM projections based on the most recent fall membership data. And then just to keep in mind that fall membership is really the leading indicator of March 31 ADM. If you have 10,000 students in the fall, you're not going to have 20,000 in the spring.

[04:08:31] So it really is a leading indicator, and we are going to update those estimates each fall for the governor's budget. Moving into slide 13, this is the visual representation of the process moving from left to right. You can see on the very left of the diagram we're showing a fall membership figure.

[04:08:53] Then we take a look at historical relationships between final March 31 ADM and final fall membership at the division level. We look at that ratio. We apply it to a fall membership figure. And then you can see we combine those two to come up with an estimate of March 31 ADM.

[04:09:14] And again, I want to highlight for the board, we will always pay final entitlements based upon actual March 31 ADM, which is certified in the spring student records collection. Moving over to slide 14, showing this is a visual representation of a bunch of enrollment data at the top.

[04:09:33] Again, we're just a restatement of step five of the re-benchmarking process of that particular cost. The graph shows year-over-year growth trends of enrollment with the very clear outlier in 2021 after the pandemic had hit.

[04:09:51] The FY25 data we show on the right is actual data. 26 is projected as of Chapter 725 of 2025 Acts of Assembly. And then the 27 and 28 figures there that we show, those are the original projections of March 31 ADM in re-benchmarking.

[04:10:10] And I'm going to actually pause and give Christine a chance to chat for a second. Thanks, Ed. And just board members, I wanted to take an opportunity. We've had a lot of conversations about enrollment over the last several months. And this is a demonstration of what our projections look like.

[04:10:27] And I want to have you recall last board meeting when we shared with you Weldon Cooper's projections. And so the alignment of our projections and the out years is very much closely aligned to what you saw in the Weldon Cooper report as well.

[04:10:42] So we use that as a moniker to make sure that what our methodology is aligns with a third-party evaluator as well. So the other thing that I want to draw your attention to, just because the pandemic created quite the ripple effect with student enrollment, and you see that dip significant in 2021, just as a reminder, in those projections that you see for 26, particularly about 25, we had a higher level of kindergarten enrollment that are from pandemic babies.

[04:11:09] So our birth rates rose during the pandemic for two years. So it creates this uncertain wave for a period of time. What I anticipate that we will see, and we'll continue to monitor this, is that you will continue to see that slight decline in Virginia student enrollment as we look out in further future years.

[04:11:28] So just wanted to draw your attention that this chart is specific to our work, but last month when we presented to you, we included those Weldon Cooper, as well as the Georgetown Dr. Rosa slides as well. So we are continuing to look at this globally to make sure that we're not missing the mark in something that we are looking at from a data perspective. Thanks, Christina. And I just want to reinforce

for the board, the re-benchmarking estimates of ADM were performed in July. Since then, we've had another significant data point come in, which will be reflected in the governor's introduced budget. Moving on to slide 15, I'm going to briefly

[04:12:05] discuss the application and calculation of the composite index. The composite index is defined in the Appropriation Act. We certainly use it to not only determine state and local share of SOQ programs, but also non-SOQ programs for which a local match is required.

[04:12:26] Compensation supplements, at-risk add-on, those are examples of those types of programs. The formula is programmed in a way that average state share across the board is about 55%, local share being about 45%, with a local index capped at 80%.

[04:12:44] The calculation is a function of three primary economic values: the adjusted gross income, true value of property, and taxable retail sales. And each of those variables is expressed on a per capita basis, weighted one-third, and per student per pupil basis which is weighted two-thirds in the calculation we publish those values ahead of the release of the governor's budget to give local school divisions an opportunity to look at those for planning purposes their local budgeting processes are starting right around now anyone looking

[04:13:20] to take a deeper dive into the data variances from one biennium to the next we actually put there's a link inside your PowerPoint presentation that takes you to our composite index website, look out for a particular hyperlink for a calculation and trend analysis file.

[04:13:41] That gives all school divisions the opportunity not just to see the calculation of their index, but how their variables change from one year to the next to get an idea of why their index went up or down. Slide 16, this is the visual representation of the calculation I was just describing.

[04:14:01] Um, the, each of these school division values are compared to, uh, statewide values. Um, true property weighted 50%, uh, adjusted gross income, 40%, taxable sales, 10%. You can see there's the ADM component and there's the population component, uh, one above the other.

[04:14:20] And at the bottom, you'll see, bottom right, you'll see that 0.45 factor in the equation. That is the factor that keeps the overall state and local shares at the 55-45 split. I was referring to earlier. Slide 16, again, is a demonstration of the application of the composite index.

[04:14:40] We start with the total cost of the program, again, total cost of program, those SOQ per pupil amounts times the enrollment figures to get the total, and then we'll apply the composite index to those totals in order to determine state and local share.

[04:14:56] Basic aid has an extra component to it. You can see that on the top section of this particular graph where we reduce the total program up by sales taxes and the supplemental GF payment. That's that supplemental payment in lieu of grocery taxes and personal hygiene taxes.

[04:15:12] That is actually to the benefit of school divisions because it reduces the base from which state and local share are calculated. Moving on to slide 18, I'm going to talk about a few of the pending updates.

[04:15:28] There are a few items in the process that are not included in the formal rebenchmarking process, mainly from a data availability standpoint. For example, the local composite index, we typically don't have that data until November. So it's technically not included in the process, but it is updated for the governor's budget.

[04:15:48] Some of the fringe benefit data is done right after we finish rebenchmarking. Some of it's not. Anyone who's looked at the DPB annual report of SOQ updates will see updated VRS rates in there, but there are components of the benefit packages and direct aid that are not included in there.

[04:16:11] So there's a little bit of a time delay between this process and getting that data. Enrollment projections and the sales tax projections, they'll obviously update it for the governor's budget. Those are still confidential data items until the governor's budget release, which is next week.

[04:16:29] And just want to also recognize in relation to VRS, unlike the national trend, they're successfully working towards the full funding of the Virginia retirement system. And they've issued benefit rates that are lower for this biennium than the prior. And those impacts are published in DPB's report.

[04:16:49] And I'm just going to quickly wrap up on page 19, excuse me, on slide 19, just to reconfirm for the board that the buy-in or re-benchmarking process is technical in nature and reflects the continuing cost of existing policy with updated input variables.

[04:17:05] Total cost of re-benchmarking, again, \$1.2 billion for 2628, with non-personal support costs representing the number one cost inflator. And March 31 ADM projections, again, function of fall membership and historical relationships between ADM and fall membership.

[04:17:24] And I'm going to pause one more time and give Christina another opportunity to speak. Thank you, Ed. Before we entertain questions, just a few next steps for you to share. So as Ed indicated, the governor is releasing his budget next Wednesday.

[04:17:42] And so this will be incorporated into that work along with whatever policy decisions he intends to make and present as well. um the fall membership information will be shared with you at the January 8th board meeting so you will have yet another enrollment presentation from us so that you can see what those real numbers that we've received from school divisions reportings actually look like moving forward we can do future projections as well so more to come on this this is definitely step one in a many many long journey uh process over the next several months so we are certainly happy to answer any

[04:18:16] questions that you may have. Thank you, Ed, for your presentation today. Ed, I have a question for you on slide 18. When you, number four, pending updates, where you talk about revised VRS fringe benefits and you said we're moving towards being able to fully support VRS, does that mean that the localities will not be committing any funding towards that? Or what does that exactly mean? If you could help us. Yeah, what it means is that the benefit rate that's applied in the funding

[04:18:49] package for funded positions has changed. It was, you know, if, again, the rates are published in the DPB report, and it shows a lower amount compared to the previous biennium. So what that means is, so for example, for a funded teacher, when we calculate the cost of a funded teacher, we're looking at salary rates, funded salary.

[04:19:15] We're looking at funded benefits rates, too. So when there's a change like that, there's a change to the benefit package that's funded in direct aid by the state to the school divisions for each position. So that's the application in re-benchmarking of the VRS rate, where the amount of the benefit package that's funded by the state has gone down from the 24-26 biennium to what will be paid in the 26-28 biennium.

[04:19:45] And that's based on actuarial data, so that's definitely a VRS board decision. That's not an us decision. So localities still have to pay, but I think the positive trend is for a number of years, you know,

VRS converted where an employee actually has to pay 5% of their compensation into VRS.

[04:20:02] That happened many years ago. But for a number of years following that, the rates have steadily increased in order for them to try to fully fund. But I think that speaks to where VRS is doing a great job of trying to mitigate the other concerns that we see coming out of other states where they're not able to support their retirees.

[04:20:19] And so when you see that decline start to happen, it speaks to the quality of the investments and the work that VRS is doing. So I think that's really the intention. The state funds a portion, but a locality still has to fund a portion of retirement benefits for their staff. Other questions here?

[04:20:36] Mr. Monk? Appreciate it, Christina and team. Ed, you mentioned the federal, what you called the federal free lunch at-risk add-on. Is that CEP, or what are you referring to there? The reference there, historically, the at-risk factor being used in direct aid has been the federal free lunch rate.

[04:20:59] Those have been proven less reliable for estimating the state at-risk population as CEP has influenced the data. We've probably been working in the ISP environment for about eight years, just running scenarios, going that far back. But when we first were doing those scenarios, the feeling that the data really wasn't mature enough to really be used in any state funding formulas. It wasn't until two years ago that the General Assembly decided that the data was a much better representation of the state at-risk population to the point where they wanted

[04:21:36] to include it in a major state funding formula such as the at-risk add-on. The at-risk add-on these days is like an \$800, \$900 million program. So there's certainly a feeling that that is a much better indicator. I think a lot of folks might agree with that given what federal free lunch data looks like because of CEP. It's just so hard to use that as a reflection of the true at-risk population in school divisions. Especially given outside of pandemic times, the need for them to fill out forms, et cetera. Understood. And then can you speak to the LCI

[04:22:14] changes kind of in some of our more urban areas? So thinking Arlington, for instance, and some of the changes over the past couple of years and the factor that the cat plays in that with rural districts. So knowing that, you know, we've had some changes in economies in our more urban areas how is that impacting lci of rural districts or smaller okay yeah the um keep in mind for also with uh with lci data since we we've got to rely on a lot of taxation data so that's there's a bit

[04:22:47] of a lag in the data so we're using uh fy23 data points so we're going back a little bit uh into the past to get you know good solid data points but when you when when lci changes what what it's doing is it's really a reflection of local economic conditions compared to the rest of the state. So if one thing changes, it technically changes everybody because the statewide average changes and then everyone's relationship to that statewide average changes just every little bit.

[04:23:19] So if you see a, let's say your composite index went up by a little bit and you look at your true value of property. It's the biggest factor in the equation. It's likely, what it's saying is that your real estate, your true value of property is increasing at a higher rate than the rest of the state, or your adjusted local income increasing at a higher rate than the rest of the state. But you could also have the reverse where you're like, wow, my true property went up

[04:23:55] by 5%, but my composite index went down. And that might be because the rest of the state went up by 8%. So you actually, yeah, you may have gone up, but you trailed the statewide average, which

could result in a decrease. Because again, it's a relative index. It's comparing everything to the statewide average. So that's kind of how it's going to work. If you see your composite index going to a higher number, it's likely meaning that your local economic factors are increasing at a rate higher than the statewide average. Does that answer the question?

[04:24:30] It does, and I think it's just important for board members to recognize then that that impacts the local percent effort that is going to, in many cases, at the discretion of their local bodies, but going to schools. So, you know, in smaller rural areas, that dollar amount is, you know, not as significant, but if we're talking about Fairfax or Arlington, those are some significant dollars just based upon, and of course, many of them are capped out, but that's a whole other discussion.

[04:24:59] A few were capped out. Definitely true. That's all. Thank you. Other questions or comments here? Ms. McPherson. Item 21, update remedial summer school per pupil amount and enrollment.

[04:25:17] There's a significant difference between FY27 and projected FY28. That's just building in program growth from one year to the next. Okay. Other questions?

[04:25:36] Mr. Monk? I just want to applaud the work because I think it was, as mentioned earlier in the presentation, this is the type of data that local school boards are utilizing now as they begin that budget development process. So having accurate information that can be with SBOs at this time of year as early as possible is helpful so they know what communication looks like between their local board of supervisors or city council.

[04:26:02] And so thanks for the work on this. I appreciate it. Anyone else? If we can take Dr. Northern off mute, it's my understanding she has a question, comment.

[04:26:21] Yeah, hey guys, am I off mute? You are. Awesome. Thank you for the presentation. I think my question goes back to the VRS and the pension systems. I think one thing I continue to worry about is that, especially when we try to work towards full funding, that the pension, especially these defined benefit plans, end up, you know, penalizing the newer teachers because we know that the pensions grow very slowly in those early years. So, you end up with a, you know, a newer teacher basically paying off the legacy pension

[04:27:00] debt for the retired teachers, and it actually doesn't go into their own future retirement account, which is pretty unfair um and i feel like more more younger teachers are starting to catch on that they're they're not paying for their own future retirement so to the extent that we can i know other states are working on that and this may be a vrs and have nothing to do with you guys but i would just love it if we would as we work towards full funding that we um really try to wrestle with this problem of early career teachers subsidizing the the later career teachers and

[04:27:34] trying to figure out how we can begin to lessen that, because I think if you give young teachers the option of taking more salary, you know, earlier on versus, you know, putting in money for a retirement, you know, 20 or 30 years away, they would choose to have that salary front-loaded.

[04:27:57] Thank you, Dr. Northern, for your comments. I think what would be best, if the board is open to this is that we reach out to VRS and ask Patricia Bishop who's their executive director to possibly present to you she is in charge of informing that board they have an independent board that operates similar to you and they are the policy decision makers and they are definitely the experts in that so I would suggest that we reach out to VRS and potentially have a future

[04:28:26] presentation for you all on on that topic yeah thank you thank you all so very much we appreciate it. I think we're going to jump to item J only because we have an out-of-town guest here to

[04:28:58] present for that and want to make sure that we get through that item. Is that correct? Can we go ahead and do we need to get anything set up for item J or are we good to present on that? Hang

[04:29:23] tight. 30 seconds. Thank you so much. Thank you and thank you for accommodating us also. Good

[04:30:45] afternoon President Creasy, Superintendent Gullickson and members of the board. I'm Amanda Navetral, the director for the Office of Advanced Learning and over the past year I've had the pleasure of working as the ex-officio member for the Virginia Advisory Committee for Advanced Learners, otherwise known as VACAL. This stakeholder group is committed to greater access and opportunity for advanced learners across the commonwealth. Today we are excited to bring to you the first ever annual report for vacow please note that although vacow and other advisory committees typically report on the events of the calendar year as a newer state advisory committee we are reporting on the outcomes of our

[04:31:25] first two meetings one in May 2025 and the other in October 2025 to formally present the report I am pleased to introduce the chair of vacow mr. mark Levy director of the Roanoke Valley Governor's School after the conclusion the presentation we are both happy to answer any questions i'll turn it over to mr levy thank you good afternoon president creasy superintendent gullickson and members of the board my name is mark levy and it is my pleasure to serve as the chair of the virginia advisory

[04:32:00] committee for advanced learning otherwise known as vacal and it is my honor to be up here today to update you on the work of the committee thus far to respect the time of the board i'll be brief about basic organizational details that are clearly outlined in the presentation and report that have already been provided to you as you know bay cal was established in 2024 to serve as an advisory committee for the virginia board of education to provide input and guidance on gifted education academic year governor schools ap ib dual enrollment and other advanced learning options

[04:32:36] membership of the committee is outlined on slide three of the presentation and is structured to ensure a broad range of viewpoints from regions across the state and voices from different perspectives, such as educators, parents, higher ed, and nationally recognized experts in advanced learning. VACAL has held two meetings since it was established, as detailed on slide four.

[04:33:00] The activities of our meetings can be generally summarized as presentations, document review, and committee reports and discussions. You can see a list of the presentations that VACAL has heard thus far on slide five. They are typically designed to give the members background information and context for objectives that the committee will be pursuing moving on to the information on slide 6 document review and feedback is an important service the committee is able to provide for example offices within the department of education and other agencies produce materials

[04:33:35] such as technical resource documents for school divisions or public facing informational resources for parents or students when materials fall within the area of advanced learning vacal is able to review these documents through the lens of our memberships broad perspectives and varied viewpoints which can help maximize the effectiveness of these documents thus far we've been able to provide meaningful feedback on a number of documents that have or will soon be published for school divisions

students and families in the Commonwealth the committee also engages in constituency reports and discussion some of the issues raised during these discussions

[04:34:13] are covered on slide 7 these include the need for professional development for teachers in particularly in the area of serving twice exceptional students providing clarity to students and families about advanced learning opportunities focusing on gifted identification and services in school divisions that are small rural or under resourced and the value of subject area acceleration to provide academic services that are appropriate for the ability level of each student these discussions have also helped generate a list of recommendations to the board however before we move on to those recommendations, I would like to take a few moments to discuss some of the

[04:34:52] accommodations of the work of the Board as well as the Department of Education. The past calendar year has been a very exciting one from the perspective of advanced learning in the state of Virginia. There are encouraging developments that have happened already or are on the horizon and it's worth taking a moment to recognize those efforts so that we can continue to build on that momentum. VACAL would like to recognize the work of the Board and VDOE in preparing for full implementation of House Bill 2686 which calls for automatic enrollment and accelerated middle school mathematics courses. We support the updates to the school performance and support framework that

[04:35:31] focus on increased rigor and access to advanced learning opportunities. The implementation of College and Career Ready Virginia has been incredibly important in increasing access and transferability of dual enrollment for advanced learners. We recognize efforts towards increased rigor and expectations in standardized testing and SOL standards. We are very excited at the board's approval of a 20th academic year Governor's School, the New River Valley Governor's School for Arts and Humanities. We are encouraged by the creative use of federal dollars by the department to establish a gifted endorsement cohort for classroom teachers from under-resourced school

[04:36:10] divisions. We're excited by the transparency provided by the new build a table structure that a department has established for disseminating gifted education data. We appreciate the continued work in providing free reduction for AP, IB, and Cambridge exams to ensure broad access to advanced coursework. And VACAL applauds the board's approval of the procedure for initiating academic year governor schools this past summer, which provides valuable guidance and support for these programs. Now I'd like to turn to recommendations from the committee. From our discussions thus far, I have seven items that

[04:36:50] I'd like to share with you. Each of these items are listed on slide 10 of the presentation. However, I would point you towards the more in-depth discussion of each of these items in the full report. First, universal screening for academic aptitude at grade two. This has been a topic of discussion for the board in recent meetings, and we're strongly encouraged by the board including this recommendation within its SOQ prescriptions. FACAL is very strongly in support of universal screening for giftedness at grade 2 using local norms.

[04:37:22] We strongly believe that early identification is important in feeding the pipeline for advanced learning in the Commonwealth and meeting the needs of our students. A single universal screening tool used statewide will provide considerable benefits in terms of data analysis and division and school level planning.

[04:37:41] Furthermore, the professional development that will be provided by the department to school divisions during implementation will ensure that best practice is observed when using the screening data. Our next recommendation is to increase the use of multiple nonverbal measures for gifted identification. BACAL encourages the DOE to consider supporting school divisions in increasing the use of multiple nonverbal cognitive measures for gifted identification in early grades to reduce barriers for underrepresented groups. We think that professional development and support in this area will help with early identification of students with different

[04:38:20] cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds. Next, we encourage improved identification of gifted students with special education needs. Students who are twice exceptional, also called 2E students, are learners who are both gifted and have one or more disabilities. It can be difficult to identify these students because oftentimes handicap or disability can mask their giftedness, therefore it's recommended to explore how we can better align and coordinate referrals of gifted education and special education programs. This could aid identifications for both of those areas while hopefully leading to an

[04:38:58] increased proportion of twice exceptional students who are accurately identified. Our next recommendation is the codification of the Virginia Advisory Committee for Advanced Learning. As you know, VACAL was established by the board as its Advisory Committee for Advanced Learning. However, other board advisory committees are outlined in the Code of Virginia and that gives them additional guidance, resources, and flexibility to support the work of those committees. We believe that VACAL would benefit from likewise being outlined in code as the other board advisory committees are. Next, VACAL encourages

[04:39:34] the VDOE to make efforts to expand professional development opportunities for school-based counseling staff. Gifted students and advanced learners have specialized social and emotional needs as well as unique course options and program options. Therefore, it is important that guidance staff are equipped with the tools necessary to properly support these students. Next, we would like to encourage additional informational resources for advanced learners and their families. There's a wide variety of advanced learning opportunities across the state, and this diverse range of course and program options benefit students. However, these options can also create confusion,

[04:40:14] as many of those programs have similarities or overlapping characteristics. Therefore, We recommend a simple and straightforward guide for students and families regarding advanced learning opportunities such as AP, IB, dual enrollment, Cambridge, and other advanced learning opportunities.

[04:40:32] These resources could explain the features and benefits of each to allow families to make the right decisions for their children. And finally, we recommend revision of the Gifted Annual Report. The existing data collection format of the Gifted Annual Report has not been updated in nearly 30 years.

[04:40:50] BACAL recognizes the efforts to make gifted education data simple, transparent, and visible through the Build-A-Table framework that's recently been established, but we recommend that the VDOE continues to make improvements to the other portions of the gifted annual report so it's more comprehensible, transparent, and useful for stakeholders across the Commonwealth.

[04:41:12] In conclusion, the committee has had a very successful start to our work on behalf of Virginia's advanced learners, and we deeply appreciate the opportunity to support the Virginia Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, and the students of the Commonwealth.

[04:41:27] We applaud the actions taken by the board and the work of the VDOE to support advanced learners. We believe that with recent accomplishments, as well as opportunities such as universal screening on the horizon, that this progress will put Virginia among the top states in the nation for support of advanced learners. I'm very happy to welcome any questions that the board may have for myself or Mrs. Nevetrel. Any questions or comments here? Well I personally would like to of course Amanda knows that I like to talk about my love for my gifted population. I'm thankful

[04:42:07] very much for your recommendations or for the committee's recommendations that you've brought to us. I certainly think that the board will take them to heart. We are and Amanda can speak to this too that we we and I'm sure she filled the committee in that the board was extremely excited and and more than willing and happy to add the prescriptions on the universal screener or the prescription for the universal screener and certainly I think are interested in doing more and we'd love to have the committee's feedback I'm sure she communicated with you as well

[04:42:46] on kind of rescreening and what that looks like you know so screening in grade two and then you know we often have the necessity for one reason or the other to rescreen having been a middle school teacher myself of gifted students you know you all often have those students who are in second grade that just simply have higher language skills that that often test them in and And so how are we truly at those higher levels of education ensuring that our students who

[04:43:24] do need the most support from the gifted perspective are getting their needed support? I mean, I think one thing that I also really liked about your presentation is the nonverbal measures for identification, because I was thinking, are we going to go down a greater path, right? So that it's not just academic giftedness, but how are we also supporting those students who may have artistic giftedness and other levels or other kinds of giftedness

[04:44:00] that we are rightly needed to be supported as well. So I really love to see how the committee takes those ideas and thoughts on and kind of runs with them too. And we are very well aware of the regional needs and differences um in the support mechanisms that are available and so you know i think we've talked about that before at the board level and how do we do the best that we can to provide an equal playing field of supports that we can provide

[04:44:37] from the department's perspective or from the board's perspective to ensure that gifted students are being supported however they need to be supported from our perspective so thank you so much for being here today and for the work that you and the rest of the committee does please do take back our thanks anyone else on this factor northern yes i i just wanted to um also bring up the other point we were talking about last month which was exploring the use of the vk rp as a

[04:45:12] potential earlier screener because we know even even sometimes by the time kids get to second or third grade you know we've all already missed opportunities to nourish and expand their talent so again if the committee can just continue to look into the possibility of using these screeners and the early grades that we already have in place and the potential of those to also assess readiness for advanced work and speak to that for a minute since our last meeting I've been added to those meetings with Jenna's team and so looking forward to digging

[04:45:48] into that and then bringing it to vacow at our spring meeting thank you thank you anything else here thank you very much we appreciate you okay and with that we are going to move item h to tomorrow um and what do we want to go to we have what did i say we wanted to go to let's go to f

[04:46:20] Next, please. H is going to tomorrow, so we have F, I, and K left. Here he comes.

[04:46:51] Oh, yeah, I'm sorry. I thought you were going to make sure.

[04:47:24] President Creasy, Superintendent Gellickson, board members, we're excited today to talk with you about accreditation. We've analyzed the results from 24-25 and have been in contact with those schools and looked at the results. And so in this presentation you have before you and the public is watching, we'll be talking about that, But also about the future of accreditation, you know, hearing from you as the board, listening to the public around what accreditation means, as we think, you know, around compliance and what you need to have.

[04:47:50] And so my colleague here will introduce herself, and she will walk through that presentation we'll be here to support. And we have, of course, our financial operations chief here as well as we think about these compliance measures. So thank you. President Creasy, members of the board, and Superintendent Golickson.

[04:48:08] Good afternoon. My name is Erin Madden. you might want to go in the middle. This will be better. I serve as a senior program and strategy specialist and in this capacity I've been looking at the accreditation system and how it can improve from the 25-26 cycle. In this presentation we're going to provide a high level overview of the 2025-26 accreditation cycle by first identifying what has changed and importantly what has not

[04:48:44] and reminding ourselves of why accreditation matters and the importance of these requirements. We will then look at the specific requirements and why they matter to Virginia schools and divisions. From there, we'll jump into the 25-26 cycle milestones, what the four accreditation designations signify, and finally, the statewide results. After a consideration of the results, the presentation moves into major takeaways, departmental next steps, and what the board can

[04:49:19] expect in upcoming meetings. Okay, some of the background. The revised SOA reorganized and kind of simplified, clarified some of the requirements. The key takeaways from this revised SOA, they're better structured, improving clarity for both the field and the department itself. There's only one addition made to documentation requirements and that was the CSI

[04:49:53] schools or schools identified as CSI under ESSA SPSF system are required in addition to provide proof of that they're implementing corrective action plans with fidelity and that was the only addition to the requirements this year for divisions. The improved consistency of this evidence being collected allowed for better statewide analysis at the department level.

[04:50:31] What stayed the same? Accreditation remains a school-level compliance-based system for the 2025-2026 cycle. Schools must continue as they have for decades to demonstrate compliance with the SOQs, SOA, and other requirements in the code.

[04:50:51] And then, Leanne, where are you going to speak to the SOQ? We will in a minute. Okay. Okay, here's a quick reminder of why this matters. Accreditation considers compliance while accountability performance.

[04:51:12] Accreditation requirements focus on the foundational supports and operational inputs needed to create the type of positive learning environments that can then lead to positive student performance outcomes.

[04:51:33] On slide six, we look at the key milestones during the 2025-2026 evidence collection cycle. July 2025 was when the revised SOAs took effect. August of this year, we requested that division superintendents with the input of principals, respond to a list of yes or no questions that were based on the SOA requirements.

[04:52:04] And this fall, we completed the review the evidence validating submissions and requesting additional clarifications for schools that needed to submit additional evidence. December of 2025, I think a couple days ago, we notified schools that were going to be considered conditionally accredited and made them aware of the appeals process that is also in place. Just a reminder about the four designations of accreditation. Fully

[04:52:39] accredited signifies that all required evidence submitted was identified as satisfactory for compliance. Conditionally accredited, any required evidence was missing, incomplete, or insufficient. Schools will remain conditionally accredited until they submit additional supportive evidence showing compliance. Accreditation denied is reserved for those schools that failed to adopt or refuse to adopt or implement required corrective actions. We had zero this year. And

[04:53:14] new schools, it's a designation of one year for newly configured schools that consist of students from outside schools. And here's the statewide results for 2025-2026 accreditation. So as you see, we have 94% of our schools were fully accredited, with only 113, which is just over six percent being conditionally accredited. Zero accreditation denied, as mentioned, and then six

[04:53:50] were under the new school designation. And further breaking down these numbers, when we look at the specific requirements that non-compliance rested in, we are able to see that they're mainly evidentiary problems rather than systemic or operational in essence the large majority of them consisted of comprehensive plans not being posted on websites things that could be easily fixed with just a dialogue and because

[04:54:29] this is in a static system once we do get those pieces of support we can move them to fully accredited and on slide 10 some of the key takeaways from the cycle we have received some positive feedback from divisions stating that the consolidated requirements have been very appreciated yet there's still need for more consolidation

[04:55:08] as well as standardization of templates for the divisions in the schools as well as internal guidance documents as well as external because there's still a disconnect and understanding between the two systems now, and just a clarification of terms really.

[04:55:32] From this standardization of evidence, we were able to collect better data that will inform future decisions and problematic areas that may need to be addressed, and we were able to tell that this system is performing as it was intended, and it illustrated the necessary gaps that we will need to address in upcoming months and then we'll move on to some

[04:56:11] next steps um the 25-26 cycle clearly illustrated the need to distinguish and differentiate between school level and division level requirements and responsibilities a lot of times principals were tasked or made responsible for division-wide decisions and that needs to be looked at very closely considered. I would like President Creasy to speak to that. So for the public who did not tune in last month, the board had a robust conversation on the importance of us looking

[04:56:50] towards division accreditation as well because so many of the policy decisions are really executed by either the financial team and the operations team at the division level as well as in partnership with their governing boards and so a hundred percent of the items that are on Ms. Madden's list for those 113 schools is really grounded in a lot of division level actions but the principles are held per the existing

[04:57:26] regs and code are held to having that accreditation status on their school quality profile and so we are just giving a nod that the board's actions last month I think are further reflected in the data that we received that was validated that more action is done also wanted to emphasize what Ms. Madden noted on the last slide is that this is different than the school performance and support framework it is not just a one-time action once a year and so we

[04:58:03] certainly can provide an update at the January 8th meeting on anyone that does take action since it is more on a rolling basis when you can demonstrate that fidelity because again of those intentions on why the accreditation system still matters outside of the academic side through the school performance support rank please continue and it's really looking not as a means of punishment but a ways of improvement like our our main goal is to get everyone 100% accredited. And it's possible. So some of the priorities that the department has

[04:58:41] identified, we definitely need to improve clarity of evidence expectations throughout. Streamline the submission process with clear deadlines and what is expected from divisions and what is expected from individual schools as well. Publishing unified guidance documents related to schools versus division responsibilities and strengthen the technical assistance and capacity for departmental reviews. Some of the board-facing work, identify where regulatory clarification is

[04:59:17] needed versus state code. Seems like a lot of times the state code and the regulations don't really they conflict actually um and we just need to look at the definitions and make sure that they are the same throughout in both things um prepare a series of briefings tied to accreditation modernization and review the timeline for 2026 accreditation cycle improvements

[04:59:53] and on slide 12 we look at what some some of the things that the department has already been doing which is analyzing the conditionally accredited schools to identify what the needs are in the upcoming years. Drafting standardized templates and clarifying guidance for future submissions.

[05:00:16] An example of this is I've created a collection calendar for both principals and then for superintendents. Each month it'll go into what would be a good idea to look at and collect for this one deadline submission. I've prepared a proposed schedule for the accreditation-related board actions related to amending the regulations. And we're starting to develop concepts for a

[05:00:51] public-facing accreditation guide and webpage. Lastly, we're reviewing the areas of regulation that need clarification in 2026 regulatory packages and considering the timelines on that.

[05:01:09] So these efforts are in hopes to position the board for clearer, more streamlined decision-making capabilities at future meetings and accreditation discussions. So this last one, what the board can expect in the upcoming meetings.

[05:01:30] Early 2026 would be a deep dive into the conditional accreditation themes, what areas of non-compliance were really at issue during the 25-26 cycle, propose refinements to evidence expectations and

documentation templates, and a updated accreditation communication guide for both divisions and individual schools.

[05:01:57] That would be dependent on the changes made for the requirements and responsibilities distinctions between the administrator versus the principal. Spring 2026 would be the recommendations for regulatory cleanup and clarification and a preview of the accreditation evidence timeline.

[05:02:23] Late spring, early summer 2026, that is when we would start with the heavy accreditation training resources and field work. And the last slide, the closing message. The 2526 accreditation cycle accomplishes its goal of improving the overall clarity and transparency of the system and delivering a better, more actionable information.

[05:02:47] um this strong foundation from 2025-2026 will allow the board and the department to continue to refine the system addressing gaps and incongruencies identified while providing the departmental guidance and support to virginia schools and divisions that need it the most and with that if you guys have any questions dr ackerman yes i think um again i'm a newbie to this so i probably don't fully appreciate how exciting this has been for this board to have such clarity

[05:03:23] on what it means to become accredited and also to separate this out from accountability I think is really exciting, and that I totally can appreciate and get. I think one thing, and maybe I just have a different definition of accreditation in my mind from some of my experiences with accreditation, but I'd still like to caution this board for having some type of third-party, not just self-assessments done for accreditation process, whether it's third-party, whether it's their peers.

[05:03:53] It could be in-house peers. Because while this data is amazing, for some regions to be 100% fully accredited, from my experience, has questions. And I think, too, it's also removing that stigma, as you said. It's not a got you. Being conditionally accredited is an opportunity for improvement.

[05:04:12] And I know being a leader and having gone through accreditation in different hats, Sometimes I really appreciated what the accrediting body said because it gave me power to speak to the board, to my constituents, to say, see, this is why we really need this because it's part of our accreditation.

[05:04:31] So I just don't want to lose the opportunities that come with accreditation, even though I also really want to celebrate this 94%. There's the part of me that also says that's, you know, we probably should see more conditional accreditations and take away that stigma that that's a bad thing.

[05:04:47] That's a great thing. It's an opportunity for leaders to get the things they need for excellence. So just a little bit of thoughts. And then again, I don't want to be discouraging because it's exciting. And I just think there's an opportunity to improve the accreditation process. And I think specifically the self-certification process of just checking yes or no needs to be looked at.

[05:05:13] Introducing randomized audits is a thing that could be very beneficial to this and serve just and serve the JLARC's recommendation of moving away from self-certification towards monitoring systems. Thank you. Mr. Mack? Thank you and would agree Dr. Ackerman number one want to celebrate right but at the same time want to make sure that it is useful information that the public with confidence can say okay this is is where we are. I know we've had a lot of conversations

[05:05:47] aboard about kind of school level versus division so I think some of that will help there and then And also, as I think it was just alluded to in the last statements there, around self-reported data. And

so maybe not a third party or peers, and maybe that's an idea, but I think just that in itself of changing and transitioning some of the -- what data is required, what that looks like, how it is checked and validated would go a long way in some of those components for sure.

[05:06:21] But I appreciate the presentation. you want well that's okay yeah so i think it is a difference this is a significant difference from what you're used to um because a lot of it is the accreditation pieces so what is this accreditation system is has been separated so the accountability the school the the student outcomes those pieces are in the school performance and support system.

[05:06:57] The accreditation system is like Mr. Jennings was talking about, which is more around those things that every school can achieve. So in other words, we're talking about those compliance mechanisms of, yes, I'm doing all of my fire drills.

[05:07:19] I mean, that's very elementary. That brings the explanation to an elementary level. But I do think that if we're being consistent, then we're also looking at what we had presented to us earlier around the accreditation process for EPPs.

[05:07:37] And looking at how we are using, and I do think that if we do something to strengthen using peer evaluators that are not people from within school buildings, within the same school building or even the same school division, to come in.

[05:08:01] I mean, Dr. Ackerman, you can attest to the fact that having someone else come in and evaluate your processes and procedures always yields something for a takeaway. Those peer professional evaluators will say, hey, in our school, we do X, Y, or Z.

[05:08:24] You might want to think about doing it that way. Our school division does this, this way. You might want to think about doing it this way. And so it takes schools from a, maybe an area of weakness to a true area of growth.

[05:08:43] And so if there's nothing else that the board takes from this presentation, I do believe that it is to support some sort of further outside evaluation metric that is used, whether it be an audit, which may be the next step to then moving to a larger step of having that external validation of the self-reported information, I think it's going to take us, it's going to be a progressive opportunity in its nature. I'm not sure that we can go from where we

[05:09:19] are right now in self-assessment to full-blown what we know of as, you know, peer evaluation. And when we say peer evaluation, it's really more peer review and opportunities for growth and improvement so that's all I would add Mr. Monk agree and appreciate the conversation too I think and you did a great job of kind of separating hey what are we looking at and I think that separation could go further if we get to the point where there is a division versus a school level

[05:09:54] and those may be conversations where we figure out what does that look like whether it you know is another entity or I really think to your point that progression of the self-validated data is there but let's get to how can we make sure that it's actually validated and that it's not just self-reported data that someone is relying on and we've talked again extensively around conversations of the school districts sometimes are large right so the person running the fire drill may not be the same person that's doing grants and some of the school finance

[05:10:29] operations and so cleaning up that and ensuring that the data is accurate and timely and relevant I think gets us there, and then maybe we can have a further conversation around whether it is a peer, whether it is a third party, what is a good use also thinking of the district's time and resources.

[05:10:47] You know, if this is something that everybody should be at 100%, should we really spend a lot of time from an operations perspective if we've already got confirmed, validated data? But definitely a conversation for another day. I think we all agree it's something that's not perfect now and we've got to fix and it sounds like there's some next steps to make that happen.

[05:11:10] I wanted to highlight the fact that since we have separated out accreditation from accountability and proficiency, that we need to kind of look at accreditation as being a very basic thing you can do to continue operating a school and that there should be no reason why you can't check the boxes and validate the boxes.

[05:11:34] And I'm concerned that some principals, it may be a reflection maybe on a principal when it's not the principal's responsibility because we didn't get certain information from a district or a division. And we need to make sure that the public and the school boards understand where we're not getting the accurate information from.

[05:11:57] Because it's unfair to people who are engaged in operational support and doing all things right. And it looks like their school was not fully accredited, but it was almost totally out of their hands. So I'm interested in making sure that we know why we're not getting basic information about just the simple things you need to have in place to operate a school, like is the fire law working, did you do the fire drills, things like that, before we even cross over to accountability and proficiency.

[05:12:28] And I was looking at one school had one of the higher ratings on the proficiency side, distinguished schools, but at the same time they had issues with absenteeism and things like that.

[05:12:47] So on that side of the equation is where I think we really have got to focus to figure out why you've got gifted programs that are doing well, but all of the other students that need targeted support are not doing well in that particular school. So as we continue to drill down, it's going to be really important that we make the public aware of where things really are happening, because we're going to come back up on the data that talks about the inability of students to perform their math and perform their reading, and we need to know where it's really off track.

[05:13:24] I think we need to make sure that we know what we're not. Oftentimes, we have these things going in our mind as we're talking here on the dais, and we've got to be really clear that this presentation is about accreditation, not accountability.

[05:13:41] So I do think, however, that communication is extremely critical to ensuring that school divisions have all of the very clear information that they need to understand, very elementary level, what the difference between accreditation and the school performance and support system, what the two differences are.

[05:14:12] Number one, I think that we need to ensure that there are more than adequate communication tools that are being passed along, not just to the schools and school divisions, but also to the professional associations who are oftentimes sitting just listening to our conversations and maybe not completely and taking some information and miscommunicating.

[05:14:38] I think the department has to ensure that we're not just leaning on presentations, but we're also almost giving a summary of exactly what we want them to know from every one of these presentations, a high-level piece that is not something that they have to make up on their own, that they can simply send on, because I think that's where a lot of our confusion and, you know, criticism is coming from.

[05:15:08] So I think that's certainly a direction that we need to go in, but I think we as board members need to be cognizant of how we're being heard, too, over the virtual system, and oftentimes things get confused. So if I, Dr. Ackerman?

[05:15:25] That was really helpful. And honestly, with all that, whether other peer or third party, even just, I think, to your point, some evidence with the self-checks. If we do randomized audits, that might get tricky. So like truly randomized, because that will be hard, I think, for us to not want, not us, but whoever, all of us, right, to put on the hat of random. So just caution on that. That's one of the one reasons the other ones are good, because you do the same thing for everybody.

[05:15:55] But anyway, yeah, no, I think we're all kind of thinking and saying the same thing, so that's exciting. And I think just drilling down on terms will really help these discussions going forward. Mr. Monk?

[05:16:12] Not to – I promise I'm done here. But I think that will put us in a position when we get evidence, and it's not just self-reported, but we've got clarity around the information we're receiving where we won't – board and the agency aren't in a position where we're accrediting a body and then we see other areas where maybe there could be some improvement or things that we weren't aware of. And so it's a good opportunity for us to make sure that there's evidence-based support to the accreditation model

[05:16:44] as we move forward. Anything else here? Thank you. Thank you. We are going to, just so that everybody's aware we're going to do item k right now we're going to move items h and i to tomorrow so this will be our last item for the day um item k hello again board members item k is a great way

[05:17:21] to end today we started with educator prep and we're going to end the day talking about teacher training and as i mentioned in our earlier presentation we are looking at um really digging deep into our entire educator prep teacher training protocols and so one of the things that that we have done at the department when you go to slide two is we have put together this comprehensive list of all of the federally and all the federal and state required trainings for

[05:17:57] teachers and what we have realized is that there are more than 20 required trainings now this is in addition to what their local divisions may require this is in addition to what you may have to do just to get your initial licensure this is so there's a lot of trainings and the training frequency varies um so some of the trainings you do it once others it's annual others it's could be biannual and um and it so so the frequency trainings and it's it's a lot and we want to make sure that the that everything that the teachers do or required to do it's truly

[05:18:35] going to have an impact on students. So when you go to slide three one of the trainings that is required is cultural competency training is required for for all licensed school board employees and the board in this in cultural competencies it must be included as a part of the employee evaluation. The board put out guidance in 2021. And the guidance, this was a good start, and we would like to go a little bit deeper. We know that since, so the guidance that was put out in 2021 was based off of research

[05:19:13] from 2020. And so we know that there has been more research, some stronger research, and we also are looking to hear from the field. And so what we are proposing is for this requirement is to launch a stakeholder engagement process to inform updates to the board's guidance document.

[05:19:35] We want to ensure that this guidance is aligned to current research and that it is grounded in practices that are proven to be effective for students. We want to also build in some clear, meaningful metrics so that when we come back to the board and we talk about cultural competency training, we can say we could put some numbers behind it so that you know if it's truly having an impact.

[05:20:02] And so what we are proposing as next steps is we want to get a survey out to the field, especially to those who are required to participate in this training. We want to hear what they feel about it, what's working well, what's not working well, how are they applying it to help advance student learning.

[05:20:19] We want to conduct some focus groups with teachers, leaders, and others to capture some additional information on the training, its impact and what they would like to see and then we're going to do a landscape analysis of all the current research and national best practices to inform revisions and we would like to bring back to the board some revisions to the guidance document that's in alignment with stakeholder feedback that the research and that whole landscape analysis so that is what we wanted to share today just this idea that we're just trying to overhaul and

[05:20:58] make sure that we are everything that's required for teachers is going to have an impact on kids any comments or questions here thank you so much okay we will get started forward to more superintendent Gullickson would you like to say something before I close this out for the day all right well I wanted to take a brief moment especially since the Perkins plan is moved to

[05:21:32] tomorrow just given all the eyes on that we want to make sure it's a focal point so first there's been a lot of exciting energy around the CTE industrial industry recognized credentials that are up for tomorrow and so we're so grateful for all the input that's come in especially since the last November meeting and after the VOE presentation on high demand industries and so we have our incredible team has collaborated closely with the Virginia Community College system and in support of Bowie and has put together an amended industry recognized credential list for

[05:22:12] the board and so we want to make sure those of you tuning in we've sent this out to some additional stakeholder groups to make sure that that was not missed but that's reflective of the input that we have received over the last month so if you have not refreshed the board agenda of late please do that ahead of tomorrow um we've been so grateful for the agriculture community and others that have flagged what those priorities are and so you'll note the red lettered amended draft for december of 2025

[05:22:51] so i just wanted to take a moment to flag that so you'll hear more on that list and perkins tomorrow, and thank you for the really productive meeting today. We have lots of notes at the agency on some next steps and are very grateful, and we will get to see you all back tomorrow unless President Creasy has any other closing remarks. Nothing from me. So with that, I will accept a motion to adjourn. We're adjourned.



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