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BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BALTIMORE COUNTY

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BROADCAST VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Transcribed by:  
CRC Salomon, Inc.

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1 **BOARD MEMBERS:**  
 2 **Jane Lichter, Board Chair**  
 3 **Robin Harvey, Vice Chair**  
 4 **Maggie Domanowski**  
 5 **Tiffany Lashawn Frempong**  
 6 **Julie C. Henn**  
 7 **Rodney R. McMillion**  
 8 **Christina Pumphrey**  
 9 **Dr. Brenda Savoy**  
 10 **Emory Young**  
 11 **Felicia Stolusky**  
 12 **Kayla Drummond, Student Member**  
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1 **PROCEEDINGS**  
 2 **MS. LICHTER:** Good evening. This is Chairwoman  
 3 Jane Lichter. I now call to order the meeting of the  
 4 Board of Education of Baltimore County for Tuesday,  
 5 November 7, 2023. I invite you to recite the Pledge of  
 6 Allegiance to the Flag, to be led by Ms. Kayla Drummond.  
 7 We will then have a moment of silence in recognition of  
 8 those who have served education in Baltimore County.  
 9 (Pledge of Allegiance)  
 10 Thank you. Tonight's Board of Education  
 11 meeting is being broadcast through the BCPS Online Live  
 12 Meeting Broadcast and on BCPS TV, Xfinity Channel 73, and  
 13 Verizon Fios Channel 34. In order to efficiently conduct  
 14 this meeting, all voting items this evening will be done  
 15 by roll call vote.  
 16 The first item on the agenda is the  
 17 consideration of the November 7th agenda.  
 18 Dr. Rogers, are there any additions or changes  
 19 to tonight's agenda?  
 20 **DR. ROGERS:** I am unaware of any additions or  
 21 changes to this evening's agenda.

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1 MS. LICHTER: Hearing none, the agenda stands  
 2 as presented.  
 3 Earlier this evening, the Board met in closed  
 4 session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act for the  
 5 following reasons: to discuss the appointment,  
 6 employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion,  
 7 compensation, removal, resignation, or performance  
 8 evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over  
 9 whom it has jurisdiction, or any other personnel matters  
 10 that affects one or more specific individuals, and  
 11 consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. The summary  
 12 of the closed session and open session information  
 13 summary can be found on BoardDocs under the board meeting  
 14 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.  
 18 MS. LICHTER: Good evening.  
 19 MR. McCALL: Good evening, Chair Lichter, Vice  
 20 Chair Harvey, Superintendent Dr. Rogers, members of the  
 21 Board. I'd like the Board's consent for the following

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1 personnel matters: terminations, resignations, leaves,  
 2 deceased recognition of service, and certificated  
 3 appointments.  
 4 MS. LICHTER: Do I have a motion to approve the  
 5 personnel matters as presented in Exhibit D-1?  
 6 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.  
 7 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Do I have a second?  
 8 MS. PUMPHREY: Second, Pumphrey.  
 9 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any discussion?  
 10 May I have a roll call vote, please?  
 11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?  
 12 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.  
 13 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?  
 14 MR. YOUNG: Yes.  
 15 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?  
 16 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.  
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?  
 18 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.  
 19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?  
 20 MS. HENN: Yes.  
 21 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?

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1 MS. HARVEY: Yes.  
 2 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?  
 3 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.  
 4 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?  
 5 DR. SAVOY: Yes.  
 6 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?  
 7 MR. McMILLION: Yes.  
 8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.  
 10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter.  
 11 MS. LICHTER: Yes. Do I have a motion to  
 12 approve the personnel matters as presented in Exhibits D-  
 13 2 through D-5?  
 14 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.  
 15 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any -- do I have a  
 16 second?  
 17 MS. STOLUSKY: Second, Stolusky.  
 18 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any discussion?  
 19 May I have a roll call vote, please?  
 20 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?  
 21 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

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

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1 MS. LICHTER: Yes.

2 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

3 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

4 MR. McCALL: Thank you.

5 MS. LICHTER: The next item on the agenda is

6 administrative appointments, and for that I call on Dr.

7 Rogers.

8 DR. ROGERS: Good evening. Madam Chair

9 Lichter, Vice Chair Harvey, and members of the Board, I'm

10 bringing forward the following administrative appointment

11 for your approval: Principal, Wellwood International

12 School.

13 DR. LICHTER: Do I have a motion to approve the

14 administrative appointment as presented in Exhibit E-1?

15 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.

16 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Do I have a second?

17 MS. HARVEY: Second, Harvey.

18 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any discussion?

19 May I have a roll call vote, please?

20 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?

21 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

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1 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?

2 MR. YOUNG: Yes.

3 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?

4 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.

5 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?

6 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.

7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?

8 MS. HENN: Yes.

9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?

10 MS. HARVEY: Yes.

11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?

12 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.

13 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?

14 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.

15 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?

16 DR. SAVOY: Yes.

17 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?

18 MR. McMILLION: Yes.

19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?

20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.

21 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter.

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1 MS. LICHTER: Yes.

2 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

3 MS. LICHTER: Motion carries.

4 Dr. Rogers.

5 DR. ROGERS: And for this evening's

6 appointment, I'd like to ask Alonna Thompson to please

7 rise.

8 (Applause.)

9 Alonna Thompson is attending this evening with

10 her husband, William Thompson.

11 (Applause.)

12 She's being appointed to the position of

13 Principal, Wellwood International School. With 11 years

14 of experience in Baltimore County Public Schools, her

15 previous experience include classroom teacher at Scotts

16 Branch and Edmondson Heights Elementary Schools, teacher,

17 academic engagement at Edmondson Heights Elementary

18 School, and assistant principal at Woodholme Elementary

19 School. Congratulations.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. LICHTER: And her former principal is right

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1 behind her, so very -- Ms. McDivitt is -- and Wellwood

2 holds a dear place in my heart. It's where I attended

3 elementary school, so congratulations.

4 (Applause.)

5 Now, I got so excited I lost track of where I

6 am. Okay. Our next item is public comment. This is one

7 of the opportunities the Board provides to hear the views

8 and receive the advice of community members. The members

9 of the Board appreciate hearing from interested citizens.

10 As appropriate, we will refer your concerns to the

11 Superintendent for follow-up by her staff. If not

12 selected to address the Board, members of the public may

13 submit their comments to the Board members via email at

14 boe@bcps.org.

15 The Baltimore County Police Department's

16 Homeland Security Unit and the Office of School Safety

17 has recommended the following safety and security

18 protocols. Participants should be seated in the room

19 during meetings. Individuals who need to stand should go

20 into the hallway to do so. Participants should not

21 approach the table unless called upon to speak, and

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 should not approach the dais. Materials brought to the                  2 table are limited to electronic devices, presentation                  3 papers, and posters no larger than 11 by 14 inches.                  4 Other items should be left in your seats. Documents to                  5 be given to the Board are to be handed to the staff                  6 member who is seated in the front area of the meeting                  7 (inaudible). Information for other attendees is to be                  8 left on the designated table outside in the hall. In the                  9 event of an emergency that requires an emergency                  10 response, such as a lockout, lockdown, or evacuation,                  11 staff from the Office of School Safety will direct                  12 participants.</p> <p>13 While we encourage public input on policy,                  14 programs, and practices within the purview of this Board                  15 and this school system, this is not the proper forum to                  16 address specific student or employee matters, or to                  17 comment on matters that do not relate to public education                  18 in Baltimore County. Disparaging or derogatory remarks                  19 towards students and staff will not be tolerated.                  20 Inappropriate personnel remarks or other behavior that                  21 disrupts or interferes with the conduct of this meeting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 dedicated educator at Parkville High School, where along                  2 with my colleagues, we work daily to support our                  3 Baltimore County area youth and their families.                  4 Tonight, I'm here as representative of the                  5 Multilingual Community Partnership, MLCP, which is a new                  6 initiative under Baltimore County Council of the PTA. As                  7 you may recall, Ms. Leslie Webber, President of the                  8 Baltimore County Council of the PTA, has spoken about                  9 this initiative in a previous Board meeting.</p> <p>10 At the MLCP, we are partners, we are advocates,                  11 and we are advisors. As a member organization of the                  12 National PTA, we also support the safety, protection, and                  13 wellbeing of all her students, including our black,                  14 brown, multilingual, multicultural, international,                  15 immigrant, and LGBTQIA-plus youth.</p> <p>16 We at the MLCP want to serve as partners with                  17 the Board of Education, with members of Baltimore County                  18 Public Schools, and with the students, parents, families,                  19 and community partners within the greater Baltimore                  20 County area.                  21 Our mission is to serve as your advisors in the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 are out of order. Persons using language that is                  2 threatening or promotes violence against a BCPS employee                  3 are subject to legal penalties. Persons who otherwise                  4 disrupt or disturb this meeting will not be allowed to                  5 continue their remarks and will be escorted from the                  6 meeting.</p> <p>7 Please observe the three-minute clock which                  8 will let you know when your time is up. The microphone                  9 will be turned off at the end of the time, and it could                  10 be turned off if a speaker address specific student or                  11 employee matters, or is commenting on matters not related                  12 to public education in Baltimore County.</p> <p>13 I now call our — on our school system—                  14 affiliated groups to speak. Our first speaker is Edwin                  15 Perez, speaking on behalf of the PTA Council of Baltimore                  16 County.</p> <p>17 Good evening.</p> <p>18 MR. PEREZ: Good evening. Good evening,                  19 members of the Board. My name is Edwin Perez. I'm a                  20 member of the Baltimore Latino community. I'm co-chair                  21 of the TABCO minority affairs committee, and I'm a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 areas related to ELL, English-language learners, the Seal                  2 of Biliteracy, and multilingualism. Our vision is to                  3 work alongside our multilingual, multicultural,                  4 immigrant, and international youth and their families and                  5 provide support for them towards achieving greater                  6 success as they navigate the complexities of our school                  7 system.</p> <p>8 The MLCP recognizes the work that the Board of                  9 Education and Baltimore County Schools has already done                  10 to complete in these aforementioned areas. But, as we                  11 all know, more work needs to be done. Through policy and                  12 advocacy, the MLCP can work with partners in support of                  13 policies leading to competitive wages, increased                  14 benefits, and better working conditions for school                  15 employees.</p> <p>16 Through employment policy work, the MLCP can                  17 work with partners to improve recruitment and retention                  18 of certified ELL, ESOL, and world language educators.                  19 Through the creation and implementation of inclusive                  20 language policies, the MLCP can partner with BCPS to                  21 support Office of World Language Seal of Biliteracy</p>

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1 initiatives that help our students in earning a  
 2 professional recognition that declares their world  
 3 language proficiency on their high school transcript.  
 4 Through the support of academic language study,  
 5 the MLCP can partner with the Office of World Languages  
 6 and support an increase of world language course  
 7 offerings, thus helping prepare students for a  
 8 multilingual professional opportunities and multicultural  
 9 community spaces. And through professional development,  
 10 the MLCP can connect with BCPS trainers to provide the  
 11 necessary training, resources, and support for staff that  
 12 work with international students and English language  
 13 learners within their school programs.  
 14 In closing, I want to thank you for your time  
 15 tonight, and I invite you to join the work of the MLCP.  
 16 Let's work together to help build bridges across  
 17 cultures, across languages, and support our BCPS  
 18 multilingual youth, staff, and families. Thank you.  
 19 Gracias.  
 20 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.  
 21 Next are our unions, and our first speaker is

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1 Cindy Sexton on behalf of TABCO.  
 2 Good evening.  
 3 MS. SEXTON: Good evening, Dr. Rogers, Chair  
 4 Lichter, Vice Chair Harvey, and members of the Board.  
 5 Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.  
 6 A quick mention of our ongoing negotiations and  
 7 the desire of both TABCO and the school system to  
 8 complete them by November 30th. We need to finish strong  
 9 by being sure we are doing what we can to retain our  
 10 educators and deal with the discipline concerns that  
 11 interrupt the education of our students. Let's please be  
 12 sure we work collaboratively to address both and finish  
 13 on time.  
 14 But I must speak up and speak out for our  
 15 marginalized students. Our transgender, our nonbinary,  
 16 gender nonconforming students need us to support and  
 17 protect them. They report repeated harassment and  
 18 violence at school. Were many of us bullied in school?  
 19 Probably. I know I was. But it has escalated and become  
 20 much more targeted for our LGBTQIA-plus students. What  
 21 is clear is that we must support and protect these

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1 students.  
 2 There are so many forces in our society now  
 3 that can make us feel unsafe. School must be a safe  
 4 place for our students and staff. Let us not find ways  
 5 to make it more difficult for them, but ways to support  
 6 them and help them in their journeys so our schools,  
 7 community, and society can be kinder, more accepting,  
 8 caring places. Students can't learn if they don't feel  
 9 safe.  
 10 TABCO stands at the ready to do the work with  
 11 you, Dr. Rogers, your team, and this Board. Let us  
 12 support all young people to be their authentic selves and  
 13 pursue their dreams. Thank you.  
 14 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.  
 15 Next are our nonprofit community groups, and  
 16 our first speaker is Tara Thompson on behalf of Moms for  
 17 Liberty, Baltimore County.  
 18 MS. THOMPSON: Are they on?  
 19 MS. LICHTER: Yes.  
 20 MS. THOMPSON: Okay.  
 21 MS. LICHTER: Good evening.

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1 MS. THOMPSON: Good evening. Chair Lichter,  
 2 Vice Chair Harvey, Superintendent Rogers, and members of  
 3 the Board, thank you for having me.  
 4 I would like to formally introduce our  
 5 organization to all of you. Moms for Liberty is a  
 6 nonpartisan, nonprofit, grassroots organization. Our  
 7 national organization is represented in 48 states, with  
 8 over 300 chapters and over 150,000 members, with 10  
 9 chapters here alone in Maryland.  
 10 We were founded in 2021 in response to a  
 11 growing need to address and uphold parental rights in  
 12 education that were being lost all over the country. Our  
 13 schools were closed. Our children's faces were masked  
 14 behind plexiglass partitions. Politics came creeping in,  
 15 and learning loss was imminent. We are seeing the result  
 16 of that now, years later. Our parental concerns are  
 17 constantly overshadowed by lobbyists and teachers' unions  
 18 who take a seat at the table time and time again and push  
 19 parents' voices aside.  
 20 I would like to briefly talk about two very  
 21 important BCPS topics tonight that do affect parental

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1 rights. First, I would like to address and loop back to  
 2 the curriculum meeting from 10/23 in regards to the book  
 3 and curriculum section -- selection and review process.  
 4 It was stated that BCPS will be reviewing the differences  
 5 between curriculum resources in the classroom and library  
 6 resources.  
 7 Thank you for addressing the pressing need to  
 8 differentiate this. New language, however, was presented  
 9 that does not protect parental rights in terms of the  
 10 checkout process of books that some parents do not want  
 11 their children having access to. It's wonderful that a  
 12 parent can email the school librarian and request that  
 13 their child is not given access to certain books.  
 14 However, this is negated when the new language states  
 15 that the child will still be able to view and check them  
 16 out digitally.  
 17 It also doesn't address the fact that they are  
 18 still physically accessible to the child on the actual  
 19 library shelf. Please address this when a clear policy  
 20 is written. No access should mean no access. Parents  
 21 want to trust the process and the system, and this needs

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1 to be addressed.  
 2 Second, I would like to address the LGBTQ-plus  
 3 guidance. I want to make it clear to everyone that the  
 4 use of restrooms, locker rooms and sports teams by the  
 5 opposite sex is guidance. No law is forcing BCPS to put  
 6 this into place. Therefore, you will bear the sole  
 7 responsibility when any child is potentially hurt due to  
 8 the guidance that you have put in place.  
 9 There are many, many children who are not being  
 10 considered in this guidance. Please consider putting a  
 11 policy in place that protects all children. Safe spaces  
 12 must be safe for our boys, girls, and those questioning  
 13 their sex. We don't take away one safe space to give it  
 14 to another. We create safe spaces for all. And as we  
 15 know, that looks different for several children, not just  
 16 a few.  
 17 Please consider adopting a policy that  
 18 guarantees rights of biological girls and boys while  
 19 providing non-stigmatizing alternatives for those boys  
 20 and girls whose gender identity differs from their  
 21 biological sex. Schools are not qualified to protect --

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1 to practice gender medicine, but they can certainly use  
 2 common sense to keep all of our children safe. Thank  
 3 you.  
 4 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Our next speaker is  
 5 Barbara Dezmon from Randallstown NAACP.  
 6 Good evening, Dr. Dezmon.  
 7 DR. DEZMON: Good evening. Board members,  
 8 members of the Board, Madam Chair, Madam Co-Chair, Vice  
 9 Chair. As you know, I am -- and I'm not going to be shy.  
 10 I know what I'm talking about. A great deal more, I'm  
 11 responsible for a state becoming No. 1 and many of the  
 12 programs that I designed or implemented in this system  
 13 led in the implementation were responsible for this  
 14 becoming one of the best systems in the nation.  
 15 Therefore, I'm speaking from that context.  
 16 I'm not -- and I did meet with some people, the  
 17 Superintendent, and I met with Dr. DiDonato and I was  
 18 impressed with both of them. I left the system. One  
 19 time I stood in this Board meeting and I chastised the  
 20 president of the Board and told him that he was going to  
 21 be responsible for what would happen to this county in

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1 the future if we did not recognize the demographic shift  
 2 and do what needed to be done for minority students, et  
 3 cetera. And it wasn't done.  
 4 So I come before you tonight to remind you as  
 5 Board members of our fiduciary responsibility because you  
 6 chose to be here as leaders, and that the job is more  
 7 than selecting a superintendent and waiting.  
 8 I warned of dire consequences, and they're  
 9 going to start within the schools, and now they're going  
 10 to spread into the county, which has already begun.  
 11 Lately, some of our NAACP members met with  
 12 representatives from your curriculum department,  
 13 specifically English language arts, and we talked about  
 14 the curriculum program Into Reading, and we also talked  
 15 about professional development. When we asked about  
 16 certain aspects of the Into Reading program, we were told  
 17 that it'd been vetted. When given details such as being  
 18 vetted since February, the vetting did not include a  
 19 research basis, et cetera, or its impact on student  
 20 achievement.  
 21 Therefore, and I'm going to pass this out to

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p> <p>1 you, we were shocked when -- I was shocked to see a                  2 letter from the English language arts department that,                  3 and the paragraph is there, that says we have three main                  4 goals for this curriculum field test: to have a                  5 research-based vertically and horizontally aligned ELL                  6 curriculum, to fully vet what resources have to offer.                  7 This isn't accurate, and I said when I came                  8 here, if you remember, a couple of months ago that should                  9 I find the case like this again, I would come back to                  10 you, and I will continue to do that. This is not true.                  11 Also, standard English. Please, we need the                  12 standard English resolution was passed by the Board.                  13 Here's some suggestions. Bring back cursive. You see                  14 the digital gap, and they're ignoring it. The teachers                  15 need it. And also keep parents better informed and                  16 prepare to grading practices to be more standards based,                  17 not project based. (Indiscernible) help that you need                  18 from the NAACP, I would be glad to do that.                  19 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.                  20 DR. DEZMON: Thank you. And (indiscernible)                  21 this, too. Thank you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p> <p>1 of individuals must be protected against infringements by                  2 any government under any excuse. History is on our side                  3 in this matter. Title 9 of the Education Amendments of                  4 1972 was established to ensure that no person in the                  5 United States on the basis of sex shall be excluded,                  6 denied benefits, or subjected to discrimination in any                  7 education program or activity receiving federal financial                  8 assistance.                  9 The original and existing Title 9 regulations                  10 recognize the physiological differences between male and                  11 female sexes, an objective scientific fact that is                  12 essential to education.                  13 Denying the reality of biological sex                  14 undermines the very foundation upon which education                  15 rests. Encouraging encounters between opposite sex                  16 students in bathrooms, locker rooms, and showers could                  17 lead to anxiety, bullying, and potential sexual                  18 harassment and abuse, which school authorities are                  19 entrusted to prevent.                  20 Forcing students to use facilities which                  21 members of the opposite sex violates their rights to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p> <p>1 MS. LICHTER: Next are individual citizens and                  2 student groups. And our first speaker is Sharon Saroff.                  3 Is she there? Ms. Saroff? Okay. We -- Ms.                  4 Saroff, are you there? Okay, I'm going to go to the next                  5 one. If we get her on, we'll come back.                  6 Our next speaker is Vanessa Faura.                  7 Good evening.                  8 MS. FAURA: Good evening, everyone. Board                  9 members, good evening. I appreciate this opportunity to                  10 address you today. I stand here today on behalf of many                  11 Baltimore County moms to speak on a matter of great                  12 significance, one that we must examine through the lens                  13 of our Constitution, history, and morality. This                  14 approach, grounded in our core values, can guide us                  15 through the challenges we face right here in Baltimore                  16 County.                  17 The principles protected in our Constitution                  18 are the foundation of our democracy, safeguarding our                  19 rights to privacy and safety. And providing a defense                  20 against government overreach under any costs.                  21 As James Madison wisely said once, the rights</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p> <p>1 privacy and subjects them to situation most adults would                  2 find objectionable.                  3 We shall not -- we should not allow any                  4 ideology to jeopardize the wellbeing of our young girls                  5 or violate their rights. This is not a political issue.                  6 It's a moral and safety issue, and it's our duty as                  7 responsible citizens to advocate for the rights and                  8 wellbeing of our children.                  9 We ask this Board to consider the gravity of                  10 the situation at hand and make decisions based on a solid                  11 understanding, compassion, and respect for the unique                  12 needs of all our students. Let us reaffirm our support                  13 for Title 9 of the Education Amendments.                  14 This commitment to protecting our children                  15 rights is not only constitutional, but also deeply moral.                  16 Thank you for your time and your consideration.                  17 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.                  18 Our next speaker is Ashley Stivers.                  19 Our next speaker is MJ Fraker.                  20 MS. FRAKER: Good evening, Board.                  21 MS. LICHTER: Good evening.</p>



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1 MS. FRAKER: Thank you for this opportunity for  
 2 me to share my views on safety with education. And that  
 3 is, I'm going to drill down to the female gender. I'm  
 4 very concerned about an article that was published in the  
 5 Dundalk Eagle newspaper of an incident that happened in  
 6 General John Stricker Middle School, which I have right  
 7 here, where a young boy threatened the young girls that  
 8 were at the restrooms, that he would tase them and then,  
 9 in turn, he would rape them inside of the restrooms.

10 So my whole point is this, that as females that  
 11 are wanting to go to school to learn and become leaders  
 12 like you are right here on the Board, they are now  
 13 totally -- I'm sorry, they're just sidetracked which  
 14 focus. They're having to stay in the classroom holding  
 15 their bladder because they're so afraid of going to the  
 16 bathroom and what would happen to them.

17 And there are girls that, when they're on their  
 18 menstrual cycle, they can't change their tampons. And I  
 19 know another girl that is actually using her sanitary  
 20 napkin to go to the bathroom because she's so concerned  
 21 about going to the bathroom and what would happen. And

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1 so then she's so focused at school, not getting the  
 2 lesson because she's so concerned about her safety.

3 So I'm asking you, Board, would you please  
 4 consider taking measures to ensure that these bathrooms  
 5 are secure, and that our girls can become leaders, just  
 6 like when I was watching that movie Hidden Figures.  
 7 Those three women, they were so powerful in that movie,  
 8 and yet there was one that she had to hold her bowel to  
 9 the end of the day or try to get over to the other  
 10 building so that she could do her work.

11 These girls need to be leaders, and you need to  
 12 show them what it's like to be a leader. And that they  
 13 have the freedom and the security, the safety at school  
 14 to learn and to be what they're supposed to be. Leaders,  
 15 not only just for today, but leaders for tomorrow. Your  
 16 daughters, your granddaughters, there -- they are needed  
 17 in this country. We need to have a voice, and I'm being  
 18 the voice for these females today.

19 I know that there are males in our school, as  
 20 well, but me as a female, I have been hindered myself,  
 21 and I want all these girls to have the freedom and the

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1 liberty to learn in a place that's safe and secure for  
 2 them. And I'm just asking you, would you please  
 3 consider, please consider, and don't let the female  
 4 gender be put under and not have a voice, and grow and be  
 5 the leaders that we need (indiscernible) and break this  
 6 ceiling so they can be everything that they were designed  
 7 to be. Thank you.

8 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

9 Ms. Saroff, are you there? I think I heard her  
 10 a little bit before. Ms. Saroff? I think you're there.

11 Ms. Saroff?

12 MS. SAROFF: Start public comment  
 13 (indiscernible).

14 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Saroff? Ms. Saroff, are you  
 15 there? Oh, we know you're there. Can you -- do you want  
 16 to say your comments? Bless you. Okay.

17 Okay. I'm going to keep going and we'll try  
 18 again.

19 Our next speaker is Ms. Adams.

20 Good evening.

21 MS. ADAMS: Good evening. Good evening, Board

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1 members, and Dr. Rogers. I'm here this evening to  
 2 continue a conversation about the reading curriculum --  
 3 excuse me, about curriculum decisions being made by Staff  
 4 and what is exactly communicated to parents. We have  
 5 some questions.

6 So there was a recent post from a Board member  
 7 who visited an elementary school to observe the use of  
 8 Amira in the classroom. But the statement does not  
 9 address the teacher and parental concerns that we've  
 10 heard related to the accuracy of the AI screening  
 11 program. We understand the need to help teachers be more  
 12 efficient and more effective. But the Ready to Read Law  
 13 was written to identify foundational skill deficits and  
 14 remediate them.

15 There is concern about the ease of use and the  
 16 accuracy of Amira screening results, and the content  
 17 being given to students. And the lack of focus on  
 18 decoding texts to mastery and with comprehension. How is  
 19 BPCS addressing these concerns to be in compliance with  
 20 the remediation according to state law? The intention of  
 21 Ready to Read Act was to focus on foundational literacy

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1 early. Should it take two months to complete these  
 2 screenings?  
 3       Following this timeline, the teachers lost two-  
 4 months' time, the entire first quarter, and were not able  
 5 to address the skill gaps. Last year, BCPS' end-of-year  
 6 data for kindergarteners showed that 36 percent were  
 7 still not meeting benchmarks. Shouldn't that number be  
 8 closer to 15 percent at the end of the year, or less?  
 9       Second, Board members, do you know that there's  
 10 a public notice for BCPS to purchase a research-based  
 11 summer learning program that includes summer literacy and  
 12 math curriculum, Contract CWA 11224. Do you know where  
 13 it is found on the BCPS website to -- for public notice?  
 14 And if not, if you don't know where it is, how should the  
 15 public find it? It's currently on the procurement  
 16 website.  
 17       Why is there a need to purchase a completely  
 18 different summer learning program for math and ELA?  
 19 Don't we have a new high-quality evidence-based ELA  
 20 program, in addition to Open Court, Haggerty, and OG?  
 21 For math, don't we have millions invested in Bridges? Do

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1 all of these different curriculum have the same scope and  
 2 sequence and what -- of what is taught during the school  
 3 year, or will it require more training for teachers?  
 4       Last week, the parents at a local middle school  
 5 were informed about a field test of a new secondary ELA  
 6 curriculum called HMH Into Literature. We're seeing a  
 7 pattern. Are we perhaps being swayed by a very effective  
 8 sales team to invest all in one company who has minimal  
 9 quasi-experimental research and case studies to support  
 10 their products? Staff is telling the Board that this is  
 11 an improved product, but when the public digs in, we can  
 12 see a lack of evidence on student outcomes.  
 13       We have now invested millions into HMH  
 14 elementary curriculum, HMH reading intervention, and now  
 15 500,000 into a field test of a secondary curriculum.  
 16 We're entering budget season where the Superintendent is  
 17 soliciting feedback from the community. We hear about  
 18 fiscal cliffs. When is spending going to end and  
 19 accountability going to begin?  
 20       As a large school system with potentially deep  
 21 pockets, are we being targeted? We need more than a 1 to

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1 1.2 percent (indiscernible).  
 2       MS. LICHTER: Thank you.  
 3       Ms. Saroff? I'm going to try again. Ms.  
 4 Saroff? I know she's putting stuff in the chat.  
 5       Ms. Gover, she can't. Okay, well, if she can  
 6 speak, she --  
 7       UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She says she can't hear  
 8 anything.  
 9       MS. LICHTER: Okay. Do you want type -- tell  
 10 her to go? Just start talking.  
 11       UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Go away or what?  
 12       MS. LICHTER: Okay. All right. At this --  
 13 okay. We'll try one more time. We do have one space  
 14 open. Let me -- since there speaker spaces available, we  
 15 will now call from the waitlist for the individual  
 16 citizens and student category.  
 17       So the first speaker from the waitlist is Eric  
 18 Morris.  
 19       Good evening, Mr. Morris.  
 20       MS. SAROFF: Okay. Can you hear me now, Ms.  
 21 Lichter?

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1       MS. LICHTER: Yes, I can hear you. Go. Go for  
 2 it.  
 3       MS. SAROFF: Ms. Lichter, can you hear me now?  
 4       MS. LICHTER: Yes, I can hear you now. Can you  
 5 hear me?  
 6       MS. SAROFF: Okay, can you hear me now, Ms.  
 7 Lichter?  
 8       MS. LICHTER: Yes. Yes, I can hear you. Go.  
 9 Go for it.  
 10       MS. SAROFF: Okay. Ms. Lichter, can you hear  
 11 me now?  
 12       MS. LICHTER: Yes, I can hear you now. Can you  
 13 hear me?  
 14       MS. SAROFF: Yes, I can hear you.  
 15       MS. LICHTER: Yes, I can hear you. Go. Go for  
 16 it.  
 17       MS. SAROFF: Okay. Okay.  
 18       MS. LICHTER: I can hear you now. Can you hear  
 19 me? Make it stop.  
 20       MS. SAROFF: I can hear you. Okay, I just  
 21 lowered my -- I just turned down a new button on my

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1 (indiscernible). I am here right now to do my  
 2 (indiscernible) concern. I did speak of some of these  
 3 concerns last night at the CCAC meeting. My concern is  
 4 that we're saying that special education is a priority,  
 5 but we're not trying to identify individuals'  
 6 disabilities.

7 We are refusing to -- we are refusing to  
 8 evaluate students, even in areas that is blatantly  
 9 obvious that they need to be evaluated in. And unless a  
 10 parent sometimes contacts an advocate, those areas do not  
 11 get evaluated. And when -- even when a parent has an  
 12 advocate, I have a couple of situations right now going  
 13 on, and I have requested on the parents' behalf an  
 14 independent evaluation at public expense because you're  
 15 refusing to evaluate the child with your in-home people.  
 16 The response is, well, we'd rather take you to court and  
 17 waste county money and waste county time than provide  
 18 that evaluation.

19 And I think that this is a very concerning item  
 20 because we really should be trying to evaluate these kids  
 21 and see whether or not they actually need services, as

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1 opposed to fighting not to give those services.

2 The other thing is that we are now turning some  
 3 services into consults. And the perfect example is the  
 4 item of assistive technology. That used to be a full-  
 5 blown evaluation. We looked at different areas. Now,  
 6 it's a consult, and we don't even bother to tell the  
 7 administration or the IEP chair that we're in the  
 8 building and find out what we're supposed to be  
 9 evaluating.

10 So these are concerns that need to be addressed  
 11 now and not when Baltimore County gets around to it.  
 12 Because it's impacting kids' ability, not just now, but  
 13 down the road. Thank you.

14 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

15 Our next speaker from the waitlist is Eric  
 16 Morris. Try this. Take two.

17 Good evening.

18 MR. MORRIS: Good evening, members of the  
 19 Board. I'm Eric Morris, a proud BCPS employee, but here  
 20 tonight I am visiting you again to speak about the need  
 21 for a strong policy supporting LGBTQ-plus students of all

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1 ages, like two of my three children.

2 At the last Board meeting, I spoke of the great  
 3 supports that my children -- or that my children's high  
 4 school offered to them. My transgender children,  
 5 specifically. But those staff members don't have to do -  
 6 - give this support. They do it because they care about  
 7 their students, and they care about LGBTQ-plus students.

8 These are the students who every day live their  
 9 lives in fear to be their true selves and fearful of  
 10 these hate groups persecuting them.

11 One of those specific hate groups, Moms for  
 12 Liberty, is making statements that our trans students are  
 13 creating unsafe environments for their children. When,  
 14 in fact, they are the perpetrators of that fear, and they  
 15 are creating the unsafe environments for those children.

16 I call them a hate group because for the  
 17 foremost authority on identifying these groups, The  
 18 Southern Poverty Law Center, has added them to their hate  
 19 groups list.

20 Please, I beg you not to listen to these words  
 21 of hate, lies and division these groups are spewing. And

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1 listen to the words of love, compassion, and equality and  
 2 equity from groups like the ACLU, NAACP, PFLAG, GLSEN and  
 3 our very own teachers' union, TABCO.

4 Once again, I ask you, I implore you, the  
 5 Board, the elected officials, the leaders of BCPS, to  
 6 reread these LGBTQ-plus guidelines and call for a vote to  
 7 make those guidelines district policy or rules. Or  
 8 better yet, put together a special committee to plan a  
 9 new inclusive policy. A committee made of teachers and  
 10 staff, administration and parents, students and these  
 11 outside LGBTQ-plus expert organizations to put together  
 12 the best policies to protect our LGBTQ children. Thank  
 13 you for your time and efforts for students -- for all  
 14 students.

15 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

16 The next item on the agenda is the  
 17 Superintendent's Report, and for that I call on Dr.  
 18 Rogers.

19 DR. ROGERS: Good evening. Chair Lichter, Vice  
 20 Chair Harvey, members of the Board, tonight I am pleased  
 21 to share the superintendent's report with you. You can

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p> <p>1 put up the slide, please. Next slide, please. Thank                  2 you.</p> <p>3 We want to begin by, again, announcing that we                  4 are excited that budget season has started this year. We                  5 know moving forward for the next fiscal year it will be a                  6 challenging season. However, we are trying very hard to                  7 make sure that we share with all stakeholders our process                  8 for developing the budget to propose to the Board of                  9 Education.</p> <p>10 We have had the opportunity to engage in                  11 several community conversations around the budget. This                  12 week, we will be at Parkville High School, and next week                  13 our last and fifth community session will be at Western                  14 Tech High School, and so we invite the community and come                  15 out.</p> <p>16 We also are proud to announce Budget 101 on our                  17 website. This provides a in-depth view of how we                  18 allocate our spending, what our funding sources are, and                  19 we want to take a few minutes, just in case you haven't                  20 had an opportunity, to receive a brief overview of our                  21 operating budget to give you a quick look. So if we can</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p> <p>1 fiscal year typically begins in the summer with a                  2 preliminary estimate completed by early fall. After                  3 considering all requests from BCPS offices, and reviewing                  4 recommendations from schools, executive leadership, and                  5 stakeholder groups, the Superintendent submits a proposed                  6 budget to the Board of Education in January. The                  7 proposed operating budget is a reflection of our values,                  8 high expectations for students and staff, and commitment                  9 to pursuing excellence in all areas of our work.</p> <p>10 The Board holds public hearings to gather                  11 comments and feedback from the community, and then works                  12 to finalize their budget proposal, which is submitted to                  13 the Baltimore County Executive and the County Council.                  14 The Council also holds a public hearing and approves a                  15 budget for the county, which includes BCPS. The Board                  16 approves a final budget for BCPS in May.</p> <p>17 48 percent of the total BCPS budget comes from                  18 Baltimore County government. Nearly 38 percent of the                  19 budget comes from the state, and almost 14 percent comes                  20 from federal and other sources.</p> <p>21 The vast majority of the BCPS operating budget</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p> <p>1 go ahead and play the video?                  2 (Video is played.)</p> <p>3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Our vision, to be among                  4 the highest-performing school systems in the state and                  5 the nation. Our purpose, to increase achievement for all                  6 students and prepare students to thrive in college,                  7 career, or the military.</p> <p>8 Every day, BCPS welcomes and engages more than                  9 110,000 students in 176 schools, programs, and centers.                  10 Our students, staff, parents, and community members are                  11 the heart of this school system, and our work is driven                  12 by their boundless potential.</p> <p>13 We work hard to provide the instruction,                  14 services, and opportunity Team BCPS students need to be                  15 successful and thrive in the future. We do this through                  16 our operating budget, which pays for the staff,                  17 resources, and materials our schools need. It is                  18 important that our community understands how the BCPS                  19 operating budget is developed and funded, and how the                  20 money is spent.</p> <p>21 Work on the operating budget for the next</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p> <p>1 goes into the classroom. For every dollar in our budget,                  2 more than 63 cents is spent on instruction, including                  3 teachers, principals, staff, and instructional materials.                  4 About 15 cents of every dollar goes to other services for                  5 schools, like bus transportation for more than 80,000                  6 students a day, nutritious meals and support staff,                  7 including social workers, psychologists, custodial, and                  8 maintenance workers.</p> <p>9 About 6 cents of every dollar is spent on                  10 Central Office staff. Our Central Office team does                  11 critical work, including hiring, teacher and staff                  12 training, and providing direct support and oversight to                  13 our 176 schools, programs, and centers.</p> <p>14 Overall, nearly 83 percent of the BCPS                  15 operating budget goes to pay for salaries and benefits to                  16 support and retain our outstanding Team BCPS staff                  17 members.</p> <p>18 The BCPS operating budget lays out the                  19 strategies we will use to achieve our goals and matches                  20 them with the investments we need to implement the                  21 strategy. Our collective efforts and strategic</p>

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1 investments will help make BCPS a premier system in  
 2 Maryland.  
 3 (Video ends.)  
 4 DR. ROGERS: Special thanks to BCPS TV for  
 5 putting together that video. Again, we invite all  
 6 members of Team BCPS to learn more about our operating  
 7 budget and the process overall by visiting Budget 101 on  
 8 our website. Next slide, please.  
 9 For the next portion of the update, would like  
 10 to provide an overview of where we are with the  
 11 transition team report. I provided to the Board the  
 12 final recommendations where we had short-term and long-  
 13 term recommendations provided to us as a school system.  
 14 Next slide, please.  
 15 We identified our next steps, which included a  
 16 cabinet and divisions to review the short-term  
 17 recommendations and to decide on the next steps. That  
 18 step is complete. The actual Excel document will be  
 19 posted on our website tomorrow, and within 60 days,  
 20 implementation of accepted short-term recommendations.  
 21 We are in progress. The next few slides share a few

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1 updates on where we are with specific areas of the  
 2 transition report. Next slide, please.  
 3 In regards to teaching and learning, we have  
 4 taken several actions consistent with the  
 5 recommendations. Specifically, we have started systemic  
 6 professional development for teachers and leaders in the  
 7 areas of ELA mathematics, special education, and ESOL,  
 8 both school based and Central Office-based, with the plan  
 9 for the entire year.  
 10 Our office Division of Human Resources has a  
 11 comprehensive recruitment and retention plan, including  
 12 expanded partnerships with universities, support for our  
 13 new teachers and our conditionally certified teachers,  
 14 and stay focus groups to find out that our teachers who  
 15 stay with us, what are reasons why they stay so we can  
 16 make sure that we expand that, and that we are able to  
 17 retain, particularly, our new teachers to BCPS and not  
 18 lose them within the first three years.  
 19 And lastly, we have started our  
 20 Superintendent's instructional leadership team, Central  
 21 Office meetings where we meet across offices and

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1 divisions to really focus on our students' data and to  
 2 identify ways that as Central Office, we can support our  
 3 schools directly. Next slide, please.  
 4 In the area of culture and climate, everyone  
 5 can expect quarterly staff advisory group meetings with  
 6 all chiefs for us to gain input and perspective on  
 7 curriculum implementation, professional learning, and any  
 8 questions and concerns that impact members of Team BCPS.  
 9 We continue to meet with community stakeholders and  
 10 elected officials. Several FY '25 operating budget  
 11 forums have been scheduled. Three out of five have  
 12 occurred. We also have operating budget forums with our  
 13 Area Advisory Councils and, of course, with the Board of  
 14 Education.  
 15 A workgroup of external partners, Central  
 16 Office staff, and building leaders to examine and enhance  
 17 our safety protocols. This work has started and will  
 18 continue throughout the year as we continue to focus on  
 19 making sure all of our schools and offices are safe.  
 20 Student focus groups will help us. We are  
 21 soliciting feedback and input from our high schools to

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1 ensure that our students are able to help us identify  
 2 issues that they are facing in real times and potential  
 3 enhancements to our work moving forward.  
 4 And lastly, we are working on reviewing and  
 5 updating our comprehensive safety plan as a school  
 6 system. Next slide.  
 7 In the area of community engagement and  
 8 communication, we are offering sessions on effective  
 9 communication and community engagement for our leaders  
 10 across the school system, both on the school side and  
 11 operations. We have started this year Central Office  
 12 professional leadership development monthly sessions, and  
 13 that is for our operations teams. A Stay Connected  
 14 campaign to provide a communication team tools to all  
 15 members of Team BCPS stakeholders in a variety of ways.  
 16 Focus groups, specifically with our Spanish-speaking  
 17 parents and community advocacy groups, as well as support  
 18 of our mobile ESOL welcome center and continue to meet  
 19 with our new principals to provide communication support  
 20 and training to respond to the recommendations to ensure  
 21 that across the system that we are modeling open,

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1 effective communication with all of our stakeholders.  
 2 Next slide, please.  
 3       In the area of infrastructure, we have hired  
 4 the project manager to lead the overall project for our  
 5 ERP, Enterprise Resource Planning system. We have a  
 6 partnership with the AIB to create and distribute  
 7 information regarding the career ladder and opportunities  
 8 for our teachers, and we are providing national board  
 9 certification support to ensure that we're increasing our  
 10 recruitment efforts. We're providing monthly information  
 11 sessions, and hosting school visits to share the benefits  
 12 of becoming a nationally board-certified teacher. Next  
 13 slide.  
 14       And for the final area of the transition plan,  
 15 Operations, we have already started the data analysis and  
 16 mapping with the -- of the new system with the ERP  
 17 vendor. We will have a presentation to the Board of  
 18 Education upcoming in November, specifically, on our new  
 19 product to share with everyone our progress and  
 20 anticipated outcomes. And additionally, leadership from  
 21 the Office of Transportation and Division of Operations,

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1 our meetings with leaders throughout the state on student  
 2 safety initiatives related to school vehicles, including  
 3 stop-bomb camera options and implementation as  
 4 recommended by the transition plan.  
 5       And so specific details regarding all of the  
 6 actions and all of the recommendations, again, will be  
 7 posted on the website tomorrow, and so we invite members  
 8 of Team BCPS to take a look, to see our progress  
 9 consistent with the recommendations of the transition  
 10 report.  
 11       Before we come to a close, we do want to  
 12 provide an update -- previous slide, please. We do want  
 13 to provide an update and a reminder to members of our  
 14 community around safety and climate. As we know, we  
 15 identified four main priorities for our school system for  
 16 the year, with safety and climate being paramount.  
 17 Ensuring the safety of all of our staff and our students  
 18 is extremely important to us. We have found two areas  
 19 where we want to remind our members of Team BCPS to help  
 20 to support our efforts around this effort.  
 21       Specifically, threats to schools, false threats

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1 to school violence, those are frightening to staff  
 2 members, as well as frightening to students and parents.  
 3 It is extremely serious. We engage with our partners,  
 4 Baltimore County Police Department, as well as other  
 5 agencies, around the clock to make sure that schools and  
 6 school communities are safe. It is important to note  
 7 that after an exhaustive investigation, when we find that  
 8 students are engaging in purposeful threats of violence  
 9 for dares or just for fun that interrupt normal school  
 10 operations, that not only are the police department  
 11 moving forward with pressing charges, as a school system,  
 12 we are availing ourselves of all appropriate disciplinary  
 13 consequences.  
 14       And again, a reminder. We shared this in  
 15 October with reference to weapons in schools. In direct  
 16 alignment with federal law and state law, gun-free  
 17 schools, any student that is in possession of a weapon on  
 18 school property will be expelled for the minimum of a  
 19 year, in addition to charges from the police department.  
 20 And so we need to keep our schools safe. Our number one  
 21 priority is to make sure that we are educating all of our

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1 students, and that requires all of us to make a  
 2 commitment to keeping our schools safe. And so I thank  
 3 in advance all of our community members for helping us to  
 4 move forward with keeping our schools safe.  
 5       And finally, we want to thank everyone for all  
 6 of their time and efforts. As we close the first  
 7 quarter, it has been a strong first quarter. Our  
 8 students are doing well. Our staff members are  
 9 energized, and we're looking forward to three more  
 10 quarters where we continue to move forward. Thank you.  
 11       MS. LICHTER: Thank you, Dr. Rogers.  
 12       (Applause.)  
 13       Next on the agenda is the chair report, and I  
 14 call on me. So good evening. One of the themes that the  
 15 Board of Ed heard during the superintendent search last  
 16 spring was the immediate and pervasive need for increased  
 17 communication by BCPS' superintendent. This theme was  
 18 reinforced many times in many ways by various stakeholder  
 19 groups, both external and internal.  
 20       Dr. Rogers demonstrated ready -- demonstrating  
 21 right from the beginning that she takes stakeholder

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1 feedback seriously, has made significant strides in this  
 2 effort to improve communication, coordination, and  
 3 collaboration across the system. Following her eight  
 4 community meet and greets and multiple meetings with the  
 5 County Executive, County Council, and members of the  
 6 Baltimore County delegation, she has had monthly press  
 7 conferences, community conversations on the operating  
 8 budget, two community meetings focused on special ed, and  
 9 as recently as last night, she participated in an in-  
 10 person SCAC, Specialized Citizens Advisory Committee  
 11 meeting.

12 I encourage the public to take advantage when  
 13 these opportunities occur to learn more about BCPS and to  
 14 hear directly from our Superintendent, and to provide  
 15 input and feedback.

16 So thank you, Dr. Rogers, for taking very  
 17 tangible steps to improve communication with all members  
 18 of Team BCPS. And we look forward to your continued  
 19 engagement with our diverse community.

20 As a Board member, it's hard to believe that  
 21 we're entering the Fiscal Year '25 budget season.

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1 Baltimore County Public Schools has a \$2.58 billion  
 2 operating budget that funds the operations of 176  
 3 schools, programs and centers, and provides for the  
 4 academic and social emotional needs of more than 111,000  
 5 students. Many Board of Ed members were extremely new on  
 6 the Board last year, or had not yet been appointed when  
 7 the budget season started last year. We learned quickly  
 8 that the budget process requires learning, homework, and  
 9 preparation from Board members.

10 This year, for the first time, our student  
 11 member of the Board will be voting on the budget, and  
 12 you're going to hear more about her preparation during an  
 13 upcoming report tonight.

14 I strongly encourage members of the community  
 15 to get involved in the budget process as the Board  
 16 prepares to receive Dr. Rogers' proposed budget  
 17 recommendation in January.

18 There are two more budget conversations left  
 19 that you're invited to attend. This Thursday, at  
 20 Parkville High School, and on the 14th at Western School  
 21 of Technology. During these conversations, Dr. Rogers

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1 provides an overview of the budget process, engages  
 2 participants in conversation about community priorities,  
 3 and answers questions from attendees.

4 Also, there's a very informative Budget 101  
 5 webpage that provides an overview of the BCPS operating  
 6 budget. Where our funding comes from, how it's spent,  
 7 and how we ensure we are meeting the needs of every BCPS  
 8 student. Please consider using this website to learn  
 9 more about the BCPS budget process.

10 Last week, as one of speakers alluded to, Ms.  
 11 Domanowski and I had the chance to visit Oliver Beach  
 12 Elementary School to learn more about the new literacy  
 13 screening tool, Amira. For those of you who knew me or  
 14 worked with me in a previous life, you know that I was a  
 15 huge supporter of DIBELS as a screener for our youngest  
 16 learners. Amira, while a screener, also provides a  
 17 practice component that DIBELS did not include.

18 My purpose in visiting Oliver Beach was to  
 19 observe the program being used directly by students and  
 20 to learn about the practice component of the program. My  
 21 biggest takeaway was, first, how much I missed being in

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1 the classroom with small children. But after that, my  
 2 biggest takeaway was the number of students that I  
 3 observed reading, especially in grades one through three.  
 4 And they were reading while the teacher was providing  
 5 small group instruction to other students.

6 As a former teacher and principal, I know that  
 7 often when teachers are trying to provide small groups of  
 8 students with targeted instruction, the other students  
 9 are given work to do that may not be as meaningful or as  
 10 robust as it needs to be. But it does allow the teacher  
 11 to focus on the students in her small, or his small,  
 12 group. Or students may be reading text, but they're not  
 13 provided immediate feedback, and therefore are not truly  
 14 practicing reading fluency, but rather going through  
 15 those motions of reading.

16 I also realized that teachers spend a lot of  
 17 time creating this work when their efforts could be  
 18 planning the instruction that they are providing directly  
 19 to students.

20 Again, the biggest positive takeaway that I had  
 21 was the large number of students that I observed in all

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1 classrooms reading. Is it meeting the needs of all of  
 2 our students? There is not a single program that we can  
 3 use that will do that. But it does appear to be a user-  
 4 friendly tool for teachers to be able to provide students  
 5 with a wide range of materials on their reading level to  
 6 practice and receive immediate feedback. Yes, it does do  
 7 that.

8 From the differentiated content being provided  
 9 to the ways in which the program provides additional  
 10 support when students stumble on a word or words, to  
 11 watching students charting their own progress, to the  
 12 teachers' ability to listen to students read to obtain  
 13 instructional implications, I was pleased to see the  
 14 potential of this new tool, especially after only one  
 15 quarter of implementation.

16 I look forward to learning more about this tool  
 17 and its impact on the system's efforts to strengthen  
 18 student literacy and boost academic achievement.

19 I'd also like to thank Oliver Beach's  
 20 principal, Lynn Palmer, her staff and students for  
 21 opening their doors to Ms. Domanowski and me last week

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1 and allowing us to learn more about this new program.

2 Lastly, I'd like to remind Team BCPS that  
 3 American Education Week takes place next week, from  
 4 November 14th through the 17th. And it would be great to  
 5 see parents in our schools supporting the work of our  
 6 students, our staff, and our administrators.

7 Also, please consider signing up for a November  
 8 conference with your child's teacher or teachers, no  
 9 matter how little or big that child may be. Conferences  
 10 are a great way to get to know your child's teacher, as  
 11 well as send a strong message to our child about the  
 12 collaboration between home and school.

13 I'd also like to wish our Vice Chair a very  
 14 Happy Birthday and thank her for spending her special day  
 15 with us.

16 (Applause.)

17 Woo-hoo. Uh-no, and next -- okay, thank you.

18 And next on the agenda is our student member of the  
 19 Board's report, and for that I call on Ms. Drummond.

20 MS. DRUMMOND: Good evening. I wanted to start  
 21 off by announcing this Thursday, November 9th, at 6:00

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1 p.m., our board of selected students and myself will be  
 2 holding our first SMOB town hall of the year, using the  
 3 Google Meet code SMOBTOWNHALL, all capitals. This is an  
 4 opportunity for all secondary students to engage with me,  
 5 ask questions, and share thoughts. Town halls will be  
 6 hosted monthly.

7 Next, this Saturday, November 11th, from 10:00  
 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Miracles and More outreach is hosting  
 9 a youth summit in participation with Baltimore County  
 10 Police Department, Baltimore County Public Schools, NAACP  
 11 of Baltimore County, and other partners at New Town High  
 12 School. It's a free event for ages 10 through 18. This  
 13 event will feature youth and adult panels, vendors,  
 14 music, snacks, and giveaways. Please find registration  
 15 information on BCPS social media.

16 Lastly, the SMOB applications will be opening  
 17 in December. Please keep an eye out on the SMOB webpage  
 18 and social media for more information. Thank you.

19 MS. LICHTER: Thank you, Ms. Drummond.

20 The next item on the agenda is unfinished  
 21 business, consideration of the proposed 2024-2025 school

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1 calendar, and for that I call on Ms. Charley-Greene and  
 2 Ms. Bielski.

3 Good evening.

4 MS. CHARLEY-GREENE: Good evening.

5 MS. BIELSKI: Good evening.

6 MS. CHARLEY-GREENE: Good evening, Board Chair  
 7 Lichter, Vice Chair Harvey, Dr. Rogers, members of the  
 8 Board of Education. Tonight I, along with our Manager of  
 9 Staff Relations, Joelle Bielski, bring forward for your  
 10 consideration a proposed 2024-2025 school calendar.

11 In a moment, Ms. Bielski will summarize where  
 12 we've been since we first came to you September 26th, and  
 13 offer a few options for your consideration. At the close  
 14 of her summary, we'll be available to answer any  
 15 questions the Board would have.

16 Ms. Bielski?

17 MS. BIELSKI: Thank you. As you know, at the  
 18 September 26th Board of Education meeting, we presented a  
 19 version of the '24-'25 school calendar. During that  
 20 meeting, a motion was made and proposed that we present  
 21 some alternative calendars that had some considerations



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1 for half days. So two alternatives, Versions 2 and 3,  
 2 were added for your consideration.

3 This next slide predicts the three -- I'm  
 4 sorry, depicts the three versions of the calendar. I  
 5 would like to point out in the Version 1, you'll notice  
 6 that December 20th and May 16th are now asynchronous for  
 7 teacher professional learning.

8 The following slide relates specifically to  
 9 Version 1 and reflects attendance data that was gathered  
 10 before -- for the day before Thanksgiving and the day  
 11 before winter break for the last two years, as well as  
 12 information related to asynchronous learning days and  
 13 grading and reporting days.

14 At this time, we'd be happy to take any  
 15 questions about any of the versions presented.

16 MS. LICHTER: Questions from Board members?  
 17 Okay. Okay. So may I have a motion -- give me one sec.  
 18 So may I have a motion to approve Version 1 as  
 19 the 2024-2025 school calendar?

20 MS. PUMPHREY: So moved, Pumphrey.  
 21 DR. SAVOY: Second, Savoy.

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1 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any discussion?  
 2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: I have some -- a question.  
 3 MS. LICHTER: Yes, go ahead.  
 4 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: So I don't like Version 1.  
 5 I like Version 3 because it has more hours in it. I'm  
 6 still concerned with the half days in general across all  
 7 of the calendars. And so when I look at the calendar for  
 8 -- like, when we get to the end of the year, for  
 9 instance, there are a lot of half days. Grading is  
 10 closed, and it's just half days. So this feels like it's  
 11 more so just compliance, checking the box to say, okay,  
 12 well, we're going to meet the 180-day mark. When really,  
 13 I mean, how many students are coming that -- if it's a  
 14 half day after grades have closed? Have we looked at  
 15 that attendance data?

16 MS. BIELSKI: I don't believe we've looked at  
 17 the last days. We looked at the attendance data on the  
 18 half days that we talked about before the holidays. But  
 19 the half days at the end of the year, I know some of what  
 20 happens there, obviously, is wrapping up end of the year  
 21 things for students and, you know, teachers to get kids

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1 ready to be home for, you know, extended periods of time.  
 2 But we can certainly pull that data.

3 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Because I just -- I just  
 4 don't want to waste people's time with the calendar. And  
 5 when I think about the half days, especially at the end  
 6 of the year, it just doesn't feel like it's -- there's  
 7 any substance there. Like the grades have closed and so  
 8 -- and I just -- okay, and I'm going to go back to just  
 9 thinking about the experience of some eighth-grade  
 10 students at that time where it's, like, just don't even  
 11 send your kids to school was told by a principal one  
 12 year.

13 And so I just -- do we really need those half  
 14 days at the end of the school year? When the grades  
 15 close, can we end the school year?

16 MS. BIELSKI: We -- so --  
 17 MS. CHARLEY-GREENE: Go ahead. Did you want  
 18 to?  
 19 DR. ROGERS: Yes, thank you. Thank you, Ms.  
 20 Booker-Dwyer. We absolutely have had this conversation  
 21 about changing how we move forward with half days. I

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1 will share with you that most recently we had a half day,  
 2 and some principals had posted how they use those days,  
 3 and they also posted the percentage that I'm thinking  
 4 about most recently was 93 percent attendance. But  
 5 really shifting to what was proposed by a member of this  
 6 Board before that we're using those activities that  
 7 usually are disruptive during full days to be purposeful  
 8 and intentional in planning. So whether it's students  
 9 who need to, you know, make up some work because we're at  
 10 the end of the quarter, or other students, you know,  
 11 participating in STEM activities, career days, et cetera,  
 12 so we have started to make that shift.

13 Now, let me put on the hat for the end of the  
 14 school year half days. All teachers, I would argue,  
 15 every level, need to -- need time in order to, you know,  
 16 tabulate those final grades for the students. In high  
 17 school in particular, you might see a little bit of  
 18 middle school, but in high school in particular, the  
 19 students are taking exams almost up until those last  
 20 days, unless on the very last day you have a make-up  
 21 days. And so the afternoon, the teachers don't leave the

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1 afternoon. They are grading all of those assessments and  
 2 getting it into the gradebook because as you know, they  
 3 only have one more day to come back and make sure that  
 4 everything's taken care of in their rooms, as well as the  
 5 grades are turned in before they close out for the year.  
 6 And so that has typically and historically in  
 7 all systems been what the half days at the end of the  
 8 year are used for. You are right. Typically, in  
 9 transition years where, you know, eighth grade that --  
 10 because they are done and they're ready to move into  
 11 ninth grade, they might have less to do. That's  
 12 definitely an area we could, you know, take a look at. I  
 13 don't know if eighth graders would agree with us taking a  
 14 look at that.  
 15 But I think these three versions that have been  
 16 presented by the staff and attended asked that we kind of  
 17 walk through all three of them.  
 18 And so, Ms. Bielski, if you don't mind walking  
 19 us through the mental health half days and, you know,  
 20 what the half days allow us to do in terms of ramping up  
 21 our efforts around professional development, and what the

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1 differences are between Version 1, 2, and 3, I think that  
 2 would be helpful for everyone.  
 3 MS. BIELSKI: Sure, and if I just might add one  
 4 thing before we walk through. Grades don't officially  
 5 close until noon on June 14th, so it's right up until  
 6 that last time that make-up work is submitted and items  
 7 are still left to be graded. I just thought it was  
 8 important to point that out.  
 9 The first version of the calendar, as you can  
 10 see, it has December 20th and May 16th asynchronous so  
 11 that students are learning asynchronously and teachers  
 12 are able to plan and also have the half day for mental  
 13 health. One of the things after the first presentation  
 14 that we heard through email and I saw on many venues of  
 15 social media was how valuable that time was for teachers.  
 16 That they needed that time to really regroup. They  
 17 needed time to be able to recharge.  
 18 If you look at the second version, the last day  
 19 of school is still the 16th, and we made some changes  
 20 with the removal of those mental health half days. And  
 21 again, did hear vocalized from teachers that -- how

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1 important it was and that they felt like it was a  
 2 challenge for us to be taking that away from them.  
 3 And then the third version of that extends the  
 4 school year, and you'll notice that we did put a full day  
 5 in in light of the half-day conversations for the 27th  
 6 and the 16th. However, then that made us have to extend  
 7 the school year in order to stay in compliance.  
 8 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Couldn't we just give the  
 9 teachers a full day to do grading? I know I brought that  
 10 up before, but I just feel like when you have 100 -- you  
 11 know, if you are a English language arts teacher with  
 12 over 100 kids, essays to grade, you need a full day. And  
 13 so could -- is that a possibility, that we could just  
 14 give that full day to the teacher to, you know, close  
 15 down their classrooms, do their grading at the end of the  
 16 year, instead of trying to, you know, do both?  
 17 MS. BIELSKI: So we have to be really, really  
 18 careful with hours. And working within the parameters of  
 19 what is in front of us as far as the number of hours that  
 20 are required and the number of days required. So that's  
 21 one consideration.

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1 We also have to be really careful with  
 2 inclement weather. We -- you know, we built in three,  
 3 but who knows what that might look like as far as if we  
 4 have a blizzard, for instance? So having those half days  
 5 allows us more time in the hour consideration, too, and  
 6 so when we look at the entire school year, we really look  
 7 at all of those things to make sure we aren't putting  
 8 ourselves in the position where we would fall out of  
 9 compliance.  
 10 MS. CHARLEY-GREENE: And I'd also like to offer  
 11 just as a former English teacher faced with all of those  
 12 papers and I had two considerations. One, getting all of  
 13 those papers graded and in the gradebook, but also,  
 14 particularly when we looked at seniors, offering to be  
 15 perfectly honest the maximum amount of time for students  
 16 to be able to get work in, turn work in, come in, take  
 17 exams, and to make sure that we had students who were  
 18 able to graduate. That was of optimal importance, and so  
 19 certainly if you're talking about at the secondary level,  
 20 those days really do matter. They really do matter in  
 21 terms of working individually with students and making

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1 sure they have what they need.

2       And so I just offer that. It is certainly

3 different on every level, but that was a primary

4 consideration. And I'll also add that even as a high

5 school principal, I often sought the very last graduation

6 day for the sole purpose of that gave me more time to get

7 more kids what they needed so they could get across the

8 stage and meet requirements. So there are a lot of

9 considerations and nuances that go beyond what happens

10 day to day in the classroom. And I just offer that, just

11 so there's full understanding of some of what happens on

12 those days that may not be visible to people who aren't

13 actually, you know, kind of in the trenches and doing the

14 work.

15       DR. SAVOY: I totally --

16       MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

17       Dr. Savoy, did you --

18       DR. SAVOY: I'm a former English teacher, as

19 well.

20       MS. LICHTER: Your microphone.

21       DR. SAVOY: High school. Former English

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1 teacher and high school administrator, as well. I

2 totally agree with this calendar and the professional

3 development days are very much needed. There are five

4 people up here who have been former teachers, so we do

5 understand. And I agree with this calendar. I think

6 it's great.

7       MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

8       Ms. Frempong?

9       MS. FREMPONG: Just a couple of questions,

10 points of clarification. So with Calendar Version No. 3,

11 it says that the last day of school is Wednesday, June

12 18th. But June 16th is a half day, so June 17th and June

13 18th would be full days. Is that correct?

14       MS. BIELSKI: Yes.

15       MS. FREMPONG: Okay. And then for all three of

16 these versions, are these also still -- are these pre-

17 Labor Day or post-Labor Day?

18       MS. BIELSKI: These are all pre-Labor Day.

19       MS. FREMPONG: Pre-Labor Day.

20       MS. BIELSKI: Yes.

21       MS. FREMPONG: Okay. Thank you.

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1       MS. LICHTER: Ms. Stolusky?

2       MS. STOLUSKY: Just something that I noticed.

3 I don't, at this point, have a preference for one or the

4 other, but thank you for putting them all together. With

5 schools ending on a Monday, I do believe it could be less

6 likely that students would come, you know, with the goal

7 of having kids be engaged. Whereas with the third

8 option, with it ending on Wednesday, it may make it more

9 likely that attendance is better for the Monday and

10 Tuesday prior. Just an observation. Thank you.

11       MS. LICHTER: I have a question. Can you just

12 walk us through the -- where the PD is? So I see for

13 Calendar 1, and we've got PD on the 20th and the 16th,

14 correct?

15       MS. BIELSKI: Yes.

16       MS. LICHTER: What about 2 and 3?

17       MS. BIELSKI: So 2 and 3 have -- did I not put

18 them in?

19       MS. LICHTER: Are we losing it?

20       DR. ROGERS: Holidays. It's the holiday that -

21 -

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1       MS. LICHTER: Oh, it's the --

2       DR. ROGERS: -- lose those two half days.

3       MS. LICHTER: Okay. So the -- okay. So we

4 don't -- there's not -- there's more PD days than in

5 Version 1. So we're lacking those two half-day PDs in

6 Versions 2 and 3.

7       MS. BIELSKI: Correct. That's right. Yes.

8       MS. LICHTER: Okay. All right. Thank you.

9       Other questions or comments? Okay. So we had

10 stopped at discussion on Option 1. So we will then do a

11 roll call vote for Option 1 at this point.

12       MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?

13       MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

14       MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?

15       MR. YOUNG: Yes.

16       MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?

17       MS. FREMPONG: Yes.

18       MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?

19       MS. STOLUSKY: I'm going to say no, just

20 because I do really like the option for the Wednesday.

21       MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p> <p>1 MS. HENN: No.</p> <p>2 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?</p> <p>3 MS. HARVEY: Yes.</p> <p>4 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?</p> <p>5 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.</p> <p>6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?</p> <p>7 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.</p> <p>8 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?</p> <p>9 DR. SAVOY: Yes.</p> <p>10 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?</p> <p>11 MR. McMILLION: Yes.</p> <p>12 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?</p> <p>13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: No.</p> <p>14 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?</p> <p>15 MS. LICHTER: Yes.</p> <p>16 MS. GOVER: Favor is nine.</p> <p>17 MS. LICHTER: Favor is nine, so Option 1 --</p> <p>18 version -- Calendar Version 1 then, therefore, passes.</p> <p>19 Thank you.</p> <p>20 The next item on the agenda is unfinished</p> <p>21 business, Consideration of Board Policies. This is the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p> <p>1 learning, and when existing Board policies do not address</p> <p>2 a given situation, the Superintendent shall have the</p> <p>3 power to act and the responsibility to notify the Board</p> <p>4 promptly of such action. The Board Chair, having</p> <p>5 conferred with the Superintendent, may convene a special</p> <p>6 meeting for the Board to discuss the situation and to</p> <p>7 provide timely guidance as necessary. The</p> <p>8 Superintendent's action and recommendations regarding the</p> <p>9 need for policy shall be reviewed by the Board at its</p> <p>10 next regularly scheduled public meeting."</p> <p>11 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Is there a second to</p> <p>12 Ms. Henn's motion?</p> <p>13 MS. PUMPHREY: Second, Pumphrey.</p> <p>14 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any discussion?</p> <p>15 Ms. Henn, would you like to speak to your</p> <p>16 motion?</p> <p>17 MS. HENN: Sure. I'll be brief. Thank you,</p> <p>18 Madam Chair.</p> <p>19 My motion clarifies the expectations when there</p> <p>20 is an emergency or urgent situation requiring the</p> <p>21 Superintendent to act. The Board has seen such instances</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p> <p>1 second reader for this policy, and for that I call on Ms.</p> <p>2 Christina Pumphrey, chair of the Policy Review Committee.</p> <p>3 MS. PUMPHREY: Thank you. Members of the</p> <p>4 Board, the Policy Review Committee asks that the Board</p> <p>5 accept the committee's recommendation to amend Board</p> <p>6 Policy 8131, Administration and (inaudible) Absence.</p> <p>7 This policy is presented to you on tonight's agenda as</p> <p>8 Exhibit K.</p> <p>9 MS. LICHTER: May I have a motion to accept the</p> <p>10 recommendation of the Board's Policy Review Committee for</p> <p>11 Board Policy 8131?</p> <p>12 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.</p> <p>13 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. No second is needed</p> <p>14 since the recommendation comes from the committee. Is</p> <p>15 there any discussion?</p> <p>16 Ms. Henn.</p> <p>17 MS. HENN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I offer the</p> <p>18 following motion for the Board's consideration. I move</p> <p>19 to amend Policy 8131 by striking the second section and</p> <p>20 replacing it with the following. "When immediate action</p> <p>21 must be taken to ensure continuity of teaching and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p> <p>1 during the pandemic, for instance, following the</p> <p>2 ransomware attack, various situations where we learned</p> <p>3 what should have gone into policy. And this retains the</p> <p>4 intent of the policy and retains most of the content,</p> <p>5 with a couple added points for clarification. Thank you,</p> <p>6 Madam Chair.</p> <p>7 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any questions or</p> <p>8 discussion?</p> <p>9 Ms. Pumphrey.</p> <p>10 MS. PUMPHREY: My initial reading of this, I</p> <p>11 was -- after thinking about it, I'm just a little</p> <p>12 concerned about the first change to the language, which</p> <p>13 is to ensure continuity of teaching and learning. Of</p> <p>14 course, that's our main goal. I just don't want to limit</p> <p>15 us to anything specific. Just based upon the fact that</p> <p>16 this is only for major emergency purposes. So I'm a</p> <p>17 little bit concerned about that language, and I'm just</p> <p>18 curious to hear other Board members' thoughts on that.</p> <p>19 MS. HENN: Madam Chair, may I respond?</p> <p>20 MS. LICHTER: Yes.</p> <p>21 MS. HENN: Thank you. So you're absolutely</p>

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1 correct, Ms. Pumphrey, that the intent of this is to  
 2 enable the Superintendent with the authority to act in  
 3 urgent priority situations. If we think about it, and I  
 4 thought about this language quite a bit and shared your  
 5 concern, there -- I couldn't think of a situation that  
 6 would not have that -- have an impact on teaching and  
 7 learning as a school system.

8 And if you think of that broadly, or define  
 9 that broadly, then that covers just about everything we  
 10 do, as our focus is on teaching and learning. So I  
 11 understand your concern. It's -- I included that to  
 12 emphasize that these are for important decisions that  
 13 need to be made. But of course, it would be the  
 14 Superintendent's judgement, which we trust.

15 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.  
 16 Ms. Frempong?  
 17 MS. FREMPONG: This is one of the policies that  
 18 came through PRC, and as a member of the PRC Committee,  
 19 one of the questions I had in trying to understand this,  
 20 I had asked Ms. Howie about have we ever had an instance  
 21 of this happen before? Is Ms. Howie still here?

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1 MS. LICHTER: She said hi (phonetic).  
 2 MS. FREMPONG: And so in asking that question,  
 3 if I remember correctly, Ms. Howie was saying we had not.  
 4 Is that correct, when we discussed this?  
 5 MS. HOWIE: Good evening, Board members. So  
 6 yes, Ms. Frempong, that's correct. During PRC, when this  
 7 was presented, I did research going back 14 years and was  
 8 not able to find when this particular policy had been  
 9 used.  
 10 MS. FREMPONG: Thank you. I just wanted to  
 11 have that clarification for everyone, as well. So again,  
 12 coming through the PRC Committee, we were, I guess,  
 13 content or satisfied with the wording as it was. Thank  
 14 you.  
 15 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. There were some hands  
 16 over here.  
 17 Ms. Harvey?  
 18 MS. HARVEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am a  
 19 little unclear as to the section in the proposed  
 20 amendment which says, "The Board chair, having conferred  
 21 with the Superintendent, may convene a special meeting

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1 for the Board to discuss the situation and to provide  
 2 timely guidance as necessary."  
 3 Is this -- is the intent of this post of pre-  
 4 decision making?  
 5 MS. HENN: May I respond, Madam Chair?  
 6 MS. LICHTER: Mm-hmm.  
 7 MS. HENN: Thank you. And thank you for the  
 8 question, Ms. Harvey. It is at the discretion of the  
 9 Superintendent. So of course, this enables her to act  
 10 without this conference, but this enable -- this provides  
 11 an option, should she wish to seek guidance from the  
 12 Board and should time allow. Then after conferring with  
 13 the chair, it would be up to the two of them to convene a  
 14 special meeting, if necessary. So it allows flexibility  
 15 both ways, either pre or post, depending on the  
 16 situation.  
 17 And if I may also respond to Ms. Howie's  
 18 comment, Madam Chair, the two situations that I mentioned  
 19 when Dr. Williams was faced with making these decisions  
 20 absent Board discussion or policy were those two  
 21 situations. COVID-19 situation, again, there were no

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1 policies for a global pandemic, and as well as the  
 2 ransomware incident. Many decisions had to be made that  
 3 were time sensitive, and this policy enabled him to act  
 4 and make those decisions.  
 5 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Other questions or  
 6 comments on Ms. Henn's amended motion? Or motion.  
 7 Okay. Then we need a roll call vote on the  
 8 amended policy wording.  
 9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?  
 10 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.  
 11 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?  
 12 MR. YOUNG: No.  
 13 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?  
 14 MS. FREMPONG: No.  
 15 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?  
 16 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.  
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?  
 18 MS. HENN: Yes.  
 19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?  
 20 MS. HARVEY: No.  
 21 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?

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1 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.  
 2 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?  
 3 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.  
 4 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?  
 5 DR. SAVOY: Yes.  
 6 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?  
 7 MR. McMILLION: Yes.  
 8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: No.  
 10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?  
 11 MS. LICHTER: No.  
 12 MS. GOVER: Favor is seven.  
 13 MS. LICHTER: So the amended motion passes.  
 14 Correct? Yes, so we do not vote on the original one.  
 15 Okay. We're voting as amended. Okay. So now we're  
 16 voting on the policy as amended. Any -- so roll call  
 17 vote, please?  
 18 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?  
 19 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.  
 20 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?  
 21 MR. YOUNG: No.

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1 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?  
 2 MS. FREMPONG: No.  
 3 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?  
 4 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.  
 5 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?  
 6 MS. HENN: Yes.  
 7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?  
 8 MS. HARVEY: No.  
 9 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?  
 10 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.  
 11 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?  
 12 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.  
 13 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?  
 14 DR. SAVOY: Yes.  
 15 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?  
 16 MR. McMILLION: Yes.  
 17 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 18 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: No.  
 19 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?  
 20 MS. LICHTER: No.  
 21 MS. GOVER: Favor is seven.

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1 MS. LICHTER: So the amended motion passes.  
 2 Amended policy passes. Okay. Thank you.  
 3 The next item on the agenda is action taken in  
 4 closed session, and for that I call on Ms. de Vastey  
 5 Jones.  
 6 MS. DE VASTEY JONES: Good evening, Board  
 7 members, Madam Chair, Dr. Rogers. For the record, I'm  
 8 Claude de Vastey Jones. Earlier this evening, the Board  
 9 met in closed session in its quasi-judicial capacity to  
 10 render a decision in Case H.E. 24-04. Now would be an  
 11 appropriate time to confirm the action taken in closed  
 12 session.  
 13 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. May I have a motion  
 14 to affirm the action taken during closed session on  
 15 Hearing Examiner Case H.E. 24-04?  
 16 MS. HENN: So moved.  
 17 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Is there a second?  
 18 MS. FREMPONG: Second, Frempong.  
 19 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. And discussion?  
 20 May I have a roll call vote, please?  
 21 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?

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1 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.  
 2 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?  
 3 MR. YOUNG: Yes.  
 4 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?  
 5 MS. FREMPONG: No. I'm sorry. Yes.  
 6 MS. GOVER: Thank you. Ms. Henn?  
 7 MS. HENN: Yes.  
 8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?  
 9 MS. HARVEY: Yes.  
 10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?  
 11 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.  
 12 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?  
 13 MS. PUMPHREY: (No audible response).  
 14 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?  
 15 DR. SAVOY: Yes.  
 16 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?  
 17 MR. McMILLION: Yes.  
 18 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 19 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.  
 20 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?  
 21 MS. LICHTER: Yes.

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1 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

2 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. The next item on the

3 agenda is contract awards, and for that I call on Ms.

4 Harvey, chair of the Building and Contracts Committee.

5 MS. HARVEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Before I

6 begin, I would like to thank our committee vice chair,

7 Mr. Young, for leading yesterday's contract meeting on

8 very short notice. It is reassuring to know that when

9 life happens, my colleagues are there. So thank you very

10 much, Mr. Young.

11 Members of the Board, the Board's Building and

12 Contracts Committee met on Monday, November 6, 2023.

13 Items M-1 through M-9 and Items M-11 are being forwarded

14 to the full Board for approval. Items M-10 will be

15 pulled out separately.

16 MS. LICHTER: Okay. Do I have a motion to

17 approve Items M-1 through M-9 and M-11?

18 MS. HENN: So moved.

19 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. No second is needed

20 since the recommendation comes from the committee. Any

21 discussion on M-1 and M-11?

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1 May I have a roll call vote, please?

2 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?

3 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.

4 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?

5 MR. YOUNG: Yes.

6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?

7 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.

8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?

9 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.

10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?

11 MS. HENN: Yes.

12 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?

13 MS. HARVEY: Yes.

14 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?

15 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.

16 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?

17 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.

18 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?

19 DR. SAVOY: Yes.

20 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?

21 MR. McMILLION: Yes.

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1 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.

3 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?

4 MS. LICHTER: Yes.

5 MS. GOVER: Thank you.

6 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Do I have a motion to

7 approve Item M-10?

8 MS. FREMPONG: So moved, Frempong.

9 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. No second is needed

10 since the recommendation comes from the committee. Any

11 discussion on M-10?

12 MS. HENN: Point of order, Madam Chair. We do

13 need a second, since the committee did not make a

14 recommendation on M-10.

15 MS. LICHTER: Okay, thank you. May I have a

16 second on M-10?

17 MS. PUMPHREY: Second, Pumphrey.

18 MS. LICHTER: Thank you, Ms. Pumphrey. Any

19 discussion on M-10?

20 Mr. McMillion.

21 MR. McMILLION: We posed a couple questions

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1 that we were hoping to get answers for.

2 MS. LICHTER: Okay.

3 MR. HARTLOVE: Sure. The questions that came

4 up last night was one, are schools required to use

5 security vendors approved under this contract, or can

6 they pay SROs to provide after-hours security? And the

7 answer to that is yes. You can use SROs, as well as the

8 contract, so that was one question. You're still -- you

9 can still use SROs if you choose.

10 MR. McMILLION: So to question that, so if the

11 principal has money in his budget for security.

12 MR. HARTLOVE: Yes.

13 MR. McMILLION: So rather than use one of those

14 contractors, he can -- now, how do they negotiate that?

15 Is there already an agreement with the policy department

16 on whether they get time and a half or whether they

17 adjust those hours?

18 MR. HARTLOVE: That part, I know, yes,

19 (indiscernible).

20 MR. McMILLION: Because back in the day,

21 sometimes the SRO came in later in the day and covered an

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1 athletic event. They weren't real keen on that  
 2 sometimes, but.  
 3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good evening, members of  
 4 the Board. You're correct, and in order to do that, the  
 5 SRO often was not available during the school day for  
 6 coverage. The difference here is that we have received a  
 7 grant that will allow us to pay the school resource  
 8 officers in addition to the funds that schools receive  
 9 for hiring their security vendors.  
 10 And so our goal is to have several layers of  
 11 security. So the school from their budget will provide  
 12 for the security vendors, this contract, and then through  
 13 the grant we received, we can then fund SROs or other  
 14 officers.  
 15 MR. McMILLION: So if the SROs that are  
 16 assigned to the school are interested, then they could be  
 17 paid from a separate grant?  
 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Correct. Correct. It  
 19 is preferred that we use our SROs. If the SROs are not  
 20 available, then we can move on to other officer.  
 21 MR. McMILLION: Okay. And then that wasn't my

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1 question. I posed another question. Do you have that?  
 2 MR. HARTLOVE: Can you repeat that question,  
 3 just we make sure we have it?  
 4 MR. McMILLION: My -- was that your question,  
 5 Ms. Henn, the one --  
 6 MS. HENN: You asked it beautifully, Mr.  
 7 McMillion, so I'm good. Thank you.  
 8 MR. McMILLION: Okay. I posed the question  
 9 about the school safety assistants. Could they be paid  
 10 out of this contract?  
 11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They cannot, and this  
 12 contract requires specific training and insurance that is  
 13 provided by those vendors who oversee the security  
 14 officers that they send to us. Many of them are off-duty  
 15 policy officers or retired military. They also have to  
 16 have training in carrying weapons, because they are armed  
 17 security.  
 18 MR. McMILLION: Okay. So the SR -- or excuse  
 19 me, the school safety assistants are not an option when  
 20 it comes to dances or athletic contests or things like  
 21 that?

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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not through this funding  
 2 with this contract.  
 3 MR. McMILLION: Okay, thank you.  
 4 MS. LICHTER: Any other questions about M-10?  
 5 May I have a roll call vote, please?  
 6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Domanowski?  
 7 MS. DOMANOWSKI: Yes.  
 8 MS. GOVER: Mr. Young?  
 9 MR. YOUNG: Yes.  
 10 MS. GOVER: Ms. Frempong?  
 11 MS. FREMPONG: Yes.  
 12 MS. GOVER: Ms. Stolusky?  
 13 MS. STOLUSKY: Yes.  
 14 MS. GOVER: Ms. Henn?  
 15 MS. HENN: Yes.  
 16 MS. GOVER: Ms. Harvey?  
 17 MS. HARVEY: Yes.  
 18 MS. GOVER: Ms. Drummond?  
 19 MS. DRUMMOND: Yes.  
 20 MS. GOVER: Ms. Pumphrey?  
 21 MS. PUMPHREY: Yes.

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1 MS. GOVER: Dr. Savoy?  
 2 DR. SAVOY: Yes.  
 3 MS. GOVER: Mr. McMillion?  
 4 MR. McMILLION: Yes.  
 5 MS. GOVER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 6 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Yes.  
 7 MS. GOVER: Ms. Lichter?  
 8 MS. LICHTER: Yes.  
 9 MS. GOVER: Thank you.  
 10 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.  
 11 The next item on the agenda is the report on  
 12 the budget training for the student member of the Board,  
 13 and for that I call on Mr. Hartlove.  
 14 MR. HARTLOVE: Sure. And let me get -- make  
 15 sure I have that in front of me and switch gears here a  
 16 little bit. So the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section  
 17 3-2B-05E required us to develop budget training for the  
 18 student member of the Board, Ms. Drummond. Student  
 19 members must complete the budget training after being  
 20 elected to -- after being elected to vote on fiscal  
 21 matters.



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1 We did bring the training to the budget -- to  
 2 the Board's Budget Committee on October 18, 2023. Got  
 3 some good feedback from the Budget Committee on adding  
 4 things, such as definitions, maybe putting in some not  
 5 tests but kind of understanding breaks.  
 6 MS. LICHTER: Text for Understanding.  
 7 MR. HARTLOVE: There you go. There you go. So  
 8 we are going to add those items, but we -- the big thing  
 9 is tomorrow we going to work with Ms. Drummond to  
 10 schedule her training.  
 11 MS. LICHTER: Okay. Thank you. And the  
 12 training is the PowerPoint that's been put on BoardDocs?  
 13 MR. HARTLOVE: The training is the PowerPoint  
 14 and, you know, this is a little bit of a guinea pig.  
 15 We're going to step you through this. You'll get in-  
 16 person training. We can do it via Teams or anything like  
 17 that, but I mean, it'll -- you'll be -- you'll have  
 18 someone to actually -- they can answer live questions as  
 19 you go through. But we'll develop this over -- we'll get  
 20 your feedback and we'll develop it and refine it as --  
 21 over the years.

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1 MS. LICHTER: Right. And it's also good for  
 2 just us other Board members, too, to take a look.  
 3 MR. HARTLOVE: We talked about that as far as  
 4 maybe new Board member orientation, having something like  
 5 this, depending on the time frame -- time that we have,  
 6 yes.  
 7 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Any questions?  
 8 Ms. Henn?  
 9 MS. HENN: Just a comment, Madam Chair. Thank  
 10 you. I would second what Ms. Lichter said. This  
 11 would've been so helpful when I came on the Board the  
 12 first time, and all new Board members, and really  
 13 outstanding job putting this together. I missed the  
 14 Budget Committee presentation, but I went through every  
 15 slide of it, and it's truly incredible work. So thank  
 16 you.  
 17 MR. HARTLOVE: Just -- and you're welcome --  
 18 MS. HENN: To everyone involved.  
 19 MR. HARTLOVE: -- this is a -- it was a team  
 20 effort between the budget folks and the facilities folks,  
 21 because there's a capital section in here. So Mr. Dixit

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1 worked on part of this and Mr. Whit -- Mr. Tantleff and  
 2 his staff also worked on this.  
 3 MS. HENN: Well, thank you very much.  
 4 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Booker-Dwyer?  
 5 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And I just want to commend  
 6 you because I saw the first iteration of this, and I see  
 7 the second one, and it -- and I see the improvements. So  
 8 thank you for that. It is much stronger, and I do think  
 9 all Board members can benefit from this.  
 10 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Other questions or  
 11 comments? Okay. Thank you.  
 12 The next item on the agenda is the report on  
 13 elementary literacy, and for that I call on Dr. DiDonato,  
 14 Dr. Jones, Ms. Shay and Dr. -- okay, maybe not Ms. Jones.  
 15 She's giving me that look back there. And Dr. Craft.  
 16 I'm just reading my script. It had her name in there.  
 17 Good evening.  
 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good evening.  
 19 MS. LICHTER: Okay. Dr. Rogers will begin.  
 20 DR. ROGERS: Good evening, everyone. Can we  
 21 put up the slides, please?

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1 MS. LICHTER: Bless you. A very polite group  
 2 tonight.  
 3 DR. ROGERS: Next slide, please. We are very  
 4 pleased this evening to provide an update on elementary  
 5 literacy, what steps we are taking as members of Team  
 6 BCPS to improve the academic achievement of our students  
 7 around literacy. On the slide in front of you, you see  
 8 our four identified academic priorities. But right next  
 9 to that, in a moment, we're going to show you a short  
 10 clip of a teacher, Ms. Chaney, who is a teacher at New  
 11 Town Elementary School.  
 12 We have had the opportunity to visit many  
 13 schools, all levels, and observe teaching and learning  
 14 that started very early this school year. We were most  
 15 impressed when we walked into Ms. Chaney's classroom, and  
 16 not only her level of preparedness for her students and  
 17 her holding every single student in her class to high  
 18 expectation, but the student responses. And so what you  
 19 see here is what we want for all of our students in all  
 20 of our elementary schools as we move forward throughout  
 21 this year.

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1 And so with that, if you can play the clip,  
 2 please?  
 3 (Video played).  
 4 MS. CHANEY: What was the genre that we started  
 5 yesterday? Iluma (phonetic), you got them? Realistic  
 6 fiction. I love that. Now, we said realistic fiction  
 7 has a few things. Does anybody remember? Now, second  
 8 grade, I took your notepaper yesterday. Remember Ms.  
 9 Chaney collected it, Nila took it. What are some things  
 10 that a realistic fiction story is going to have? We  
 11 highlighted some words. Who has a good memory?  
 12 Sebastian, give me one thing.  
 13 SEBASTIAN: Characters.  
 14 MS. CHANEY: Characters. We're going to have  
 15 some characters in a story. What else are we going to  
 16 have? Nila.  
 17 NILA: Events.  
 18 MS. CHANEY: Events. The details that happen  
 19 in the story. There was something else. Where am I?  
 20 Where am I? Jewan (phonetic)?  
 21 JEWAN: Setting.

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1 MS. CHANEY: The setting. Excellent, and we  
 2 said a realistic fiction is -- are events that could  
 3 really happen in real life. We're not aliens. We're not  
 4 in outer space. There -- it's some events that could  
 5 really happen in real life, not the same, like Clark the  
 6 Shark, because we know that was a what kind of story?  
 7 Who can make a difference between the genres?  
 8 Clark the Shark was what type of story? Awai (phonetic)?  
 9 It was a fantasy, because it was all made up. It was  
 10 kind of silly to start the year but now we're getting  
 11 into some realistic fiction.  
 12 (Video ends).  
 13 DR. ROGERS: Thank you, and that clip does not  
 14 begin to really showcase the level of excitement and the  
 15 rigor that was in that classroom. And so in a moment,  
 16 we're going to have both Ms. Shay --  
 17 MS. CHANEY: What was the genre that we started  
 18 yesterday?  
 19 MS. LICHTER: It's the repeat.  
 20 DR. ROGERS: What's the genre? You should all  
 21 know the answer now. Both Ms. Shay and Dr. Craft really

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1 walk us through the changes that we've made and what our  
 2 comprehensive literacy program in elementary schools  
 3 looks like. Next slide, please.  
 4 We certainly want to thank Ms. Chaney, as well  
 5 as Principal Coston at New Town Elementary School for  
 6 letting us visit the school.  
 7 On this slide, really helps us to center around  
 8 what we're looking for with our students. Again, we  
 9 thank the Board of Education for your considerable  
 10 investment and moving us forward with a new literacy  
 11 program for our elementary school students. Our goal is  
 12 to make sure that this literacy program, which if you  
 13 look at the graphic that's in front of you, it's our Tier  
 14 1. It's what all of our students are going to  
 15 experience, both in whole group and small group  
 16 instruction.  
 17 And it's our goal that it's so successful that  
 18 we have a smaller percentage of students somewhere in --  
 19 no more than 20 percent, 15 to 20 percent of our students  
 20 that need additional supports. Additional supports being  
 21 Tier 2 instruction, which really speaks to the explicit

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1 and more explicit and systematic instruction for our  
 2 students where we're teaching, reviewing, and practicing  
 3 in targeted areas, and then a much smaller percentage of  
 4 our students needing Tier 3.  
 5 And so we're excited that we have a new  
 6 curriculum that is directly aligned to our state  
 7 standards, and these two staff members will really talk  
 8 you through not only what's in HMH Into Reading but what  
 9 else we're offering to our students. Because there is no  
 10 one product that is going to meet the needs of every  
 11 single student in every single school.  
 12 And so with that, I turn it over to you guys.  
 13 DR. CRAFT: All right. Next slide, please. So  
 14 I know this is a graphic we have used often. I'm not  
 15 going to talk through it at length but, again, just to  
 16 visually remind us of the different strands that are  
 17 necessary for skilled reading. And so as we look at that  
 18 top strand that illustrates language comprehension, that  
 19 is really what our HMH Into Reading is targeting is  
 20 working on that comprehension piece. And you can see  
 21 under the comprehension piece how many different pieces

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1 are involved to becoming a skilled reader, a strategic  
 2 reader.

3 On the bottom part of the rope, you can see  
 4 that is our word recognition strand. And for that part,  
 5 we are still using our foundational skill Open Court to  
 6 teach those skills explicitly. And so when both of those  
 7 pieces come together, then we will see increasingly  
 8 strategic and increasingly fluent and automatic readers  
 9 that become skillful readers. And so we're looking at  
 10 both and the necessity of both of those to really move  
 11 our readers forward and change what our current level is  
 12 when we start to look at the different tiers of  
 13 instruction. Next slide.

14 So when we start talking about the universal  
 15 screeners in BCPS, and if you'll click two more times,  
 16 there's some guidance that MSDE gives to us around what  
 17 those screeners should look like in terms of assessing  
 18 our students. Again, as a benchmark screener to know  
 19 universally how our students are doing. And so they give  
 20 us some very specific guidelines, and they provide a list  
 21 of approved screeners.

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1 Additionally, if you'll click one more time, it  
 2 tells us that you are supposed to screen students within  
 3 the first two months of the beginning of the school year.  
 4 And so that is what we have done. All of our screening  
 5 took place by October 13th, and we are going to actually  
 6 share the results that we have for actually the two  
 7 screeners that we are using currently in BCPS. Will you  
 8 click again?

9 So we have DIBELS 8, and we also have Amira.  
 10 And so we are using both of those screeners. Both of  
 11 those screeners are approved by MSDE, and we will look at  
 12 how our students did on that universal screening.

13 So for DIBELS, you can see, we have several  
 14 schools that are still using DIBELS. And for those about  
 15 17 schools, this is the aggregate data by grade level.  
 16 And so as we know, anyone that is scoring in that red  
 17 range are students that we are going to want to get  
 18 additional information on. Because right now, what that  
 19 screener is indicating is that they're at risk for not  
 20 meeting grade-level proficiency in reading by the end of  
 21 the year. And so this is just a reflection of where we

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1 are at this moment in the fall, based on the DIBELS  
 2 screening data.

3 On the next slide, we're going to show you our  
 4 Amira fall data. And so you can see it again broken down  
 5 by grade. Again, the students in red are our students  
 6 that have been flagged for being at risk. And yellow are  
 7 students that we want to find out some more information  
 8 on. Green and, of course, in DIBELS, the green and blue  
 9 in DIBELS indicate that they are at core instruction and  
 10 are not likely to need additional supplemental  
 11 instruction to be successful.

12 And so when we talk a little bit about the  
 13 different types of assessments we use, so when we do  
 14 Amira and DIBELS and our students come up in that red or  
 15 at-risk category, then we need to get more information.  
 16 And so the screener is really just a quick measure to  
 17 determine if there are students that might be in need of  
 18 more assistance.

19 The diagnostic assessment is going to help  
 20 teachers in making decisions about what instruction that  
 21 students might need and what are the exact areas of need

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1 that are showing up.

2 After that point, we are continually progress  
 3 monitoring through both formative and summative  
 4 assessments to determine if students are making  
 5 improvements and really determine the effectiveness of  
 6 the instruction for the student.

7 And so those three types of assessments work  
 8 together to give us a complete picture and to ensure that  
 9 students are not slipping through the cracks and that we  
 10 are surfacing students that need additional support.

11 Next slide.

12 So for Amira, and I know we've talked about  
 13 DIBELS reports a lot, so we just wanted to show you that  
 14 Amira does provide a plethora of different ways to  
 15 analyze data for the teacher. And so the teacher can  
 16 really look at a variety of different reports to know how  
 17 to plan whole-group instruction, how to plan small-group  
 18 instruction, and really how to plan for individual  
 19 student needs.

20 And so if they're looking at that whole-group  
 21 instruction, they're going to look at that class progress

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1 report. If they want to plan for responsive literacy  
 2 instruction, they're going to look at that skills status  
 3 report. And if they really want to drill down to  
 4 individual readers and know how do I support this  
 5 specific readers, there's a couple of reports that will  
 6 give them very specific information, and those include  
 7 the skills diagnostic report, the progress report, and  
 8 the instructional recommendations report.

9 We have done this training with our principals  
 10 and our reading specialists so that they know how to use  
 11 these reports, how to leverage them in PLC and planning  
 12 time, and also we have quick one-minute videos for each  
 13 type of report so that classroom teachers can look and  
 14 say, okay, what does this report do and how do I use it  
 15 to make instructional decisions? Next slide.

16 MS. SHAY: So I have the pleasure of updating  
 17 you on our professional learning, so I was so grateful  
 18 for the conversation around the calendar because the  
 19 Board has been so supportive about knowing that  
 20 purchasing the curriculum is just Step 1. It's really  
 21 about the professional learning and making sure that

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1 every level of the organization, our teachers, our  
 2 teacher leaders, and our administrators, have that  
 3 support.

4 So we have moved beyond training into coaching  
 5 for instruction. So I'm still going to talk to you about  
 6 updates for training, but training is really just about  
 7 what is it? How is this curriculum organized? How do I  
 8 navigate it? Now, we are moving into coaching for  
 9 instruction. And what that looks like is that every  
 10 single is going to have a school-based coaching visit.  
 11 We've already conducted 15 school visits to date, and we  
 12 have about another 16 scheduled just for this week. And  
 13 I'm going to talk a little bit more in a future slide  
 14 about what those coaching visits look like, but the point  
 15 I want to illustrate is we're now taking it to the  
 16 schools, and they're going to have that job-embedded  
 17 opportunity to have coaching for instruction that goes  
 18 beyond just training.

19 We also have a teacher leader core. This is a  
 20 really exciting initiative where we are building teacher  
 21 leadership, opportunities for teachers who are in the

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1 classroom, practitioners using this curriculum, to also  
 2 develop the leadership so that we have a team of leaders  
 3 right in the building that can support their colleagues.  
 4 This is also an important part of Blueprint. Blueprint  
 5 talks about school districts having to build pathways for  
 6 teachers to develop leadership experiences without having  
 7 to leave the classroom. So that we can have teachers  
 8 like the one we just saw be a leader right from her  
 9 classroom and be able to do both. Our teacher leader  
 10 core, I'll also explain a little bit more about what  
 11 we've done to date. But this is an exciting opportunity  
 12 to build capacity of our teachers to lead for instruction  
 13 using this new, exciting curricular resource.

14 Amira champions, so Dr. Craft mentioned that  
 15 Amira is one component and that has two parts, and thank  
 16 you, Chair Lichter, for sharing your experiences. Not  
 17 only is it used as a screener, but it's used as a  
 18 practice. And so each school has the opportunity to  
 19 identify one or, in some cases, more than one Amira  
 20 champion, which is someone who has an interest in being a  
 21 leader around Amira. So best practices for how to engage

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1 learners, supporting teachers with navigating some of  
 2 those reports, and connecting with users all across,  
 3 really, the country around how to best use Amira to  
 4 support their students.

5 And then we do as a district have virtual  
 6 coaching licenses, and what that means is point of use,  
 7 immediate support right from the publisher and from the  
 8 authors of this curriculum. This is an exciting way,  
 9 again, to spread the wealth so we don't -- we certainly  
 10 as an office work to be very responsive to questions that  
 11 come up. When you're adopting something this  
 12 significant, that is so critical to the priority area in  
 13 our system, we also want to make sure that schools have  
 14 real-time support.

15 And so the way we've been using these virtual  
 16 coaching licenses is, again, to build that leadership at  
 17 the school level through our reading specialists or, in  
 18 some cases, administrators so that they have that real-  
 19 time access to virtual coaching.

20 We are still, though, on the right-hand side  
 21 working on those monthly touchpoints around

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1 implementation. Because while I've said we've moved into  
 2 professional learning, we're not finished. We still know  
 3 that we are working to make sure that we have integrity  
 4 of implementation, that we are really utilizing the  
 5 curriculum the way the evidence-based best -- evidence-  
 6 based research supports, and that we're supporting our  
 7 teachers and our teacher leaders. And so every month,  
 8 this is a standing item for principal leadership  
 9 development.

10 To date, as Dr. Craft said, last month we  
 11 talked about data literacy support and helping them to  
 12 navigate that Amira screening (inaudible). And then  
 13 today, we were at principal leadership development and  
 14 actually, today, our principals got a two-fer. Because  
 15 we had our ELA session was around data around the  
 16 comprehension assessments and the modules, and then we  
 17 did a crossover episode where when they came for the ESOL  
 18 session, the ESOL session was about how to leverage  
 19 resources from the HMH curriculum to support our  
 20 multilingual learners. And this was designed to help our  
 21 principals leverage the resources to support two of our

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1 system priority areas, both with ELA and with supporting  
 2 multilingual learners.

3 We have monthly professional learning for our  
 4 reading specialists where we tap into their knowledge  
 5 base and expertise around coaching teachers. And then we  
 6 also partner with our staff development teachers so that  
 7 there is another resource in the building with that  
 8 implementation. So we wanted to illustrate that we have  
 9 moved into coaching for instruction, but we continue to  
 10 have those regular touchpoints at multiple levels of the  
 11 organization to support that. Next slide.

12 But as I mentioned, we do also continue to  
 13 train. Because we know our district, we continue to  
 14 onboard new teachers. We have teachers that did not  
 15 participate in the summer, perhaps because they were late  
 16 hires. We have trained -- at this point, it's over 4,000  
 17 teachers just in the actual initial training, too. And  
 18 so we want to make sure that teachers -- also, on the  
 19 right-hand side you can see, there are teacher success  
 20 pathways built into the curriculum itself. So we have  
 21 the initial training that is two parts that we've done

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1 with over -- close to 4,000 teachers. But we also have  
 2 teacher success pathways built into the resources, again,  
 3 for point of use. So teachers can access this at any  
 4 time. Next slide.

5 So I mentioned the onsite coaching visits. So  
 6 this is, again, part of our effort to make sure we're  
 7 shifting to implementation. So an HMH coach visits each  
 8 elementary school to provide job-embedded coaching. You  
 9 can here the menu of what might be included in that  
 10 visit, but what's critically important is that the  
 11 principal has an opportunity to direct what that work  
 12 looks like to make sure that we're meeting the diverse  
 13 needs of our schools.

14 So you can imagine the needs of a school that  
 15 has a lot of new educators might be different than a  
 16 school that has some more seasoned experience. In some  
 17 cases, these coaches facilitate grade-level planning. In  
 18 others, they're going into classrooms and providing that  
 19 coaching support in classroom, supporting data analysis,  
 20 and even helping them if they've identified a specific  
 21 component. So a school might say we're doing really well

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1 with the shared reading, but we need help with writing.  
 2 Or we want to talk specifically about how to support  
 3 responsive instruction. Or they might identify, again,  
 4 as we illustrated today, how to support a particular  
 5 group of students, so multilingual learners or perhaps  
 6 students receiving special education, or students in need  
 7 of acceleration and enrichment.

8 The important piece is that the principal and  
 9 their leadership team with that reading specialist gets  
 10 to design that, and they get that job-embedded support  
 11 right within their school with their students and their  
 12 teachers. Next slide.

13 So I mentioned our teacher leader core. Again,  
 14 we're really excited about the potential pathways for  
 15 developing capacity of teacher leaders. Here -- excuse  
 16 me, here's some of what we've done to date with our  
 17 teacher leader core, so again, digging deeper into that  
 18 curriculum to help them learn how to support effective  
 19 planning. But also to help them understand the why  
 20 behind the decision making.

21 Teachers make a thousand decisions every day,

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1 based on what they know about their students. And so  
 2 while we've provided them with this incredible resource,  
 3 they still need to make decisions based on the needs of  
 4 their students. And so part of what we do with our  
 5 teacher leader core is to build that capacity for  
 6 teachers to make that instructional decision, knowing  
 7 what they know about their kids, but also locating those  
 8 curricular supports, whether in HMH or in Schoology.

9 We've also levered our teacher leader core --  
 10 that's okay, you can go to the next one, to help us with  
 11 provide feedback. So we're committed to ongoing feedback  
 12 for teachers and teacher leaders as we work to implement  
 13 them, these resources, so that we can provide and adjust  
 14 our support.

15 So I know this Board loves data, as does our  
 16 Superintendent, so we had 99 out of 112 elementary  
 17 schools represented at this teacher leader core. And I  
 18 put an asterisk there because the 13 schools that  
 19 couldn't attend all reached out to us and said we just  
 20 couldn't let the teachers leave. We may have had a  
 21 challenge finding substitutes. So we are offering

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1 afterschool workshops, and so we believe we're going to  
 2 get to 100 percent of schools that have that opportunity  
 3 for a teacher leader core.

4 We had 427 teachers, so in many cases, we had  
 5 multiple teachers come. We invite them to send  
 6 representatives from every grade level, but we ask them  
 7 to consider trying to send at least one primary and one  
 8 intermediate, since the resources are different.

9 We had 68 schools send us at least 4  
 10 participants, truly committed to building that capacity  
 11 for leadership within. So I'm sure you can hear how  
 12 excited we are about building that capacity for  
 13 professional learning. I'm going to turn it back to Dr.  
 14 Craft on the next slide to share a little bit more about  
 15 professional learning.

16 DR. CRAFT: So in addition to the professional  
 17 learning that we've been doing around Into Reading, we  
 18 continue to do around Open Court. We also have really  
 19 started out deep professional learning around the science  
 20 of reading. And so when we're talking about the science  
 21 of reading, we're really talking about the five decades

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1 of research that has gone into looking at what the  
 2 evidence says around how students learn to read. And  
 3 this is through multiple fields of study, so it's not  
 4 owned by education by itself, but very interdisciplinary  
 5 work. Because we do know that there is a way that the  
 6 brain acquires reading and that there are methods that we  
 7 can use that will be more successful for students.

8 And so one of the things that we always like to  
 9 say is that sometimes we reduce the science of reading to  
 10 phonics, but really the science of reading is around  
 11 phonemic awareness. It's around phonics. It's around  
 12 fluency. It's around vocabulary, and it's around  
 13 comprehension and really understanding what are those  
 14 principles that we are going to use that will lead to  
 15 effective acquisition of reading? Next slide.

16 And so really, as we start to think about -- on  
 17 the left-hand side, you can see, again, that  
 18 interdisciplinary nature of the research is coming from  
 19 so many different fields, from linguistics to  
 20 neuroscience to education to psychology, to inform our  
 21 instruction. And then we really want to emphasize that

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1 the science of reading is not a fad. It's not a  
 2 buzzword. It's not going away. It's not just one  
 3 program of instruction. It's not synonymous. You know,  
 4 some publishers like to be, like, this is a science of  
 5 reading product. Science of reading is a set of  
 6 principles and instructional methodology that can be  
 7 incorporated through a variety of different programs.  
 8 And so that's why it's so important for us to understand  
 9 what the science of reading is so that when we do look at  
 10 programs and curriculum that we can say, oh, yes, they  
 11 are aligned to the science of reading.

12 As part of this effort, we are looking to train  
 13 100 percent of our K-to-3 teachers, that's our kind of  
 14 our first wave, if you go to the next slide, so that we  
 15 can ensure that all teachers know, not only the theory  
 16 behind the science of reading, but what is the practice  
 17 that it takes. And so we have been working not only on  
 18 our K-to-3 educators, but also administrators.

19 And so as part of that, we know that sometimes  
 20 the science of reading can be very theoretical based in  
 21 nature, and so we have started these community of

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1 practices that are aligned to our letters professional  
 2 learning to really help people say, okay. So if this is  
 3 what I learned in Unit 1, then what would that look like  
 4 in the classroom? Whether I'm a teacher, or I'm a  
 5 teacher leader, or I'm an administrator.  
 6 And so at our first community of practice -- so  
 7 it's very new. We had five schools represented, but so  
 8 many people have expressed interest that we actually have  
 9 to find a new location for our second one for Unit 2.  
 10 And so we're really excited because this was really a  
 11 voluntary opportunity to say what would this look like in  
 12 practice?  
 13 And so, really, what some of the feedback that  
 14 we got from the participants was it is great to be able  
 15 to talk to my colleagues across multiple schools. It's  
 16 great to learn about what I should be seeing in  
 17 instruction. It's great to know what are those decisions  
 18 that I'm making in the moment? And so that's really what  
 19 we're trying to foster in those community of practice is  
 20 to provide a safe space to say, well, this is what I  
 21 learned, but I don't really know what that means when I

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1 go and do it in the classroom. And so that is another  
 2 level of support that we're providing, in addition to the  
 3 macro training we're providing. Next slide.  
 4 And so we realize, though, that the only way  
 5 that we get better is to continue to get feedback, and so  
 6 we really do have a continuous improvement cycle. And so  
 7 you heard Ms. Shay a few minutes ago talk about at the  
 8 end of every teacher leader core, we actually have  
 9 structured feedback sessions where they can give us  
 10 feedback about what is working, what's not working, what  
 11 additional support is needed.  
 12 We then take all of that feedback and we go  
 13 through and look for those patterns and trends across  
 14 time. What are we seeing? We also have it by grade  
 15 level, so we can start to see are these across grade  
 16 levels? Are they specific to a grade level?  
 17 So for example, in kindergarten, we've heard a  
 18 lot about I need additional support in the writing  
 19 process. I need to know what I need to do with my  
 20 students. And so that's something that we then would  
 21 then plan our professional learning specific to

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1 kindergarten.  
 2 There's other things that people are saying we  
 3 need in every single grade and that will inform our  
 4 professional learning. We will continue to do learning  
 5 walks, again, not associated to a teacher but to a grade  
 6 level to inform the professional learning experiences  
 7 that we need.  
 8 And we've been very excited that we've been  
 9 invited with several executive directors to walk in the  
 10 buildings with them and to talk about, okay, how does  
 11 this align to the Into Reading program? Tell me more  
 12 about this component. And so we've really been walking  
 13 shoulder to shoulder with the executive directors as  
 14 we're looking at the implementation in the building.  
 15 All of this has provided very rich information  
 16 about what we need to do, what we need to continue to do,  
 17 as well as maybe things that we can drop off at this  
 18 point because they're now at a sustainability point. And  
 19 so at this point, we can take any questions.  
 20 MS. LICHTER: Questions?  
 21 Ms. Pumphrey?

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1 MS. PUMPHREY: Hi. Go I have a specific  
 2 question about the -- or a couple questions about the on-  
 3 site coaching visits. You mentioned that they were  
 4 school specific, so based on a school's needs, which is  
 5 wonderful. What type of feedback have you gotten from  
 6 that? And also, you mentioned that it was 15 schools so  
 7 far that have had visits. When do you anticipate that  
 8 the remainder of the schools will have on-site visits?  
 9 MS. SHAY: Great question. So I'm going to  
 10 answer the second one first, which is that our goal is  
 11 actually that every school will have a visit in the first  
 12 semester, so by the end of January. Because then they'll  
 13 all get a second visit with the same coach in the second  
 14 semester. So that we hope it's not a drive-by, but  
 15 rather that cycle opportunity. So our goal is to have  
 16 all of our schools have their first coaching visit by the  
 17 end of the second marking period or first semester.  
 18 The feedback actually today, several of the  
 19 principals that have had their visit grabbed me in the  
 20 hallway to say, you know, this was wonderful. I loved  
 21 it. I already know what I want to do for the next visit.

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1 We also invited some of our principal  
 2 colleagues. Part of what we do at our principal  
 3 leadership development is let them talk to each other,  
 4 because they don't get as many opportunities. So Dr.  
 5 Craft can certainly chime in, but we're getting a lot of  
 6 feedback of they really like having it in their building.  
 7 That's really huge, and we don't always do that.  
 8 Sometimes, a district of our size, we leverage train the  
 9 trainer or we leverage other models, and so they really  
 10 have appreciated being in that driver seat.

11 The one hesitation some principals have shared  
 12 is it's so new to them, they don't know yet what they  
 13 don't know or need. So some of the feedback we've gotten  
 14 is after the visit, they have a more idea about what they  
 15 want for the second visit. So we have implemented almost  
 16 like a coaching support call before the visit where we  
 17 offer some drop-in coaching hours. The principals can  
 18 come pick our brains about, well, what would you do,  
 19 Megan or Jen, with this visit to try to support them in  
 20 planning. Because sometimes that's the one piece of  
 21 feedback they say is I don't know yet. I want all of it.

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1 Can you help me prioritize? Do you have anything you  
 2 want to add?

3 DR. CRAFT: Yeah, so one comment that  
 4 particularly sticks out, and it was great. They  
 5 organically said if they'd had the coaching visits and so  
 6 one of the principals said it was a game changer was the  
 7 exact phrase that they used. And so, in addition to  
 8 those coaching sessions that we're offering to say, like,  
 9 how do you want to develop your schedule, as we have  
 10 found some good schedules that have been submitted,  
 11 because they submit it ahead of time, we continue to send  
 12 them out to principals. So say, oh, here's another way  
 13 schools set up their coaching visit, and so we're very  
 14 excited.

15 January is the latest. We're trying to get all  
 16 the visits through before winter break, but definitely  
 17 before the end of Semester 1. That same coach, like Ms.  
 18 Shay said, will come back, but in between, they're also  
 19 giving their contact information so they have a person  
 20 that they know that they can reach out to for support.

21 MS. PUMPHREY: Thank you.

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1 MS. LICHTER: Other questions?  
 2 Mr. Young?  
 3 MR. YOUNG: Are the HMH coaches BCPS employees  
 4 trained? So they're HMH employees.  
 5 MS. SHAY: They are HMH. Mm-hmm.  
 6 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Thank you.  
 7 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. Other questions?  
 8 Ms. Harvey?  
 9 MS. HARVEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a  
 10 couple of questions about Amira and DIBELS. You talked -  
 11 - you said that 17 schools are still using DIBELS. Is  
 12 that by preference, by --  
 13 MS. SHAY: Yes.  
 14 MS. HARVEY: -- okay.  
 15 MS. SHAY: Because of the time at which we  
 16 adopted HMH, as you all know, was late in the school  
 17 year, and because DIBELS is something that many of our  
 18 teachers had invested a significant time and training, we  
 19 did for this year offer schools the choice. So we knew  
 20 every student would have Amira practice. We knew that  
 21 the law required they had to use a screener, but we did

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1 give schools the option to choose to stay with DIBELS for  
 2 their screener this year, and we had I think it might be  
 3 19 schools that opted to stay with DIBELS.

4 I also want to clarify, too, all of our schools  
 5 still have access to DIBELS. And so when there is a  
 6 student for whom Amira, whether there's any question or  
 7 the teachers or schools think I'm not sure that this is  
 8 the best fit for a screener for the student, they can use  
 9 the DIBELS screener for an individual student that they  
 10 might have questions about. So it hasn't been eliminated  
 11 from anyone else. It was just the choice they made about  
 12 the universal screener, yes.

13 MS. HARVEY: Okay. Thank you. And then my  
 14 second question is, you talked about the levels of  
 15 support and communication in interpreting the -- and  
 16 analyzing the results of Amira for teachers, including a  
 17 report and a video and those kinds of things. How is  
 18 that getting translated to parents?  
 19 MS. SHAY: Great question. Do you want to talk  
 20 about the parent report?  
 21 DR. CRAFT: Yeah, so there is a parent report



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1 that can be sent out to the parents where it will tell  
 2 exactly where the student is, and it actually gives some  
 3 recommendations for things that parents can do at home.  
 4 And so those should be going home. I actually had a  
 5 school reach out recently and said, oh, you know, during  
 6 American Education week, we're actually going to do a  
 7 little preview of how they would read the parent report.  
 8 And so schools are doing some different things to help  
 9 parents understand. Since we've been using DIBELS for so  
 10 long and so parents are familiar with that to really help  
 11 them understand, okay, well, what does this look like?  
 12 Because it's different than what we were seeing with  
 13 DIBELS before.  
 14 MS. HARVEY: And the report is system  
 15 generated, and is it in plain language? We tend to use a  
 16 lot of technical language that doesn't necessarily help  
 17 parents pinpoint exactly where their children are in a  
 18 process. So does the report require interpretation by a  
 19 second party, or can the parents --  
 20 MS. SHAY: It's a great question because  
 21 educators, we love -- there's no acronyms and educator

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1 jargon. It really talks about -- it gives specific  
 2 parent-friendly suggestions of what parents can do.  
 3 Where I think there is some interpretative and where  
 4 we've been supporting teachers is around what is the  
 5 Amira Reading Mastery, or ARM? What does this number  
 6 mean? And that's where we've provided guidance with  
 7 teachers, and there's actually a resource that goes with  
 8 it that we've shared with reading specialists to help  
 9 them navigate that. So that's a little bit.  
 10 I would say the suggestions for parents are  
 11 pretty clear and explicit for parents. But it is a new  
 12 system and so understanding the numbers and what that  
 13 score means is really where we've been leaning in with  
 14 teachers about providing that support.  
 15 We also heard from some teachers that plan at -  
 16 - and I was so glad to hear us advertising Elementary  
 17 Conference Day is huge. Teachers can actually let  
 18 parents listen to the recording of their child during the  
 19 conference day and actually walk them through that data  
 20 as a part of the conference, which is really more  
 21 beneficial than any piece of paper I can send home is to

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1 actually engage. So we've been really trying to lean in  
 2 on that Elementary Conference Day and support teachers  
 3 with that. Anything you would add?  
 4 DR. CRAFT: No, but those colors are actually  
 5 reflected, so when we showed you the red, yellow, and  
 6 green, that's actually reflected on the graph that goes  
 7 home. And if they are using it as a screener and  
 8 practice, they'll actually have any data that is  
 9 reflective of the screener and/or practice that will show  
 10 a goal line of where we would expect the student to be by  
 11 the end of the year. So it does give some good  
 12 information.  
 13 And then we have an annotated report that  
 14 schools can use that, you know, that's a fake student.  
 15 No names have been involved with it that they could help  
 16 walk them through.  
 17 MS. HARVEY: Thank you.  
 18 MS. LICHTER: To follow up on what Ms. Harvey  
 19 said with the DIBELS versus Amira, is it the intent that  
 20 next year to all of our elementary schools are using  
 21 Amira, or will it still be a choice or not decided yet?

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1 MS. SHAY: So we haven't decided yet, and part  
 2 of that is because we're trying to be authentic to the  
 3 feedback practice. So for example, kindergarten  
 4 teachers. Kindergarten teachers are very passionate that  
 5 kindergarten is different, and it is. And so we may get  
 6 to a point where there's one recommendation by grade  
 7 level. It would be great to have one screener, but we  
 8 are open to the actual process of folks giving us  
 9 feedback about Amira, both grade specific. This is our  
 10 first time now sharing information with parents. And so  
 11 we want to be open to that this year.  
 12 Obviously, there's going to be a screener no  
 13 matter what, because that's part of our obligation, but  
 14 we are really open to making that decision later in the  
 15 year.  
 16 MS. LICHTER: So when I look at the DIBELS  
 17 versus the Amira results, there's some, like,  
 18 discrepancies as far as, like, K -- the K, the red,  
 19 versus, you know, is different. The red for the other  
 20 grades seems pretty consistent. But the DIBELS showing  
 21 us the green and the blue is different than what Amira is

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1 showing.

2 Now, I know the numbers of kids for DIBELS is

3 far less than the number of kids that took it for -- took

4 Amira. Are there any beginning thoughts about why

5 there's the discrepancy between the two screeners?

6 MS. SHAY: So it's a great question. It's

7 something we've also been talking about. So first, one

8 of the things we have to put in the space with DIBELS is

9 it is human administered and human scored. And so we do

10 often lean in and inter-rater reliability, and so this is

11 literally a human sitting in a one-minute timed marking

12 up text for students, which is challenging. And because

13 it's our fall benchmark, sometimes some of the

14 discrepancy may be about training and about the inter-

15 relater reliability.

16 But we also recognize on the flip side with

17 Amira, it's a new technology and students and teachers

18 are learning on how that works. So we don't want to

19 over-decide what it means yet, but it is something that

20 we're looking at.

21 We also talked about making sure we're

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1 comparing apples to apples, because the 19 schools, we

2 did not -- this is not a controlled study, right? So we

3 did not choose 19 schools that are commensurate with

4 another 19 schools. This was principals, where are you

5 with your staff? So we may not be comparing schools that

6 have commensurate populations of readers that they serve

7 to begin with.

8 We're curious, so we're asking some of those

9 same questions, and it's a part of the ongoing

10 conversation. The critical piece, too, to remember is

11 this is a screener. This is not any data point that's

12 used to determine one thing in isolation. It is just

13 that. It's a screener, and the language that we're

14 really specific about is who is at risk for potential

15 reading failure? It is not a sole data point to make any

16 decisions about a student's educational placement. It is

17 just that. It's the warning light coming on in your car,

18 and you pulling it in to the mechanic and saying what's

19 going on? That's really what we're talking about.

20 So we're asking some of the same questions.

21 We're noticing some of the same patterns. It's also

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1 important to note DIBELS has four different cut scores

2 where Amira has three, so we're trying to look at some of

3 the cross-walking, as well.

4 MS. LICHTER: So if it's just a screener, then

5 diagnostic testing would happen for the kids who are in

6 red or red on both of them. What -- you may have said it

7 but I missed it. What does that look like, the

8 diagnostic level?

9 DR. CRAFT: So the other thing I just -- to

10 close out the other question before I talk about the

11 diagnostic is so I happened to be in a school the other

12 day that had selected Amira. And so the teacher was just

13 chatting with me. I was asking her how she liked it, how

14 the kids liked it, and she was, like, I can tell you, I

15 used to grade DIBELS wrong all the time because it went

16 by so quick. And it was just, you know, one of those

17 moments where, like, you know, she was just saying

18 anecdotally. She was, like, but now I can listen back to

19 what they say. You know, she was, like, it's just a very

20 different ballgame for me.

21 For diagnostic testing, we have them do the

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1 beginning and advanced decoding survey which will give us

2 a sense of where some of the breakdown might be

3 occurring. If a student, based on that diagnostic -- so

4 the screener might have flagged something and when we go

5 to check in more, like, nope. Everything's good. But if

6 things are popping up, we will see that in the

7 diagnostic, and it will also tell us, well, what is it

8 that we need to support this student with? And help us

9 make decisions about what level of support we want to put

10 in place for that student.

11 MS. LICHTER: And the diagnostic is one to one

12 with the teacher?

13 DR. CRAFT: That's correct.

14 MS. SHAY: And the diagnostic is consistent for

15 both screeners, so that is used whether you were screened

16 with DIBELS or Amira.

17 DR. CRAFT: That's correct.

18 MS. LICHTER: Thank you. I could ask a

19 thousand more, but I'm going to stop.

20 Ms. Henn?

21 MS. HENN: Thank you. Good evening, Dr. Craft,

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1 Ms. Shay. Thank you for this presentation, first of all.  
 2 It's outstanding. And Ms. Shay, I especially appreciate  
 3 your explanation of the choice of screeners, that that is  
 4 still a choice for teachers. Some may not be aware of  
 5 that, so that might be a communication opportunity.  
 6 A few teachers have reported that one thing  
 7 that DIBELS excels in is with students that have accents  
 8 or --  
 9 MS. SHAY: We get that question a lot.  
 10 MS. HENN: So it's helpful to hear that they  
 11 have the option to use DIBELS. Given that Amira is  
 12 computer based and doesn't have that human factor to  
 13 allow for differentiation, so that would be one reason,  
 14 as you're making that decision, to consider continuing to  
 15 allow that choice.  
 16 MS. SHAY: Sure, and part of what exactly what  
 17 we talked about, two-fold, we've heard that about  
 18 students with speech impediments and wondering about  
 19 whether or not it's really accurate. But we've also  
 20 heard human beings say they don't know if they're  
 21 accurate in scoring that both ways. So sometimes, even

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1 having multiple data points for exactly that purpose. So  
 2 I appreciate the opportunity to say loud and on camera,  
 3 yes. If you've Amira and you have any question about  
 4 whether students who have an accent -- now, the research  
 5 body from Amira, they have tested it with students with  
 6 accents. But teachers know if they feel that it was  
 7 reflective of their student or not, and so our  
 8 recommendation is then use DIBELS. Let's have another  
 9 data point so that we really have that opportunity for  
 10 that student.  
 11 We've also talked about some of our speech  
 12 pathologists listening in to the Amira recording if it's  
 13 a student with a speech impediment and then making a  
 14 decision. If they're going right to a diagnostic, it  
 15 might not be necessary to repeat the screener because  
 16 they'll get that one-on-one human-delivered interaction  
 17 with the diagnostic to help address any of those  
 18 outstanding questions.  
 19 MS. HENN: Thank you. Which brings us to my  
 20 second question. On slide 3, there's a graphic that's  
 21 very clear and helpful. It presents the three tiers of

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1 instruction. Are these targeted numbers? And I notice  
 2 by the footnote, it's not our graphic but rather based on  
 3 the research. And in comparing it to our DIBELS and  
 4 Amira data, the two don't align, so I'd imagine this  
 5 might be -- these might be targets for us? Based on Dr.  
 6 Rogers' --  
 7 MS. SHAY: Yes. So that is what the research  
 8 says. Those numbers are exactly what you just described.  
 9 That's the goal. We've shown this as a pyramid in the  
 10 past. We've shown this lots of different ways. That's  
 11 the goal. It's not our current state. So -- and it's  
 12 not something that we're going to get to in a year,  
 13 right? It's something that we're striving for and that  
 14 we're working towards.  
 15 What the research will also say is when your  
 16 pyramid is upside down, you have to focus on Tier 1. And  
 17 that's really what we're trying to do is to strengthen  
 18 that Tier 1 instruction so that we're truly identifying  
 19 students that have those different learning needs to be  
 20 able to intervene appropriately.  
 21 MS. HENN: Thank you very much. It would be

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1 helpful to see our data as a benchmark in this format to  
 2 compare where we're moving by comparison.  
 3 DR. ROGERS: So I can share with you  
 4 foundationally, Tier 1 nationally as of 2022 across the  
 5 nation at the end of third grade was 67 percent. State  
 6 of Maryland last year was 48 percent. Baltimore County  
 7 Public Schools, as evidenced by MCAP, Baltimore County  
 8 Schools was 43 and 9/10 of a percent. So we're still  
 9 behind the state. Not that far behind, but still not  
 10 where we want to be. Where the goal overall is that  
 11 you're about 80 percent in terms of Tier 1. And then,  
 12 you know, you go lower in Tier 2 and Tier 3, but  
 13 nationally, we're at 67 percent.  
 14 MS. HENN: Thank you.  
 15 DR. ROGERS: You're welcome.  
 16 MS. HENN: And it's helpful. I appreciate the  
 17 descriptions how we're building capacity, and those are  
 18 all very exciting. So thank you for sharing that with  
 19 us.  
 20 MS. SHAY: Thank you.  
 21 MS. LICHTER: Other questions?

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1 Ms. Booker-Dwyer?

2 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: So thank you, Ms. Shay and

3 Dr. Craft. You always have my favorite presentations.

4 So I just have six questions for you.

5 DR. CRAFT: Only six? It's a light night.

6 It's a light day.

7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: It's a light day. So my

8 first question is around the Amira fall data. What is

9 your Y axis? What are -- so 24, is that the number of

10 students, the percentage of --

11 DR. CRAFT: Percentage.

12 MS. SHAY: Percentage.

13 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Percentage of students,

14 okay. And so is there a way to get more granular with

15 this data? So when we see the 24 percent of students in

16 kindergarten, is this overly represented -- is it overly

17 representing one school? Or is this looking at -- or

18 this -- does this equally represent all the schools that

19 took it?

20 Like, I'm just wondering, like, how does the

21 students -- it -- are we seeing it in certain schools?

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1 Are we seeing it with certain demographics of students?

2 Is there a way to get more granular with that?

3 MS. SHAY: Yes. So with -- we can certainly,

4 through the Superintendent and Dr. DiDonato, provide

5 school level, so we can get granular to see the schools.

6 This is in the aggregate at the system level, so we're

7 able to report on the percentage system wide.

8 We do see differences in different grade

9 levels. We also do see differences in different schools,

10 depending on -- and we see that in our KRA data, as well,

11 and some of readiness for kindergarten. So yes, this is

12 the system-level averages. But we do have the ability to

13 provide school specific.

14 DR. CRAFT: But not only do we have the

15 ability, we regularly disaggregate. We look at schools.

16 We look at student groups. We look at demographics and,

17 you know, really interrogate the data and look and see

18 what it's telling us. And also, where we might need to

19 provide differential support.

20 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Right, because just getting

21 at kind of the root cause of why certain students are not

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1 -- especially at the kindergarten level, then that's just

2 saying that they're not even coming in ready to read. So

3 are these students in -- are they in homeschool pre-K or

4 are they in, you know, a -- well, I won't go there.

5 So then with the DIBELS data, so, okay, let's

6 say you're a first grader and you're in red. Do we have

7 DIBELS data from that student last year? Like, are these

8 students being screened every year, and are they moving

9 at all, and could we see that trend to know that whatever

10 we're doing is working? Or do they have a target that

11 they're going for?

12 MS. SHAY: Yes to all the things. So the D for

13 DIBELS stands for dynamic. And the reason that it stands

14 for dynamic is because the standard shifts over time,

15 beginning, middle and end, and also which of the subtests

16 is the priority in reaching this composite score.

17 So it's a both and. We can track the progress

18 of students. We do look at where students ended the year

19 in the year prior. We train reading specialists to look

20 at where they were at the end of the year? Where are

21 they at the beginning of the year? Knowing that that

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1 indicator is dynamic, so it's a one for one. We can't

2 say -- but we are looking at that trajectory. And both

3 DIBELS and Amira clock a trajectory for individual

4 students. So they let us know by student what is the

5 rate of progress that a student would have to make in

6 each of these subskills in order to change that overall

7 composite score?

8 And then both programs allow us, once we get to

9 the midyear, to analyze the summary of effectiveness of

10 each of these tiers. So we will be able to look and say

11 what percentage of students moved from being at risk to

12 being emerging? What percentage of students moved from

13 emerging to being at core? That gives us information

14 about which of our programs are working well and how we

15 might need to adjust.

16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: okay. So with -- and I'm

17 only looking at DIBELS because I know we have a longer

18 trend of data with that. So do we see that our students

19 are moving?

20 DR. CRAFT: Yeah, so -- oh, sorry, did you want

21 to say anything?

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1 MS. SHAY: No, please, go ahead.

2 DR. CRAFT: So actually, last year, not that we

3 were where we want to be, but the state actually had us

4 present at a meeting because we had grown so much and

5 DIBELS, from the beginning of the year to the end of the

6 year, and so really moving students from the red to green

7 or blue on Core or Core Plus. And so we had an

8 opportunity to share a little bit about and that we were

9 kind of in that sweet spot of the third year of our

10 foundational skill implementation.

11 And we also do see a pattern of, you know,

12 which has been documented by research for, you know,

13 nationwide where we do see this -- where they end in

14 kindergarten, right? So then our first grade should look

15 the same, but we do see that summer slide when they come

16 in.

17 We also know that it's not always, you know, a

18 one-to-one match in terms of, like, that's the same exact

19 student group. But I can tell you, when our students

20 come in in the fall, we aren't seeing where they left in

21 the spring. And so really starting to think about, well,

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1 what does that look like in the summer and what do we

2 need to put in place so that we don't see such a

3 significant decline where we're having to start over and

4 try to get them where they need to be.

5 And then like Ms. Shay said, I just want to

6 underscore that we really do look. We went out to visit

7 20 schools last year that had moved a significant number

8 of students from the red, not to the yellow, to the

9 green. And we went and we looked. We watched. We asked

10 what they were doing. We asked how they were planning,

11 you know, and what they did because what we're trying to

12 do is say how are we moving students? What is in place

13 to get those types of results?

14 And so you're right. We do look at it over

15 time, grade to grade, to see what is working and what's

16 not working and what we can learn from each other.

17 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: So that's helpful. And I'll

18 just put in another plug for the summer slide, perhaps

19 year-round schooling. I'm just saying. I'm just putting

20 that out there.

21 DR. ROGERS: Ms. Booker-Dwyer, with the FY '25

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1 budget, while year-round schooling is not an option, the

2 good news that we do have is that we are really taking a

3 close look at our summer programs and what we're offering

4 to our students. Really moving in the same way that

5 we're moving from optional professional development for

6 our teachers to require the same thing for our students,

7 particularly our students who are demonstrating the need.

8 When we look at our data for -- looking at our

9 KRA data, we have a little less than 39 percent of our

10 kindergarten students who demonstrate readiness. And so

11 we are expanding pre-K. As you know, that is our

12 commitment to our communities, so drastically expanding

13 our pre-K offering and even our three-year-old offerings

14 to our students.

15 But then what are we doing over the summer?

16 What are we doing that might not be as summery and, you

17 know, enough, you know, days with the break, but what is

18 -- what does research tell us? What does the evidence

19 tell us in terms of what does that structure of summer

20 school need to look like for students across the summer?

21 How long does it need to be? How many days does it need

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1 to be for us to see gains so that we are not going back

2 and forth every single year, that we're able to see and

3 sustain gains for our students. Because we know that it

4 also has an impact across all of their core subjects,

5 their behavior, their self-confidence, et cetera, et

6 cetera.

7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: No, I definitely think you

8 all are on the right track, and my kids hate it when I

9 bring it up at a Board meeting, so I'll just -- I'll stop

10 here.

11 MS. SHAY: Thank you.

12 MS. LICHTER: Other questions or comments?

13 Ms. Pumphrey?

14 MS. PUMPHREY: Sorry, I have one more question.

15 I was hesitant to ask, but I'm going to ask anyway. So

16 looking at some of this Amira data with the red, green --

17 the chart with the red, yellow and green and I'm noticing

18 that third grade has slightly higher numbers for the red

19 and yellow compared to the other grades. And we know the

20 data shows that students need to be reading by the end of

21 third grade to be successful.

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1 So my question is, do we, or might we, have any  
 2 more intensive interventions for third graders to ensure  
 3 that these students who are at risk -- a high risk,  
 4 especially in third grade, are receiving instruction that  
 5 will push them to that level of being able to read by the  
 6 end of third grade?  
 7 MS. SHAY: It's a great question, and I really  
 8 appreciate the way you added that at risk, because I just  
 9 want to again reiterate, this is a screener. So all we  
 10 know right now is the warning light has gone off. It's  
 11 this next step that really tells us. And then the  
 12 results of that diagnostic determine what level of  
 13 intensive tiered intervention we provide for students.  
 14 So we do have tiered interventions at the  
 15 elementary level, ranging from a double dose of that Open  
 16 Court in a smaller group because when you're thinking  
 17 about intensifying tiers of support, sometimes it's just  
 18 increasing the frequency, duration, and intensity of  
 19 delivery by reducing the group size. So now I'm  
 20 providing that double dose of phonics instruction in a  
 21 group of one and two.

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1 We've talked a lot about how we do have  
 2 training around open -- Orton-Gillingham strategies. We  
 3 also have SIPPS as another Tier 2 intervention. So we  
 4 have multiple programs that we work in collaboration with  
 5 the ELA office and, where appropriate, the Office of  
 6 Special Education, although not every student that needs  
 7 intensive intervention is a student with an IEP. But  
 8 there is definitely a collaborative approach.  
 9 So we do think about at each grade level.  
 10 Second grade, historically, has been the area that we  
 11 really need to flood our resources because of that  
 12 transition from learning to read to getting into that  
 13 content and knowledge building. So at every grade level,  
 14 we take this screening data. We work through those  
 15 diagnostic pieces, and then we plan for that multi-tiered  
 16 support of what those intensive interventions would look  
 17 like.  
 18 At the school level, we do provide  
 19 differentiated support about what will that mean for a  
 20 third grader? We have interventions that we have in  
 21 place even for students in fourth and fifth grade that

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1 might need them. But we really do prioritize that third-  
 2 grade year because of the content demands that will  
 3 happen in terms of that disciplinary literacy when they  
 4 move into the intermediate grades. Anything you want to  
 5 add to that?  
 6 DR. CRAFT: And something that we're doing this  
 7 year on a more systemic level is we are actually  
 8 tracking, so once a diagnostic has been given and it says  
 9 they do need some supplemental instruction or  
 10 intervention, we are tracking that data in our system so  
 11 that we can make sure that those students that popped up  
 12 as needing some additional support are getting that  
 13 support. And also, is that the right support? So if I  
 14 put a student in that support, am I starting to see a  
 15 difference when we do the mid-year screener? And if not,  
 16 was that the right intervention or the right intensity?  
 17 And so that is some of the work that we're  
 18 doing is really around supplemental instruction. So I  
 19 think we have the screening down. We have the diagnostic  
 20 down, and now the real work that we've been really  
 21 leaning in on this year is so what does that mean when we

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1 talk about supplemental instruction intervention?  
 2 And so we have really tried to partner with  
 3 schools. That's actually what we did at our last reading  
 4 specialist meeting, and we're providing places where they  
 5 can document that information so that we ensure that  
 6 we're giving every student that needs that additional  
 7 support that they're getting it.  
 8 MS. SHAY: I also want to reiterate really  
 9 quickly the need to also focus on instruction. So in  
 10 some cases, especially when you see, you know, a third of  
 11 third graders. Again, I mentioned before when Ms. Henn  
 12 asked her question, you have to look at Tier 1  
 13 instruction. So when Dr. Craft talked about part of the  
 14 end result -- Karen Chenowith, an author, talks about the  
 15 most powerful question you can ask is your kids are doing  
 16 better than mine. What are you doing? And that's really  
 17 what we try to do.  
 18 And one of the things that we found is schools  
 19 that are using the Heggerty resources, which is a  
 20 supplemental resource. It's the small little spiral.  
 21 It's about 10 to 15 minutes around phonemic awareness.

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1 That was one of the magic pieces that we heard from  
 2 schools. Every school had it. Not every school was  
 3 using it that way. So I just want to offer that some of  
 4 what happens when we look at this data is also around  
 5 informing professional learning and what happens in  
 6 whole-group instruction because that was one of the  
 7 things we saw was a pattern in schools that were having  
 8 tremendous success was that they were making sure to use  
 9 that Heggerty resource for that phonemic awareness, all  
 10 the way up through third grade.

11 So I just want to say that it's not always  
 12 about putting a student in a different place. Sometimes  
 13 it is, but oftentimes it's also about informing that  
 14 explicit first year of instruction.

15 MS. PUMPHREY: Thank you.

16 MS. LICHTER: Thank you very much for your  
 17 presentation, and for answer -- whoops.

18 Okay, go ahead, Ms. Domanowski.

19 MS. DOMANOWSKI: I just wanted to comment --  
 20 not to single out those third graders anymore, but you  
 21 have to think about these third graders started

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1 kindergarten virtually.

2 MS. LICHTER: They're COVID babies. Right.

3 DR. CRAFT: We're leaning into that data and  
 4 you're right.

5 MS. SHAY: Not an excuse, but it's the reality.

6 DR. CRAFT: It is the reality and that means  
 7 that we have work to do and supports to provide.

8 MS. LICHTER: Right. It's as much a screener  
 9 for kids as it is for the adults that are working with  
 10 the kids. So we just have to keep that in mind. So  
 11 thank you for answering all of our questions and for the  
 12 presentation, and I'm sure we'll get updates as the year  
 13 goes on.

14 The next item on the agenda -- we've had some  
 15 very patient people waiting in the back there. I see you  
 16 back there. The next item is the report on the Watershed  
 17 Public Charter School renewal, and for that I call on Dr.  
 18 DiDonato and Dr. Jones and whomever else they are -- Dr.  
 19 Elmendorf. I don't know if Ms. Widney's coming or not.  
 20 Nope, she's just back there. Okay.

21 Good evening.

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1 DR. ELMENDORF: Good evening.

2 DR. JONES: Good evening. I am Racquel Jones,  
 3 Chief of Schools, and I am joined by my colleagues, Dr.  
 4 Elmendorf and Dr. DiDonato. And we're here to report out  
 5 on the Watershed Public Charter School renewal.

6 The purpose of our presentation is to share  
 7 information regarding the renewal. On August 1, 2023,  
 8 Watershed Public Charter School, per BCPS'  
 9 Superintendent's Rule 1600, submitted to BCPS a written  
 10 notice of intent to renew its charter.

11 This presentation summarizes the report that  
 12 was written and submitted based on the BCPS review of  
 13 Watershed Public Charter School that was required as part  
 14 of the renewal request. Next slide, please.

15 The report describes the purpose and process of  
 16 the review, including a summary of findings for both a  
 17 document review and site visit. The metric -- the  
 18 metrics used for the review were aligned with COMAR and  
 19 the BCPS strategic plan that was in place on August 1,  
 20 2023 when the intent to renew was submitted. And we may  
 21 need to go back a slide, or you want to stay right here?

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1 DR. ELMENDORF: Go back one more slide, please.

2 DR. JONES: Go back one more. I'm sorry. Yep.

3 DR. ELMENDORF: Thank you, Dr. Jones. Upon  
 4 receipt of the intent to renew, the Department of  
 5 Academic Programs and Options convened a referral review  
 6 team, or RRT, consisting of 10 BCPS Central Office  
 7 professionals from the divisions, departments, and  
 8 officers that are represented on this slide. Next slide.  
 9 There you go.

10 Additionally, the Executive Director of the  
 11 Department of Academic Programs and Options, which is me,  
 12 and a supervisor from my department facilitated the  
 13 planning, implementation, and analysis of the review.  
 14 Next slide, please.

15 This slide shows the timeline of the renewal  
 16 process from the date the intent to renew was submitted  
 17 until now. The vote on the renewal will occur at the  
 18 December 5th Board meeting. This gives Board members  
 19 time to reach out to BCPS staff and/or Watershed between  
 20 now and then with any questions you might have to inform  
 21 your decision on the 5th. Next slide, please.

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1 The renewal review process can be broken into  
 2 two sections: document review and site visit. This  
 3 slide represents some of the commendations related to the  
 4 document review that are outlined in the report.  
 5 Highlights include commendations in the areas of student  
 6 achievement, professional learning, financial profile of  
 7 the organization, safety and security protocols, and the  
 8 engagement of volunteers and the community. Next slide,  
 9 please.

10 This slide shows some of the recommendations  
 11 related to the document review. In general, it was  
 12 observed that there are some important practices in place  
 13 at Watershed that could be more substantially documented,  
 14 including professional development for new teachers and  
 15 data related to the implementation of restorative  
 16 practices.

17 Dr. DiDonato will now share findings related to  
 18 classroom observations. Next slide, please.

19 DR. DIDONATO: Site visits included two main  
 20 components, both classroom observations and stakeholder  
 21 focus groups. Classroom observations were conducted for

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1 20-minute periods in 9 classrooms over -- with a group of  
 2 individuals observing within each classroom completing a  
 3 rubric that was agreed upon by both BCPS, as well as  
 4 Watershed Public (inaudible) -- Watershed Public Charter  
 5 School.

6 On the screen, you can see the findings of the  
 7 classroom observations, the commendations. As you can  
 8 see, things that were noted specifically and within the  
 9 whole report. There's some additional commendations, but  
 10 some we highlighted, lesson objectives posted and  
 11 reiterated by the teacher, which means students really  
 12 understand the learning outcomes in the classroom, as  
 13 well as teachers demonstrating their knowledge of the  
 14 standards.

15 Use of flexible seating in the classroom, being  
 16 responsive to students, having them participate  
 17 interactively and move throughout their classroom. Next  
 18 slide, please.

19 In addition to the findings about the  
 20 commendations, some recommendations that were provided  
 21 was looking at other modalities to support student

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1 learning and scaffolding instruction. What that means is  
 2 that if we're providing information auditorily, are we  
 3 also providing it through other modalities, whether it's  
 4 visual, other manipulatives, hands-on learning, so to  
 5 provide that multi-modality approach to instruction. And  
 6 to really look at some opportunities for students, as Dr.  
 7 Elmendorf noted, the student academic profile is a  
 8 strength of Watershed Public Charter School, so really  
 9 looking at the opportunities for advanced academic  
 10 enhancements at the school. So really looking at how do  
 11 we extend student learning there in lieu of not just more  
 12 work, but really a deeper understanding or moving onto  
 13 additional standards.

14 DR. ELMENDORF: Thank you, Dr. DiDonato. I  
 15 just want to mention that the observers in the classroom  
 16 visits, they did acknowledge that their short visits were  
 17 only what they called snapshots in time. And that the  
 18 slides that we're showing you, and even the information  
 19 in the report, are commendations that are related to --  
 20 commendations and recommendations related to the visit.  
 21 But those -- that was a snapshot in time for them.

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1 The second component of the site visits was my  
 2 favorite part, the focus-group areas, especially when we  
 3 met with the students. Staff from the Department of  
 4 Academic Programs and Options facilitated feedback  
 5 sessions with five different WPCS stakeholder groups, and  
 6 they were students, school leadership, faculty and  
 7 support staff, the school governing board, and the  
 8 parents and families. All focus-group sessions focused  
 9 on the areas of discussion listed on this slide. Next  
 10 slide, please.

11 Participants in the focus groups had a lot to  
 12 share. Their reflections are outlined in the report.  
 13 This slide represents some of the major themes and a  
 14 couple of direct quotes from those sessions. I want to  
 15 point out specifically that students feel safe because,  
 16 "There are adults everywhere throughout the building."  
 17 Another quote, "Teachers and staff," this is  
 18 from students, as well. Teachers and staff "go above and  
 19 beyond to foster student learning." That was a fifth  
 20 grader that said that. And fifth and sixth graders have  
 21 what Watershed calls intensives, and that -- students



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 158</p> <p>1 said that's to get help for subjects that they are 2 struggling with.</p> <p>3 I will now turn the presentation over to our 4 Superintendent to share the recommendation.</p> <p>5 DR. ROGERS: Thank you. After considering the 6 recommendation of the BCPS renewal review team, I 7 recommend that the contract with Watershed Public Charter 8 School, Incorporated to operate Watershed Public Charter 9 School to be renewed for a five-year term, running from 10 July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2029.</p> <p>11 MS. LICHTER: I feel like it's a cliffhanger, 12 because we don't vote on that until December 5th. So 13 you'll have to stay tuned and come back for the next one.</p> <p>14 DR. ELMENDORF: So at this time, I'd like to 15 invite the Watershed Board President Sage Magness, 16 Executive Director Jessie Lehson, and Principal Lori 17 Widney up to provide brief remarks.</p> <p>18 MS. LICHTER: Now it's your turn. Good evening 19 and welcome.</p> <p>20 MS. LEHSON: Good evening. Can you hear me? 21 MS. LICHTER: Yes.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 160</p> <p>1 Maryland Report Card from 2022, Watershed received a star 2 rating of four and a total earned percent of 69.8 3 percent. Watershed, as an environmental arts charter 4 school, has demonstrated strong connections to related 5 organizations, the community at large, and most 6 importantly, the families and students at Watershed.</p> <p>7 The school is to be commended for being 8 recognized for various accolades, including charter 9 school of the year nominee, U.S. Department of Education 10 green ribbon school, a recipient of the National Fish and 11 Wildlife grant, and most recently being awarded \$1.2 12 million Renew America school grant from the U.S. 13 Department of Energy.</p> <p>14 I look forward to continuing a long and 15 productive partnership with Baltimore County Public 16 Schools. Thank you.</p> <p>17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you. Thank 18 you, Jessie.</p> <p>19 MS. MAGNESS-HILL: As I'm sitting over here. I 20 promise. If I get sick, I know who gave it to me. So 21 good evening, members of the Board. My name is Sage</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 159</p> <p>1 MS. LEHSON: Okay. Good evening, Chair 2 Lichter, Vice Chair Harvey, Dr. Rogers and members of the 3 Board. Watershed is always happy to be invited to speak 4 to you and, of course, we're pleased to endorse the 5 written recommendation for renewal. We don't have any 6 factual corrections or substantive -- excuse me, I'm 7 getting over the flu, concerns, but wanted to be 8 available to answer any questions you might have. I'm 9 not contagious. It's okay.</p> <p>10 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Domanowski and Ms. Booker- 11 Dwyer, they both just went backwards.</p> <p>12 MS. LEHSON: Sorry. I should've kept that to 13 myself. Sorry. We have no concerns but wanted to be 14 available to answer your questions you might have. I 15 also want to thank all of the BCPS staff involved with 16 the renewal process, especially Dr. Elmendorf and Ms. 17 Kirk, as this was really a big lift for everyone.</p> <p>18 I did want to take just a moment to highlight a 19 few things from the report. Academic growth and 20 achievement, as mentioned by the Maryland Report Card, 21 continues to be a bright spot for Watershed. In the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p> <p>1 Magness-Hill, and I have the privilege and honor of 2 serving as the President of the Watershed board of 3 directors. So on behalf of the Board, thank you to the 4 BCPS renewal review team for the diligent work done 5 through the site visits, the review of our very long 6 application, and especially for our five-year renewal 7 recommendation.</p> <p>8 And I want to thank, also, Dr. Bennett, Dr. 9 Elmendorf, Dr. DiDonato, and Dr. Jones for your continued 10 support of Watershed.</p> <p>11 Watershed's partnership with BCPS is 12 tremendously valuable to our community, and we always 13 want to ensure that Watershed reflects well on BCPS and 14 all the ways that public education serves students, now 15 and in the future.</p> <p>16 As a college academic advisor for under- 17 resourced students, I know how vital access to quality 18 public education is. And I'm grateful as a board member 19 and as a parent for all that BCPS provides for our 20 children.</p> <p>21 We are looking forward to continuing to build</p>

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1 partnerships, both with BCPS and our West Baltimore  
 2 County community. Thank you for continuing the  
 3 opportunity to try something different within public  
 4 education that enables families to choose an environment  
 5 that best suits their child's learning needs. Thank you  
 6 again.

7 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

8 MS. LEHSON: We welcome questions if you have  
 9 any at this time.

10 MS. LICHTER: Any -- Dr. Savoy?

11 DR. SAVOY: I don't have a question. But I  
 12 just want to say, I've been there and it's one -- I think  
 13 it's Baltimore Public Schools' best kept -- County Public  
 14 Schools' best-kept secret. It was phenomenal to visit.  
 15 All the things that happen there, and I'm still waiting  
 16 for my eggs. They do have chickens there, and they  
 17 promised me some eggs when I came back.

18 And it was just so great to see parents working  
 19 in the school with their children. Everybody on point.  
 20 It's a green school. You only use biodegradable things,  
 21 and it was just fabulous. Please keep this school open

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1 for 20 more years.

2 MS. MAGNESS-HILL: We really appreciated your  
 3 visit, Dr. Savoy. It was lovely having you.

4 DR. SAVOY: I enjoyed it. Thank you.

5 MS. LICHTER: Other comments or questions?

6 Yes, Ms. Booker-Dwyer.

7 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: So I have not been to your  
 8 school, but I've heard great things. I know a lot of  
 9 families at your school, and they absolutely adore it.  
 10 And I just had a question. So I know you all right now  
 11 are K-6, right? And you're planning -- so over the next  
 12 -- this is renewed for the next five years. You're  
 13 planning to go up to K-8 by then? And so you have that  
 14 whole plan mapped out and --

15 MS. LEHSON: Yes, we expanded to sixth grade  
 16 this year. We will expand to seventh and then eighth  
 17 grade in every year, like, following. So next year we'll  
 18 have seventh grade. The year after, we'll have eighth  
 19 grade. With curriculum development and input from  
 20 community stakeholders.

21 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And when the students leave

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1 your school, so the fifth graders who left last year, are  
 2 you following them? Are they successful in middle  
 3 school? Do you know? Have you been --

4 MS. LEHSON: So we have only said farewell to  
 5 one fifth-grade class. The other fifth-grade class is  
 6 expected to articulate to sixth grade this year.

7 Following them, no, but we did articulate them directly  
 8 with Baltimore County Middle Schools.

9 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And are your families, are  
 10 they -- do you have a sense that they are looking to stay  
 11 there for middle school to sixth, seventh, and eighth or  
 12 --

13 MS. MAGNESS-HILL: Yes. So we do an interest  
 14 survey midyear to make sure that we know when the  
 15 (inaudible) open and what seats are available.

16 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: Thanks.

17 MS. LICHTER: Any other questions or comments?  
 18 I was trying to get the vote then but we can't do it. So  
 19 we will -- so the Board is scheduled to vote on the  
 20 charter renewal at our December 5, 2023 meeting. Thank  
 21 you for being our audience tonight at the Board meeting

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1 and for your comments and all of the hard work. I've  
 2 been to a couple events at your school and it truly is a  
 3 special place, so thank you. And thank you to our  
 4 presenters.

5 MS. LEHSON: Thank you for your support, as  
 6 well.

7 MS. LICHTER: Where are we? Oh, look where we  
 8 are. We're at the end.

9 The next item on the agenda is Board member  
 10 comments and agenda setting. So again, you can fill it  
 11 in or take a pass.

12 Ms. Domanowski, I'll start with you.

13 MS. DOMANOWSKI: I've mentioned this in an  
 14 email, but I wanted to say it publicly and since we had  
 15 so many questions tonight about Amira, if we could have a  
 16 follow-up presentation on Amira with those, you know,  
 17 more deep dive into what's going on. And I think a lot  
 18 of parents have questions and want to see how it's  
 19 working or the future of it. So that's it.

20 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

21 Mr. Young?

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1 MR. YOUNG: (No audible response.)

2 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Frempong?

3 MS. FREMPONG: (No audible response.)

4 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Stolusky?

5 MS. STOLUSKY: (No audible response.)

6 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Henn?

7 MS. HENN: (No audible response.)

8 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Harvey?

9 MS. HARVEY: Just that the next Building and

10 Contracts Committee meeting --

11 MS. LICHTER: Is?

12 MS. HARVEY: -- is December 4th at 4:30

13 virtually, and we invite all to attend. Thank you.

14 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Drummond?

15 MS. DRUMMOND: (No audible response.)

16 MS. LICHTER: Ms. Pumphrey?

17 MS. PUMPHREY: (No audible response.)

18 MS. LICHTER: Dr. Savoy?

19 DR. SAVOY: There is an equity meeting on

20 Thursday at 5:30, 5:30 to 7:00.

21 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

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1 Mr. McMillion?

2 MR. McMILLION: Yes. The Audit Committee will

3 meet next Tuesday, November 14, at 4:30. But I do have

4 something I'd like to throw out for the agenda item.

5 Only if the majority of the Board members were in

6 agreement. Now that the calendar is taken care of for

7 next year, I think it would be extremely interesting to -

8 - for a number of different reasons, and one of them is

9 staff retention.

10 And another would be, you know, the academic

11 performance is to look at around the country and around

12 the world at other options for the school year. Whether

13 the summer would be, you know, just throwing out

14 different things. You know, an optional fifth quarter.

15 A four-day week, if you talk to some people, and with

16 TABCO leadership, you know, the four-day week is really

17 attractive for retaining people and maybe recruiting

18 people. That would -- you know, a lot of different ways

19 to look at that four-day week. You know, would it be a

20 longer school day? Would it be a longer school year?

21 I think we need -- and really, I'm the oldest

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1 member of this Board, if I'm not mistaken. But I want to

2 keep an open mind to look at other options on -- you

3 know, this is the way we've been doing this forever. But

4 around this country and around this world, people are

5 doing it differently. And there might be some school

6 systems or districts, independent districts, that are

7 experiencing a real, you know, phenomenal performance,

8 academic performance growth because of how they're

9 looking at the school day and the school year and the --

10 and so I just think it would be really interesting to see

11 what else is out there. And just, you know, if the other

12 Board members are in agreement. Thank you.

13 MS. LICHTER: Thank you.

14 Ms. Booker-Dwyer?

15 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: You know I'm in agreement.

16 MS. LICHTER: I was going to say, did you two

17 set that up?

18 MS. BOOKER-DWYER: And so the next Legislative

19 and Governmental Relations Committee is at 4:30 on

20 November 30th. And I don't have any other things.

21 MS. LICHTER: Okay. Thank you.

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1 The last item on the agenda is announcements.

2 This is an important note, especially for Board members.

3 The next meeting is on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 6:30.

4 So it's Monday. That's the week of Thanksgiving. Thank

5 you for joining us tonight. The meeting is now

6 adjourned.

7 (Meeting adjourned.)

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I, Stephanie Crawford, hereby certify that I transcribed from audio file the proceedings to the best of my ability in the foregoing-entitled matter; and I further certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct transcript of the audio files produces.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have subscribed my name on November 14, 2023.

Transcriber

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