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BOARD OF EDUCATION

BALTIMORE COUNTY

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 23, 2024

Transcribed by:
CRC Salomon, Inc.

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1 **BOARD MEMBERS:**

2 **Tiara Booker-Dwyer, Board Chair**

3 **Christina Pumphrey, Vice Chair**

4 **Maggie Domanowski**

5 **Tiffany Lashawn Frempong**

6 **Robin Harvey**

7 **Julie C. Henn**

8 **Jane Lichter**

9 **Rodney R. McMillion**

10 **Dr. Brenda Savoy**

11 **Felicia Stolusky**

12 **Emory Young**

13 **Kayla Drummond, Student Member**

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Good evening. This is

3 Chairwoman Tiara Booker-Dwyer. I now call to order the

4 Board of Education of Baltimore County -- the meeting of

5 the Board of Education for Baltimore County for Tuesday,

6 January 23, 2024. I invite you to recite the Pledge of

7 Allegiance to the flag, to be led by Ms. Kayla Drummond.

8 We will then have a moment of silence in recognition of

9 those who have served education in Baltimore County.

10 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Tonight's Board of Education

12 meeting is being broadcast through BCPS Online Live

13 Meeting Broadcast and on BCPS TV. That's Comcast XFINITY

14 channel 73, Verizon Fios channel 34. In order to

15 efficiently conduct this meeting, all voting items this

16 evening will be done by roll call vote.

17 The first item on the agenda is consideration

18 of the January 23rd agenda.

19 Dr. Rogers, are there any additions or changes

20 to tonight's agenda?

21 DR. ROGERS: I am unaware of any additions or

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1 changes to this evening's agenda.

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Hearing none, the agenda

3 stands as presented.

4 Earlier this evening, the Board met in closed

5 session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act for the

6 following reasons: to discuss the appointment,

7 employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion,

8 compensation, removal, resignation, or performance

9 evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over

10 whom it has jurisdiction, or any other personnel matter

11 that affects one or more specific individuals.

12 The summary of the closed session and open

13 session information summary can be found on BoardDocs

14 under this Board meeting agenda date.

15 The next item on the agenda is personnel

16 matters, and for that I call on Mr. McCall.

17 MR. McCALL: Good evening, Chair Booker-Dwyer,

18 Vice Chair Pumphrey, Superintendent Dr. Rogers, and

19 members of the Board. I'd like the Board's consent for

20 the following personnel matters: resignations and

21 retirements.

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1 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Do I have a motion to

2 approve personnel matters as presented in Exhibits D-1

3 and D-2?

4 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.

5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Do I have a second?

6 MS. LICHTER: Second, Lichter.

7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any discussion?

8 May have a roll call vote?

9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?

10 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?

12 MS. HENN: Yes.

13 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?

14 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.

15 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?

16 MS. LICHTER: Yes.

17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?

18 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.

19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?

20 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.

21 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?

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1 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.

2 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?

3 DR. SAVOY: Yes.

4 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?

5 MR. McMILLION: Yes.

6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?

7 MS. HARVEY: Yes.

8 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?

9 MR. YOUNG: Yes.

10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer.

11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.

12 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Motion carries.

14 Our next item is public comment. This is one

15 of the opportunities the Board provides to hear the views

16 and receive the advice of community members.

17 If not selected to address the Board, members

18 of the public may submit their comments to the Board

19 member -- to the Board members via email at boe@bcps.org.

20 The Baltimore County Police Department's

21 Homeland Security Unit and Office of School Safety has

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1 recommended safety and security protocols, which are
 2 posted in the boardroom and available in BoardDocs and on
 3 the Board's Participation by the Public website.
 4 While we encourage public input on policy,
 5 programs, and practices within the purview of this Board
 6 and this school system, this is not the proper forum to
 7 address specific student or employee matters, or to
 8 comment on matters that do not relate to public education
 9 in Baltimore County.
 10 Inappropriate personal remarks or other
 11 behavior, such as language that promotes violence against
 12 a BCPS employee, or that disrupts or interferes with the
 13 conduct of this meeting, are out of order and will not be
 14 tolerated. Persons who otherwise disrupt or disturb this
 15 meeting will not be allowed to continue their remarks and
 16 will be escorted from the meeting.
 17 Please observe the three-minute clock which
 18 will let you know when your time is up. The microphone
 19 will be turned off at the end of your time, or prior to
 20 that time at the discretion of the Board Chair.
 21 So it is the practice of this Board to allow

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1 elected officials to provide their comments to the Board.
 2 We do not have any elected officials, and so I now call
 3 on school system-affiliated groups to speak.
 4 Our first speaker is Mr. Billy Burke with CASE.
 5 MR. BURKE: Good evening, Chairwoman Mrs.
 6 Booker-Dwyer, Vice Chair Mrs. Pumphrey, Superintendent
 7 Dr. Rogers, and members of the Board. Thank you for
 8 letting me speak on behalf of CASE.
 9 I serve CASE in three significant ways. One, I
 10 am the chief negotiator for CASE member contracts. Two,
 11 I represent CASE members when there have been possible
 12 violations to their contracts and working conditions.
 13 And three, I support CASE members when they have been
 14 accused of violating the contract and Board policy. My
 15 role in representing members is to ensure they get due
 16 process.
 17 I have a question. What is our responsibility
 18 as a school community when an employee has been accused
 19 of wrongdoing? In recent weeks, a CASE members has been
 20 accused of making racist statement. The statements in
 21 question are abhorrent and CASE denounces them. An

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1 investigation is occurring, and CASE is cooperating with
 2 BCPS and the authorities. The member and his family have
 3 received emails and calls that range from harassment to
 4 actual threats of harm.
 5 At its core, our legal system is founded on the
 6 tenet that you are innocent until proven guilty. Press
 7 coverage and social media have made it possible for
 8 people to make statements and tell stories with no
 9 evidence and no accountability.
 10 I am grateful to Dr. Rogers for her letter to
 11 the community asking them to let the investigation happen
 12 and to not rush to judgment. I am grateful that Dr.
 13 Rogers and her staff coordinated police presence at the
 14 member's house when their lives were threatened. I am
 15 grateful to the police chief and to the County Executive
 16 for supporting the investigation.
 17 I ask my question again. What is our
 18 responsibility as a school community when an employee has
 19 been accused of wrongdoing? What is my role as a BCPS
 20 leader? What is my role as a Board member? What is my
 21 role as a staff member, parent, student, or community

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1 member? Do I value fairness in search of the truth? Am
 2 I willing to stand up and say that? I usually make my
 3 comments in person. I didn't feel safe coming in person
 4 because I, too, have received harassing emails.
 5 What is our responsibility as a school
 6 community when an employee is accused of wrongdoing? We
 7 are better than this. Please don't rush to judgment.
 8 Please make investigations safe and fair. Thank you for
 9 the opportunity to speak.
 10 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Burke.
 11 And Mr. Burke is with the union, so not a
 12 school system-affiliated group, and I've just been made
 13 aware that we do have one school-affiliated group member,
 14 Dr. Stiff from NWAEAC. Stiff. Stitt, oh, this looks
 15 like two Fs. Okay.
 16 Dr. Stitt, are you there?
 17 DR. STITT: I am.
 18 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay, thank you.
 19 DR. STITT: Good evening.
 20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Good evening.
 21 DR. STITT: Happy New Year.

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1 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Happy New Year.

2 DR. STITT: I'm going to have a brief statement

3 on behalf of parents, stakeholders, and students in the

4 Pikesville community, which encompasses the Northwest

5 Area Education Advisory Council.

6 Good evening and greetings, Board members. My

7 name is Dr. Lashaune Stitt, and as the chairperson of the

8 Northwest Area Education Advisory Council, I represent

9 those scholars, families, and stakeholders in the

10 Northwest Region of the county, while serving as the

11 liaison between the Board and the community.

12 I usually say acknowledgement. Because I want

13 to keep my time tight, I will just acknowledge that this

14 is the land of the Susquehanna people and we should

15 always honor and give them gratitude and appreciation for

16 their territory.

17 As a parent, social justice advocate, and

18 scholar, it is not only my passion to push the envelope

19 for equity, but to also raise a voice for the voiceless.

20 Unfortunately, our voices must be used again to raise

21 consciousness concerning the degrading statements made in

Page 15

1 an audio recording presumably from the principal at our

2 high school in Pikesville that circulated last week.

3 Many were in shock, but I wasn't. This is

4 another example of how failing to lead with authenticity

5 and courage has continued to grow and fester in our

6 district.

7 Have you ever seen the film Waiting on

8 Superman? Well, I invite you to view it. There are

9 plenty of lemons throughout this district that create a

10 sour learning and working environment for scholars and

11 staff daily. Their behavior has been overlooked or swept

12 under the rug for years, hoping that it would all go

13 away.

14 Well, it is time to take the blinders off and

15 to stop conducting an orchestra of lemons. Take a

16 proactive approach to DEIA as it relates to our

17 respective communities. Commit to the equity training

18 that is offered through the Department of Equity and

19 Cultural Proficiency right here at BCPS. Create a policy

20 for teachers and administrators to engage in the same

21 training to address existing biases and bigotry that is

Page 16

1 lurking in our school system. Perhaps this approach will

2 mitigate those situations that pose harm, discomfort, and

3 prejudice to our children. And those that fear

4 retaliation, hopefully they will feel comforted knowing

5 their views and beliefs are supported.

6 The stakeholders of the Northwest Region

7 deserve full transparency, demand integrity, and require

8 accountability as we were promised by the Superintendent

9 last week with a full investigation. We will not stand

10 to have our intellectual capacity insulted, nor will we

11 allow this behavior to continue in our community.

12 We can't erase history, no matter how much

13 folks want to convince us that America is not a racist

14 country. What we can do is move with respect for our

15 fellow citizens and consciously attempt to shift the

16 trajectory of hate that continues to dwell in our --

17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Dr. Stitt.

18 DR. STITT: Thank you.

19 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay. Next are our unions,

20 and we have heard from Mr. Burke. So now we will go to

21 Ms. Cindy Sexton of TABCO.

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1 MS. SEXTON: Good evening, Chair Ms. Booker-

2 Dwyer, Vice Chair Ms. Pumphrey, Dr. Rogers, and members

3 of the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to speak

4 tonight. And thank you to all of you who were able to

5 make it to our legislative breakfast back on January 6th.

6 You braved the cold and the snow and the ice, and we had

7 many valuable conversations, not only around legislation,

8 but also the working and learning conditions that are

9 hindering our student and educator successes. Let's

10 please continue those conversation because there is much

11 work to be done.

12 And at that legislative breakfast, our County

13 Executive assured us that the agreements and negotiations

14 we completed would be funded so we can turn our attention

15 to something else. And one of the biggest facing us now

16 is the effective implementation of community schools.

17 I know some of you have met with the Baltimore

18 County Education Justice Coalition, and you may be aware

19 of community school champions that we are working to find

20 at every single community school. Because it will take

21 more than just the system to get this right, and we are

Page 18

1 here to do the work together.

2 The possibilities that community schools make

3 available for our students and families are truly life

4 altering, and we must be sure we get it right. We look

5 forward to the work with the community school

6 facilitators, community members, students, staff, and all

7 those in the system who will play a role in this

8 important implementation. It is daunting, but it is work

9 that we must get right.

10 Thank you in advance for the collaboration and,

11 as always, TABCO stands at the ready to do the work with

12 you. Thank you.

13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Ms. Sexton.

14 Next are the nonprofit community groups, and

15 our first speaker is Arya Kazemnia from Team Metal Pipe.

16 MR. KAZEMNIA: Good evening to the Chair, Vice

17 Chair, Superintendent, and members of the Board. My name

18 is Arya Kazemnia, and I'm here representing the First

19 Tech Challenge Team 23741.

20 We have spoken at great lengths at past

21 meetings about STEM programs, and they have had such a

Page 19

1 positive impact on my teammates and I, with most of us

2 coming out of the Cromwell Valley Elementary STEM

3 program. We can say with full confidence that we would

4 not be here today without -- with -- we had not been --

5 we would not be here today if we were not enriched at

6 such a young age. And I think it's safe to say that

7 thousands of Baltimore County students across the county

8 and in the workforce would agree.

9 Magnet programs have been a top priority for

10 funding and growth. Not only do your constituents see

11 the remarkable impact these programs can have, but also

12 the teachers and students on whom you directly leave your

13 mark. The existence of magnet programs, especially those

14 that start early and allow students to matriculate, have

15 singlehandedly bolstered our students, allowing them to

16 explore careers and interests that would be unavailable

17 otherwise.

18 Any consideration of taking magnet programs out

19 of our students' hands is an affront to the mission of

20 education, and the policies that the Board has set forth,

21 such as Board Policy 6400. Magnet programs have proven

Page 20

1 time and time again to produce globally minded,

2 passionate 21st century thinkers, with a dedication to

3 serving the broader community. And I would like to

4 believe that this body of devoted public servants would

5 take great pleasure in ushering in a new generation of

6 skilled innovators and great thinkers.

7 Within our magnet programs, you'll find

8 students from all backgrounds. You will find hopeful,

9 resilient students who have had an illuminating vision

10 for the future. Don't stifle them. Give them the oxygen

11 that they need. Give them the hope that they deserve.

12 Magnet programs pay TCBC tuition for high

13 schoolers, CTE programs, and countless other

14 opportunities this Board has created must be funded,

15 supported, and allocated the resources that they deserve.

16 I trust that you'll make the right decision

17 because I sincerely believe that you are all dedicated to

18 the service of our students above all else. Keep these

19 programs and elevate these programs. Thank you.

20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

21 Our next speaker is Zenaida Rowe.

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1 MS. ROWE: Good evening to the Chair, Vice

2 Chair, Superintendent, and members of the Board. My name

3 is Zenaida Rowe, and today I am representing the First

4 Tech Challenge Team No. 23741, along with my friend,

5 Arya.

6 As a Kenwood High School senior in the

7 international baccalaureate program, I have felt the

8 impact of magnet programs profoundly in my own life. The

9 IB program is interdisciplinary, globally minded, and

10 rigorous. But with these shining qualities, there is a

11 gem among them that has always stood out to me.

12 The IB program, along with all of the magnet

13 programs in our county, encourages students to explore

14 their interests in an enriching and exciting way. I have

15 experienced this, and it has changed the way that I think

16 and view the world in a overwhelmingly positive way.

17 The IB program has changed my life. It has

18 made me a well-rounded student. Now, I am proficient in

19 both the humanities and the STEM fields. I am free to

20 explore my interests and challenge myself.

21 STEM, in particular, is an area that our

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1 students struggle with. These programs embody a rich
 2 opportunity to elevate the STEM fields in our system, and
 3 to create innovative, problem-solving students who could
 4 one day change the future.

5 STEM careers are pivotal and high earning.
 6 Doors open up when one is passionate about science,
 7 technology, engineering, and math. It is high time we
 8 open these doors to our students regardless of their
 9 background. STEM programs, and magnet programs in
 10 general, serve as socioeconomic equalizers.

11 As a public school student, I am conscious of
 12 the fact that I am competing with private school students
 13 when I apply to colleges. I am conscious of the fact
 14 that I may have less resources than they do, and that I
 15 may not have the contacts that they do. But it is a
 16 great relief to be in a magnet program where I have the
 17 chance to be challenged and to enrich myself, and it is
 18 really a gem in the public school system that I am so
 19 thankful to have. And that I hope that future students
 20 are able to access, as well.

21 My wish is that you keep investing in magnet

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1 programs. They could change someone else's life, like
 2 they have changed mine. Thank you.

3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Ms. Rowe.
 4 Our next speaker is Sonia Busby from Decoding
 5 Dyslexia Baltimore County.

6 MS. BUSBY: Good evening, Dr. Rogers, Board
 7 members, and staff. I am here representing Decoding
 8 Dyslexia Maryland Baltimore County Chapter. We are a
 9 parent-led organization that has been advocating for
 10 improved identification, instruction, and teacher
 11 training in BCPS for more than a decade. We also serve
 12 as a support system to BCPS families and staff.

13 I joined Decoding Dyslexia Maryland when my son
 14 was diagnosed with dyslexia by an evaluation that we paid
 15 for. When I first asked for help for my son, I was met
 16 with excuses. He's a boy. He's a late bloomer. There
 17 are kids worse off than him.

18 I mistakenly thought that the outside
 19 evaluation results and a diagnosis would lead to an IEP
 20 and, more importantly, support for him. Instead, I was
 21 met with more delay and deny tactics, including

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1 misconstruing data by sharing it without grade-level
 2 benchmarks and having his ELA test read out loud to him,
 3 and using inflated grades to further deny him help. He
 4 never received a Tier 3 intervention, nor an IEP, and
 5 after four months, they stopped all interventions,
 6 leaving us as parents to fill in the gaps. He is now
 7 thriving in a school outside of BCPS that is addressing
 8 his needs.

9 I am here because this is wrong. Because my
 10 child's experience is the same as many families. You say
 11 consistently that the system is focused on equity. How
 12 can it be when parents have to pay for tutoring or move
 13 their kids out altogether so they can learn to read?
 14 This system's actions on equity do not at all align with
 15 your words.

16 Switching gears, I'd like to share a recent
 17 account from a struggling BCPS teacher who reached out to
 18 us because they also are not being supported as they try
 19 to support students. This teacher's IEP team asked the
 20 Office of Special Ed to provide a teacher with training
 21 on visualizing and verbalizing, the only elementary Tier

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1 3 intervention for reading comprehension.

2 The teacher pointed out there is no one
 3 currently trained in the building for V&V, and the
 4 response from OSE was that they are not currently
 5 training anyone in this Tier 3 intervention. And
 6 instead, handed the team teacher-paid teacher materials
 7 to use.

8 This is not how a Tier 3 intervention is
 9 supposed to be implemented ever. Per the elementary ELA
 10 tiers of support graphic, BCPS has three programs for
 11 Tier 3 ELA: visualizing and verbalizing, Wilson Reading
 12 System, and Orton-Gillingham.

13 According to OSE, you are not training in V&V.
 14 Staff stated in the fall that you have no one certified
 15 systemwide to teach Wilson, and staff has cut Orton-
 16 Gillingham training in half by 30 hours. What is
 17 happening? These are your most marginalized students.

18 Board members, your questions about curriculum
 19 and academic achievement are surface level at best. When
 20 are you going to fully engage in ensuring this system is
 21 accountable for academic achievement of our students?

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1 Thank you.

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

3 Next are our individual citizens and student

4 groups, and our first speaker is Ms. Sharon Saroff.

5 Okay. So we will move on to Dr. Bash Pharoan.

6 DR. PHAROAN: Good evening to all. I have

7 questions about the budget. If you add them to the

8 questions I raised earlier, I would appreciate your

9 answers.

10 Will this budget have adequate effective

11 reading and math specialties -- specialists? Please show

12 me.

13 Will this budget cut the class size and by how

14 many? Please show me.

15 Will this budget have adequate effective

16 teachers at all levels so students will graduate ready to

17 face the world?

18 Will this budget have adequate paraeducators at

19 all levels so teachers can effectively improve the

20 students' performance?

21 Will this budget assess any redundancy or

Page 27

1 ineffective positions in the Central Area or down?

2 Please show me.

3 Will this budget address the adequacy and

4 effectiveness and accuracy of the curriculum free from

5 bias? Please show me.

6 Will this budget have adequate counselors to

7 effectively address the issues of lack of disciplined

8 behavior, drugs, alcohol, et cetera? Please show me.

9 So I know I have an minute and 20 seconds left,

10 and I don't want to drag it. I ask you questions. I

11 listen to our esteemed Superintendent, and I really have

12 great hope and regards to her. This is not criticism of

13 you, Dr. Rogers. I listened to you when you went around.

14 I listened to you on Monday. I listened to you on

15 Tuesday. I read the budget, and I cannot pinpoint the

16 answers to my previous questions and to these questions.

17 So I have been paying taxes for 48 years. I

18 deserve answers. I do deserve answers. Otherwise, I ask

19 for rebate. Thank you.

20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

21 Okay, we will go back to Ms. Sharon Saroff.

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1 MS. SAROFF: I apologize for being late. I was

2 dropping my child off at work in the city. Since you

3 know who I am, I'll try to be brief.

4 When I first moved to Maryland 20-some-odd

5 years ago, I was told that the disability that I have,

6 one of many, auditory processing, was not a real

7 disability because it was not on a list. I don't know

8 where the list came from. I still don't know if it

9 exists, but this is what I was told.

10 I'm mentioning this because I'm wondering if

11 our budget is taking into consideration what's going on

12 in our county right now. I have watched this year

13 students who have legitimate disabilities like

14 convergence insufficiency, where your eyes don't focus

15 together and you start seeing double or blurry vision.

16 Imagine looking at a page of print with that kind of a

17 disability.

18 Where students who have auditory processing

19 that's not considered a legitimate disability anymore.

20 Again in Baltimore County. It was last year. I had a

21 client tested for it last year. She came up needing, and

Page 29

1 she's benefiting now from the assistive technology that

2 she got as a result of that evaluation.

3 So I'm wondering, Dr. Rogers, is the idea of

4 we're putting special education first include deciding

5 not to test kids so we don't have to worry about the

6 expense of servicing them? Because that's what's going

7 on.

8 We are literally fighting parents taking them

9 to court so that we don't have to test their child for

10 what we consider an illegitimate disability.

11 It's not illegitimate. I wish I could turn it

12 off at a whim, but I can't. And we shouldn't look at

13 disabilities in that manner, that we can simply turn them

14 on and off. That grades don't matter in an IEP meeting.

15 They do.

16 Special education is real, and yes, it's

17 expensive. But it's necessary for everyone to have

18 equity in this county.

19 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Ms. Saroff.

20 Since there are speaker spaces available, we

21 will now call from the waitlist for individual citizens

Page 30

1 and student category. The first speaker on the waitlist
 2 is Eric Morris.

3 MR. MORRIS: Good evening and Happy New Year,
 4 everyone. It's good to see you all again. My name is
 5 Eric Morris. I'm a proud BCPS employee but as you know,
 6 I'm not here for that. I'm here because I have -- I'm a
 7 proud parent of three teenagers in your county, in this
 8 county, who are students here and two of which are
 9 transgender.

10 Every day in school, I see LGBTQ-plus students
 11 who are afraid to be themselves in school because of the
 12 fear of retribution from other students and families.
 13 Sadly, I see it as much in the way staff are treating
 14 these LGBTQ students. Why? Because there is -- are hate
 15 groups out there that are creating confusion about
 16 information and fear when it comes to supporting our
 17 LGBTQ-plus students. Groups like Moms for Liberty and
 18 PASS.

19 Please, I beg you not to listen to these words
 20 of hate, lies, and division these groups are spewing.
 21 And listen for the words of love, compassion, and equity

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1 from groups like the ACLU, NAACP, PFLAG, GLSEN, our own
 2 teachers using TABCO, and our very own BCPS Department of
 3 Social Emotional Supports. Their mission statement
 4 states that BCPS must provide equitable access to
 5 impactful services and programs that promote students'
 6 academic, behavioral, social emotional, and physical
 7 development in preparation for college, career, and life
 8 readiness.

9 With this mission statement in mind, I want to
 10 again ask you, the Board, the elected officials, the
 11 leaders of BCPS, to reread the BCPS guidelines on LGBTQ
 12 policies. It shouldn't say policy. It's not yet,
 13 hopefully soon. And call for a vote to make those
 14 guidelines district policies or rules.

15 Or better yet, put together a special committee
 16 to plan a new inclusive policy. A committee made of
 17 teachers and staff, administration and parents, and
 18 students and these outside LGBTQ expert organizations to
 19 put together the best policies to protect our LGBTQ-plus
 20 children.

21 As I love to quote the Foo Fighters' song,

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1 Rescued, it states, "Kings and queens and in-betweens,
 2 they all deserve the rights." Let's put these rights in
 3 place for our LGBTQ-plus students. Thank you for your
 4 hard work for all BCPS students. Thank you.

5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

6 Next is public comment on the naming of the new
 7 Northeast Area middle school, and our first speaker is
 8 Dr. Bash Pharoan.

9 DR. PHAROAN: I have an idea for you. I hope
 10 you like it. So Policy 7520 talks about naming schools
 11 per geographic area, street. You could call it Babico
 12 School. You could call it, I know, MedStar School. You
 13 could name it after me because my clinic is just nearby.

14 The policy talks about naming schools in the
 15 names of people that has impact on our Maryland history.
 16 And as you know, I am born in Texas so I have to look it
 17 up.

18 So I suggest to you to call the school Thomas
 19 Stone. Or Tansh Tigan (phonetic). I really like that
 20 one. Thomas Kennedy. He was in the House of Delegates,
 21 and he believed in religious freedom, which I fought for

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1 here for 25 years.

2 You could call it Francis Scott Key. Of
 3 course, that's a famous name. Or maybe Lieutenant
 4 Colonel George Armstead. Johns Hopkins is a good name.
 5 George Peabody is a good name. Of course, Frederick
 6 Douglass. Everybody knows Frederick Douglass and his
 7 impact. Harriet Tubman is one of my favorites. Don't
 8 call it John Wilkes Booth. He's famous, but he is really
 9 infamous.

10 So why am I saying this in my last one minute?
 11 When you give a school name like Essex, Roseville,
 12 whatever, you are really wasting educational occasion.
 13 Most students I meet in my profession don't know a thing
 14 about American history. As a GD foreigner myself, I know
 15 more about American history than many of the people that
 16 come my way, and it's really noticeable, you know.

17 So if you call it Babico School, Roseville
 18 School, or whatever, you know, there's nothing
 19 educational about it, you know. What's the big deal?
 20 But if you call it Harriet Tubman, for instance, Peabody,
 21 John Hopkins, it means something. And then you can do

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1 like you do in Carver, you will have a plate in the front
 2 explaining who is that person, and what impact that
 3 person had on all of us in Maryland. Thank you.
 4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 5 Next is public comment on Board Policy 3170,
 6 Framework for Continuous Improvement, and our first
 7 speaker is Ms. Sharon Saroff.
 8 MS. SAROFF: I think most of what I wanted to
 9 say for this particular item, I just said in my public
 10 comment, but I will add to it.
 11 I think we need to be very specific in our
 12 goals and how we are going to implement these goals, and
 13 put it into the policy. One of the things that I've
 14 noticed about the policies, especially the ones that I
 15 have been in contact with that impact students, is that
 16 they're very vague. They don't tell parents things that
 17 they have to do behind it, like if you disagree with
 18 grading, you have to go to a hearing. Because that's
 19 probably -- and hire a lawyer because that's the only way
 20 you're going to get anywhere.
 21 If we are going to seek to improve students, we

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1 have to be very specific as to what we want to do, and do
 2 it across the board. We're talking right now about
 3 cutting funding for the college and career readiness so
 4 that it's only available to 11th and 12th graders. So
 5 that's only available to students who pass a specific
 6 group of things, and that's not to -- that's not the way
 7 to improve across the board.
 8 The way to improve across the board is to have
 9 a specific goal that every student is going to be given
 10 the opportunity to make sure that they are successful.
 11 And we're not doing that right now, if you're listening
 12 to what I just said.
 13 So let's go back, look at the language, and
 14 have a plan in mind and be specific. That's what I have
 15 to say.
 16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Ms. Saroff.
 17 And just for clarification, we're not cutting
 18 funding for college and career readiness, or things are
 19 not just allocated for 11th and 12th graders.
 20 MS. SAROFF: That's what's being told to
 21 parents. I have a client who's dealing with that right

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1 now.
 2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 3 MS. SAROFF: You're come.
 4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Our next speaker is Dr. Bash
 5 Pharoan.
 6 DR. PHAROAN: Madame Chair, can I do 4 of them
 7 for 10 minutes, no interruption? That's a 23 percent
 8 discount.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Let's start with the three
 10 minutes, and we'll just take it from there.
 11 DR. PHAROAN: All right. Thank you.
 12 Policy 3170, line no. 7 into 16, says ensure
 13 every student in every school is prepared for college, et
 14 cetera. I believe our students needs to be competing
 15 with Germany, Finland, China, and India. We should not
 16 really relate ourselves to Gareth County.
 17 Paragraph also talks about quality teaching,
 18 efficient, effective system, et cetera. Those adjectives
 19 are in eyes of beholder. I think they should be defined
 20 in the policy.
 21 Item B, line 26 talks about using the data for

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1 informed decisions. I agree. But the data are as good
 2 as what goes in. So -- and it's also as good as removing
 3 the noise in the data.
 4 That policy also talks about collaboration with
 5 systemic stakeholders. Reminder, honorably, Board, you
 6 cut down public speakers from 10 to 5.
 7 Line No. 39, Item D talks about we'll raise the
 8 quality of teaching and learning. I say the quality is
 9 also in the eyes of the beholder unless you define it
 10 objectively in the policy.
 11 On page 2, line 2 talks about improve the
 12 involvement of principal caregivers in decision making,
 13 et cetera. Again, I say that you cut down the public
 14 speaking to five. And also, the Educational Area
 15 Councils are ineffective or weak, in my opinion.
 16 I finished one minute early.
 17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. You can stay
 18 right there because next is public comment on Board
 19 Policy 3520, Maintenance and Operations, and you are our
 20 first speaker.
 21 DR. PHAROAN: Line no. 9 and no. 10 talks about

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1 proper care and maintenance of facilities. I think the
 2 word proper needs to be defined. What is proper for one
 3 person is not the same for another.

4 Line 22 and 23 and 24 talks about improvements
 5 in the facilities. I say the improvements needs to be
 6 defined in the policy. A slight improvement is not an
 7 improvement. You know, if you go a hair up, you did
 8 improvement, but that's not really big deal. And the
 9 same about the word healthy and safe school environment.
 10 Those two words, I believe, should be defined in the
 11 policy.

12 Line 26 and 27, Item B talks about the Board
 13 doing annual review. So as you know, I have been here
 14 for 25 years with the Board, and nobody really kicked me
 15 out yet. I think if you do annual, like has been done
 16 before in many things, you know, obviously, the school
 17 system is not really truly better a whole lot over a long
 18 period of time.

19 I think you need to consider every six month.
 20 It is not a distrust of administration or anything like
 21 that. I think the Board needs to assume the

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1 responsibility of oversight much more than the previous
 2 boards, much more. So instead of 12 month, I recommend 6
 3 month as an observing person from this side out. And I
 4 know our Superintendent will shine but thank you.

5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

6 Next is public comment on Board Policy 3532,
 7 the Restitution for Vandalism, and our first speaker is
 8 Dr. Bash Pharoan.

9 DR. PHAROAN: Line no. 8 and no. 9 talks about
 10 the student who vandalizes Board property, et cetera. My
 11 recommendation, you know, idea for you that the vandals
 12 can be students but also can be outsiders or can be
 13 employees. So I think they should be added.

14 Line no. 26 and 27 talks about will be
 15 disciplined, that's the student, in accordance with
 16 behavior code. What I would say is where is that
 17 behavior code? Now, I know I look for things online, and
 18 I'm really not a dummy with online, but I have the
 19 hardest time of finding things. So I ask you really to
 20 put it right in the policy where do you find that code.

21 Line 29 and 31 talks about parents responsible

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1 for restitution. I agree. However, I suggest that you
 2 consider that the students also needs to pay a price.
 3 Students do have money. And somehow, you need to get
 4 permission from parents early on before they go to school
 5 that they will agree for paying the money and for the
 6 students, also, to pay from whatever their allowance is.

7 I think students needs to be feeling it and
 8 just really disciplining them without taking money from
 9 their allowance and putting it in restitution of the
 10 school system, they would not really feel it. It would
 11 be like a slap on the hand.

12 The final thing is that I think about this
 13 policy, it really lacks addressing the root cause of
 14 vandalism. So when a student, you knows, paints swastika
 15 or something horrible about Islamophobia or Hindus or
 16 whatever, you know, or African Americans, you know, you
 17 need to study why did this thing happen. You need to go
 18 to the root of it, and the policy doesn't talk at all
 19 about addressing the root cause.

20 So basically, we are, you know, disciplining
 21 students and asking parents to pay, but we are really not

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1 looking at the root cause of it. And think that would be
 2 wise for you as a Board to consider. This is my comment
 3 about 3532. I still have 18 seconds.

4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. So we will move
 5 on to the next Board Policy. So next is public comment
 6 on Board Policy 3620, Inventories, and you are our first
 7 speaker, so you can move forward with your remarks.

8 DR. PHAROAN: So Madame Chair, since you are
 9 friendly, and I finished early, I mean, do I get anything
 10 because I'm finishing early? Okay. I'll be serious.
 11 Maybe Panera Bread card? Okay.

12 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: It's in the mail.

13 DR. PHAROAN: This policy is good. I like it.
 14 Kudos. However, it is brief. You know, read it, please.
 15 It is really brief. It is briefer than a telegram. So I
 16 suggest that you need to characterize what is the
 17 inventory system you are considering or, you know, you
 18 advocate for in more details in a typical characteristic
 19 fashion.

20 So I suggest few things based on my knowledge I
 21 have inventories and software that the system needs to be

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1 accurate for the school system. The system need to be
 2 scalable up and down, and needs to be cost effective, and
 3 needs to be easy with maintenance.
 4 You know, you buy a cheaper system but cost you
 5 more maintenance, it's not cheap. And needs to be easy
 6 to teach and for the staff to learn and to use. Just my
 7 recommendations, and I have 1 minute and 33 seconds. Can
 8 I just sit and -- no. Thank you.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 10 The next item on the agenda is new business,
 11 report on Board policies. This is the first reader for
 12 these policies, and for that I call on Ms. Christina
 13 Pumphrey, Chair of the Policy Review Committee.
 14 MS. PUMPHREY: Thank you. Members of the
 15 Board, the Policy Review Committee asks that the Board
 16 accept this report of the committee's recommendation of
 17 proposed policy changes. Excuse me, proposed changes to
 18 the following board policies.
 19 Board Policy 3170, Framework for Continuous
 20 Improvement. Board Policy 3520, Maintenance and
 21 Operations. Board Policy 3532, Restitution for

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1 Vandalism. Board Policy 3620, Inventories. These
 2 policies are presented to you on tonight's agenda as
 3 Exhibits F-1 through F-4.
 4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: May I have a motion to
 5 accept the recommendation of Board -- of the Board
 6 Policies Review Committee for Board Policies 3170, 3520,
 7 3532, and 3620?
 8 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. No second is
 10 needed since the recommendation comes from the committee.
 11 Is there any discussion?
 12 So, I have a few. So let's go to Board Policy
 13 -- and I'll just pull up my notes. 3170, that Framework
 14 for Continuous Improvement. And so when I think about
 15 policy, research informs policy, policy informs practice.
 16 And when I look at this policy, I'm not clear on the
 17 purpose of the policy. And how does this policy -- how
 18 did this framework align with other frameworks and what's
 19 happening with Blueprint for Maryland's future, and is
 20 this policy still needed? I don't know if -- okay.
 21 And so -- can you hear?

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1 DR. ROGERS: So I'm seeing if we have anyone
 2 from draw who can speak, and I think Mr. Connelly is not
 3 with us, but Dr. Grim has come forward to certainly try
 4 to respond, or we can take some notes back.
 5 DR. GRIM: Yes, Mr. Connelly was unable this
 6 evening. I do apologize. That was a last-minute issue.
 7 So in taking a look at this particular policy, it is
 8 basically, as it's noted, the framework for continuous
 9 improvement. The rule would be more specific around
 10 Blueprint or any other continuous improvement cycle.
 11 So what this is intended to do is to set a
 12 frame so that we are making decisions based on data, and
 13 that we're providing data literacy to our staff. So it
 14 encompasses those two really important points, and that
 15 is we found, as Dr. Pharoan said, you know, data is only
 16 as good as the quality of that data. And the use of data
 17 is only as good as folks who are -- staff who are trained
 18 to use it properly.
 19 So that is -- that's really the driving force
 20 behind the policy. Of course, it's up to the Board to
 21 determine whether this in its form is necessary or not.

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1 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And that is my question.
 2 Because when I look at this, there's elements of this in
 3 other things that are being done in the school system.
 4 So how tightly right now are you all adhering to this
 5 continuous improvement framework, and has it really
 6 yielded the results that you intended?
 7 I'm just wondering, is it still -- is it needed
 8 right now, considering everything that's happening in the
 9 new goals and every -- do we still need this?
 10 DR. ROGERS: Let me respond, Ms. Booker-Dwyer.
 11 I am not the expert on, you know, COMAR stipulates and
 12 school system, there are certain policies that we must
 13 have. But our general counsel is, and so, with your
 14 permission, I would like to find out whether or not this
 15 is a requirement for our system.
 16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay.
 17 MS. PUMPHREY: And just a comment. Some of the
 18 recommendations are in the policy analysis. I'm sure
 19 you've seen, and I also would recommend looking at the
 20 rule compared to the policy because if the policy's not
 21 there, the rule goes, also. Which is more specific so --

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1 and it's about implementation, so I would certainly
 2 recommend that -- to compare the two before making any
 3 decision to complete remove the policy.
 4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And then if we are deciding
 5 to keep this, could it be more specific and truly set the
 6 parameters around the research for what constitutes
 7 continuous improvement? So I do agree with some of the
 8 speakers today in that, you know, this is the core.
 9 If we're trying to continuously improve the
 10 school system, then when you read the policy, it's -- it
 11 is. It's very vague, and it's -- I just think we could
 12 frame this around, like, effective practices for what the
 13 research says around continuous improvement, if we do
 14 decide to keep this.
 15 MS. HENN: Madam Chair?
 16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes, Ms. Henn.
 17 MS. HENN: Thank you. I'd like to make a
 18 motion to move Policy 3170 back to the Policy Review
 19 Committee for further refinement, given your questions
 20 and concerns you raised for further discussion.
 21 MS. PUMPHREY: Point of order. There's a

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1 motion on the floor, I believe.
 2 MR. BURNS: If there's no -- if that's not an
 3 amendment offered then you've got to go back to the
 4 primary motion.
 5 MS. PUMPHREY: Because the motion --
 6 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Right, we have the motion to
 7 accept the recommendation.
 8 DR. ROGERS: Yes.
 9 MS. HENN: May I move to amend the motion on
 10 the floor?
 11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.
 12 MS. HENN: Thank you. Let me pull up the list
 13 of policy numbers here. I move to accept the committee's
 14 recommendations regarding 3520, 3532, and 3620, and to
 15 move 3170 back to committee for discussion and
 16 refinement.
 17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Is there a second?
 18 MS. STOLUSKY: Second, Stolusky.
 19 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: May I have a roll call vote?
 20 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?
 21 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

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1 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?
 2 MS. HENN: Yes.
 3 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?
 4 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.
 5 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?
 6 MS. LICHTER: Yes.
 7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?
 8 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.
 9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?
 10 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.
 11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?
 12 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.
 13 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?
 14 DR. SAVOY: Yes.
 15 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?
 16 MR. McMILLION: Yes.
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?
 18 MS. HARVEY: Yes.
 19 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?
 20 MR. YOUNG: Yes.
 21 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

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1 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: The motion carries.
 2 And then the next question I have is around
 3 Policy 3532, the Restitution for Vandalism. So I
 4 understand that we want the students' family to -- oh,
 5 yes.
 6 MR. BURNS: So you dispensed with -- pardon me.
 7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Oh, sorry. We accepted
 8 everything. Yes, so never mind. Move forward. Move
 9 forward. No.
 10 MR. BURNS: Now you have to go back to your
 11 primary motion now that it's been amended and have your
 12 roll call to actually approve it.
 13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Got it. Okay.
 14 So may I have a motion to accept the
 15 recommendations of the Board Policy Review Committee for
 16 Board Policies 3520, 3532, and 3620?
 17 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.
 18 DR. ROGERS: That was already made. Now you
 19 need a roll call.
 20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: That's the roll call vote.
 21 I left out 3170.

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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But she already amended
 2 your motion so.
 3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay.
 4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's as amended.
 5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: As amended. Perfect. Okay.
 6 All right. So may I have a roll call vote?
 7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?
 8 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.
 9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?
 10 MS. HENN: Yes.
 11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?
 12 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.
 13 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?
 14 MS. LICHTER: Yes.
 15 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?
 16 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?
 18 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.
 19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?
 20 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.
 21 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?

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1 DR. SAVOY: Yes.
 2 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?
 3 MR. McMILLION: Yes.
 4 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?
 5 MS. HARVEY: Yes.
 6 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?
 7 MR. YOUNG: Yes.
 8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.
 10 MS. GOVER: Thank you.
 11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay. So now I would like
 12 to discuss Policy 3532, Restitution for Vandalism. And
 13 so with this one, we're looking at having the -- a
 14 student who vandalizes to, essentially, pay back or to
 15 repair -- to pay the cost of repair or replacement for
 16 the vandalized property.
 17 And I'm wondering, given that we have a
 18 significant amount of students from low socioeconomic
 19 households, is there another way or another -- is there a
 20 proactive or productive way to seek -- it feels like this
 21 is the consequence, right? So is there a better

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1 consequence or another option? Could we have the student
 2 do community service? Could we have the student do
 3 something else? Because when you don't have any money,
 4 and you're asking me for money, you're not going to get
 5 the money.
 6 And so I would much rather see -- I think that
 7 we could keep this in here and have another option. If
 8 the family cannot afford to pay, then there's something
 9 else that needs to be done, just so that it's not just
 10 hanging out there. We could do something more
 11 productive.
 12 DR. ROGERS: If I could.
 13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.
 14 DR. ROGERS: So thank you for those statements,
 15 Ms. booker-Dwyer. And I would share that the goal from
 16 pre-K on up is to be proactive and preventative, to make
 17 sure that our students value property. You know,
 18 typically in schools, when we talk about the rules, when
 19 we talk about respect, we don't only talk about
 20 respecting yourself and respecting others. We talk about
 21 respecting property.

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1 And so I think, ultimately, the goal would be
 2 that students aren't involved in vandalizing property. I
 3 don't also think that, you know, there's only one option
 4 in terms of restitution. Some of the things need to be
 5 repaired, and so that is, you know, one of the things
 6 that needs to be done. But there's -- you know, our
 7 schools really work to restore the relationship. And
 8 part of restoring the relationship is some of the things
 9 that you're talking about, whether it's community
 10 service, whether it's reflecting on the impact that the
 11 vandalism had on the community as a whole.
 12 You know, that's a part of our practice. I
 13 think this policy specifically just speaks to, you know,
 14 when you're trying to recoup the damages and certainly,
 15 you know, we don't want students to vandalize to begin
 16 with. We do want to recoup the damages as much as
 17 possible, but there is consideration. You know, if
 18 students are experiencing, and their families are
 19 experiencing, significant economic hardship.
 20 But, you know, the goal of this policy is to
 21 make it clear what our expectations are with the first

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1 and primary goal being that we don't want students
 2 vandalizing any of our property.
 3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you for that
 4 clarification.
 5 Ms. Pumphrey?
 6 MS. PUMPHREY: I also just wanted to point out
 7 that under the -- onto paragraph 3B it -- the policy does
 8 mention, also, that this is part -- as part of the
 9 disciplinary actions. And that's not the only action.
 10 And again, just in general, to this rule -- policy,
 11 excuse me, and the remainder of the policies, anytime
 12 we're talking about specifics and being more specific in
 13 the policy, that often leads itself to the rule. Because
 14 that's part of the implementation. And the rule is often
 15 more specific than the actual policy.
 16 So it is -- it's difficult to find that
 17 balance, I think, especially for the public. And I think
 18 it's maybe something that we could explain more in detail
 19 to the public so they understand the difference between
 20 rule and policy, and how the rule is where the more
 21 specifics come into play.

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1 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 2 Ms. Henn?
 3 MS. HENN: Thank you. And to Ms. Pumphrey's
 4 point, I was looking at the rule, and I pulled up the
 5 reference to the alternative that you recommended. Under
 6 4C, it refers to the student's assignment to a school
 7 work project and it -- as an option or as an alternative
 8 to monetary restitution.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 10 MS. HENN: Thank you.
 11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any other discussion? Oh,
 12 Ms. Domanowski.
 13 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Just a general comment as far
 14 as -- because we kind of bring up this a lot as far as
 15 more clarity in the policy. If we were to bring the
 16 policy and the rule together at the same time if that
 17 might help, you know, eliminate some of these, you know,
 18 can we get more specifics on the policy?
 19 MS. PUMPHREY: And I was actually thinking
 20 that. I know that when you click on the policy, you can
 21 go right to the rule, but it might be useful to just have

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1 it in with our presentation so that we can reference it
 2 more easily.
 3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Okay. Thank you.
 4 So the next item on the agenda is unfinished
 5 business, the Proposed FY 2025 County Capital Budget, and
 6 for that I call on Dr. Grim.
 7 DR. GRIM: Good evening, Board Chair Booker-
 8 Dwyer, Vice Chair Pumphrey, Superintendent Dr. Rogers,
 9 and members of the Board. At the Board's meeting on
 10 December 19, 2023, we shared with you the proposed FY
 11 2025 county capital budget recommendation.
 12 At your virtual Board meeting on January 9,
 13 2024, staff were present to answer questions regarding
 14 this recommendation. This evening, we are seeking the
 15 Board's approval of the proposed 2025 county capital
 16 budget recommendation.
 17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: May I have a motion to
 18 approve the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 County
 19 Capital Budget?
 20 MS. HENN: So moved, Henn.
 21 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Is there a second?

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1 MS. FREMPONG: Second, Frempong.
 2 DR. SAVOY: Second, Savoy.
 3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any discussion?
 4 May I have a roll call vote?
 5 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?
 6 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.
 7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?
 8 MS. HENN: Yes.
 9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?
 10 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.
 11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?
 12 MS. LICHTER: Yes.
 13 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?
 14 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.
 15 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?
 16 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?
 18 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.
 19 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?
 20 DR. SAVOY: Yes.
 21 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?

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1 MR. McMILLION: Yes.

2 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?

3 MS. HARVEY: Yes.

4 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?

5 MR. YOUNG: Yes.

6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer.

7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.

8 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Motion carries. Thank you,

10 Dr. Grim.

11 The next item on the agenda is action taken in

12 closed session, and for that I call on Mr. Burns.

13 MR. BURNS: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Board

14 took no action that requires ratification in open

15 session.

16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.

17 The next item on the agenda is the work session

18 on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 Operating

19 Budget, and for that I call on Dr. Rogers and Mr.

20 Hartlove.

21 DR. ROGERS: Good evening, Board Chair Booker-

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1 Dwyer, Vice Chair Pumphrey, members of the Board. I am

2 pleased to open our work session this evening.

3 I want to begin by sharing an update on where

4 we are with the operating budget timeline. If you'll

5 note, next steps after our work sessions that we've held,

6 the public hearing and the presentation of the budget

7 include the February vote from the Board, and the budget

8 is then submitted to our County Executive and County

9 Council in February for the final approval in May by the

10 County Council and July funds for -- July 1st, excuse me,

11 for funds to be disbursed. Next slide.

12 As a reminder, our budget is in direct

13 alignment with our identified priorities for the school

14 system. Our primary role is to ensure that all of our

15 students are learning at high levels, and they are able

16 to demonstrate those -- that level of learning in a

17 variety of ways. But in order to do that, we must

18 continue to invest in infrastructure, safety and climate,

19 and highly effective teachers, leaders, and staff.

20 And so we are extremely proud of the way that

21 we have gone about this budget process. As everyone

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1 knows, it has been a challenging budget process.

2 However, we have engaged across Team BCPS for the last

3 several months, really empowering all of our stakeholders

4 to be a part of the process, for them to share their true

5 experiences, and also help us to prioritize our needs so

6 we can move forward and excel.

7 We engaged staff and stakeholders through

8 community conversations, a stakeholder survey, principal

9 survey, the new Budget 101 website, dozens of meetings

10 with our principals and Central Office members, as well

11 as advisory meetings. Advisory meetings consisted of

12 principals, Central Office staff, as well as school-based

13 professionals that worked in a variety of roles.

14 As a reminder, this budget is particularly

15 challenging because the ESSER funds expire at the end of

16 September. For us, being a larger system, this is \$84

17 million of funds that will no longer be available. And

18 if you look at this graphic, you'll note some critical

19 initiatives across our school system that we must

20 continue to move forward.

21 This also happens to be the same year that we

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1 are receiving the smallest percentage of allocation

2 towards moving the Blueprint for Maryland's Future

3 initiatives forward. And so we had to, as a school

4 system, find a way to make -- to find some specific

5 savings, as well as add needs -- add items to our budget

6 based on our identified student needs based on our

7 specific data.

8 And so this slide shows some documents that are

9 inside of our budget book that has been published for

10 this proposed budget. In the executive summary, you will

11 find a summary of the general fund categories, and what's

12 depicted there, the FY '24 adjusted category, compared to

13 the FY '25 proposed, and that gives everyone information

14 about the difference, whether there will be an increase -

15 - a proposed increase or a proposed decrease in that

16 specific area.

17 We also have the pie chart depicting where the

18 expenditures are going across the system proposed for FY

19 '25. And while, as a school system, we have committed to

20 working on safety and climate, safety and climate is more

21 than just ensuring the physical safety or social

Page 62

1 emotional safety of students and staff when they're in
 2 the building. A lot of the work that happens in our
 3 school is supported by our Central Office staff members
 4 on a regular basis.

5 And so one of the things that we discussed as
 6 senior leadership was in our past practices how
 7 inadvertently staff members would find out that their
 8 positions were being cut through a budget presentation.
 9 When there was a specific position that was available the
 10 previous year, and the next year, the projected year, you
 11 saw a zero, that is how people found out that they were
 12 losing their positions.

13 We have committed to improving the climate and
 14 morale across Team BCPS. We have also committed to
 15 treating all of our employees with the respect that they
 16 deserve. And so, as I shared at the very beginning of
 17 the budget book and the budget letter, the first
 18 operating book provides division rollups. And on this
 19 slide, you will see an example from page 197.

20 So for those who are interested in exactly
 21 where the cuts may be, here is an example where you're

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1 able to see the FY '24 adjusted budget items. You see
 2 the professional and support staff numbers. You'll see a
 3 difference in terms of the FY '25 proposed, as well as
 4 specific dollar amounts for budget by object classes,
 5 specifically calling out salaries and wages, contracted
 6 services, supplies and materials, other charges,
 7 equipment, and transfers.

8 This information is provided in our budget book
 9 for every single division. It also gives us the time to
 10 notify staff members directly of any changes to their
 11 current position, as well as options that exist within
 12 the system for all of our represented staff to make sure
 13 that they are taken care of for the upcoming year.

14 And as stated in the beginning of the budget
 15 book, and I want to share again for the public, our next
 16 two iterations of the book, since we typically share
 17 three versions of the book, the first proposed one, the
 18 March book, as well as one after we've had final approval
 19 from all parties, those next two versions will include
 20 the department-level data. Next slide, please.

21 But I wanted to spend some time this evening

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1 really speaking to the savings, to answer some of the
 2 questions that we received and make sure that our public
 3 has a strong understanding of how we were able to find
 4 these cost savings.

5 So this slide speaks to the position reductions
 6 that were not in schools. These positions, the 239
 7 positions that were identified in the budget, they were
 8 across divisions. As shared, you know, prior, we had
 9 every division at the table. We had all department
 10 leaders being an active part of this process. I would
 11 estimate about 200 staff members actively participating
 12 in identifying positions that were chronically vacant.

13 Why that's important is even if a position is
 14 chronically vacant for a school system, when you are
 15 developing the budget, it is your responsibility to still
 16 fund those positions. And so we took a deep dive and
 17 identified those positions that were chronically vacant.

18 We also talked about our increased efficiencies
 19 that we've been able to put in place last year and this
 20 year, you know, eliminating -- allowing us to eliminate
 21 redundancies and to make some reductions in areas. And

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1 again, that commitment to no layoffs for any represented
 2 staff, the same commitment that we made to all of our
 3 union partners.

4 The staff that you see there details the
 5 divisions, you know, to show you where, you know, the --
 6 we were able to save money. Specifically, it's also
 7 important to note that in the other areas, you know,
 8 human resources chief of staff and finance, you see a
 9 smaller amount, and those are our divisions that are
 10 extremely lean to begin with. Next slide, please.

11 Another area for savings was in class sizes,
 12 and wanted to really present some information for all of
 13 our public to understand what this means. So on one side
 14 of the slide, you will see the class sizes proposed for
 15 FY '25. In bold, you see the numbers for grade 3 through
 16 5. That is with a reduction in class size. That brings
 17 us to 24.

18 We shared from the beginning that there was a
 19 slight increase in secondary schools. But if you'll
 20 note, that slight increase in secondary school still has
 21 our middle schools at the same level with kindergarten

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1 through grade two. And it also has our high school still
 2 under the number that we have for grades three through
 3 five at this time by eliminating -- reducing the class
 4 size by one. Next slide, please.

5 The next item that I wanted to call to
 6 everyone's attention is responsibility factors.

7 Responsibility factors are part of our negotiated
 8 agreement, and they are funds that specific roles
 9 receive, above and beyond their salary, for doing
 10 additional work to move departments forward. So they are
 11 typically for department chairs, team leaders, as well as
 12 our nurses.

13 And so we were able to reduce the amount of
 14 expenditures from \$4 1/2 million, we were able to save
 15 \$1.8 million in this area. Part of that, approximately
 16 \$400,000, was by moving our nurse responsibility factor
 17 to a grant that we received for nursing. And then the
 18 other part came from reducing the allocations for middle
 19 schools and high schools.

20 We right-sized those responsibility factors in
 21 alignment with the content areas that we have in our

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1 schools. And so we're moving in high school from 15 to
 2 9, and middle school from 14 to 8. Those do not count
 3 special education and counseling. We will continue to
 4 have department chairs in those areas.

5 We also are going to standardize our
 6 expectations for teaching courses in those areas. When
 7 we analyzed our report, there was great variability
 8 across our system, and department chairs and team leaders
 9 were teaching everything from zero classes to a full
 10 load. And so we are standardizing that across the
 11 system, and then the other information provided is what
 12 does the allocations that are provided in neighboring
 13 school systems, what does that look like so that there
 14 can be a comparison with where we are moving to as a
 15 school system with those savings.

16 Next slide talks about zero-based budgeting.
 17 When we talked about the amount of savings that we knew
 18 we were going to have to realize, early on we talked
 19 about two things that we had to do as a school system in
 20 order to start saving. Part of that was to put a freeze
 21 on Central Office positions that were not essential and

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1 put in a process if there was -- if there were positions
 2 that we needed to fill those vacancies. But the other
 3 piece was zero-based budgeting.

4 Typically, in a large school system, the budget
 5 is created annually by providing people what we call the
 6 built-ins, the amount that has been spent in prior years.
 7 And then departments and divisions have an opportunity to
 8 identify additional expenditures that they feel are
 9 needed.

10 This year, we did not follow that process.
 11 This year, everyone started with zero, and they were
 12 asked to build a budget to make their request, to provide
 13 a rationale for every line item that they were
 14 requesting. Being honest with you, because this was very
 15 new, our team members had a little bit of struggle with
 16 this task at first.

17 At first, they thought the task was to build
 18 back up to the money that they used to receive. We all
 19 came back together and shared that this was not, indeed,
 20 the task. And what we didn't want to do is to sit at a
 21 table and make some blind decisions of what areas we

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1 needed to cut. We wanted these decisions to be well
 2 informed by the people that were closest to the work.

3 So we shared with them, you know, gave them
 4 another opportunity to go back to the table and make
 5 those decisions based on the work that they're doing
 6 based on the new efficiencies. And what you see in front
 7 of you are the results that they came back with.

8 It is divided by division where you are able to
 9 see FY '24 adjusted, where we ended up by division, and
 10 where we were after the zero-based budgeting exercise,
 11 informed not only by the chiefs that lead those divisions
 12 but really the department heads and leads that work in
 13 the divisions across Team BCPS yielding those savings.

14 Next slide, please.

15 We also were able to realize some savings with
 16 built-in budgets. Build-in budgets include items such as
 17 health insurance, other employee benefits, FICA, workers'
 18 compensation, utilities, retirement, and things of that
 19 nature. Want to make it very clear that we are not
 20 reducing funding in any of these areas, but what our
 21 budget and finance team did was they took a deep dive

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1 into our actual expenditures into these areas. And based
 2 on that, through that thorough review, we were able to
 3 make changes where we realigned our budget request to the
 4 amount of money that we needed to spend in these areas.
 5 And that resulted in approximately \$10 million worth of
 6 additional savings.

7 So this slide again reminds us of the task in
 8 front of us. We have a difficult task in front of us but
 9 extremely important work, work to make sure that all of
 10 our students from the beginning when they step foot in
 11 our pre-Ks all the way to when they leave us as graduates
 12 of Baltimore County Public Schools, that they are
 13 college, career, and community ready. And so we must
 14 invest in academic achievement, infrastructure, safety
 15 and climate, as well as highly effective staff. Because
 16 it takes our people to get this work done.

17 When we really take a look at our data, as
 18 we've been sharing throughout the year and will continue
 19 to share, it calls our attention to focusing on English
 20 language arts, mathematics, meeting the needs of our
 21 students who are multilingual learners, as well as our

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1 students receiving special education services. And so
 2 that is why this budget invests heavily in those four
 3 priority areas.

4 We also are responsible for continuing to
 5 advance Blueprint for Maryland's Future, making sure that
 6 we have robust early childhood education programs.
 7 Again, making sure that we are expanding access and
 8 opportunity to have high quality and diverse teachers and
 9 leaders across our schools and offices, making sure that
 10 we're investing in their professional development.
 11 Providing more opportunities for our students to be
 12 college and career ready after they have demonstrated
 13 that.

14 It's important to note that students are unable
 15 to demonstrate college and career readiness until the end
 16 of grade 10, per MSDE requirements. And so that's an
 17 important distinction that we should highlight as a
 18 school system. And lastly, making sure that we are
 19 investing more resources for those students who need more
 20 resources in order for them to be successful. That's
 21 where our work with community schools comes in, as well

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1 as our intentional focus on providing more resources for
 2 special education and our multilingual learners.

3 Wanted to call everyone's attention back to our
 4 trajectory. As I shared during the budget presentation,
 5 we were able to work with psychometricians to really
 6 identify what are the steps along the way that our
 7 students need to take so that by the time they reach the
 8 end of 10th grade, and they have taken all of those
 9 assessments, they're able to demonstrate readiness.

10 You'll note that the first marker is in
 11 kindergarten, and so the work that we do to expand pre-K
 12 will have a significant impact on making sure that our
 13 students are able to demonstrate readiness on the
 14 kindergarten readiness assessment. There are two markers
 15 in elementary school.

16 We have designed this budget to make sure that
 17 we're investing, reinvesting heavily at the foundation so
 18 that when we look at our maps for student performance
 19 across a variety of measures in elementary schools, we
 20 are able to help our students to demonstrate high levels
 21 of reading at the end of grade three, as well as in grade

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1 5, making sure that our students are demonstrating
 2 proficiency or above proficiency on the MCAP in literacy,
 3 as well as mathematics.

4 In eighth grade, successful completion of
 5 Algebra 1 with a grade of C or higher is a goal, and you
 6 will note a variety of measures that demonstrate college
 7 and career readiness at the high school level.

8 So the remaining slides simply provide a
 9 reminder of our asks before we open it up for any and all
 10 questions. For achievement, making sure that we are
 11 reducing those class sizes in grades three through five.
 12 Those class sizes were originally at 25, the largest in
 13 our entire school system.

14 For elementary investing in math lead teachers
 15 as a pilot. Making sure that we have that job-embedded
 16 professional development in our schools, and responding
 17 to our needs of our community for the virtual academy
 18 program, expanding the reach of our online teaching
 19 options, and in college and career readiness, really
 20 partnering with our partners' workforce development at
 21 county government to have 25 new positions that really

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1 focus on that career counseling that our students need,
 2 as well as addressing the growth needed for our new
 3 schools.
 4 We also are -- have proposed that we move
 5 forward with aggressive expansion of our pre-K programs,
 6 aligned in the areas where we have the greatest need.
 7 This is also aligned with the data that we have from the
 8 Blueprint in terms of where our highest population of
 9 Tier 1 students are living.
 10 In addition to providing teachers, we also want
 11 to make sure that we are providing those special area
 12 teachers, the paraeducators necessary, as well as the
 13 additional assistance to provide the support for our
 14 students and the requisite special education support so
 15 that our youngest learners have access to their home
 16 schools to receive services in pre-kindergarten.
 17 We also continue to grow our population of
 18 multilingual learners. As shared before, our
 19 multilingual learners are lagging behind in many of our
 20 measures. And so investing in additional ESOL teachers
 21 as we move more middle school and high school students

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1 back to their home schools and investing in a new English
 2 language learner curriculum using one-time funds is the
 3 request.
 4 In the area of special education, identifying
 5 this as a priority. When we look at our enrollment, we
 6 see that there was a dip, you know, as a result of the
 7 pandemic. Our numbers went back up, and we're close to
 8 near where we were before the pandemic. But we also know
 9 that because a lot of the learning loss that has
 10 occurred, we are spending more money on special education
 11 non-public placements.
 12 And so in the request, you see an additional
 13 request for special education non-public placements. But
 14 you also see a request to provide additional special
 15 education teachers across all of our grades to meet the
 16 needs of our students, as well as providing those
 17 elementary school IEP chairs so that we are providing
 18 supports as early as possible and working with our
 19 families and our students to meet their needs.
 20 In the area of safety and climate, we have over
 21 170 safety assistants deployed in our secondary schools,

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1 and a differentiated model in elementary schools, so
 2 moving that over to the operating budget, as well as
 3 moving forward with Phase 2 of our athletic trainers, are
 4 the two requests that we have.
 5 Using Blueprint funding, we want to continue to
 6 expand our Blueprint community schools, making sure that
 7 we're providing all of the supports that are necessary
 8 for our students and families. Mental, physical, social
 9 emotional and academic, including extracurricular
 10 activities.
 11 And then our final area, which is -- sorry,
 12 next to final area, infrastructure. Additional
 13 transportation contract buses, providing additional staff
 14 for facilities and grounds in our new schools, devices,
 15 cases to protect our devices, and to help us with saving
 16 at our middle school -- for our middle school students,
 17 which is a great area of need. As well as providing
 18 those desktops needed for staff members, utility, rising
 19 utility costs and startup costs for our new buildings
 20 that are slated to open next school year.
 21 And finally, investing in our people, making

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1 sure that we're able to fund our compensation increases,
 2 move over to the operating budget. The costs for
 3 extending our school day to be on par with all other
 4 school systems across the state of Maryland, as well as
 5 continuing to provide those adjustments necessary for our
 6 contractual and substitute staff members, and pay for the
 7 rising costs of benefits for staff members.
 8 And so with that, I turn it over to Board
 9 members. We are happy to answer any and all questions
 10 that you might have.
 11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Dr. Rogers.
 12 Board members, do you have questions?
 13 Yes, Ms. Henn?
 14 MS. HENN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank
 15 you, Dr. Rogers, for the outstanding presentation. I
 16 have two questions regarding staffing. And I also
 17 appreciate you answering our written questions we
 18 submitted. Those provided a lot of the answers we
 19 needed.
 20 DR. ROGERS: Thank you.
 21 MS. HENN: Could you speak to the number of

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1 employees impacted, and these would be non-represented
 2 employees, by the position reductions? Believe it's 250,
 3 give or take. How many actual employees will be impacted
 4 by those reductions?
 5 DR. ROGERS: So I don't have that number off
 6 the top of my head, but what I can tell you is -- so we
 7 have 239, you know, when we're talking about offices, and
 8 we're not talking about school based. We worked very
 9 hard to stay far away from schools because after all,
 10 we're working on academic achievement. And so we didn't
 11 want to do anything that would adversely impact, even
 12 though we had these financial challenges.
 13 I will tell you that the vast majority of
 14 positions, and when I say vast majorities, I mean in the
 15 high 90 percentile, were vacant positions. And so, you
 16 know, going back to the explanation, where we were still
 17 continuing to fund chronically vacant positions that
 18 either we had increased inefficiencies and so they were
 19 no longer needed, or they were chronically vacant and not
 20 being filled but still causing that burden on the system.
 21 That was one way that we were able to do this work.

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1 And again, not in isolation, not random
 2 decisions. Really bringing department leads and division
 3 heads to the table to have those conversations about, you
 4 know, what that meant. So for example, if we had an area
 5 where there were over 200, you know, vacant positions,
 6 how many did we really need? We didn't cut to zero, so
 7 if we had 200, you know, maybe it looks like we have 100
 8 now. Because, you know, we want to continue to recruit
 9 and, you know, to have additional people available.
 10 What I would say high 90s, you know, that were
 11 vacant, I would say, you know, we have a few dozen filled
 12 and a much smaller number of non-represented. And I make
 13 that distinction because as a part of our negotiated
 14 agreement, we have guidelines that we've agreed to
 15 follow, and we absolutely will follow them to a T in
 16 terms of finding positions where people have -- are
 17 qualified, where they have been successful in the past to
 18 make that match and for our chief of Human Resources to
 19 work to, you know, have that conversation with people.
 20 Make the offer, give them, you know, these opportunities
 21 so that we are losing as few people, if any, across Team

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1 BCPS.
 2 We really want to invest in our people and
 3 really want to respect the work that they do on a regular
 4 basis, in addition to being fiscally responsible and
 5 meeting the challenge that's in front of us, you know,
 6 with the needs of our student, in addition to the \$84
 7 million from ESSER.
 8 MS. HENN: Thank you. And of course, our
 9 people come first. And that's a point that makes me
 10 nervous looking at the numbers, but hearing you say that
 11 90 percent are chronically vacant positions, and your
 12 graphic was very helpful to that effect. If I do the
 13 math in my head, that's about 24 individuals, non-
 14 represented employees, potentially affected.
 15 When we talk about classroom positions, 255
 16 classroom teachers won't be furloughed. They're
 17 protected against furloughs, but they -- how many of
 18 those would you say are chronically vacant?
 19 DR. ROGERS: So teachers is different. So when
 20 you look at teachers, I want us to think about the number
 21 of teachers that we typically hire in a year. So

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1 typically, we hire 800 to 1,000 teachers in a year. So
 2 we're not going to be in the position where we, you know,
 3 are doing that. So if we hired 1,000 and that was the
 4 flat number and 255 was the number that we identified
 5 through savings, it would mean for us that we would hire
 6 745 the following year, if we had the same level of
 7 turnover.
 8 So some turnover is going to happen because,
 9 you know, people are going to retire. People are going
 10 to be promoted within the system, as well as outside.
 11 You know, everyone knows, that we are doing our level
 12 best to retain as many people as possible. You know, so
 13 teachers looks a little different, but you also see that
 14 we are adding in the proposed budget some teacher
 15 positions.
 16 So when we're talking about 35 more special
 17 education teachers, we're talking about, you know, those
 18 special area teachers in the budget. When we're talking
 19 about the pre-K teachers that we need, so it's not as
 20 black and white as, you know, it's 255 and 255 are going
 21 from somewhere, our goal is to keep as many of those

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1 people here for as long as possible, 30 years and beyond
 2 we want them here. And we're adding more teachers, but
 3 where we're making the change is we had to make the
 4 adjustments to secondary to really start that important
 5 work that we needed in grade three through five.
 6 Particularly if you look at that data and the
 7 importance of our data of making sure that our students,
 8 by the end of grade three, are reading at or above
 9 proficiency level and seeing that they were at 25, which
 10 was larger than even our high schools, a higher class
 11 size. So we were only able to do it step 1 this year if
 12 everything passes which brings us to 24, so they're still
 13 the highest in the school system. But we're moving it in
 14 the right direction.
 15 MS. HENN: Sure, and I appreciate that we're
 16 moving towards those priorities. The Board fully
 17 supports you in that. So it's more difficult to
 18 categorize teaching positions as chronically vacant since
 19 that's constant -- that number is constantly in flux.
 20 DR. ROGERS: It's constantly in flux and we
 21 looked at things like, you know, if we had specific

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1 positions for years that had been vacant, you know, like
 2 a specialized niche area. But the principals for the
 3 last three year, you know, they've been able to make it
 4 work with a reasonable, you know, good class sizes,
 5 particularly since at high school we were, you know, much
 6 smaller on that -- on those class sizes.
 7 We were able to look at that data and say this
 8 has been open for years. You know, we've checked the
 9 class sizes as, you know, we have that full report that
 10 you have. It's not causing a undue burden on our
 11 students and the ability of other students to learn, and
 12 so in those, you know, isolated instances, we were able
 13 to make those kinds of reductions, as well.
 14 MS. HENN: That's fantastic, and this exercise,
 15 and it's a lot of work so I appreciate you and the
 16 efforts of all your team, has not been done, at least in
 17 my time on the Board, that I'm aware of in making -- in
 18 right sizing our staffing based on looking at those, like
 19 you said, chronically vacant positions and eliminating
 20 those.
 21 Because they still have to be funded, whether

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1 they are filled or not, so to your knowledge, is that an
 2 accurate statement that this is new work that is
 3 happening as part of not necessarily your zero-based
 4 budgeting process, but in looking at what are our actual
 5 needs versus what we're funding that could be
 6 reallocated?
 7 DR. ROGERS: So, you know, I can't speak with
 8 100 specificity of what, you know, people might've done,
 9 you know, behind closed doors in the past. But what I
 10 can tell you is we took a deep dive. We looked
 11 everywhere. We also looked at places that perhaps in the
 12 past enrollment had surged, and so based on the staffing
 13 allocation formulas, we had provided additional staffing.
 14 But over years, those numbers went down.
 15 And so those are, you know, conversations that
 16 are easy to have with our principal colleagues because,
 17 you know, there's already a formula. So we looked at all
 18 of those places and all of those savings, I can share
 19 that we took a comprehensive look, together with
 20 everyone, you know, across the board this year.
 21 This was just a part of the work because we

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1 wanted to stay away from touching people. You know, we
 2 know that, you know, the fiscal outlook, you know,
 3 nationally is still going to be tight as we continue to
 4 move forward. But we really value our people and need
 5 our people to do this work. And so we looked at things
 6 first, which, you know, you saw the big areas with that.
 7 And then when we looked at people, we tried to look at
 8 potential people as much as possible.
 9 And then, you know, to look at, you know,
 10 efficiencies that were necessary and places that we could
 11 eliminate redundancies and really just standardize our
 12 formulas. You know, when I gave that example about
 13 department chairs and the great variability that we
 14 found, you know, as part of our process moving forward,
 15 being able to say here are our expectations so that we
 16 can budget.
 17 Because when you pay for a position, and you
 18 pay for a responsibility factor, and there are reduced
 19 classes that you're teaching, in essence the school
 20 system is paying for that, as well, because it might
 21 cause a swell in some areas or it might cause a request

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1 for additional staffing that is provided. And you know,
 2 those come at a cost to the school system.

3 MS. HENN: Thank you. And my final question,
 4 and then I'll turn it back to my colleagues, is magnet
 5 programs and the reductions there. We heard from two
 6 students tonight speak to -- very eloquently speak to the
 7 value of our magnet programs. And we're fully committed
 8 to supporting them. It's one thing to reduce promotional
 9 materials or things that are nonessential.

10 When I read in the budget book that staffing
 11 could be affected, that makes me nervous. So could you
 12 speak to the division of that half million that's being
 13 reduced from school magnet allocations and what that
 14 looks like in the schoolhouse?

15 DR. ROGERS: Absolutely. Yes, thank you. And
 16 I, too, compliment our students who were here this
 17 evening and has -- have come to several sessions to, you
 18 know, share with us the impact that elementary STEM
 19 magnet programs have had on them.

20 And so that half-a-million dollars, you know,
 21 as shared, it's the -- so the reduction is -- you know,

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1 we had some additional funds that we put together, you
 2 know, for magnet with ESSER. And so those funds, you
 3 know, obviously expire September 30th. But we also had a
 4 process where we -- very similar to the zero-based
 5 budgeting where we didn't reach out to schools and ask
 6 them what do you need to move forward? We kind of just
 7 said, you know, here's what we're providing.

8 So the vast majority of that money, you know,
 9 when we looked at the amount of money that was spent on
 10 promotional materials, the vast majority of that money is
 11 going to be absorbed in that way. When we say
 12 promotional materials, we're talking about high-gloss
 13 copies and, you know, maybe some shirts and some things
 14 of that nature. So a lot of it is things.

15 But we also created a process where Dr.
 16 Elmendorf, who leads our magnet programs, schools --they
 17 submit a budget request with a justification, just like
 18 our zero-based budgeting. And then they're going to
 19 provide, you know, those approvals based on the needs
 20 identified by the schools.

21 And so we were able to take a look -- again,

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1 looking at those actual expenditures versus what we had
 2 allocated, as well as looking at, you know, past
 3 practices where there is that time and space where
 4 there's money left and people spend it.

5 But is it something, you know, that we had a
 6 lot of expenditures throughout the year showing us this
 7 demonstrated need to spend that money on students. And
 8 so we're confident, you know, that that -- because again,
 9 we are prioritizing our students. We're confident that
 10 that cut is mostly on things, and we're also confident
 11 that this process is going to make sure that every school
 12 has what they need.

13 MS. HENN: And you had mentioned in your
 14 responses that a portion of that -- those funds were not
 15 spent when you talked about looking at actual
 16 expenditures. Do you have any ballpark estimate on what
 17 percentage of that (indiscernible) --

18 DR. ROGERS: Not off the top of my head. Not
 19 off the top of my head. Yes.

20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Ms. Henn. Other
 21 questions from the Board?

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1 Ms. Stolusky then Mr. McMillion? Okay.

2 MS STOLUSKY: Thank you for being so
 3 intentional and purposeful with this budget. I know it
 4 was really challenging. My questions just relate to
 5 class sizes, and I have two.

6 So one, knowing that there has to be some
 7 increases in the class sizes, can you speak to the
 8 community, teachers, stakeholders, et cetera about what
 9 the secondary increases in class sizes will actually mean
 10 in practicality?

11 And then do you have anticipation in the long-
 12 term plan to reduce class sizes across the board in the
 13 future? Thank you.

14 DR. ROGERS: Absolutely. So I'll start with
 15 the second question, and thank you for those thoughtful
 16 questions. So the first question -- or the second
 17 question about do we have plans long term to reduce.
 18 Absolutely. As soon as we get back to a place where
 19 we're able to reduce, yes. That is within our reach and
 20 part of our long-term plan.

21 The first question in terms of really speaking

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1 directly to our teachers, our teacher leaders, and our
 2 parents, you know, what does this mean? This is where
 3 that comprehensive look and comprehensive approach is
 4 going to pay dividends. And so, you know, when I talked
 5 about looking at our department chairs and team leaders,
 6 for example, you saw that great variability from zero to
 7 five classes. And so those released periods have an
 8 impact on what happens in the classroom.

9 Another area where we saw that was school-based
 10 resource teachers. Where we provide these positions in
 11 the school, and you had some of them that taught in
 12 classes and then you had some that taught a few or a few
 13 numbers in between. Our goal -- and we're actually
 14 meeting with all of our principals to provide, you know,
 15 staffing allocations on the 25th, so that is the day
 16 after tomorrow.

17 We are providing a comprehensive memo where we
 18 speak to all of these areas that we learned throughout
 19 this process that we had variability because either
 20 things changed over time, or we didn't have anything in
 21 writing. We've really brought people to the table to

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1 talk about what makes sense and what's best for students.
 2 And so we strongly believe by reducing, you know, the
 3 released periods and, you know, making sure that we have
 4 standardized expectations for what specific positions are
 5 doing across the system that we really should not see any
 6 great fluctuations in terms of secondary.

7 Again, secondary was even lower than our
 8 intermediate grades in elementary, and one of the reports
 9 that I, you know, provided, it gives you the summary by
 10 course, elementary, middle, and high, for the average
 11 class size. But then when you look underneath it, it
 12 shows you everything that lives underneath that for, you
 13 know, what are the class sizes in specific numbers.

14 And you'll find when you, you know, peruse that
 15 report that you don't see large numbers jumping out at
 16 you. So this -- you know, we're hoping that this is only
 17 going to improve that. So thank you.

18 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Mr. McMillion?
 19 MR. McMILLION: I really appreciate your
 20 involvement in the construction of this budget. Because
 21 it's obvious by the way that you're speaking to the

Page 92

1 detail. You didn't refer to anybody out there. You can
 2 speak to it because you were involved in the process.

3 I also appreciate how you walk through your
 4 leaders through the budget process. Where you scaled it
 5 down, the zero-based budget. Because I think that that's
 6 something that's been needed for quite a while.

7 But the piece that I have a difficult time with
 8 is, on my five years on the Board and seeing five budgets
 9 come through, you know, it's pitched to us that it's our
 10 budget. And it's constructed by you and your staff, but
 11 people say it's our budget. We vote on this budget. I'm
 12 finding it very difficult to conceptualize voting for a
 13 budget where I can't see detail.

14 Like, once finalized by the Board, the adopted
 15 '25 operating budget will include, will include, will
 16 include. So if I'm going to be fiscally prudent with my
 17 vote, I -- how can I vote for something I can't see? And
 18 can you talk me off my cliff?

19 DR. ROGERS: I'm going to talk you right off
 20 the cliff, or I'm going to do my best to help you.
 21 MR. McMILLION: Talk me off the cliff.

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1 DR. ROGERS: Yes, I'm going to attempt. And so
 2 what I would say to you, Mr. McMillion, is you do have
 3 the information. So when you look at the division
 4 rollups, it speaks specifically to here's where we were.
 5 Here's where we're trying to go. So you can see in the
 6 specific areas where we had the savings.

7 When you look at the slide that I shared, you
 8 know, this evening about the divisions so you can see
 9 where those savings are, so when we say to people that
 10 this was across divisions. This wasn't one isolated
 11 place, there is evidence across 309 pages that this
 12 happened.

13 But I think one of the things that we have to
 14 all continue to be committed to, when we're talking about
 15 recruitment and retention where we want people to stay is
 16 demonstrate that level of respect that we have for them.

17 I think there are people who have been in this
 18 room and watched people's faces change when they heard in
 19 a public Board presentation that next to their position
 20 was a zero. I would never want to be in that position,
 21 and as the leader that you entrust with the care and

Page 94

1 concern of this school system, I would never want to put
 2 people in that school system.

3 And so my work, my responsibility is to make
 4 sure you and the public have the division information.
 5 Also to share in a timely fashion with those individual
 6 what their options are, and to answer, you know,
 7 questions that I can in a public fashion so people
 8 understand how we did the work, where the savings are
 9 coming from, what lives underneath that without exposing
 10 those.

11 I think part of it, also, and I'm not going to
 12 say that part of this is about trust, because there are
 13 numbers in black and white. So like page 197 for
 14 curriculum and instruction, there's one that's there for
 15 the Division of Schools. There's one that's there for
 16 Operations. There's one that's there for every single
 17 department.

18 And so I think it's about shifting how we're
 19 doing business. If we want differentiated outcomes, to
 20 continue to do things in the way that we did where, you
 21 know, we came together and talked about how do we improve

Page 95

1 climate and morale? How do we make sure that we're
 2 attracting people? How do we make sure -- you know, I've
 3 been very proud to see people come to this Board meeting
 4 and, you know, we're appointing them, or you're
 5 appointing them, approving the appointment and they're
 6 coming from other school systems during the school year.

7 This is a place where people want to be, where
 8 they want to come, and we want our people who are here
 9 that, you know, that they want to stay. And so I've been
 10 speaking to them personally about our investment in them,
 11 about how they've been a part of this process, about the
 12 respect that we're going to show to them.

13 I think it would then be disingenuous for me to
 14 turn around and in the biggest presentation that we have
 15 to provide to the public, to show them that their cuts in
 16 their positions are in a book. And so I am happy to sit
 17 down with you and anybody else to go through division by
 18 division, you know, if the information that I gave this
 19 evening wasn't sufficient in terms of the division to
 20 show you exactly where you see the professional, where
 21 you see the supporting. And then you see those other

Page 96

1 budget classes. Happy to, you know, share that
 2 information with you.

3 But I think the information that you have in
 4 front of you demonstrates our commitment to really keep
 5 our word with people. To really walk through a process
 6 openly, honestly, to really look at everything, to value
 7 people first. But then at the very end when we have to
 8 make difficult decisions, which is what you have to do as
 9 a school system, to do it in such a way that we're still
 10 valuing and honoring people to the end.

11 MR. McMILLION: And I want to say thank you
 12 very much for your answer. And I know it might seem that
 13 I'm being critical of you, but I'm trying to understand
 14 the process. And you have my support. Thank you very
 15 much.

16 DR. ROGERS: Thank you.

17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any other questions?
 18 Ms. Pumphrey.

19 MS. PUMPHREY: My questions were answered, but
 20 I just have a comment that, again, I just appreciate the
 21 why. So when these things come in front of us and people

Page 97

1 look and they're, like, oh, no, this looks different.
 2 Why does this look different? Why isn't this included?
 3 I appreciate that your responses include the why so that
 4 everyone understands, us and including the public, why it
 5 looks a little bit different and why things may be the
 6 way they are. So just a comment. I wanted to thank you
 7 for that.

8 DR. ROGERS: Thank you.

9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Ms. Frempong?

10 MS. FREMPONG: So I was glad to see that at the
 11 school-based budget, we do see that the number of support
 12 staff has increased, and it's (inaudible) 109 full-time
 13 equivalents. But I was looking -- so that's from page
 14 122.

15 But I did have a question from page 125 where -
 16 - just where do the numbers come from when we start
 17 talking about thresholds? So for example, when it refers
 18 to clerical and the student population, if it's 500
 19 students or more, then we get additional assistance. But
 20 that's different than from a reading specialist, where
 21 the number is 700. So where do those numbers come from

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1 as far as thresholds for the support staff?

2 DR. ROGERS: I appreciate that question. So

3 that's, you know, historical. I would have to dig deeper

4 to find out. You know, I think some of them have been,

5 you know, part of the allocation formulas for, you know,

6 more than a decade. Whereas, some I specifically asked

7 the question around department chairs and, you know,

8 found out that, you know, the number of allocations, that

9 had been practice for three to four years.

10 And so we would have to do some more work to,

11 you know, to find out historically where they came from

12 at the very beginning as well as, you know, identifying.

13 This is, you know, probably some of work for the FY '26

14 budget where there was more room. Where we also

15 identify, you know, I always try to benchmark with

16 neighboring districts who are similarly situated

17 districts. Might be outside of our neighbors to make

18 sure that we're aligned with those best practices.

19 But I think, you know, the short answer is, you

20 know, many of them are historical in nature. The why, I

21 wouldn't be able to tell you that. But we can certainly

Page 99

1 go on a journey to find out.

2 MS. FREMPONG: Thank you. And then the next

3 question would be the nurses. So there was the reduction

4 for the nurses, as far as the money, because there's

5 grant funding, so that's from page 124. But then when

6 you look at, again, this same school allocation, there's

7 only one nurse per school.

8 And there was some data in here just talking

9 about there's 450,000 health suite visits. There's

10 80,000 medical treatments, and all of that is just one

11 nurse. So can you talk more to that?

12 DR. ROGERS: Sure. So, you know, in my younger

13 days, I thought I was going to be a nurse because I came

14 from two generations of nurses. And obviously, I didn't

15 make that decision. So I have high -- I hold nurses,

16 physicians all in very high esteem and high regard.

17 What I will share with you is just, you know,

18 for the record, we're not making any changes, no

19 reductions in nurses, no reductions in our health

20 assistants, no reductions in the responsibility factors.

21 As you pointed out, we are changing the funding source,

Page 100

1 so that is a net savings for us on the operating budget.

2 But I will share with you, of all these systems

3 that I'm aware of, the allocation is, you know, one nurse

4 that might be an area where we can partner with, you

5 know, perhaps our, you know, external partners to see,

6 you know, if there's a long-term plan to make some

7 increases.

8 I know in our community schools, of which we

9 think we're going to be above 80 next year, one of the

10 areas where we provide support is health services. And

11 so, you know, that usually comes with a health assistant,

12 and we also usually work with some kind of, you know,

13 medical clinic providers for our families in those areas.

14 And so having over 80 of those, I think, will

15 help to provide some additional support to our nurses,

16 but I think it would have to be a much, you know, longer-

17 term plan. But again, this is another area where we can

18 take a look at our -- I know what the neighboring systems

19 are if they haven't changed. But it's definitely

20 something we can look into, as well as our very

21 collaborative and helpful county government partners, you

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1 know, and our health department that really works with us

2 hand in hand on a regular basis.

3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yep, go ahead.

4 MS. FREMPONG: My last question, actually, is

5 kind of -- it's a follow-up. I believe Ms. Henn had

6 asked the question about the 18 math specialists, and

7 then I saw a slide that spoke to the schools.

8 And I guess my question is how were those

9 schools determined? Because if we look at the map

10 information that's in here, some of the lower schools, I

11 didn't see those names. So how is it that we're

12 allotting the math specialists to, you more, more

13 affluent and schools that have the better scores versus

14 the ones that are less affluent and don't have as good

15 scores?

16 DR. ROGERS: Great question. So the first

17 answer is if we could've provided one to everyone, we

18 absolutely would've. But, you know, with over 100

19 elementary schools, that wasn't something that we

20 could've done.

21 So in -- you know, when you're designing a

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1 pilot, part of what you want to do is have a range of
 2 schools. So we didn't want only Title 1 schools. We
 3 didn't want only affluent schools. We wanted a mix. But
 4 we also looked at additional resources that were
 5 available.

6 Part of our concerted effort moving forward is
 7 going to be to make sure that we have a math expert in
 8 every single elementary school, and we're able to provide
 9 them with that professional development. But we're also
 10 able to, in real time, you know, have indicators of how
 11 our students are doing on our math curriculum.

12 And so in those spaces, I think each -- every
 13 single one of the spaces that were identified, we didn't
 14 have a dedicated math expert. But we were able to look
 15 across other schools where we had, you know, either with
 16 additional funds where you have a, you know, school-based
 17 math resource teacher that can support that work that we
 18 can bring all of them together throughout the course of
 19 this pilot to really focus on implementing the
 20 mathematics curriculum with fidelity.

21 And also monitoring the progress of our

Page 103

1 students and making, you know, those course corrections
 2 in real time. So that's how we decided on the schools.
 3 You're welcome.

4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Other questions?
 5 Ms. Lichter?

6 MS. LICHTER: More comments, because all of my
 7 questions were answered. One, as a former elementary
 8 principal, the idea of IEP facilitators, lowering the
 9 ratio in grades three to five, and the math specialist
 10 are things that we have been needing desperately for
 11 years and years. So thank you for wading through all of
 12 the -- all the information and all of the funds to start
 13 to fund that in our schools. And it's so aligned with
 14 the needs that we've seen. So thank you for that.

15 The one question I had was the English language
 16 learners piece, and the 84 percent of elementary kids
 17 gaining scores is huge. So that, you know, there's a lot
 18 of points in here that are pointing -- showing us it's
 19 pointing in the right direction.

20 Is there -- is the PD amount of 31,000 enough,
 21 considering the increase of teachers and that there

Page 104

1 aren't experts for ELL in the schools?
 2 DR. ROGERS: So this is a great area where
 3 we're able to leverage grant funding. So we have some, I
 4 think it's Title 3, Title 3 funding where we can use that
 5 specifically for English language learners. And that's
 6 what we're going to leverage to provide additional
 7 professional development.

8 So part of this exercise was also looking at
 9 how we can maximize grant funding to meet some of our
 10 needs. You know, use our Title 2 funding in different
 11 ways than, you know, perhaps we've used them in the past.
 12 And so that's what we're going to use, in addition to,
 13 you know, our Director of ESOL and World Languages on the
 14 Curriculum and Instruction side, who's really focusing on
 15 that piece.

16 And then we have the Director of Multilingual
 17 Achievement on the school side really focusing on getting
 18 to inside of schools. What are the needs of the
 19 principals and the teachers in the classroom? As well as
 20 ELA to provide, you know, some of that support.

21 One of the areas showing promise is HMH. HMH

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1 provides resources for our multilingual learners, as well
 2 as, you know, our students in need of additional
 3 supports. And our high -- very high-achieving students.
 4 And so I think using some existing resources, as well as
 5 Title 3, allows us to do what we need to. They have come
 6 up with a very robust plan in terms of, you know, what
 7 our next steps look like, including, you know, this
 8 summer and beyond.

9 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. And then just one
 10 last comment. I appreciate -- I understand the
 11 frustration or the not seeing all of the details about
 12 people. But I sat in Ms. Booker-Dwyer's seat last year
 13 and watched people in the audience find out that their
 14 positions had been cut, and it was heart wrenching.

15 So while I understand we may feel we're missing
 16 information, the look on those people's faces to hear
 17 that their future was now not in jeopardy but that they
 18 did not have their position back was very hard. So I
 19 appreciate that being the paramount consideration for
 20 this. Thank you.

21 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any other questions from

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1 Board members?

2 Okay. Well, thank you, Dr. Rogers, for

3 answering all of our questions, for providing clarity to

4 the budget. I definitely think it reflects the school

5 system that we are aspiring to be where we are putting

6 people first, where we're investing in our students, and

7 really respecting the professionalism of adults by not

8 detailing positions in that detailed departmental budget

9 list. So thank you for that.

10 The Board is scheduled to vote on the FY 2025

11 Operating Budget at the February 27, 2024 Board meeting.

12 Okay. We still have more on the agenda. That

13 was -- all right. So the next item on the agenda is the

14 report on the Maryland Star Rating System, and for that I

15 call on Dr. Jones, Dr. DiDonato, and Mr. Connelly.

16 Dr. Jones and Dr. DiDonato.

17 DR. JONES: Thank you.

18 DR. DIDONATO: Yes, one of our trio is not with

19 us this evening, but we're going to do our best to give a

20 good show for him.

21 DR. JONES: So we're going to just jump right

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1 in. Dr. Rogers, we didn't know if you wanted to say

2 something. You have said a lot, and you did it well --

3 and you did it well, so we're going to just get started.

4 We're going to get started.

5 We're here today, Chair Booker-Dwyer and Vice

6 Chair Pumphrey, we are here -- and members of the Board,

7 we are here to present the 2022-23 ESSER Star Ratings.

8 Joined with me is my colleague, Dr. DiDonato, and as was

9 stated, Mr. Connelly, who's DRA team is a representation

10 of Dr. Jess Grim and the Chief Operations Officer, due to

11 an emergency he is not here. But they did contribute a

12 lot to what you're going to see, and we wanted to make

13 sure (inaudible). Next slide, please.

14 So one of the things that we really wanted to

15 point out and really start off the presentation around is

16 that the Maryland Report Card really advances equity

17 through ESSER. As we know, the -- ESSER stands for Every

18 Student Succeeds Act, and it was -- has established an

19 accountability system here within Maryland, focused on

20 equitably preparing students for college and career

21 success.

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1 The plan closely aligns with the systems focus

2 on equity and increased academic achievement, and it

3 gives us an opportunity to really think about our

4 priority around increasing academic achievement and

5 closing gaps for students. Next slide, please.

6 So the Maryland Report Card rating, as you can

7 see, their school performance is measured through

8 indicators, and those indicators are there for all

9 schools. Academic progress for elementary and middle,

10 progress in achieving English language proficiency is

11 also for all schools. And then we have our graduation

12 rate, which we're all familiar with, for high schools.

13 Quality or student success for all schools, and then

14 readiness for post-secondary success, again, is for all

15 schools.

16 And off to the side, you can kind of see the

17 stars and the awarding of the stars based on the

18 percentages that are received. Next slide, please.

19 DR. DIDONATO: We wanted to highlight some of

20 the changes in the ESSER report card from 2022 to 2023.

21 I know that when we look at those report cards, and we

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1 compare them from one year to the next, we believe that

2 it's a true measure. However, there are some metrics

3 changes that occur between the 2022 report card and the

4 2023 report card. We wanted to highlight some of those

5 changes for you because it gives some insight into some

6 of the score changes.

7 So at the top of the slide, you can see chronic

8 absenteeism. So chronic absenteeism calculation reverted

9 to the original pre-COVID calculation metrics that was

10 used. During 2022, recognizing that students' attendance

11 was still being impacted by COVID, the chronic

12 absenteeism rate metrics changed so that it was a lower

13 threshold. So it allowed more flexibility for schools

14 with a higher level of chronic absenteeism.

15 For 2023, it returned to the pre-COVID rate.

16 So while we had schools who dramatically improved their

17 chronic absenteeism rate, it didn't come to fruition in

18 seeing that number change for the star rating purpose

19 because the metric had actually increased. So they had

20 improved it. However, they were chasing after a number

21 at that point.

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1 The English language proficiency, so this is
 2 looking at the achievement of our students making
 3 progress to acquire English. One of the differences,
 4 again, between 2022 and 2023, the WIDA assessment is
 5 what's used to evaluate students' progress towards
 6 English language proficiency. And the timeline for
 7 administration was cut short, and so the assessment from
 8 2022 to 2023 measured progress over a single school year.

9 The 2022 school year score was actually a much
 10 longer time because there were options and waivers in
 11 2021 for administering the test, and there were students
 12 in 2020 who did not take the test. So it was a longer
 13 growth window for students versus this past year was a
 14 true one-year progress measure from the test that they
 15 took in 2022 to the test that they took in 2023 to look
 16 at their English proficiency rate.

17 So what you see is, while we've had some really
 18 positive gains at the elementary level, we are again --
 19 that's really demonstrating we're moving at a positive
 20 trajectory because we had gains even though it was a
 21 shorter window for really assessing students. And that

Page 111

1 would be the normal window of one year.

2 Students' growth proficiency, again, this was
 3 another factor that was changed based on the implications
 4 and impact of COVID-19 and the school closures, the
 5 gradual reopening. The metrics for 2023 again returned
 6 back to those pre-COVID scoring systems. So this was
 7 another variable. So what these are really coming
 8 together to show is that there's a lot of differences
 9 between the 2022 and 2023 report cards.

10 And finally, one of the biggest differences for
 11 our middle schools was that social studies achievement
 12 was now included on the report card. This was the first
 13 year that that happened. So again, of course, we want to
 14 see growth in our schools 100 percent. However, we also
 15 want to make sure that we're measuring comparable
 16 indicators and so the past two years were just a little
 17 challenging to do that. Next slide, please.

18 However, despite all of those challenges, we
 19 did have some highlights that we wanted to share with
 20 you. We did have 18 schools that increased by 1 star.
 21 We had 23 schools that were in the 90th percentile or

Page 112

1 higher. We do recognize we had 36 schools that reduced
 2 by 1 star, and we are working very strategically with
 3 those schools to identify the areas where that may have
 4 happened.

5 We did see that happen in several schools
 6 because of the chronic absenteeism. And again, while
 7 schools were making some progress with that, the
 8 indicators had changed.

9 We want to also highlight two of our schools,
 10 Eastern Tech and West Towson, that were identified in the
 11 100th percentile based on their performance. Next slide,
 12 please.

13 DR. JONES: So as Dr. DiDonato said, the -- one
 14 of the things that changed was chronic absenteeism. And
 15 so we are going to share with you some of the things we
 16 are doing to fast forward as Dr. Rogers has charged us to
 17 do related to the systems priorities.

18 And so the first thing we want to do is make
 19 sure that we're employing proactive and responsive
 20 strategies. And so while we're doing that in many areas,
 21 we wanted to make it relevant to our presentation. And

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1 with that being said, I do want to highlight the fact
 2 that a team of folks from the Department of School Safety
 3 and the Department of Social Emotional Support actually
 4 were able to provide to BC STAT, which is Baltimore
 5 County's STAT meeting with the CE and others, to really
 6 share some important data around chronic absenteeism.

7 And so that attendance committee, which is led
 8 by our attendance liaison, our PPW coordinator, and a
 9 representation of the PPW team, we were all there to
 10 basically share this data, and we wanted to share it with
 11 you.

12 Although there were changes made to the
 13 Maryland State report card, we are very excited to see
 14 that from last year, based on last year's data or
 15 previous year's data, we are seeing increases in terms of
 16 how our students are coming to school, which represents
 17 the blue area in terms of just low chronic absenteeism.
 18 And then it kind of moves up through the orange the red.

19 Now, this is not necessarily year-over-year
 20 data, but this is where we kind of stand now, and we are
 21 definitely seeing decreases there.

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1 I did want to highlight that year over year,
 2 though, from an elementary school standpoint. If we look
 3 at the elementary school level we're approximately down
 4 12 percent in terms of chronic absenteeism, and that was
 5 January 11, 2023 to January 11, 2024. Middle school is
 6 down approximately 10 percent, and high school is right
 7 at 10 percent in terms of a decrease in chronic
 8 absenteeism. Next slide, please.

9 In addition, we're making sure that there is
 10 utility around strategies, and we're utilizing strategies
 11 to increase our ESSER star rating. This is just a sample
 12 of a really collaborative project and work that has come
 13 together through DRAA and the Department of Schools. It
 14 definitely is something that they actually thought about.
 15 We often think about instructional leadership and how are
 16 we supporting our schools from an instructional
 17 leadership standpoint.

18 But we also know that we need the specialized
 19 technical assistant, and we -- assistance and we don't
 20 use the word technical very often in education. But we
 21 came to this understanding as we began to conduct needs

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1 assessments around data literacy and data analysis and
 2 protocols and all those things is that those of us who
 3 are not statisticians, we do need some sense of technical
 4 assistance. And so they've provided just that in this
 5 form.

6 We will be able to provide samples as we begin
 7 to use it. We're in the process of rolling it out with
 8 our principals. We had an opportunity to share it with
 9 them at our principals' leadership development. But what
 10 it essentially is, is it has the various indicators on
 11 the school report card. And then each school actually
 12 has what we're considering or calling a tool.

13 And so it will show you -- it shows the
 14 principal and the instructional leadership team exactly
 15 where they are over time. I think it dates about three
 16 or so years back, where they've scored in each of the
 17 areas and some of the things that they can do to increase
 18 their scores.

19 It is an interactive tool. We're able to click
 20 on it and it takes you to a data display which is in
 21 power and in form. Again, we are in the process of

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1 rolling out this tool to really think about how we can
 2 provide that specialized teaching and learning
 3 instructional leadership and technical assistance to our
 4 schools. Next slide, please.

5 Dr. DiDonato?

6 DR. DIDONATO: Thank you. As we continue to
 7 look to fast forward our achievement and prioritizing our
 8 English language arts, math, ESOL, and special education,
 9 we wanted to highlight some of the things that we are
 10 doing and have in place in order to move this work
 11 forward.

12 So as a school system, we are completely
 13 prioritizing these four areas to the point that principal
 14 leadership development on a monthly basis includes these
 15 four topic areas. As well as integration of other
 16 content areas within in, so for example with ESOL, what
 17 are the strategies and supports that we should be seeing
 18 in all of our classrooms for our multilingual learners?

19 What are those coaching feedback tools and
 20 moves that administrators can make to support their
 21 teachers doing it? And then what would it look like

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1 within a social studies class?

2 So giving them those practical application of
 3 what they can look for within classrooms so that they are
 4 giving feedback to teachers around specific content, as
 5 well as specific strategies to support learners in our
 6 schools.

7 We are also conducting principal leadership
 8 learning logs in elementary schools. So elementary
 9 schools each have two days in which an HMH coach comes to
 10 their schools, works with the school principal,
 11 collaborates with teachers, can provide very
 12 individualized support of I can't find this and what's a
 13 better way to find this tool? Or if I want to find this
 14 resource? And will work with teachers individually, as
 15 well as the school administrators.

16 The HMH coaches go on walks with the school
 17 administrators and then the follow-up, there are
 18 leadership walks with multiple principals at a single
 19 school with an HMH coach.

20 For example, and I know that Dr. Jones was at a
 21 school this afternoon, I was at a different school this

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 118</p> <p>1 morning with an HMH coach, as well as several other 2 principals and other staff from the office -- the 3 Division of Schools to walk through classrooms, look at 4 instructional implications, level set, identify areas of 5 need and growth. Ask specific questions about things 6 that we're seeing in the moment from the HMH coach to 7 identify how we can then, one, shift professional 8 development that may need to occur for either principals 9 or for teachers. And we can then identify some next 10 steps for that specific school.</p> <p>11 So in a follow-up visit, whether it's from 12 their executive director of schools, or from someone from 13 the Division of Schools, or with their HMH coach, they 14 have another incremental step of what they can look at 15 for implementation for HMH.</p> <p>16 We are also doing our cross-divisional 17 collaborative instructional visits, so that's staff from 18 curriculum and instruction, along with the Division of 19 Schools, going to schools to visit to look at 20 instruction, using the Look Forward tools that we're 21 supporting principals with during professional</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 120</p> <p>1 improving everybody's pedagogy and knowledge of 2 strategies, that's going to support and enhance the 3 instruction of all of our kids. Next slide, please.</p> <p>4 All right. Emphasizing strategies to increase 5 our English language learners' proficiency with English. 6 We do have a new director for multilingual achievement, 7 as you heard Dr. Rogers mention. She is working in the 8 Division of Schools, so really working firsthand to look 9 at the instructional implications in the classroom, 10 working very collaboratively with the Office of 11 Curriculum and Instruction to evaluate what's happening 12 in our classes. Look at what are the strategies, again, 13 that we're providing in professional development. How do 14 we see those happening in schools?</p> <p>15 And for the decentralization of our ESOL 16 centers, so that's the movement of our middle and high 17 school students from the regional centers back to their 18 neighborhood schools. What are the professional 19 development needs of those schools and how are we making 20 sure that we're providing them -- to them now so that 21 those schools are well prepared for their students. And</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 119</p> <p>1 development. Walking together with school 2 administrators, again, creating that very consistent 3 level setting of instructional expectations and really 4 coaching principals around, you know, what did you see in 5 the classroom? What kind of feedback would you give 6 around that? What are the questions you may ask a 7 teacher based on what we saw in the classroom? And then 8 how can we move instruction forward from that point?</p> <p>9 In addition, you saw in the budget presentation 10 the addition of ESOL as well as special education teacher 11 positions. In a time of teacher shortages, I know a lot 12 of questions are, well, where are you going to find them? 13 One of the things that we are trying to do is support our 14 own teachers in becoming dual certified.</p> <p>15 So we are providing ESOL and special education 16 practice cohorts for our teachers so that they can engage 17 in professional development, learn more about the test, 18 get some tips about things -- content that is really 19 important on the assessment so that we're also looking at 20 creating our own pool of dual-certified staff members who 21 can help support their students. Because again, as we're</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p> <p>1 we're not offering some are optional professional 2 developments, but rather those staff are going to be 3 trained already.</p> <p>4 Let's see. ESOL -- whoop, go back please. 5 Thank you. ESOL school support visits. I just spoke 6 about that. We provided professional development again 7 to our principals, looking at what Dr. Jones was talking 8 about. Increasing data literacy so helping our school 9 administrators really understand the access for Ls or the 10 WIDA assessment and those scores.</p> <p>11 The WIDA assessment scores and student's 12 English proficiency increasing can earn up to 10 points 13 on the ESSER report card. That's the equivalent to a 14 graduation rate point value at the high school level, 15 which means this is really important for our 16 administrators to understand this assessment and to 17 understand the different pathways that students 18 demonstrate English proficiency.</p> <p>19 Because there's two different metrics that can 20 be used depending on how long a student has been 21 receiving English language services within the United</p>

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1 States.

2 I mentioned just before the Psy Op strategies

3 for principals in professional development in school

4 teams. So again, really looking at how can we frontload

5 professional development to all parts of our school staff

6 from administrators to classroom teachers. Next slide.

7 And that's it. Thank you.

8 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you, Dr. DiDonato and

9 Dr. Jones. Any questions from the Board?

10 Yes, Ms. Domanowski?

11 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes. Thank you for all that,

12 and I'm sorry I'm going to say something. There's lots

13 of good things in there, but one things that definitely

14 stood out to me was the middle school scores. Twenty-one

15 out of twenty-seven got a two star or below. That's

16 alarming to me, and I'm wondering -- I'm -- maybe Dr.

17 Rogers can speak to this. What are we doing right now to

18 effectively address that?

19 Are we -- is -- I think some elementary schools

20 have, like, a red light and green where quarterly or half

21 yearly they -- midyear, they'll check in and see how

Page 123

1 their students are doing so that they know where they

2 need to catch up, who needs more work. I just -- that's

3 -- that -- what are we doing there?

4 DR. DIDONATO: So I can say it's multifaceted.

5 So one, one of the things that we're doing is the

6 secondary reading interventions are happening in our

7 schools. As you know, at the beginning of the year we

8 came to you and we talked about some of our secondary,

9 middle, and high schools were not scheduling students who

10 needed reading intervention in reading intervention.

11 They're in it now. Part of -- when we had

12 asked for increased spending authority was so that we had

13 those tools to provide reading intervention. So one,

14 we're working on making sure all of our kids are reading.

15 We're also looking at our curriculum-based assessment, so

16 after each unit assessment, the school principals, as

17 well as the executive directors from the Division of

18 Schools, as well as DRAA and curriculum and instruction,

19 are looking at what are those indicators that we're

20 seeing.

21 So it's not just a beginning of year, mid-year,

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1 but it after every unit assessment. What are we seeing

2 as far as areas where students are still struggling on

3 certain standards? Are those standards that are

4 addressed in other units? Because some of our curriculum

5 is spiraled. So you'll have a skill indicator that you

6 have in unit 1 and then you see it resurface in unit 3.

7 And again, when we look at standards we want

8 students to master, it's within a year. It's not within

9 just, like, the first two months of school. So it's okay

10 that we're going to do it again in unit 3 because we

11 still haven't gotten to the end of the year yet. So the

12 goal is by the end of that unit, if it's not going to be

13 revisited, that they've mastered it at that time.

14 So we're looking at our curriculum-based

15 assessments and we are seeing positive progress on our

16 curriculum-based assessments. Which is, again, a

17 positive indicator for what we're doing.

18 Looking at, you know, what are we doing as far

19 as professional development in-classroom work, so our

20 Office of Mathematics, that was an area of big need for

21 us at the middle school level are visiting our middle

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1 schools. Walking with school principals, walking them

2 through illustrative math. What are the things that they

3 should be looking for? What do they see in the

4 classrooms? What feedback are we giving to teachers?

5 And then having those follow-up visits to really see how

6 have school administrators begun embracing giving some

7 differentiated feedback so that we are really trying to

8 move the equality of the instruction forward. So that we

9 will see those changes.

10 MS. DOMANOWSKI: It's not just that how they're

11 doing academically, but how they're doing, you know,

12 emotionally or disciplinary wise. Are you getting

13 feedback from the teachers as far as, you know, are they

14 -- is there something else that needs to be done? I know

15 we have the student safety assistants there. Is that

16 working? Is that something we need more of? Just the

17 atmosphere-wise that's going on there. Do you want to

18 guess?

19 DR. ROGERS: Yes, yes. Thank you. I thought I

20 was done for the night, Ms. Domanowski. But, you know,

21 what you raise is exactly our work. So we have a Central

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1 Office instructional leadership team meeting, and we meet
 2 every three weeks. And we rotate the grade levels where
 3 we're reviewing the data, and so we start off with the
 4 academic data.

5 We don't only look at report cards so, you
 6 know, that's one measure, but we also look at these
 7 district assessments because they're directly aligned to
 8 the state assessment. And it gives us that objective
 9 view of how our students doing -- are doing and
 10 predictive, as well as it informs curriculum and
 11 instructions' work in term of if there's anything that
 12 they need to do quickly to get out to the schools.

13 But the other piece of that meeting, in
 14 addition to going through all of the academics and the
 15 standards, and we compare performance from last year and
 16 whether or not we're making growth, we look at
 17 attendance. We look at suspensions. We look at
 18 behavior, any infractions. For middle school, we've
 19 rolled out those mental health services with that pilot.
 20 We're looking at usage.

21 But, you know, we're looking at all of that

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1 data because it all has a role, including that's why
 2 we're looking at chronic absenteeism because the first
 3 step is you need to be in the buildings. And so middle
 4 school is another pain point for us, but it's a area
 5 that's receiving a lot of attention.

6 And, you know, we're going to continue to focus
 7 in that area and continue to, you know, monitor that data
 8 and, hopefully, we're going to see the progress based on
 9 the investments that we're providing. And also the
 10 feedback, the direct feedback, that our principals are
 11 giving us on a regular basis.

12 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Thank you.

13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Any other questions?

14 Ms. Harvey?

15 MS. HARVEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I have
 16 a couple of questions, brief, and comments. The chronic
 17 absenteeism. And I'm not really expecting an answer
 18 tonight. But last year in the report for chronic
 19 absenteeism, we were informed that there were patterns in
 20 that. That we could predict when kids were going to miss
 21 sections of school. After the holidays or, you know,

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1 certain times of year. And just really wanting to know,
 2 is that consideration -- are you still receiving that
 3 type of data? And is that consideration part of your
 4 strategy?

5 DR. JONES: Yes, and yes. Yes, there are
 6 predictable patterns. I think what we're trying to do is
 7 disrupt some of those patterns and really create a sense
 8 of stronger meaning and I don't want to say value because
 9 I believe, as a parent myself, that education is valued.
 10 But a sense of understanding, if that makes sense, around
 11 those patterns that can be interrupted and changed based
 12 on the fact that our students need to be in school.

13 So to both of your answers, yes and yes. And
 14 you're right. That data is not available this evening,
 15 but that is something that we definitely drill down to,
 16 to begin thinking about because that helps us provide
 17 differentiated supports to our students in a very diverse
 18 way but then also to our schools as it relates to their
 19 needs.

20 MS. HARVEY: Thank you. I appreciate a
 21 disciplined approach to the practice using your data and

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1 a differentiated approach, recognizing that schools may
 2 need different approaches at different schools.

3 I also wanted to know, you mentioned that the
 4 coaches for the Into Reading at the elementary level were
 5 in the schools two days. Two days per week? Two days
 6 per month? Two days at what interval?

7 DR. DIDONATO: So there were two visits during
 8 the first semester of this school year, and this was an
 9 additional visit to the school, despite other visits from
 10 Central Office or from their principal supervisors. So
 11 this was a firsthand opportunity for school principals to
 12 have someone just with them to look at specific nuances
 13 of curriculum implementation within their building from
 14 someone trained by the vendor.

15 So they have other opportunities with us going
 16 in. They have other opportunities with their executive
 17 directors of schools, but this was just really focused
 18 with someone who is a content expert from the vendor. So
 19 they could look through some nuances of curriculum
 20 implementation with them.

21 MS. HARVEY: Okay. And then we have 18 schools

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1 that increased by a star, which means we're doing
 2 something right. Something well. We have 36 schools
 3 that decreased by a star, which means we have some
 4 challenges that we still need to meet.

5 Are you recognizing any patterns in those
 6 increases and decreases by school, by region, by -- are
 7 there any patterns that you've recognized?

8 DR. JONES: So again, I think that -- yes.
 9 There are always patterns to me. I think data lends
 10 itself to patterns. What we really believe is a pattern
 11 is what we talked about, some of the changes. Some of
 12 the changes as it relates to our schools trying to
 13 achieve a moving target. But we do believe that this
 14 year, we'll be able to create somewhat of a baseline.

15 What we have done is begin to share what some
 16 of our principals are doing and what they're doing well.
 17 So we're highlighting -- in the midst of all of this,
 18 we're trying to highlight those best practices. What are
 19 some of the things that our schools are doing where there
 20 are increases or incremental change? And so during our
 21 professional development, we have principals share out.

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1 We have them dialogue. We have them work very closely
 2 together, and make sure that they are visiting each
 3 other's schools and tapping into what is working well.

4 We are finding that in some of our schools
 5 that have, you know, had, you know, significant
 6 challenges as it relates to academic achievement, they
 7 are making incremental change. But it's not necessarily
 8 showing up in the data just yet, but we are excited about
 9 those incremental changes that are occurring.

10 We do have some outliers. We have some schools
 11 that are considered to be all of the things that, you
 12 know, we may -- they fit a profile where they're not
 13 necessarily considered to be doing well. But they are,
 14 but again it's incremental changes. And we are
 15 celebrating every win we possibly get because we believe
 16 that with a steadfastness, we'll be able to jump to the
 17 next star and the next piece.

18 Also working with our DOS or Department of
 19 Schools executive directors. It's not just -- we all can
 20 talk about schools, but we're also building our capacity.
 21 And we're building the capacity of the executive leaders

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1 to be able to coach efforts that require turnaround, to
 2 be able to coach efforts that require a different
 3 approach.

4 So it is, as we often say, multiprong,
 5 multifaceted, but yes, there are patterns within the
 6 data. We are seeing that some of our schools that've
 7 been traditionally or, you know, historically low
 8 performing making gains. They just haven't showed up in
 9 the data yet, but we are determined. We almost have a
 10 pledge and a chant we say every day, that we will get it
 11 right for students. So thank you for asking.

12 DR. DIDONATO: Ms. Harvey, just to piggyback on
 13 what Dr. Jones was speaking about, so one of the
 14 strategies as far as looking at the ESSER star ratings
 15 and helping principals really dig into that in a
 16 different way. So there's certain point values on that
 17 that aren't necessarily about instructional things that
 18 are happening in the school, but they're about
 19 scheduling. So students' access to a well-rounded
 20 curriculum, that's a report that we pull from Focus.
 21 So if students aren't scheduled in fifth-grade

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1 health, for whatever reason, then that takes points away
 2 from that. So making sure that those very easy things,
 3 which is making sure we have accurate data and
 4 information about students, are one of the pieces that
 5 we're looking at. That should never be an area where our
 6 student -- that we have schools losing points.

7 All of our students have science, social
 8 studies, and health at the elementary level. They're all
 9 getting their personal finance courses. They're -- those
 10 are all things that are happening for students. So a
 11 scheduling anomaly should not be a reason why a school
 12 doesn't receive something -- receive their points for
 13 that.

14 So part of helping principals really look
 15 strategically at their data and every single component of
 16 it is to make sure those little things are not creating
 17 bigger challenges that then create that point variation
 18 where they don't -- we don't see them moving up because
 19 the progress in their other areas aren't seen because of
 20 that.

21 MS. HARVEY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

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1 MS. DIDONATO: You're welcome.

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. Other questions

3 from Board members?

4 Yes, Ms. Frempong?

5 MS. FREMPONG: So is this optional for schools

6 to take? I was just looking at the numbers for the

7 total, and I see that it's 161 schools. And I know that

8 we have more schools than that.

9 DR. JONES: I'm sorry, can you let us know what

10 your --

11 MS. FREMPONG: So on slide number five with the

12 BCPS performance, and you see the total and the star

13 ratings. When you total up that last category for all

14 five, it's, like, 161 schools. So.

15 DR. DIDONATO: So our schools, our centers,

16 like, so Catonsville Alternative Center, Campfield, like,

17 those are all -- well, Campfield doesn't have scores

18 because it only goes up to kindergarten, so they wouldn't

19 have a report card. But students who are attending

20 Rosedale or VPL, their schools -- their scores are routed

21 back to their neighborhood zone school. And so that

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1 decreases the number of places. Although those are part

2 of our schools and centers, their scores go back to their

3 neighborhood school.

4 DR. JONES: Yeah. That was a great question.

5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And I have one question. So

6 I think this was a great presentation, and I'm, you know,

7 just kind of following up on what Ms. Harvey was talking

8 about around chronic absenteeism. Do we know the root

9 causes of why the students aren't coming to school? Is

10 there, like, a certain demographic of student that's not

11 showing up? Like, are these the homeless students,

12 migrant students? Do we know anything about the root

13 causes as to why students aren't -- are being -- are

14 chronically absent?

15 DR. ROGERS: I can start. And the start would

16 be there are so many different causes. You know, when we

17 looked at our data, so we disaggregated the data by

18 level, by zone, by student groups. And we did that

19 because we were having levels of, you know, chronic

20 absenteeism across every group. So across every, you

21 know, socioeconomic status, Central, East, West, middle,

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1 high, elementary. And so with that comes a variety of

2 reasons.

3 There are some that are based on hardship. But

4 there are some, you know, the students want to sleep in.

5 You know, and there's everything in between. And so we

6 look for those reasons where students and families are

7 experiencing difficulties so we can provide those

8 wraparound supports.

9 But on top of that, we've really been

10 intentional about that Here for It attendance campaign to

11 let everyone know the importance of regular school

12 attendance. And even if, you know, sometimes you want to

13 give your young child or your older child, you know, a

14 mental health break, you want to give them a day off, you

15 can and still not be chronically absent.

16 So part of that is educating, you know, our

17 community on here's how many breaks you can take and

18 still be in the low area. So you guys, if you want to

19 add.

20 DR. JONES: No, no, no, I was going to say the

21 same thing. There are multiple factors and we are

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1 studying patterns to be able to provide those wraparound

2 services and those additional supports.

3 I think that's kind of the key to study those

4 patterns, but it's not just one thing.

5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thanks. I was hoping it was

6 an easy answer, but okay. Yes. Any other questions?

7 All right. Thank you.

8 DR. JONES: Thank you.

9 DR. DIDONATO: Thank you.

10 DR. ROGERS: Thank you.

11 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: The next item on the agenda

12 is information. The first item is the FY '24 general

13 fund report on revenues, expenditures, and encumbrances,

14 budget and actual, for the period ending November 2023.

15 The last item is the revised Superintendent's Rule 5210.

16 The next item on the agenda is Board committee

17 updates and agenda setting. So first are committee

18 updates, and I would like to start with the Legislative

19 and Governmental Relations Committee. We had a great

20 meeting yesterday where we began to dive -- take a deeper

21 dive into our draft priorities. And so we are looking

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1 forward at coming back to the Board meeting in February
 2 with draft priorities for the entire Board to review and
 3 react to.
 4 Next we'll have updates from the Audit
 5 Committee, so we'll go to Mr. McMillion.
 6 MR. McMILLION: I met with Ms. Barr recently,
 7 and we did our agenda for the last meeting. That was
 8 here a couple -- I think Tuesday a week ago. So we don't
 9 have another meeting until February. Thank you.
 10 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. Budget
 11 Committee, Ms. Domanowski?
 12 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes. Our next meeting is this
 13 Thursday at 5:30.
 14 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 15 Building and Contracts, Ms. Harvey?
 16 MS. HARVEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The next
 17 Building and Contracts meeting is Monday, February 12th
 18 at 5:00 p.m. virtually. Please join us if you can.
 19 Thank you.
 20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Curriculum Committee, Ms.
 21 Lichter?

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1 MS. LICHTER: Our next meeting is on Thursday,
 2 February 1st at 4:30, and one of the items on the agenda
 3 will be an update on the implementation of HMH in our
 4 elementary schools so stay tuned for that.
 5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Equity Committee? Is Dr.
 6 Savoy on still?
 7 DR. SAVOY: Our next meeting will be the first
 8 Thursday in February at 4:00 through Teams. Thank you.
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 10 Policy Review Committee, Ms. Pumphrey?
 11 MS. PUMPHREY: We didn't have a meeting in
 12 January, but our next meeting is scheduled for February
 13 4th. And I also just wanted to mention that I will be
 14 discussing with Ms. Howie and staff a more intentional
 15 way to review our policies through an equity lens. I
 16 feel that we do that already, but I want to be more
 17 intentional about it. So we're going to have a
 18 discussion about that to make sure that that's being done
 19 throughout the (inaudible).
 20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you.
 21 Next is agenda items. Board members, please

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1 raise your hand to indicate if you have any comments or
 2 items for consideration.
 3 Yes, Ms. Stolusky?
 4 MS. STOLUSKY: Yeah, so first of all, I just
 5 want to comment that there's so much intention in
 6 everything that seems to be changing within the school
 7 system, very purposeful change and efforts.
 8 The only agenda item I have is I know several
 9 months ago, there was a request for an update on the
 10 pilot with the cellphone policy. So it would be great if
 11 we could have that update in the near future. Thank you.
 12 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thank you. Any other agenda
 13 requests?
 14 Okay. The last item on the agenda is
 15 announcements. The Board's next meeting will be held
 16 Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.
 17 Thank you for joining us tonight. The meeting
 18 is now adjourned.
 19 (Meeting adjourned.)
 20
 21

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E
 2 I, Vivian Saxe, hereby certify that I
 3 transcribed from audio file the proceedings to the best
 4 of my ability in the foregoing-entitled matter; and I
 5 further certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and
 6 correct transcript of the audio files produces.
 7 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have subscribed my name
 8 on February 2, 2024.
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