

Paul PCS August 2025 Board Meeting Transcript

[00:00:00,000] Hello, T. Hey, Aaron. Hey, Shamira. Dr. P, Yocum. Hey, Bundy and Jackson. Do you have a good day? Do you have a good day at school? Yeah. Good deal. That's Hayes' baby. What grade is he in? First, second? Second grade today. Yep. Next stop, college. Hey, Shamira. Welcome back, Shamira. Hi, thank you. How was your trip? Was it great? I know it was. It was. It was really good. How long were you gone? A little over a week.

[00:01:15,520] Right. You were in Cannes, right? We did Cannes and Barcelona. Wow. Nice. All right. Hey, Murchison. Tracy, I want to let you know my granddaughter is. in labor and she had um the the text came from her dad that my son that she was at nine and a half centimeters at five o'clock so an hour ago so if i get distracted during the meeting it's not because i'm not finding what you're saying fascinating i just may get news and so i may just Flip out for a moment. Wow. And wait, is this, wait, you said this is your, this is your granddaughter. My granddaughter. This is your great grandbaby. We already have several great grandbabies. You know, that adoption thing, let's see. Yeah. Adopting older kids, we have to speed things up a little bit.

[00:02:14,450] So it's not that I'm that old. I'm really not that old. Okay. Just to be clear in case that's where you were going with that. That's good stuff. Hi, Kimba. Hey, Laurie and Miss Wood. See you down there. Hi, did you get the email from Terry? Kimba. No. Can you hear me? I'm having computer problems so I'm on my phone. Oh, um. Oh, no. You see, for, I didn't get an email from Terry. I did get one from Sterling and Jen. Both are going, Sterling's going to be late because he's traveling and Jen can't come today. Yeah, Terry's not going to be here because it's her anniversary today. Oh, but that's lovely. Like Erin, she may be distracted for a different reason, but, you know, I guess we have to understand. Okay, hold on. Let me see if I can at least get into my drive.

[00:03:24,320] Hello, everybody. Can you see me? Can you hear me? Yep, we can see you in here. Okay. When we see Miss Wood. Hello. Hello. Miss Wood, how's your baby? Where is she at? She's actually at Trinity. My signal may go in and out. I'm driving right now. Y'all know I'm always driving. But she was supposed to go to Temple, but she decided to stay local. She had like a... A mini meltdown a week or two before she was supposed to leave and decided to stay. But thankfully, due to the dual enrollment, she got a big scholarship from Trinity. They have like the leadership scholarship that they offer for people who did dual enrollment with them. And they accepted into their program and she started yesterday. That's good stuff. That's amazing.

[00:04:21,140] Bacchus, we may have to pick that up again with our seniors to let them know that type of opportunity exists. That's good stuff. Yeah, I didn't even know. I found out just by happenstance. Actually, I didn't even know until after they accepted her and they sent a letter in the mail. It was like, due to your dual enrollment, here's your scholarship. We were like, wait, what? I didn't even know that was a thing. But thank you. Not that joy.

It's good stuff. Okay, well, in the interest of time, I am going to get started. Is that okay with you, Tracy? Okay. And so I'd like to welcome everybody back to this new school year. It is really amazing to see the faces of both the staff and the board members who are able to join us today for this first meeting.

[00:05:05,940] As usual, we're going to start the meeting by reading the Paul student kind of mission. And so we will start there if everybody is able to open your board books. And I'm having since I'm on my phone and Zoom is not cooperating my computer, I'm going to need people to like, say because I can't see everybody in one screen from the phone. If there's like if there's a hand or something, I'm not able to see it. So I'm just letting people know. So I am going to start with the mission. The mission of Paul is to educate our students and to develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers, and leaders. I can see a couple of lips moving, so I thank you for joining me.

[00:05:52,060] This is our first meeting for the year, and I apologize, and I will do it after this meeting. At the end of the year, the minutes were sent around. mania also shared um in the board books the new minutes or the agenda for today and the board books for this meeting i want to make sure everybody got that and um we do have to vote on approval for the minutes for the end and i'm actually gonna i'm actually gonna hold that um until The end, because I didn't, I'm going to, I'm going to ask Vanya. I didn't, I know I didn't resend them for this meeting, the, from the June minutes. Vanya, did you share those with everybody? Again, I'm sorry, I wasn't doing a very good job multitasking.

[00:06:37,580] I was trying to get the board. Can you repeat your question, please, Kimber? That's absolutely fine. That's part of why I said your name. I said I did not resend like I normally did the minutes. for this meeting to everyone. So I'm asking, did you send with the board book a copy of the minutes from June? I can see Aaron's head nodding. So, okay, so I was gonna pause on the voting on the minutes. So if everyone was able to review the minutes or you were able to see them, and I've seen Aaron nodding, I'm going to ask if there are any amendments. And I'm going to also ask for a motion for the floor to approve the minutes from our June meeting. I'm happy to approve the minutes for the June meeting.

[00:07:19,420] Thank you. And if there's a second, I'm going to ask you to unmute and second. I second. Thank you. Who was that was? Me, Brittany Wood. Oh, thank you. Thank you, Ms. Wood. And so it has been properly, it has been, we have a motion on the floor to approve the minutes. I'm going to ask, I'm going to call names because we do have to make sure, just a reminder, this is the first meeting I'm going to call names. so people can vote. Erin, since you're the first person I see. Aye. Thank you. Lurianne, you are the second person. Aye. Thank you. Dr. Malachi. Aye. Thank you. Ms. Wood. Aye. Shamira. Hi. OK, so for all of the people who are here, it has it is unanimous. And so we will now move on.

[00:08:17,930] And I'm going to actually ask. It's on the agenda. It says that we are going to give the enrollment updates, but I don't think that makes sense. I'm going to yield to Dr.

White. Yeah, I'm going to do all of these things here. Yeah. Yeah. So actually, I'm going to jump right into. The enrollment updates will be part of Ms. Yocum's report out to the group because her team oversees and project manages the enrollment process. And so as you all know, in keeping with our board roadmap for... The topics that we discuss with the board over the course of the year, we always kick the school year off with inviting the entire executive team in. And we call ourselves now the e-cabinet. Because we have expanded as Ms.

[00:09:12,600]Spann has transitioned out. And you'll learn more about that as Dr. Bacchus and Ms. Hayes provide the updates. It'll give you a better glimpse into the shifted organizational structure. You know, since, again, as SPAN has transitioned out, we chose not to backfill that role. And instead, I'm working more closely with Dr. Bacchus and with Ms. Hayes. And so with that, I'm going to ask, actually, Bundy, would you screen, can you screen share for us? Are you recording the meeting? Yeah. Can you, will that allow you to still screen share the slide deck? Awesome. So beginning with just organizational updates, I want to say that we've had a really fast-paced summer. Like summer was... crazy because why was it so short I don't understand it just felt like it literally like we literally closed um took one quick breath and then we opened again that's what it felt like But I have to say that the work that took place over the course of the summer was really, it's always really good work.

[00:10:21,880]But I felt like it was exceptional this year because, you know, we have some clear priorities around. some changes, improvements and shifts that we need to make in our organization. Pardon the gardener, because of course they would come like at six o'clock. When do they ever come at six o'clock? But they knew I was having a board meeting. So excuse the noise. At any rate, we had a really good, strong opening. The Professional Development Institute was phenomenal. We had a wonderful. And thanks again to Aaron and to Kimba. And Pam also came to the 25th year anniversary party. The energy and the spirits that you would have felt in that space were just kind of what it felt like for that entire week. It was really, really good.

[00:11:10,960]We're going to dive right in and give you all a brief overview of our organizational priorities for this year. And I just want to, and I didn't put these slides in, but we shared these with our entire staff. And one of the things that I want you all to know is that, you know, we do a pretty extensive review of the data. both our data connected to student outcomes and then our data also connected to adult outcomes. That includes attendance. That includes, you know, the anecdotal data that are collected when HR does their multiple check-ins and school teams do their check-ins. So there's a myriad of different data sources that we look at to include just the state of the world right now, which is a little bonkers.

[00:11:48,430]to make decisions about our priorities. And so I'm going to share our big four organizational priorities and then punt to department leads who will walk you through their department priorities, which as they are implemented. and they meet those objectives

and milestones will then lift our overall organizational priorities. And then the last source that I have to say, of course, that our priorities come from is our strategic plan. And we'll do more around the strategic plan in September, but Manya included our updated snapshot of the strategic plan in the board folder for this meeting. All right, next slide. So four big priorities, all of them, you know, first and foremost are in service of improving outcomes. But the path to improve outcomes looks a little different this year.

[00:12:39,680]In the past, it was like super focused just on the academic work of our students. But this year, we are really focusing on the student experience at Paul, understanding that motivating our students, celebrating our students, making sure that the environment makes our students feel safe and comfortable. So that they can take in the amazing content of our staff is priority number one. And so organizational culture and strengthening that culture is the first priority for our organization. And we think about that as it relates to our adults that we call our champs. And there's the acronym for champs. And our students that we call our merit scholars. Next slide. So the areas in particular for our adults, there are three that we're really focusing on improving over the course of this year.

[00:13:28,050]The first one is engaging our scholars through a trauma-informed lens. The reality of it is, is that we did some good work with our staff this summer to help them understand what that means. We don't have a single child in our school that has not experienced some form of trauma, whether that's acute trauma because of a certain situation. I don't know, like the National Guard taking over your city. federalization of police, you know, or some of the data from the crime stats over the course of the past 10 years, which we know that all out of 566 schools in D . C., 564 of those schools. have been within the proximity of some sort of gun violence, you know, or it's complex trauma or, you know, long-term trauma.

[00:14:16,600]We understand that our kids come to us having experienced trauma. Trauma impacts the brain and its ability to really connect and focus on the work that we're providing for our students. And so we have to figure out how to engage our students and create an environment where they can learn and thrive. Exemplifying CHAMPS and all we say and do, that's being courageous, humane, achievement-focused modeling and planning, and then showing up and showing out for our scholars. We've made some adjustments to our performance evaluation process to specifically include programming such as office hours for our kids throughout the years, which is a mandate for all of our teachers. And then, it's also it's a mandate for everyone in the organization to support at least two extracurricular activities that our kids are engaged in over the course of the year, whether it's a play or, you know, a sporting event.

[00:15:11,410]We want our kids to see our faces because that also connects them to us more closely. And if there are any questions at any point in time, please stop me. Next slide. For student culture, there are four big areas kicking off the year strong with social emotional learning. This year, we've contracted with an organization called the Found

Collective to do monthly gender-specific activities in terms of how our kids identify. Sessions with our students. We call it 'real talk' that really focuses on providing a safe space for them to open up and to also, you know, kind of affirm and stamp the social, emotional learning and lessons that are happening over the course of the year. Ms. Reagan will talk more about that in her presentation because.

[00:15:59,370] That's the shop that some of these lessons are ready that they're coming out of. We're also focusing on cultivating merit scholars by explicitly teaching what it means to be a merit scholar. And then creating an environment of celebration and ritual. Celebration so our kids feel like they are seen and heard and rituals so that our kids have things to look for on a consistent basis. Okay, next slide. Priority, priority area two, of course, and we don't need to go deep into this. It's attendance, attendance, attendance, attendance. It is attendance because we can't do any of this work if our kids are not in school. So it's all facets of attendance. Priority three, of course, is academics. And you might be saying, well, how come priority three is not, you can switch the slide, Manya.

[00:16:55,560] How come priority three. is not the first priority, academics. Well, the reality of it is, is we have a really strong academic program. It's very strong. It is well-developed. It is very defined. It is very strategic. It is well-communicated, well-conveyed. well-documented. And so as we examine our outcomes, we have to examine what is it that is standing in the way of this really well-developed, well-defined programming. getting our kids to where we want them to be academically. And as we really explored that, you know, the two first priorities that you all saw are those two things that we believe are roadblocks for our students, getting to where we need them to be academically, having a strong organizational culture for them. And then the second thing is.

[00:17:42,920] They got to come to school every day. They have to, because our children don't know how to catch up when they miss a day or two. or 50. So it's really important that, you know, they're there and that they enjoy and feel comfortable in the school that they're in. And we understand that we still have to focus on academics. And if you will. Bundy, go to the next slide. We're still focused on it, but it's not our top priority, although it is one of our major priorities. And so specifically, we're making sure that we have strong tier one instructional practices across all of the classrooms. We have done. A lot of amazing work. And Ms. Hayes, Spann, and Reagan have have collaborated over the last couple of years around, you know, our RTI pyramid in particular.

[00:18:31,180] But what we've learned, because we are data-minded people and from examining the data from our RTI programming, we have a backlog. You know, response to intervention programming says basically no more than three to five percent of your students should need tier three level interventions. Well, we were backlogging and bottlenecking our system and we had tons of kids, way too many. We were at like. 20, 30 percent who was at the top tier and then another, you know, 20, 30 or more percent at tier two, which led us to understanding that things were not happening the way they needed to in tier one. And just for you all's understanding, tier one. is what all of our children get. Tier

two is what some of our students get in terms of instructional support.

[00:19:16,900]And tier three is the most intensive level of support that students receive. So we're doing a lot of work to make sure that tier one is as strong as it can be so that if there are children who need additional support. we feel confident that that support is support that could not be handled in the first year. Implementing our intervention and recovery, you all have seen this multiple times. We're not going to let up on this. And then continuing to use data to drive our instructional improvements. Next slide. And our fourth priority for this year is family engagement. We can't do anything without our families. And so we're going to focus on streamlining communications, increasing participation.

[00:19:59,200]at events, and then making sure that we have really strong partners with our families because we understand that this kind of undergirds all of the other priority areas and that we can't be successful if we're not successful here. So that's the big picture of where we're focusing for the year. I want to punt to department heads to then talk about. how they are taking these focus areas and operationalizing it into work for their respective departments. And because we have new members, I've asked everyone to reintroduce themselves. But before we do that, are there any questions about the four big priorities? Okay, with that. I believe that we are, okay, starting with Miss Yoakum. Great. Thanks, Dr. White. This introduction slide reminds me to share my nail art.

[00:20:55,290]Oh, I don't know if you'll be able to see it with my background, but I've got the cupola on my Paul back to school nails this week. So that's just a little—something fun fact about me that I do my, all my own nail art. I am Kristen Yochum. I am the Executive Director of Operations, and this is my third school year with Paul. So the operations priorities for 25-26, we, you know, I pick a goal or a theme that I centralize our work around for the year, and this year it's one Paul, one purpose. Strengthening systems and culture to better serve every student. So we're doing that in three main buckets this year. The first is strengthening our operational systems. These are our internal operating systems.

[00:21:42,920]We want to make sure that we have a safe and organized supportive operations team that enhances student experiences. We're doing that through, you know, in this first quarter, we're really heavily going in on new event management procedures. These might sound like kind of a small thing, but everything that we do is an event in some ways. And so unifying the procedures and the process for that to make it easier for staff and more enjoyable for students so that they can feel celebrated for the things that we're trying to celebrate them for is really important. We're really trying to reinforce consistency and equity by rooting all of those operational internal systems in the CHAMPS quality. So CHAMPS is not just a poster that we make and put up on the wall.

[00:22:35,110]It is something that we make sure we see in all of our work every day. We're also focusing on delivering high-quality resources. So we're trying to provide safe, welcoming facilities. We want to make sure that our technology is reliable and the right technology for the programming that we do so that our students can succeed. We want to

build student ownership in maintaining those shared resources. It's not my school building. It's our school building. It's their school building. And when it gets damaged, it is something that belongs to all of us getting damaged. This is, in years past, this would have been a really big concern for facilities. And today it is a super important when it comes to student technology.

[00:23:25,740] So the first thing we did this year was we gave students all clear book bags to make sure that their Chromebooks make it with them to school every day safely. They're not, you know, dropped in the street on the way in. But they make it. They come with their charger. They have something now to carry them around throughout the building all day. So we're really focusing on finding those solutions to help students have what they need. And then also high-quality resources for our staff. You know, you probably recall we spent last year building out PowerSchool to be the, you know, end-all-be-all tool for everyone. And this year we're focusing on the training in those systems so that people have, you know, at their fingertips the data that they need.

[00:24:18,500] And finally, you know, as Dr. White just talked about, we are focused on deepening family engagement through partnership with families. So the work that we have already started doing here. is really around that unifying communication, really close partnerships with our families, with our family engagement teams within the school, so that we are all sending the same message. And using the same format to send those messages. If you're parents, you might have already seen our family newsletters that went out that are scrollable and clickable and not 14 pages, but still able to express the information that families need. in a way that they can internalize and helps us to reduce the number of times a day or a week that we need to reach out to families.

[00:25:09,750] One of the things that we are still reaching out to families about is enrollment. And so as promised, here's our enrollment update. We have hit our enrollment target, which is something that we, that I, I will be honest, did not think would happen this year. Citywide schools, LEAs have noticed a decrease in charter school enrollment. We're still waiting on some. some better data across the city to really understand what's going on here. But this is something that, that everyone we know has struggled with. As I said, we didn't think we would get here. One of the things that did happen in these first few weeks of school— first week and a half of school— is that students who ignored all our requests to re-enroll at the end of the year showed up.

[00:25:59,610] And finally did process the re-enrollment. So we have some returners that we weren't counting in our numbers, which helped a lot. And then we're still enrolling. We've seen incredible numbers in the middle school for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. We're still recruiting and we have great incentives for families who know fifth graders. And we're trying to make up for some retention losses in the high school. We didn't retain quite as many students in rising ninth and 10th graders as we historically do. And so we've made up for that by bringing in new 10th graders and bringing in a good-sized ninth grade class. We are still enrolling in ninth and fifth and waiting to see our final, the final shakeout of

what we call our no-shows.

[00:26:51,680] So every year students enroll and then choose, you know, at the last minute to go to a different school. And we have to make phone calls. We have lots of people making those phone calls to find out who they are. Right now, it's under 20 students. which for a week and a half in is excellent. By next, but you know, a week from now, so the Tuesday after Labor Day, that's when we'll really have a good idea of what our no-show list looks like. I expect by next Tuesday for that list to be down to 10. And that way, that'll help us make some decisions on if we want to, you know, make a few more offers to bump our numbers up. But we have well surpassed our budget goal and we have met our...

[00:27:35,890] big number goal, which gives us that cushioning we need. So we are in a good place on enrollment and look forward to having everyone in the building. Yeah, thank you for that, Ms. Yocom. And the heavy emphasis on what we budget for and what we target for enrollment are two different things. Our target is always significantly higher than our budgeted number. Budget number is always conservative. We got to our budgeted number or close to it really fast. And then it was like the faucet turned all the way off and was like a single drip, you know, every six days. Right. But luckily, you know, we did exceed that budget number. And as Michelle said, we have now hit the target number beyond this. So that is really, really good news.

[00:28:27,650] I mean, I also want to second, you know, what she shared about. the number of students who have already shown up to school that has been a historical pain point. We are really trying to shake that whole notion of school doesn't start until after Labor Day because literally school has started before Labor Day for probably almost 20 years now. It's been a really long time. But we do know from, you know, talking to other LEAs and LEA leaders that cross the city and something probably has to do with what's going on, you know, just in the world of Washington, D . C. Schools are seeing record low numbers of students who have reported in these orientation days. So we feel very.

[00:29:06,300] blessed and fortunate that we were literally like looking for 20 kids, 20, 25 kids, as opposed to other schools that are looking for hundreds of missing children, not actually missing, but missing from their buildings. Yeah. Any questions for Michelle? Awesome. All right. You don't want to talk about the nail art. All right. Next one is Ms. Murchison. Good morning. Good evening, everyone. I think I've met everyone on this call. My name is Pamela Merkerson. I lead the talent department for Paul and going into my ninth school year doing so. I do not do my own nails. I don't think I've had my nails done since I had children. So I'm not really fancy like Ms. Yoakum. I actually, when we were putting together these slides, we kind of thought about, it feels very...

[00:30:06,540] very familiar to when we had just met in June and my team and I were collaborating and thinking about priorities for this particular school year. And we've put it into six buckets and we're like going over the list and it looks so easy on paper, like, oh, it's just six buckets. And we know what it will actually take to make this occur. So priorities for

the upcoming school year, of course, include retention and recruitment. And so making sure that we have a full staff. We're strengthening the retention of the staff by investing in recognition techniques, professional growth opportunities, improved feedback loops, which I think is really, really important. I had the pleasure of going to a fantastic.

[00:30:55,980] conference in San Diego this summer that really was able to connect us to a lot of vendors that kind of streamline a lot of our processes, bringing extra things to the table that aren't difficult but have rewards, right? We had small things that we've had a lot of requests for. had insurance, and we were able to link up with a vendor that allows us to do that for our staff, but not in a way that's troublesome. And so next on that list is kind of like looking at what options we could have in terms of helping our staff with student loans as well. Um, next, excuse me, sorry. I'm outside to have some bugs flying around me. Um, under that first bucket, though, definitely expanding our candidate pipelines to increase diversity.

[00:31:41,860] I know you're not allowed to use that word, but most importantly, to ensure alignment with our mission. And I think that we have, as a leadership team, been intentional about adding in our mission and our motto of CHAMPS into our everyday work. And so making sure that that's also something that's highlighted during the interview process, because those are the types of folks that we need to bring into the organization that are aligned with CHAMPS. Second, talent development. So what that looks like is implementing consistent and high-quality onboarding. We want to make sure that we have an onboarding system all the way through 90 days, giving teachers a strong start. We know it's very overwhelming for them in the beginning of the school year.

[00:32:26,780] And so we want to make sure that they know that we're here to support them and all of that. And we haven't just like, oh, you went through orientation and good luck to you. Excuse me. Also, I've had the opportunity to establish some leadership development pathways for internal staff for future vacancies. And I think that that's been exciting because we get a lot of inquiries about that from our team. Third on our list was staff engagement. So obviously focusing on fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and recognition of both each campus. We have some wellness and work-life balance supports that we're really excited to bring out this year. We'll have a new initiative for each month to help the staff in that way. Dr.

[00:33:14,830] Whitehead mentioned that we are also doing some tweaking of our performance management, performance and accountability as a whole. We think that we've strengthened greatly. in the past few years, but always having a space for refinement. And so we're going to make sure that our evaluation systems are transparent, they're equitable, they're aligned with our goals. Definitely have been providing managers with feedback and tools for training. For their effective coaching. Using our data from the performance reviews to really inform professional development is a huge priority for this year. I mean, it is obviously something that the data-driven world is into all the time, but I think that we will have the data, and sometimes it's difficult to make the decision because

you also have... human feelings.

[00:34:06,320] And so we really want to make sure that a lot of our decisions are being based on the data this year. And so being very specific and intentional about that. It literally didn't last. Fifth, compliance, least fun of all. It has been an incredible year in recognizing that there was no Department of Labor, no national labor. Bureau Statistics, OSHA. So a lot of the compliance pieces that we have been held with for a while are a little in flux. I think that. our thought process was best to just keep it as status quo. So no, there's not an OSHA, but that doesn't mean we're not going to make our work environment safe, right? So we're using all the same standards, even though currently that baseline of what is needed is definitely gray.

[00:35:02,600] So but in that really helps to work in in cohesion with our labor attorneys. They really help us with adhering to labor laws and organizational policies being maintained. So that's a whole thing this year, of course. We definitely want to be leading with confidentiality and legal compliance in all of our HR practices. And so we've all gone through some additional training for that, just to remind folks in this season what is needed to make sure that we're always in compliance and on the right side of the law. Lastly, would be our human operations. So we've streamlined our HR processes to improve efficiency and reduce administrative burden. This, of course, has been the development of allowing a lot of HR requests to be gone through our platform of FMX.

[00:35:54,320] So we're moving those requests along more safely as we've had some concerns with internet phishing and more accurately. Those are the strategic levers that directly support student outcomes, we think, and what we're really working on. Ultimately, our goal is to enable the staff to thrive so that our students can thrive. Thank you, Ms. Markerson. And I just want to say really quickly, like that's a really important part of our strategic plan. It is our, it's our fifth priority. We have five, we have five strategic plan buckets, the fifth one being operations. And so, you know, really making sure that our operational priorities for the year. and our human resource policies for the year align in a way that supports the development of the organizational culture and of course the academic programming and outcomes for kids.

[00:36:49,460] And so with that, I'm going to now, any questions for Ms. Markison? I have one question. Are we fully staffed or do we still have any vacancies? We've just added, we are fully staffed. for all of our campus roles, middle school and high school, we are fully staffed. We are at a space where we're recognizing that our needs may require an additional teacher, but for all planned teachers, those roles are done and we're really excited. But right now we're interviewing for some supplemental and we also take this time to interview. just in case there's any transitions early in the school year. We've been in a good place with staffing for a good amount of time now, Erin and board members.

[00:37:32,320] I would say, though, that we had there were some really good learnings that we had this year because we were able to offer retention bonuses at the close of the

year. So we were actively budgeting to hope to be able to do that. It may not be to the same extent, but. Definitely, it pushed some decisions sooner rather than later, which put us in a really good position to avoid any Sunday night resignations when it came time to come back for the year. And, you know, we did have one or two, but luckily, you know, the HR team had already staffed those roles. Because if you pass upon a retention bonus, especially given the size of the bonuses that we were able to give this past school year, and you tell us you're going to pass on the bonus, but you're still coming back— Yeah, we won't go ahead on staff for that.

[00:38:22,879] Sorry. Can we move on to the next slide? I don't have anything else to say, but I thought that might help Ms. Albright in just kind of looking at what recruitment looked like for us this year. Bye-bye. So if now, if you have any other questions, otherwise I'm going to zip it. Thank you. All right. Next slide, if you will. And I'm going to punt to Dr. Bacchus. And Dr. Bacchus, if you'll just open, just sharing a little bit about yourself and your expanded role and work here at Paul and how long you've been here with us as well. Yes, good evening. I'm Lynette Buck. I'm the Director of Leadership Development. I've been at Paul collectively six years.

[00:39:05,980] I've been in multiple roles and have been here a couple of times, but I'm so happy to be here and be here in the organization. My work is broken down into four areas, primarily the supervision of the head of schools and specifically looking at people management and accountability. And also leadership development. And so this is about deepening the understanding execution of core leadership competencies, and specifically thinking about how do we get leaders to strategically think. How do they also execute it in emotional or maintain emotional intelligence? Ensuring that their communications are aligned to the organizational outcomes and how can they have influence so that they can move the needle in terms of the people that they manage and meet the strategic priorities. The other two areas are around college and career readiness and our career and technical education program.

[00:40:10,109] So, if I move to the next slide, three priority areas for leadership and school management priorities are around these three: planning, execution, and building. Specifically, these are focused on building. building strong data-driven leaders. And so, thinking about what do they do at every level, by developing them around their core leadership competencies. Specifically, I think about these competencies through three areas: managing the work, collaborating within their teams or across teams, and then also driving accountability. And so I see this through areas and teachers are also developed. I know very often Dr. White talks about us building a leadership within, and so ensuring that we have a clear pipeline to do that. And so that work does happen at the leadership development level, ensuring that we're advancing these pathways and deepening our teacher leadership, reinforcing movements as well.

[00:41:17,730] Right now, we do have one of our leaders or principals who is now in a principal PLC through our... school leader lab this is also our partnership with teacher for

america which we do have we've done a lot of onboarding of our tfa teachers within our school and so this is just making sure that we keep strong pathways in partnerships with some of some of the organizations that provides specific pipelines to us. Next up is, next slide. Thank you. Is the organizational data review. And this is mostly specifically focused on reviewing and action and monitoring of our data. And when I think about this specifically, the overall goal for our organizational data approach. is to ensure that our data drives our strategic decision-making, accountability, and continuous improvement across our organization.

[00:42:18,030]And so we do this through making sure that our leaders are aligned to results. And so, how do they align to... um, the outcome of our metrics? And that's being really clear and so making sure that they're executing on their project plans to ensure that they are meeting these metrics. How do they then make course correction in the event that they're not? Making sure that we provide support consistently in their decision making. So making sure that there is a creation of very structured process, review, analyze, and act upon some of the data that we have within our organization. The last two are around data organization impact. And so, making sure that what we do looks at and how we are engaging in it is accurate, that we are making some movement on this in a very timely manner.

[00:43:11,560]And that we are also identifying gaps really early so that we are seeing a cycle of this through various organization organizational structures and that we are now. as a result of that we're able to improve the outcomes that we're seeing for our scholars with our organization one one one area that's very very specific and very important is around the separation between tactile and strategic uh focus and so making sure that operationally we are looking at how do we engage in some of these more routine issues that we see within our organization. avoid diluting some of our focus on very small things when we need to be very high, focus on our high priority metrics. And so how do we stay high enough to engage across our organization?

[00:44:02,190]and then go deeper in some of the other structures. And so when do we need to be tactile and when do we need to be really, really strategic in our lens and our data? Next slide. is college readiness and career and technical education. And so for our early college and dual enrollment program, we're really looking and thinking about expanding. And this is actually for all of our programs specifically, our CTE and our early college and dual enrollment. is making sure that we're now focusing on the equity of access. And so making sure that we are meeting all of our microgroups across a variety of our microgroups, not just our L and our scholars with IEPs, but thinking about like ours being really strategic about our...

[00:44:48,660]economic disadvantage scholars, MKV scholars, scholars who are migrant scholars, et cetera. And we want to make sure that they're the equity and access to our dual enrollment program and our CTE programming through our advanced technical education center. Which is also a dual enrollment program, that they have equitable access

to ensuring that they have a pathway post-secondary. Also making sure that we're keeping high rates, pass rates, which we have been able to maintain that within our organization. We want to continue to do that. And so making sure that we're maximizing transferable credits so that scholars can get as someone mentioned earlier scholarships to have access to school and in making sure that we're strengthening our partnerships and so year-over-year we do build our institutions and higher education partnerships.

[00:45:41,560] And so that pipeline is growing and we're really excited about that. That gives students more choice in how in organizations or schools that they want to engage with. In terms of our CTE pathways, one big priority is to continue to build out our internal career and technical education program and information technology, specifically computer science. And so this year we're in our second year. And after this year, we will then become a concentrator. And what that means is that our students will be able to take certification exams to get certifications to to garner access or get access to career scholarship. and college access. And so we want to make sure that we are building that pipeline internally while also maintaining our partnership with the Advanced Technical Center.

[00:46:32,460] Now, because the Advanced Technical Center is engaging more with other LEAs, that does reduce our in-seat access at ATC. And so we want to make sure that we are expanding our internal programs so that we are giving more of our students opportunity— for our organization. This is also critical in terms of making connectivity to entry. Several of our students have gone on, have been a part of our CTE program and have gotten into programs where they have early access. And one of our students is actually entering. um her first year of college as a as a sophomore because she was able to earn her credits through the cte program and our partnership with atc and lastly i want to highlight our alumni engagement specifically making sure we're closely tracking the outcomes of our scholars and so making sure that They are persisting.

[00:47:33,410] And so this is really critical in connecting them back to three areas, I think, pillars that are really important. Family, making sure we're connecting to continue to connect with their families. Making sure that we're continuing to connect students to what's happening in terms of what they've learned in their secondary education programming. Thirdly, how do we continue to connect them to their experiences? In terms of their external experiences. Specifically, looking at partnerships that we've had at other institutions, making sure that we are making connections to some apprenticeship programs that we have built out for our students. And so they're able to work and then also go to school. We're also formalizing this alumni network where students are coming back to do TED Talks with our scholars. So we are building that in for our.

[00:48:32,560] our 11th and 12th grade students to be able to engage with our alum who will lead some TED Talks to support our students and giving back to the students at Paul and making sure that we're providing. this more advisement system for our students. So they do return back to us three times a year. That's what we plan for this year to come back, do three advisement sessions for them to. continue to persist or to launch in the case

they did not launch in the fall. We have two other opportunities and that's the spring and summer. And so that's the work that we're doing currently for career readiness. I mean, college readiness priorities. Any questions? those four. Okay. All right. Thanks, Dr. Bacchus. All righty, Wendy. Next slide.

[00:49:29,890]And now I'm going to punt to Ms. Hayes. If you'll introduce yourself, talk a little bit about your role and how long you've been here at Paul. She's our Director of Academics and Accountability. Hi, good evening to you all. I'm happy to be here. I am over the academic team, which includes our instructional specialists, our new teacher mentor, as well as our... L, Instructional Support Manager. So I've been with CALL for five years. I came over 2020, and I'm really excited to be here today. So we can go to the next slide. Thank you. So there are four real priorities that I wanted to highlight to you all that we're really focusing in on. I'm going to start with, I'm actually going to go clockwise and start with.

[00:50:31,800]SL and IS partnership, because that is at the root of a lot of the work that we are doing. My partnership with Dr. Bacchus and the school leaders is critical to make all of the other aspects of our work really stand out and really have an impact for our scholars. We've always had a fairly strong process or partnership between our instructional specialists team and our school leaders. But we have recognized that we really do need to strengthen that partnership in being more intentional with how they are working together and paying attention to what Dr. Bach has referred to about the critical data and really following the data that is telling a true story about where our scholars are, where our teachers are. And so we really are kicking off this year in the summer.

[00:51:34,220]Re-establishing what it means to have a strong partnership across our teams and why it matters. Our school leaders and our instructional specialists will continue to meet regularly as a full team in our cross-campus instructional leadership teams. But it's really critical that that meeting is just a baseline. They have to meet regularly, both formally and have some collective partnership, whether they're meeting to go see teachers. to look at data together so that they can collectively and in alignment guide teacher development and monitoring scholar growth and achievement. So that's really at the crux of making the rest of these boxes really work. So I'm going to go down to teacher development. And two areas that I really wanted to highlight within our teacher development is our course collaborative team meetings.

[00:52:32,760]They are not new, but we have found those to be one of the most important aspects of our work. particularly because our Friday PDs are just one space. Our course collaborative team meetings meet on a weekly basis with our instructional specialists. And that's where we really expect our teachers and our instructional specialists to really be diving into the scholar data, not waiting until the end of the week or not waiting until the end of the advisory to look at massive data. And we found that, over the course of really overseeing and managing and facilitating those course collaborative meetings in a more structured way, we're paying attention to the data more consistently and being able to

respond.

[00:53:27,360] One thing that we were really pushing this year is to make sure that in the course collaborative team meetings that we are underscoring the importance of maximizing instructional minutes with our scholars. by looking at the data and deciding on where our small group instruction needs to happen on a regular basis. We started a lot of this work last year, really starting to track our student data from week to week, shuffling students, paying attention to... who's in what block and where are those students performing. We're continuing that this year and we really have a good baseline to continue that work. We also are excited that we're moving all the way to pair assessment, which is our data platform for So we used to use Illuminate, but we've fully moved over to Pear Assessment this year across our entire, all of our content teams.

[00:54:31,900] Last year, our math team adopted it. And we're kind of the guinea pigs to try it out. And then they talk so highly of it that other teachers started to use it. We were able to use it fully for summer school. It's a very intuitive platform. The reports that it gives not only us as leaders.] but more so our teachers really will help them better understand and cut the data in a way that helps them not feel overwhelmed by the data, but they can use it to their advantage to make instructional decisions. So we're really excited about that. And then the other thing under the teacher development is our new teacher mentor. This is our second year having our new teacher mentor. We're really excited to continue to expand the impact of our.

[00:55:23,590] new teacher mentor working across both schools this year. We have a large number of new, very new, first year teacher new teachers in both the high school and the middle school. And last year, our new teacher mentor was really squarely working with our middle school teachers. But we have a large number of teachers in the high school that need that support. And so we're really grateful to have the new teacher mentor coming back for a second year. Across both schools, really focusing on setting that foundation for a strong and safe classroom environment that opens itself up for strong instruction. On the left-hand side, learning recovery. I know it's all of your favorite topics. It is mine as well. So much so that we've been talking about it for four months.

[00:56:21,330] Literally in May, we started having learning recovery planning meetings. And so it was a delight. To be able to finally launch it this week with our scholars and last week with our teachers. We did a lot of intentionality with our IXL and reflex learning recovery plans, have learned a lot from what has worked specifically in the middle school and bringing that over into the high school. We are starting strong day one. We've already been in classrooms today, making sure that students weren't having those hiccups in their launch of their learning recovery plans. We're also aligned to what many of my colleagues have talked about, the intentionality and the accountability structures for being clear about what we expect from the gate. so that we're not spinning our wheels around what is the target?

[00:57:24,330] Everyone knows what the target is. Our scholars do and our teachers do, and we want to be able to celebrate that and course correct when we know we're off track. So that is a big part of our work this year and excited to share some of that positive data in a few weeks when it comes out. Additionally, during the learning recovery, our academic deans have really built out. a plan for celebrations and incentives for our scholar engagement. So we hope we're excited to continue to lift that up. Additionally, our HMH interventions courses, Read 180 and Math 180 is coming back again. We do have three out of the four teachers are brand new to the organization and to the program.

[00:58:11,500] So we have spent a lot of time over the summer to not only to develop our teachers but also our leaders. Our leaders, our school leaders, myself, a few other folks at the network level have spent a total of four hours with HMH getting shored up on the HMH platform on the program so that we are super clear on how to lead our teachers this year. In addition, we are excited to have two intervention lead teachers who are experienced teachers in their content area, and they are excited to serve as mentors to our intervention teachers. And then we've also invested in HMH-facilitated coaching. So they are kind of at our beck and call. We've invested in Coachly, where they can set up weekly coaching meetings with HMH experts to help us look at our data, see where we can continue to improve, help us troubleshoot some of those tricky scholars that we're trying to figure out how to get them to move.

[00:59:31,900] How do we get them to understand the foundations of phonemic awareness? So we are really leaning into that heavily in the professional development realm of intervention. And then, coupled with that, we want to see if it works. So we're paying attention to monitoring the data and bringing back those biweekly organizational reports. So we're staying close to it across the year and not waiting until midway and end of year to see our growth. And then lastly, assessments, all of our favorite topics as well. We are bringing that back with a few things. We feel good about our assessment programming. We've come a long way with... making sure that we have strong plans, that it's strongly communicated.

[01:00:23,030] But we do recognize that we have room to grow in terms of making sure that all of our scholars across any of our testing windows have a common experience. We have leaned into or leaned back into the fidelity of oversight of our programming, talking about having a common script so that our students and our proctors get used to reading a testing script for even NWEA as well as interims. We're also making sure that as school leaders and network leaders, we're monitoring the fidelity of the testing windows so that we can give that feedback early and we're not giving folks feedback during high-stakes tests so that it becomes the norm of what we expect. Lastly, we are continuing to build upon some really great work last year, where we were establishing strong routines and systems to build scholar investment.

[01:01:26,230] and build their motivation. So we're continuing with goal setting with our scholars, and then we're also doing a lot more to increase the celebration of scholar

performance after each assessment. Any questions for me? Thank you. And you all have this slide deck. So if you want to go back and revisit and have any questions, by all means, you can. And closing us out this evening, Ms. Reagan. Good evening, good evening. My name is Rose Reagan. I'm the Executive Director of Student Support Services, and I am starting my 14th year at Paul. Next slide. And so we have three major priorities connected to just our strategic plan for this school year. The first is culture and scholar support. Dr. White did a little bit of forecasting at the beginning about some of the work that we've been doing.

[01:02:30,110] For many years, we have been talking about the Paul way, the Paul way, the Paul way. And this past summer, we spent some really good and extensive time codifying the Paul way. in a 70-page manual that really speaks to our scholars' experience, our expectations for them, and then the staff's. role in supporting the scholars with those expectations. In addition to that, we did some really great training with our staff this summer so that they really internalized the Paul Way and 10 culture systems that are connected to our Merritt Paul Way. We also focused on our social emotional learning. That's a big focus for us this year. As Dr. White stated, we have partnered with an organization called FAM Collective. They are out of California and have done some really great work with scholars who identify as male.

[01:03:37,120] And I just, you know, focused on life skills and who am I. and my responsibilities as a scholar. And so we had them here actually yesterday and today. They did their kickoff meeting in our high school where they met with all of our scholars who identify as male across. the high school throughout the two days and just really started some of that critical work to really just promote a sense of self as a scholar at Paul. So you probably wonder what happens to our young ladies. And so our social work, our mental health team. which consists of about 10 clinicians, have been working with our girls over the last two days in the high school and doing the same work that FAM Collective is doing just to...

[01:04:31,130] really focus on who am I and what does that mean for me and how I show up in life and how I show up as a merit scholar at Paul. And so that's something that's going to be happening every month. There are some sessions that are virtual, some sessions that are in person. But our scholars are really going to have this real close connectivity with these content experts in helping to just enhance their own identity and what that means as to be a scholar. Really, really, really excited about that. In addition to that, we have really expanded our SEL, just a structure or programming within our school. And so our school counselors this year are owning social emotional learning for our scholars. And we have a thematic calendar that we're working from.

[01:05:26,740] And literally every single week, through various ways, they're teaching lessons connected to the thematic calendar. In addition to that, our families will be getting weekly updates on what our scholars are learning so that, you know, they can ask questions and reinforce. And at home as well, because not all be done at school, right?

We have... um our families who are scholars first teachers um that really uh are in this with us and so that is some really exciting work that we're doing um with our scholars and and really that sel work is happening in so many aspects of their day, from morning announcements to, you know, messages that they'll see on the e-board throughout, the boards throughout the school, at lunch with the deans of culture who leads lunch, and then again at the end of the day.

[01:06:23,480] So really, really exciting work. In addition to that, you know, we have just really been focused on intentionally developing our adults, our teachers and staff. so that they feel equipped to support our scholars as much as they can. As Dr. White stated that at the start of the school year, we did an intense... very comprehensive dive into trauma-informed support and looking at how we educate and support our scholars through a trauma-informed lens. And, you know, we started the conversation with them around, it's not like... It's just our scholars who've experienced trauma. We all have. However. Due to our own brain development, we have the necessary life skills and coping skills to deal with what we're dealing with every day. Our scholars do not.

[01:07:19,230] And so when they show up, we have to be able to support them based on and meet them where they are and what their needs are. So really excited about that work that is happening with our scholars because we know that it's going to be a slam dunk to the work that's happening with them academically. In addition, this year, we're going to begin codifying the program and connected to developing the development of global mindsets in our scholars and what that means. I apologize for the typo, but that is some work that we're going to be diving in starting in October and really excited to share out more with y'all throughout the year. Our special populations is another area of focus. As you know, we have a robust special populations at Paul and it is continuing to grow.

[01:08:15,410] our ELs and our students with IEP, that population is continuing to grow and we have to make sure that we are equipped with all of the necessary tools that we need to support them. in their academic growth. And so that is a continued focus for us. We've been focused on that, but that is a continued focus, as well as intensifying support for our high need scholars this year alone already. We have gotten some, a few scholars that have enrolled with us are extremely high need and scholars that we typically would not be able to service, that we would immediately be advocating with DCPS for private placements. However, we are developing a plan to really try to do our best to support these scholars. And we're already seeing some wins with some of the scholars that we're working with.

[01:09:12,200] And so that is an area for us as well, is to continue to intensify our support so that. we can support scholars at all ends of the continuum. Scholar-led IEPs, we started this work last year with our juniors and seniors that they were able to really lead their IEP meetings and advocate for themselves and share. their goals and their strengths and areas that they want to focus on. And our goal is to have, um, that process for all scholars at every grade level, including our middle school. And so that is some work that we are

continuing to focus on this year with our case managers working very closely with our scholars to first understand their data. We have a saying in our department that it's all about the data baby.

[01:10:02,560]They have to understand their data so that then they can internalize it in way, help us internalize their needs in ways that we may not be able to understand. And then just continuing to really be intentional about professional development for our staff, just so that we can, we're doing all that we can to support our scholars. As you know, we have. um several scholars with um dedicated aides as we call them uh student support technicians we have about 14 scholars right now and i think we're getting ready to add a 15th and so you know these are scholars with a um it's you know high need and um and and To be honest, the support that our scholars need, their dedicated aides are not they don't go to school for this.

[01:10:57,420]You know, they are, you know, folks that are passionate and wanting to help scholars with, you know, with with needs, but they need to be trained. And so. We have a whole training institute that we started a few years ago and we've continued to intensify it so that we are providing our dedicated aides with as much support as possible so that they can support their scholars. And then, last but not least, for special populations, it is just continuing to have strong oversight of our non-public placement scholars. They are our students. They are our students. They are our students. And so we are monitoring them very closely. We're meeting with the non-public placements on a monthly basis and definitely leading, guiding, and supporting the work that needs to happen with them.

[01:11:45,500]In those placements, so that they are able to graduate and go to college and pursue the necessary goals that they have for themselves. And so that is some very important work that we're continuing to do. Next slide. Last but not least, attendance, attendance, attendance, as Dr. White said. Last year, last spring, we started, you know, really revamping how we supported scholars that. had some attendance concerns and we started an attendance campaign, which was called Power Up. And it was really an action plan to that all adults that touch scholars were a part of this action plan in really, you know. analyzing data on a weekly basis, developing strong action steps to address whatever discrepancy of whatever concerns were in the data, celebrating the heck out of scholars that were coming to school daily and on time.

[01:12:50,080]And then even identifying case managers, which could be anyone, right, that could closely work with scholars where there were concerns about their attendance. And that process was very successful. It was a lot of work. It was hard work. But we finished the year off with very favorable attendance percentages in both schools. And we have continued that action plan this year. Our campaign is called Show Up and Show Out. And we started that work this summer with just positive messages to families about the importance of attendance. And, you know, little did you know about scholars that miss days of school versus come to school each day. And so we really are focused first on tier one, just in terms of making sure that. All our families are getting all of the important information

that's necessary about attendance and, you know, making sure that our scholars as well and putting some incentives and things in place to really celebrate those that are, you know, meeting the goals right away. And hopefully that that will then ensure that our attendance, the scholars that need more are not that many. And so that's what our goal is. So we have some really good work to do, looking forward to doing with regarding our attendance priority.

[01:14:23,480] All right, any questions for Ms. Reagan? Okay. All right, thanks team. And I'm gonna ask you all to stay on. So you all have, your cup is full board. You all have very clear. understanding of the work that we have to do this year. And once we share our data, it will make some of that a bit more real during closed session. So I'm going to move on to our financial report. And if you all will go to your board book and I've asked the. the cabinet to stay on. Usually I release them after they provide their reports, but I ask them to stay on so that they can be part of the conversation about our data that we'll have during closed session.

[01:15:08,930] So if you can just open up your personal board book and then cabinet, Manya emailed you all so you can... follow along we're going to take a look at the finance slides um very briefly because there's not a ton of new information um but there is really good information here um so you all will remember um That last year we received the ERC credit, the employee retention credit that we actually applied for probably about two to three years prior. That along with really strong financial management from. Our internal team supported by EdOps and guided by our finance committee, you know, put us in a position where we were able to offer retention bonuses to staff, which was great.

[01:15:54,260] In addition to that, we did what we call kind of the great spin down, which was, you know, did a lot of pre-purchasing of things that we were going to need for the year. Because we had that additional room in our budget. Well, we did a great job of spending, but still landed in a very incredibly healthy financial position, as you can see. where our cash balance is at the end of the year. You see our days of cash, our gross margin, and our debt service coverage ratio, which is pretty significant. If you move on to the next slide, you'll see the key changes in revenue. You'll see that our earnings from our investments in the common fund and also our ICS account. paid off big this year.

[01:16:42,410] We have had a really good conversation in the finance committee. I promise you, Sterling is on a mission to make me the smartest finance girl. On the face of it, because, you know, in thinking about, you know, what we have amassed in terms of our, you know, our revenue and our reserves, I'm just trying to think of a way that we can leverage in particular our reserves. And so I met with the bank. You know, just to have conversations with them about our debt service coverage ratio, which is not necessarily an end for us to be able to, you know, better leverage our reserves. But we are thinking about doing some things differently with our investments. Potentially, I'm in the process of researching some of those things.

[01:17:27,020] So that we can better leverage, you know, our investments. And you'll see,

like, our common fund investments are doing really well as our ICS accounts. We have a higher Medicaid revenue this year that's higher than what we originally projected. And then we applied for and won a summer boost grant. We had... additional armor summer programming this year that we got about 38k for but we're not doing that anymore sometimes the the funding is not worth the um everything you'll see people shaking their head by dr b is shaking her head yogam is shaking her head like we're not doing that It was nice. We tried it. We're okay. So in terms of changes, you will see some of that great spend down, which, you know, hits our cash balance.

[01:18:19,730] So we did a lot of leasehold improvements. You're going to see a lot about that over the next course, over the course of the next couple of years. One of the things on. Ms. Yocum's things to-do list is to commission a pretty extensive facilities evaluation so that we can do some physical planning and thinking about, given the level of reserves that we have, like, what would it take to truly modernize our space and expand? Ms. Reagan talked about, you know, we have these three to five students who have some pretty extensive special needs. And part of that includes them having their own classroom space. We don't have any classroom space. I mean, zero, zilch, nada. And Sterling, I have to tell you about what I learned in researching whether or not we could buy the land.

[01:19:08,430] The land, again, I'm going to be the smartest finance girl and a real estate agent. We can't buy the land, but we do need to figure out how to work within what we have. And then computers, you know, we spent less than what we budgeted, although we did purchase MacBooks for everyone. And then there were some higher ending accounts receivable. So those were some of the key changes to cash. Looking at our KPIs, you can see all of them are very much in the green, which feels really good given the state of the world, particularly the federal world, and particularly as it relates to federal funding. You know, we, of course, were part of the scare when we thought that we weren't going to get any of the Title II through.

[01:19:58,130] I think it was like five or six. I can't remember. But the good news is, is that because of how we budgeted, even if we did not get that revenue, we we budgeted enough cushion to be able to make it through that difficult moment. So we didn't have to go through that moment, which was great. But yeah, so we were good. If you go to the financial revenue overview, you'll see the variance in terms of revenue, the variance in terms of expenses. In the change in cash, I want to take your eyes down to the last. row where it says changing cash you'll see what our actual was and how far above what we thought we were going to end the year with in terms of our our cash we were significantly above that So it was a good budget year.

[01:20:46,980] I'm going to push you down just to our common fund performance. If you go down a couple of slides. And you'll see if you go to the end, you'll see our year to date gains and losses where our year to date gains are remarkable. We don't typically include this in our budget. And so one of the things that the finance committee. is in myself we're working on is like figuring out how to better leverage our gains, you know, for our actually

in real time budget. which for our common fund, we have always budgeted zero for that because that money is in the market. So it's volatile versus our ICS interest accounts where those accounts, the interest rates are all fixed. So this is not volatile, right? It's only volatile in so much that you change.

[01:21:37,020]The amount of money that you have in your bank account. And so you can see, if you look at the last two columns, particularly what we budgeted for, for FY25, this is what we thought we would earn on interest. But when you look at the year-to-date gains, you'll see how much more we actually earned. So we're doing some movements in terms of our money to increase the amount of interest that we're able to accrue in real time so that we can better leverage those dollars and cents for the benefit of our students and staff and families. Any questions about that? Okay. With that, Kimba Hendrix, I'm going to pump back to you until it's time to talk about the data. OK, there are only two very brief points that I have in the board book.

[01:22:30,020]There are two forms that I want everyone to take a look on that. We have our individual. There's the. long-term year-long board map but then there's the board goals that have our goals um kind of identified by the committee and um and how those um what's not on there is how those will be measured and so um in our next meeting i'm going to ask for some input on that. And I will likely follow on with our chair leads on how to make sure that we are evaluating ourself against this, our board goals and making sure we have something to check in on to make sure that we are on the targets that we set for ourselves.

[01:23:12,770]The goals are very similar to what they were last year, with the exception of one change due to our environment, because that was one of the goals that we had around diversity, equity, inclusion, and that one was changed. to tracking our strategic plan, which because we have a new strategic plan makes a lot of sense. And so in the interim between this meeting and our next one, if you have feedback or any questions, please let me know and reach out to me so that I can coordinate with you and we can make sure your feedback is incorporated. into the map, which will be discussed in our next meeting. And then additionally, I will touch base with all of our committee chairs and leads.

[01:23:51,730]so that we can make sure that we are evaluating and have some kind of metrics to do to make sure that we are on track and on target. The second thing, and this is in your board book, is Manya included our conflict of interest form in the board book. Please make sure you fill that out prior to our September. Go, I'm gonna, I saw Manya's hand. We're going to send that out via DocuSign or Panda Doc. I'm going to talk to my business manager and see what's what. But it correlates with the vendor list for a school year 24, 25. So everybody who we spent more than \$5 ,000 with, that's who we need to make sure nobody else has any affiliations with. That's perfect. So I rescind what I said.

[01:24:36,290]Please do take a look at it just so you know if you have conflicts of interest so that when Mania sends around the one that allows us to do an e-sign rather than a wet signature, that you will be able to do that pretty quickly and we will have those. And that is

all I have. Oh, one more thing as we transition, because we are not ending the meeting right here. We voted in June to do a closed session. So at this point, we are going to transition into the closed portion of our meeting. So that we can review the embargoed data that was released for the student data.

[01:25:18,110]There's no vote needed to close the meeting. Yeah. We voted in August. It's in the board book, everything that's been approved. Okay. Awesome. All right. Bundy, will you refresh your slide deck and then. Yeah. Will you refresh the slide deck and then let's go. One second. So this is an adjourn.

Paul PCS September 2025 Board Meeting Transcript

[00:04:12,473]Welcome, everybody; our first in-person meeting of the year. I'm always excited to see everybody in person and see everybody's faces, and also, when we are in person, we have delicious food; so thank you to Tracy and team for food. As always, we will start with the mission, so does everybody have their? So the mission of PAL is to educate our students, to develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers, and leaders. Manya shared the minutes from last meeting, and they are in your board book. In looking at them, if you were able to look at them prior to the meeting today, does anybody have any changes that are needed to the August minutes? Okay, seeing that, I am going to ask for a motion from the floor to approve the meeting minutes from August as they are entered in our board book.

[00:05:18,193]Thank you, Erin; can I get somebody to second that motion? I second, thank you, Dr. Malachi, and I am going to call people in. Manya, is anybody? Okay. Okay, so I will call the people present in the room. Present. Vote for. Oh, yes. Thank you. I am going to talk about it. Sally, oh, you weren't. Erin, yes. Thank you, Sterling, and thank you. So it has been unanimously first, second, and unanimously voted on. So the meetings are into meeting minutes from August are entered into the record. And then we are trying to figure out the slides. The slides, okay, so I will yield the floor to Dr. White so she can do her report. Thank you. We were trying to figure out the slides really quickly to see if I could just show them up here.

[00:06:25,852]Awesome. So, good evening, everyone. Welcome to our first in-person meeting of the year. First in-person meeting of the year. The school year has gotten off to a really good start. We have a really great team. We have always had a really great team, but have spent the summer doing a lot of work, and it feels like we are moving with a different level of intentionality. You know, being rooted in our vision 2035, very quickly making sure that our work is aligned to the things that are in that vision 10 years off. We have a date that's coming up; you don't know this yet in October. So we can actually start to build out even more of the programmatic pieces that our students are really hungry for right now that help them to kind of lean into that notion of what it means not just to be a responsible citizen but to be a citizen of the world.

[00:07:25,832]Our children are very interested in what's going on right now, don't necessarily know how to contextualize everything, so we realize that we have got to start to also build out experiences to help them know what to do with all of what they are feeling these days. So that said, it's good to know that even though the world feels really topsy-turvy right now it doesn't feel topsy-turvy in here. And so that just is a testament, not just to our students and our families, but also to the adults in the building. So, there are two big pieces that I want to share with you all for reporting. Today, we're going to do part two of our accountability metrics review. We already went through our CATE data back in August.

[00:08:12,853] We also talked about some attendance data, but we'll look at that again. You will recall that each September we kind of do a deeper data guide that lists some of the metrics that don't necessarily fall in our accountability framework, or that was still kind of being processed through when we met back in August. But before we talk about that, I have to share with you all that change is coming. I can't remember what day it was; I texted you, Kimberly, about a week or so ago. On a random Tuesday, I got an email from Aussie that was like, surprise, this is the last year that we're taking the CAPE exam. Whatever. I thought you were going to ask a question.

[00:08:54,531] So 2020, last year, was the first year that the scores counted, because the first year was like a baseline test, and they were getting together, like NGP, growth data, and all that other kind of stuff. And so, with our Aspire framework, the Aspire framework, this was the first year it was supposed to go public, but not necessarily have your scores on there. But the data would be public, but they would not necessarily say that you were a level 1, 2, 3, or 4, or 5. There are actually five levels. Well, we get this email way out of the blue. There was no conversation or dialogue about this. It didn't even come from the state superintendent; it came from somebody in the data department. And we're like, dude, WTH, what's going on?

[00:09:45,991] What do you mean, like this is the last year? They just passed a whole accountability framework based on this assessment. And as anyone knows, when you push the reset button on assessments, it's minimally two years until you can put that data in a framework because you have to score it. You have to have growth data, the whole nine. So we had a meeting last week with the state superintendent, and it was very tough. And to be honest with you, there were no answers. They rushed through it to get to a conversation about model cell phone policies. I know, literally, it was like seven minutes, and it was, I know. This is a question for safety reasons or something, or just? No, it was like, we're not going to talk about this.

[00:10:35,892] I put in the check, can we please not rush through this? You just sent us an email; that means it's public. People are going to have questions; we have zero answers. And what we did learn was that the PCSB was not necessarily informed much before us either. So where did this decision come from? I have no idea. I mean, I would think that the runway to make a shift on a state, high-stakes assessment, I would think that runway was at least two years. They said that they got feedback from people; I'm like, who were the people? What were the processes? Nobody even knew that this was working. I'm imagining that the contract is multimillion dollars over several years, so it has to go through a big process. Our state is already on the Smart Balance Consortium's.

[00:11:28,692] So, it feels like maybe these wills were in motion for quite some time, but no one told us. So, we have a meeting coming up next week on Tuesday because we've asked to have a longer meeting, or we can ask questions. This means a full-on revision of our curriculum. It means fully revising our interim assessment system, which we have used now for almost eight years and have it for eight grade levels. Yeah, so the new assessment

is from the Smarter Balance Consortium. And the good news is that they do have interim assessments that we can purchase, and we were told that we'll be able to use those resources free for one year. But how much do they cost?

[00:12:16,132] Because the out years for the budget ain't looking pretty, so we're making this shift when the council has already said that we should not expect an increase in our per pupil funding allocation and that we should not expect anything in terms of our facilities funding. But we now are going to need to make a pretty significant investment, not just in human capital but in financial capital to shift all of our learning to make sure it aligns with the assessment, because you do need to teach students all this, because there are a ton of standards. And while you need to cover as many of the standards as possible, it's no different from if you plan on going to law school at the end of your four years of college and you're going to do courses that prepare you for that assessment so you can gain entry.

[00:13:12,751] It's no different with our students. But that means because we are literally changing to a whole new assessment system that we are going to have to work this year to ensure our students do well this year. But we also, we've already had one emergency meeting. We're gonna have to, we're having a series of meetings to start to build out a timeline for how we're going to revise our curriculum to be ready for the first day of school in 26. I'm sorry, I understand that this may not be relevant for Paul because of how diligent you are with Paul's finances. But from a district-wide perspective, for LEAs that are financially strapped and challenged, what harm does this potentially pose to district children for schools that can't afford, because they haven't budgeted, to completely rework the curriculum to align with their new tests when they thought that they just did that for the last week?

[00:14:13,923] And I mean, it could be devastating, like there are tons of questions, like schools that just got through their review process, but they have conditions. And like, I'm thinking of one school in particular; they had a tremendous number of conditions, really high stakes conditions, and they did well this past year. But now, the executive director's side kind of feels like the rug's being pulled from under us because we have one more year with Kate, and then we're trying to figure out how we're gonna get ready for the SMART Balance, you know, assessment. That sounds like sabotage; it sounds so intentional to me. Yeah, it does; it's meant to just turn everything you say. It's meant to make sure there is no success here. Yeah, I don't know where this is gonna be by us.

[00:15:02,903] But yeah, I don't. Also, how different are the two? Have you seen? So we are, after next week, hopefully, we can get access to some like sample materials. Like I know a good amount about the SMART Balance assessment consortium because when the Common Core Standards were first passed back in like 2015, there were two big assessment giants out here that states were opting into. And it was either the PARCC assessment or it was SMART Balance. At the time, I was doing some professional development in different places across the country, and I would always use items from SMART Balance, which were very, very literacy heavy. Like, even their math, the portion,

math portion of their assessment was very literacy heavy.

[00:15:49,662] Like, you know, those days of you being able to do math problems because, you know, you were good with numbers, but maybe not so much good with words. You know, we saw PARCC, you know, really challenged kids with that. But I would say that SMART Balance, from what I had seen in the past, looked to be a bit more challenging. Once they really, you know, open up the portal so that we can at least start to see stuff, we'll be able to tell. They have said that they're going to have a couple of pilots for schools this year. So we're also watching very closely to see who gets picked for those pilots, because of course people want to get picked for pilots so that you can have access, so you know how to prepare your kids.

[00:16:31,923] So we'll see. The other thing, really quickly, I will say—did Maryland or Virginia get similar? I'm just, just because the whole rule was on the table. You know, Virginia is standard; they do their own thing. They never conform in any of this, like they were like, whatever, we're good. Maryland came away from PARCC; however, they do still use some PARCC items. But, you know, we'll have to look to states like California, I think Ohio. California is like their biggest state that does Smarter Balanced, so there are a lot; there's a good number of states out there. It's just, I think the thing that concerns me— I'm not concerned, you know, they believe so much about financial investment. I'm more concerned about the time for staff, employees, and expertise to go through and realign curriculum.

[00:17:22,403] They don't have to rewrite all of it, but they have to realign it. But the part where they do have to rewrite are assessments. And then we need to go through, now, a couple of years of that collecting that data to see how it aligns and lines up with what our kids are actually going to be assessing. And we have done all of that and have been in this flow. And now we have to do it all again. And this is the last piece that I'll say: it's really important to note we're coming up on our 30 year renewal, not a review. We just finished 25 review. Renewal is different from review. Review, if you're struggling, you can get the review with some conditions; they don't typically do conditions for renewal.

[00:18:06,484] And it's not that I'm worried about that, but that's a lot of transition in this little five-year bucket of time leading up to such a high-stakes moment with the PCSC when kids are still in recovery. Correct. Exactly. And the world is going. These very kids are gonna have to readjust are the ones who will be tested. If they're the ones who just got through COVID, the most profoundly affected by COVID will be the ones who you'll have to reassess in this new system. That's right. So we don't know what it means for our SPIRE framework and those types of things as of yet, like we'll find that out soon, but yes, they posted. We'll let you know.

[00:18:52,164] So this notion of teaching to the test, how is that contributing to that notion with the switch or not compared to Virginia and other places who just don't use these assessments? Well, no, Virginia uses, they use assessment. They just use their own. They

use their assessments based on their standards of library. So, everybody has an end-of-course or end-of-grade kind of assessment. Like, Maryland also uses like end-of-course assessments. Everyone has assessments. It's just that we, in our state, ours was PARC, then CAPE, which was the same thing. And now it changes the SPIRE balance. The example that you use about SPIRE balance has more literacy, in particular, to the math. Those are some elements that, again, counterbalancing teaching to the test, you don't need to change anything about literacy.

[00:19:47,725] No You just need to incorporate it more into the math and the other parts of it. Yeah, and give the children more, so it's more tweak as opposed to steering your curriculum to this particular instrument that's being used to assess. Well, I would say for not for our curriculum, that's correct. Like it is gonna be realigning. Like there were certain units that happened at certain times of the year to give students multiple times to master kind of those heavy standards that were assessed on CAPE. Let's say Smarter Balanced; let's say there are three standards that are heavily assessed for 10th grade ELA on CAPE. And so we've been strategic about making sure that those standards show up multiple times throughout the curriculum. Well, let's say Smarter Balanced does not weight that standard heavily, right?

[00:20:35,924] Let's say that maybe instead of like 10 items on CAPE, on Smarter Balanced, there are only two. And so now we need to like think about how often this standard in particular comes up in the curriculum because there may be another standard that has a greater amount of emphasis and focus. And so it's not that we have to fill the baby out with the bathwater, but as you can imagine, and there are a ton of standards; I don't know how many, well over 50. There are a ton of standards for ELA, a ton of standards for math. And so figuring out like what makes sense, and then the part that is going to require redevelopment are our assessments. And so those are formative assessments and our interim assessments, and that is a pretty significant thing.

[00:21:20,564] And it's the opportunity cost, right? Because that means you're doing all of that instead of moving forward. I mean, essentially, you're redoing instead of doing something. We're building a plane while we're flying it. And what I will tell you in regarding these conversations is just from a, I'm just not comfortable going into the year with a plan to build while we're in the year, so like, we got to figure this out before we get there. You know, sometimes it's like, okay, as long as we get quarter one done, and then while quarter one is happening, we'll start quarter, like, we can't do that. You can't do that with an end of the year test, no, because you don't know what you should be emphasizing quarter one if you haven't planned it all the way out.

[00:22:04,185] That's right, especially when the end of the year test doesn't come at the end of the year, correct, that part. So there's a good amount of work, there's a good amount of lift, I would say, you know. Sorry, this is done. This is like definite? Oh, it's done. That's the other part of it. Yeah, there was no open comment period or nothing. Like, we're now like asking, well, can we delay it a year? And because you have to remember that means

that this contract has to be terminated with our current assessment provider before you were even notified, right? And who made that decision? I don't know why. Random question, you can't do that. Something, something happened. I feel like there's a scandal in there. I don't know, is it a home-grown thing?

[00:22:52,809]In my head, everything has an angle, right? For sure, that's for sure. Somebody's benefiting. Who knew who? I don't know. What never tells you what? Slop math. That's the biggest thing that's a concern with me. This has always been my issue, when things get in the way of actually assessing student knowledge. So, if it's literacy-heavy for math and someone is struggling in literacy, but they're good at math, then you put a barrier in front of them to be able to show what it is that they can do, because they can't. We already know that they're struggling in literacy, and so now you are creating this situation where it's not even really showing what they're supposed to be able to do. Yeah. Yeah. And then what do I do for the student?

[00:23:38,570]If I know I'm great at math, I have something to shine for. Yeah, you've now just taken that away from me. That's right. But now what? What do I have to look for? I get these questions like this all the time. It's like, that's not a math question. You asked them to find three t-shirts. What if they don't know the word t-shirt? You're not focusing on a number, you're focusing on the word. So we're going to get into it, we're going to start to build out. Like I said, we're starting to build out our timeline for revision work, we'll launch revision work in January. It will have a financial impact this year. We'll find out more. We've asked questions like, who's our rep? Give me their phone number.

[00:24:14,789]Let me start talking to them now, so that I can think about how much this will cost. What things can I purchase now in a budget year that is not tight? I'm not professing tightness over next budget year, but I also know what the position of the council has already said the city is in. We all know that, so we're working on it. We'll have a plan for it, but that's really important for you all to know to contextualize our data, because in a moment, it all is getting ready to shift. Yeah, and which council member is over education? Has there been one? Sorry, it's Mendelsohn, Phil Mendelsohn. Oh, so he put it under him. Yeah, yeah. So with that, I know.

[00:25:01,869]Want to go over a couple of additional accountability metrics from last year, starting with attendance and re-enrollment. Numbers that you see in purple are in purple because OSCE is still going through the process of validating those numbers, and what we anticipate is that these numbers will increase some once OSCE finishes the validation process. So what you'll see is our in-seat attendance rate from last year for our middle school to this year. We had a pretty significant jump in our in-seat attendance rate; we are still trying really, really hard on attendance this year. We also saw a pretty good decrease in terms of our chronic absenteeism last year to this year, and again, we have some pretty strong, aggressive goals to continue to reduce chronic absenteeism and just absenteeism overall for our students.

[00:25:59,190] Our re-enrollment rate, as it stands, is roughly 86. 9%. Those are for our students who re-enrolled for last school year; remember, this is a lagging metric. We anticipate that going up a little bit once we get the numbers from OSCE. For our high school, we saw a slight increase in our in-seat attendance rate and a very nominal and slight decrease in chronic absenteeism, and it's nominal as that chronic absenteeism decrease is. We fought for that with every fiber of our being. In the spring, we launched a new attendance initiative that really addressed the fact that we were not seeing our chronic absenteeism in the high school go in the wrong direction. We still have a lot of work to do with our families on understanding the importance of kids getting to school on time, I mean, this is on time in every single day.

[00:26:59,110] It's hard sometimes for families to remember that when kids miss a day of school, they don't necessarily have the pockets of the schema to know how to come in and pick up what they missed. And while we want to ask teachers to bring them up to speed, we have to remember that's a huge task. They still have to teach the other 103 kids who were not absent the day before. So figuring out how to pull in the seven who were is hard because the train never stops moving. So we've had a good, strong start to attendance this year, but it's a metric that we will remain highly concerned about and watch very closely all year long. We're investing a lot of money this year in incentives for attendance.

[00:27:45,706] I mean, a lot, because whatever it is that we can do to really encourage our kids to come, awarding them scholar dollars, and we're in the process of rolling this out, but I'm like, let's get us a school store, put eyelashes in it, pimple patches, phone cords, you know what I mean? Like things that kids want to buy. That's real. My daughter became disincentivized by the scholar dollars. She's like, I've just been collecting these. Yeah, the store's never open. No, there's never anything in there. So she... Any of the stuff that's in there, I'm like, the kids, like, okay, how many bags of chips can one eat? I mean, I know they can eat a lot of them already. I know, I have a cookie mom.

[00:28:27,825] It's a cookie weapon for their edges, right? All of that stuff, that's a weapon. I can't talk from here. Oh, that is, yes, well, no, we can sell it outside, and then they can, hopefully, you're right, but we'll have to get something else for that. But even if you have the edge control gel, it's expensive, you know? And if we put that stuff in the store for the kids, things like that, that they want, like body spray, yeah, with the overage, yeah, with the overage, yeah. I know I'm using it for the teachers, so you can give it to the kids. Here's another question, what's the connection with extracurricular activities? And it's really a two-part question. One is, are the kids engaged in extracurricular activities, and is attendance tied to that?

[00:29:15,166] And I'll just give you, before you answer, the reason I'm asking that is because the only reason that our oldest son went to school is because if he wasn't there, he couldn't play soccer. Yeah, and so it was like, that's the only reason that he didn't go to school. It is tied to that for sports, so it's definitely an extracurricular. We've also tied attendance to being able to go on field trips and all of the senior activities because that

was a sticking point last year. Our seniors coming and making sure that they were here consistently. So we've tied attendance, and we tied 95% attendance rate. So we are shooting high for our kids. And is that working? I mean, we've had a good, solid start.

[00:29:55,465] What's also working is like the regular communication with the kids, pitting classes against one another, you know, for who can have the highest attendance rate. Those things have been helping, but we still have too large of a handful of students. I would say that tardiness is an issue. Sometimes, you know, Ms. Reagan went through, excuse me, tardy hall, and read all of the kids' reflections this morning. And, you know, their reflections are, I'm doing the best that I can. Like, I left my house an hour early and, you know, got on the bus, blah, blah, and I'm still here late. And so what we realized is that there's some additional support that we need to give them in terms of planning and preparing, but then also supporting their families to know what they need to do to make sure that the kids get here on time.

[00:30:46,146] I have a, just, it's like every June drop-off in the morning, and I, like, every now and then what I don't see is, like, a Safe Passage Officer. What is it, the bottom of the hill right here as you cross onto Missouri? And I'm only asking it because every now and then I will see kids come, stop at the bottom of the hill, and meet up as a group. Yeah, and then go the opposite direction. But I also don't see, like, a Safe Passage Officer or any of the teachers at the bottom. Yeah, and I just, there was one morning where I was thinking that, I was like, these little girls have run all the way around the block, because I just, like, saw them, like, five times.

[00:31:17,866] I was like, they are clearly trying to run away, like, for stuff that we see, like, that's not hard to find in school when you have it all circled. No, because I was just sitting there. I'm like, my kid walks slower than the last, so I was just sitting there. And then I had entertainment because I was looking at the lunch buns running around. So for stuff like that, I don't, I was like, there's nobody in, from the angle that the teachers who are on, who are in front of the school are sitting. They wouldn't have been able to see them because of the line of the trees that's like, right as you get to the edge of the campus.

[00:31:45,926] So I was like, are there safe visuals that you can put in place that the kids don't feel, like, as they drop their little scooty bikes off or as they're pulling up, that they can coalesce and then escape together in the opposite direction to the Walmart or, like, back to McDonald's? So, every now and then, we have staff who will go and do a round because we don't have safe passage officers or crossing guards or anything like that. And then security is working our, you know, we have multiple security points, and now we also have the cell phone tent that we have for staff in the morning as well. And so, some of the people who would do the circles are now on cell phone duty because the kids have to lock all of their stuff in the lockbox that's outside.

[00:32:27,466] And so we still do have a rotation of someone who will every now and then get off shift, like every like 10 minutes, and do a quick circle to make sure, and we'll go all

the way up to Georgia to make sure that the kids are not upstanding, you know, to get a frappuccino and then taking their time to drink it and then coming back to school right. How is that cell phone tent working out? It is working. It is working. You know, the kids are so resourceful, so they are all turning them in and can't come into school. We have like no technology violations, right? Because we're going straight to confiscation. If we see it, we're confiscating it. Somebody has to come here and get it.

[00:33:11,785] But they all have to turn them in, in their individual lockers on the side of the building in the morning, in addition to their earbuds. First week of school, the kids are so smart; they bought some of them, smuggled in wired headsets and plugged them into their computer because the kids have their laptops all day. So that was a quick moment where we had to get on them for, you know, the wired headphones. But that was great; it is so lovely. Oh, my gosh, it's so lovely, and that will actually be a physical structure, like building a garage over there that will have heat and whatnot, be able to be temperature controlled. But the lockers are already in, and each kid has their own individual locker for their own unique lock code.

[00:33:55,006] I bet those backpacks help too; clear backpacks help. My daughter doesn't need her backpacks; she just stuffed the papers in there. All there is is a binder and her cue. Before, it was just I didn't even know what that track was; I think she had it thrown in there a long time ago. Well, she couldn't see it. We went to the mesh bags; it wasn't the clear. It had to be either clear or mesh, and it really cracked down on the stuff that you bought in the school. You could see it; you could smuggle anything in it. I wonder why that kind of went away for a while; we brought it all the way back. Just so you all know, we bought clear backpacks for everyone.

[00:34:50,966] We also bought black shoes for everyone because that was the whole situation: black shoes, not for everyone but for a lot of children. Yeah, because their families did not do all black shoes. We were like, listen, at the beginning of the year, we thought they had to be 100% black, which was a little different because before you could have some color. We bought shoes already that we had to return. Some parents referenced our old family manual, and it was fine. I was like, we're not going to buy these shoes that are coming from Walmart. I'm not sure they're going to want to wear them, but we're going to get you some shoes. And when the dean of students went to go pick them up, he said, good Lord, these are ugly.

[00:35:33,486] Our shoes are black, and they were free, so we're good. That means you will buy black shoes, that's right. We're not getting jeans, we're getting these black ones. I want to start going back to the attendance and the kids who are expressing that they're leaving an hour earlier and getting here. Is there any way that the city, because I know particularly when there were citywide schools in Baltimore, there was a partnership between the school district and the city. And there were special buses that were school buses that didn't make all of the stops. They used to do that in D. C. I'm not so sure that's a great ask, and I'll ask mine in a reminder follow-up about that. I'm not sure, but I think

that right now we're in kind of geo-tracking to figure out where the students are coming from.

[00:36:36,686] What I will tell you is that when D. C. had those buses, they were only running between stops that were more for the neighborhood children. So if we have kids who are coming from Ward 7 and 8, they're not going to have a special bus for them to come all the way uptown. Those buses typically ran within their communities to drop off because it was a partnership between the public schools and charter schools. Even if that's an X and you expand it and use Baltimore as an example, because you have the schools that are in northwest or northeast, these Baltimore kids are coming from all over the city, and there would be one bus. Because when I was in high school, if I missed that one bus, then I had to go all the way downtown.

[00:37:19,650] to come all the way back up but like this one bus the only stops that they need is like to pick up people within that radius that they knew and then we got on the highway and they dropped us like straight off and then after school there were like special buses that took us to our part of the city and even if you have to transfer to someplace else it still took you a good like amount of way where you didn't have to cross the entire city. Yeah, I'll definitely go inquire about that. So, we did used to have like the special bus service like that; we never had that at all. But I know when I worked down, you know, down in southeast area, we definitely had that, because even if they're coming from seven or eight, you can get them halfway here like one bus, and then they have to take like one more, that's like, or even get to the metro.

[00:38:05,949] But first, we're looking to see who, I'm not sure it's our, it might be our kids in seven and eight, it might not be our kids. I mean, yeah, it's early, it came here at 7:45, but I live right there, so I we leave at 7:40. Yeah, I can't imagine if I had to come across the city. Yeah, it's hard, it's tough. I'm gonna have to floss across. I'm gonna be honest, as a parent of a kid that was here, we did 15 minutes down the street and she'll be like, oh mom, I was late because of the bus; you live right 15 minutes, you take one bus up the street. So, I know it is used. Yeah, even if the bus is a little bit late, you still should be late, that's right, that's right.

[00:38:51,355] Um, so additional metrics, our ninth grade on track, really proud of that metric. Um, you can see back in 22, 23 we were struggling; that was more of our ripples and reverberations from, you know, coming back from covid. But we've seen an increase in that number year over year. Um, our four-year ACGR rate, when I tell you, um, fought tooth and nail to get to um that 92. 9 this year, this was one of our smallest graduating classes. Um, and this is actually our ninth grade class coming back from Covid. Uh, and so, and then our five-year ACGR, these are students who should have you know our graduating class of 2024. These were additional students, um, who graduated this past year, so that rate is up to 95.

[00:39:45,233] 9 and our college acceptance continues to be 100 percent. What's ACGR,

um, adjusted cohort graduation rate? So basically, when um your ninth grade, uh class is, let's say, our ninth grade, or sixth, let's say we have 110, but what happens is is that your graduation rate is going to be based on those 110 students minus those who have left your school and went somewhere, and there's proof of the, and they re-enroll somewhere, and there's proof either in the system because they re-enroll in DC, or we've uploaded paperwork because they re-enrolled out of state. But we received that paperwork, those kids come out of that adjusted, uh cohort graduation rate. But so those 10 come out, so there's 100 left, but let's say that there are five who leave, but you don't have any evidence of re-enrolling re-enrolling in a diploma granting school.

[00:40:53,527]Then what happens when they do your graduation rate? You still get charged for those five students even if they left at the end of freshman year, even if they left at the end of freshman year, because you're being charged for them. Because if we don't have a record of them, then we're counting them as dropouts. Yeah, so we're way better with this system, like it that took a lot of work over the last couple of years, but you know we now. have a team that was like the dog the bounty hunter. They wanted you down when you leave to make sure that they have the data um to support where you've gone and to make sure that you land someplace.

[00:41:32,478]So, and those are just to say on that slide there were two, you know, really some significant improvements: the ninth grade on track rate and that one. I mean, those are, if you look back at 22-23, I just want to pause for a moment and recognize because we were struggling with that. I mean, that was hard. Yeah, that was that's coming out of COVID. Yeah, our PSAT and SAT performance, so we have a new metric for PSAT which is up from, used to be 850. the metric that we were uh rated on now the metric is 970 this past year we saw 12. 16 percent of our 11th graders get a 970 so we have a lot of work to do with them now as seniors on the SAT we've reconfigured our global citizenship class which is where our kids get their SAT prep and have put an ELA and math teacher in there to help the kids with that assessment

[00:42:33,439]packing that code has been a bit tough but you know we're going to continue to push hard on it saw some good growth with our last year's seniors in terms of their SAT and ACT performance so there was an uptick there Our AP and dual enrollment CTE, what's important to note about that is that the metric has changed. This 59. 2% only represents the number of 12th grade students that took an AP course and passed the test, took a dual enrollment course and passed that, or took a CTE. It is not the full universe. We used to get credit for the full universe of students. That's why in 2022-23 you see 164%. Now we only get credit for our seniors.

[00:43:26,758]Is it just what they do during their senior year or is it what they did at any time during their whole career? At any point in time, yeah, during their time here at Paul. And what I will say is that this last year was probably our smallest senior class And so, that metric was based on a very small number of students that remained from our ninth grade cohort that we took in our first year after COVID. Sorry, I don't want to get into school

performance committee stuff, so if it's too much in the weeds, but with the SAT and ACT, do you notice that the kids do significantly better on one or the other? Are they always better on ACT? Yeah. Do we push the kids more towards them?

[00:44:14,187] Yeah, because they can take either? Well, no. So, we get SAT for free, like our SAT day is coming up in October, but we will pay for ACT. But the SAT, for that participation piece, all the kids have to take it. But then afterwards, you know, we try to do some work with our students to convince them to take the ACT. Historically, the kids do better on the ACT. Research supports that students of color, in particular, do better on the ACT, so we urge them to take the ACT. And that's what I was asking, and we do provide them the opportunity, but they have to pay. No, we don't pay. We pay, so it's still free for them either way. But do they have to come like on a Saturday or something?

[00:44:56,739] It's not like one of these things where the whole class is taking it. That's right, that's right, like we shut down— not shut down, but like everyone is taking the SAT. And there's no opportunity to do that for the ACT because it's only Saturdays. That's right, and things. Yeah, that's right. Additional goals, there's something missing here. Maybe it's here, no. Am I missing this one, maybe? There's another slide here about, there was a slide about... There's two additional goals in our strategic plan, that's what you look for. There was one that also showed the number of students, oh, maybe it's on this next one. Okay, yes, it is, it's right here. Sorry, that was me, additional goals.

[00:45:45,192] So there are some additional goals that have nothing to do with any of our, they don't have anything to do with our, what do you call it, our SPIRE or our report card framework that we track because it does have something to do with our end goal of getting our students to, to college and career. And so, for example, by 2025, 70% of our eighth grade students will earn at least one high school credit in algebra, Spanish, art, or biology. We can no longer award the credit in art, but we did have 65. 2% of our students earn either a credit in algebra, Spanish, or bio. That's important because that sets our kids up to be able to take the early college coursework.

[00:46:28,544] By June 2025, 65% of our 12th grader school have enrolled in at least one AP and/ or dual enrollment course at some point in time. So we did have a higher percent of our students who enrolled, and we also had a higher percentage of our students who successfully earned a three or higher on the AP test. Okay, and then the last piece is, is that 75% of our 12th grade students who enroll in dual enrollment courses will have earned a college credit course. And so you'll see this year we had double the number of our students enrolled in dual enrollment. Dual enrollment is not the same as ATC, so dual enrollment is like it's offered through OSSE, and those are with universities And so, last year we had 36 of our students, as opposed to the year before, we had 18.

[00:47:19,289] So we doubled that enrollment, and they can take classes in the fall, the spring, and the summer. Any questions about that? All right. These are goals that we track. Again, they're outside of our strategic plan, outside of any accountability framework. By

October 2025, our enrollment was gonna be 315. Last year, we hit 325. You will see that the middle school is becoming larger year over year over year. Last year, our enrollment for the high school, our goal was to get to 425. We, of course, made it to 439 last year. We're smaller at the high school this year, and we're okay with that. We're at about 415, 418, but we're up in the middle school at about 345. And then our suspension rates, our goal, excuse me, is for them to not exceed 10%.

[00:48:15,288]Last year, we saw an uptick in our suspension rates, but from a programmatic standpoint, it was necessary. We dealt with a lot of behavioral infractions connected to marijuana, and we were going to address that very, very sternly. So we are looking to see; we have some good supports in place to include with some of our external partners, where if there is an infraction that connects to marijuana use, marijuana possession, or any of those things, then you will actually get some rehabilitation treatment from one of our external partners. And we started doing that last year, and I found that to be a really good intervention for our kids, because there's a reason, like we had students who were literally going to go smoke before they got to school.

[00:49:09,349]And we're like, dude, you smoked before school? You were-I know; I was like, what stressed you out at eight a. m.? Indirectly, like what is even going on? You didn't wait until after school? You did this before school? I smell you; I know how you are; you're fine. So we'll continue to watch those numbers. And then the last piece, we always share with you all at the beginning of the year if there are any significant shifts in our population. And I think that you can see just kind of with our racial makeup, and over the last couple of years, there's definitely been a population shift. We've stayed pretty consistent. We are an organization at the high school that has more boys than girls, fun times.

[00:49:58,229]And then we are half and half, perfectly split for our boys and girls at the middle school. You can see the changes and the shifts in our African-American and Latino populations over the years. And then we're pretty consistent in terms of the percentage of our students that are English learners. We saw a small uptick at the high school this year, and pretty consistent in terms of the percentage of our students who have an IEP, so we don't anticipate any weird shifts with funding there like we saw last year. Any questions about that? All right, so we're gonna come out of this presentation and then Bundy will open up our financial slides, and let's talk about the money. Sorry, Tracy, I do have one really quick question on this.

[00:50:55,309]In terms of when we're tracking, Rose talked about really making sure we're tracking all the different populations for progress. We also track low income, right? We sure do. Yeah, and so are there any shifts there for us in terms of just the overall population? I need to have, Susan, can you make that note for me to double back and check with her about that? Thank you for asking that question. We do, because as I think I shared with the board last year, we definitely saw performance gaps big time with our low SES population and our non-low SES population, so I need to find out whether or not we have, we see shifts in terms of the percentage of our students. Always remember there's, there

are gonna be issues with accuracy in that data because some of it is connected to my parents' self-reporting, so I'll definitely share that in the next board meeting or so. Thank you, all righty. And we're gonna shift to the financial slides.

[00:52:09,229] I locked it, give me one second. I didn't, it's not in that first, because I made the board drive private, so I'm trying to see. But we typically don't put them up here. Oh, well, if you don't open them up on your iPad, one of mine gets those on there. It's the Palm Monthly presentation for July, 2025.

[00:52:38,789] Does that get streamed? We're not sharing the screen, oh, okay. Yeah, just the meeting. Thank you. So if you, once the slides are open, if you will go to slide number three, where you can see we are anticipating another pretty strong financial year. Right now, you'll see we have a pretty significant forecast in terms of our days of cash projection. The DC Public Charter School Board requires 60 days. You can see we are well ahead of that 60 days, and then we anticipate a debt service coverage ratio of roughly 2.78%, which is well above the 1.15 required by our covenants. Our outlook though, what you're going to see in this presentation is actually significantly stronger than what the current forecast indicates. We are always very conservative under the guidance of our finance committee in terms of our budgeting, and so there is money that we knew that we were set to receive because the mayor's budget was passed.

[00:54:02,829] However, we had not received word in terms of how much that money was going to be, and so all of the charters this year got a potential block grant. When we first found out about getting that grant, we thought that it was going to be roughly \$250 per student based on our certified enrollment from last year. We've since learned and received word from OSSi that it's actually closer to \$650 per student based on our enrollment from last year, which was 767 students. So it's roughly 490 that we did not include in our budget that we now get to include in our budget. So in a pretty solid place financially, even beyond what you'll see in this presentation. On the next slide, you'll see just our key performance indicators, and we talked about those.

[00:54:55,629] The next slide talks about our forecast and our overview. And so again, the revenue is already ahead, roughly \$163,000. That's not a count for the roughly half a million dollars that we're anticipating adding to the financials because of the block grant information we received. Our expenses are higher right now than what we budgeted because we did add both an additional counselor to do some work in the high school, and actually for the first time, we have a counselor, a second counselor who's servicing our middle school students, as you all are seeing that our middle school is growing. Then we also hired an additional L teacher because our students needed it. If you keep going, you can see what our net income and our cash flow adjustments are, and then the overall change in cash.

[00:55:52,870] But again, this is based on the budget that was submitted and approved; it does not include the additional revenue that we anticipate receiving. Our cash forecast,

you can see, is again, we're forecasting the end of the school year with a very strong cash balance. I've been doing some work with Evo Bank and the finance committee to work the ways that we can better leverage that cash for our organization. It's good that it's there, but also just kind of thinking about what are some ways that we can use it to better leverage and position ourselves. And some of that is going to come with the project that we're undertaking this year, which is to have a thorough evaluation of our physical plant so that we can start to make some financial investments into the overall building. But we want to do that in tandem with taking a look at our next lease, which comes up, I want to say in like about seven years.

[00:57:05,840] So there are a couple of moving parts there. We want to make some big investments, but we also want to start the process of thinking about our pending lease that's coming up for us to renew. I can't, I'm not sure exactly how many years, is that what you're going to ask him? No, I was going to ask him, like you said, pending lease in my head, not pending, but it's like we might switch locations. We just have to re-sign it. I just want to make sure that when that time comes, that they don't try to renegotiate. Right, we have good security payroll, yeah, 50,000 a year for this building. Right, okay. What are you saying? That seems perfectly appropriate. No comment. It's for the kids.

[00:58:08,332] Here you can see our investments are doing really well. They did well last year as well. And so, you know, for the last, over the course of the last month, you know, we saw about 40K in interest earned on our common fund investments. And then, as you all are aware, we have an ICS account where our operating dollars sit. And then also we have savings and ICS savings. So we have done some transferring so that we can trigger the higher interest rate in our savings account, but we also continue to gain. And this is, you know, not subject to the ebbs and flows of the market. These are fixed rates that we're earning on, and you can see that we're budgeted to earn, you know, close to half a million dollars this year just in interest, which is good for the organization.

[00:59:04,472] Part of that, we've gotten zero, right, nothing. Our money was sitting in accounts where it was not earning interest. I'm like, why is this? No interest to almost half a million dollars a year, that's a lot. It's like five people, yeah, it's like five classroom teachers just on interest, so that's significant, and oh, the financial audit is underway, hooray. The fieldwork for the audit has already started. I'm already getting emails of stuff needing to be uploaded. Cunningham and her department are also working in tandem to make sure that all of this is done, and the deadline for completion is December 10th. But we should be done by the end of September, still using the same auditors, J. M., and we anticipate a strong audit with no findings.

[01:00:03,653] I don't think so, okay, that's no pressure there. No, I'm saying that we have been, we've run. I'm saying that not to pressure on; I don't mean that at all. I was saying that to the rest of the board, who may not be aware that we have always run a very clean financial organization. Like, there's never been anything to answer for. We have literally never had any findings that I, in the time I've been involved, no, you go back a lot further

than I do in terms of finance committee, because I only joined, you know, a couple years ago, but so you might know it differently. But at the time I was on there, and when I was chair, there were never findings.

[01:00:44,172] So I just think that's kudos to the organization, but it's something for people to know about, because that's not true of every organization, right? A lot of organizations, you do have findings, but we've always been, you know, by the book, and therefore we can answer anything, and we've got the documentation. Always, yeah, yeah. So it feels good to be in compliance, you know, like compliance is good. There are enough things to worry about. I got to worry about student achievement, but you don't want to worry about student achievement and whether or not your books are not in order at the same time, like that's too much. So, you know, we feel, we feel good about the way that we run our finances, from our finance committee to ed ops.

[01:01:22,303] We have good point people on ed ops. You know, like they can never change out our people or else we'll have an issue with them. And then, you know, we have a good small finance team within the organization, so that makes things easy. Yeah, and I think that is, this is just the annotated financials and the very accounted-esque last slide. Those are for Terri and Sterling; the ones for me are the ones with the colors on it. These are just numbers. Okay, and that's it. That's my full report. One question. Yes, ma'am, on the annotated financials? Yeah, yes, ma'am, please, please. The revenue expenses, what does the revenue do as far as financial status? So the revenue part, those are all of the sources of revenue that are coming into the organization, okay?

[01:02:24,989] Also, our per-pupil funding, that's our uniform per-pupil funding allocation. Any other local revenue that we're receiving, the federal revenue that we receive, you'll see the forecast, and then you'll see the budget. Any private grants and donations, and then earned fees is about the interest that we accrue. No, I guess the significance of it, it says behind, it says net income. Like, what's the significance? So we're talking about the notes over to the right? Yeah, so our revenue, if you go back, this slide corresponds to this slide right here, that's why I said the pictures. So if you go back up, this is the one that I like right here. So we forecasted in terms of revenue that we would have in our budget. I'm sorry, we budgeted for \$26.

[01:03:17,427] 6 million in terms of total revenue, but our forecast is actually 26. 8 million. So there's a variance of roughly \$163,000, so that's where you see that we're ahead. And that's because of higher than anticipated E-rate funding, eighth grade dues, and a STEM grant that we received. So when we did the budget, we thought that we would only get 26. 6 million, but based on some things that we've learned and some things that we've received, the forecast has been updated and we're actually ahead in terms of revenue. This number, Jennifer, is gonna get even larger based on what I just talked about with the teacher block grant. So next time you see it, it may be like \$500,000 there. The next piece where you see expenses, we budgeted for \$26.

[01:04:09,501] 6 million in expenses. However, when we look at the forecast, even though we haven't spent all that money, we're forecasting that we're actually going to spend 26.8 million. And that's because we added an additional counselor and an L teacher, so when you see the terminology that says behind, that's what that means. And again, this slide here is just a pictorial representation of this slide here. That's the fine print. This is the fine print. Yeah, these are all the numbers broken out, no, the subcategories that we have, yeah. And I would just say, as you know, in terms of, from a finance committee perspective, what they would be looking at is not necessarily what we're seeing right now, which is month to month, but overall, where are we gonna end up, which is why we always start with that third slide, which is the metrics are days of cash on hand, our debt to what you call it ratio, service coverage ratio, service coverage ratio.

[01:05:16,810] Service coverage ratio. Those are the two main things in terms of, again, back to compliance. So we have to make sure that we're gonna be all right. And then, kind of overall, as an organization, we wanna make sure we're not spending more than we're gonna have for the whole year. And of course, that's where we have extra money that we have in the past that sometimes called on, but we're not having to do that at this point because we're projecting for the entire year. That's right. We'll still come out ahead, or actually possibly ahead like we did last year. That's right. Right now, we're projecting that we'll come out ahead, but the reality of it is that we need to, we don't need to do that. We need to like spend our money, yeah.

[01:06:01,710] During the course of the year, yeah. But there's also another way to look at it. If you look at your household income, you have your paycheck coming in, you're paying your bills, and month to month, this is kind of like a report card. But if you need to spend more that particular month, it really depends on how much money you get to pay, yeah. And you'll have to say to them, I got \$21 million, yeah. And then 240,000 is 0.1%, yeah. I don't have the application, but it's 0.1%, yeah. No, it's like, I don't take pensioners for me too, girl, yeah. I don't take pensioners for me. Say that one more time.

[01:06:35,270] Hang on, just because I know that we are a little, we're taking a little more time than we normally do, and I appreciate seeing you all. But I assume that other people have, you know, have been students or in there too. The first thing that we haven't been, it was out of business. The board map for the year has been shared a couple of, it was shared at the end of last year for recommendations, and it was shared at the beginning of this year again. And I asked in the last meeting if anybody had any recommendation changes and had not received them. We're gonna move forward and assume that the map works for everyone because I haven't received any changes. So as it is entered into the record, there are no changes.

[01:07:19,339] As I mentioned, it doesn't vary that much from our previous year's map, other than we removed one of our goals that we had around diversity, equity, and inclusion and we changed that to one that was looking at more of implementing the strategic plan that was recreated at the end of last year. I don't wanna delay it, but I think just two really

quick things. They're not, I mean, yes to everything you said. One is the date at the very top. I think you've updated it. It's not 24. It was a 24. Okay, then I—that's what was the original one. It was the original one, and I have, so what I will, I will do that. I think, and I remember doing it when I sent it. I saw it.

[01:07:56,959]It's, you know, Google Docs sometimes, it doesn't show you what's in the frame in the format. That was like, anyway, I'll go back to change that. I mean, I just didn't have a question. I was assuming that we're monitoring the implementation of the fifth grade just because it's our newest grade and relatively new and not because they're concerned, or are there actually concerned? There are not because there are concerns, because I don't think, because it is new and we are still inculcating that into the art practices. I didn't make sense, because it was a goal that was introduced last year to eliminate it this year to me, and nobody gave me the feedback that they thought that it would change it.

[01:08:33,718]No, I mean, to me, because it felt like from the report that we got that it's still, it's yeah, evolving. That's a good word. We don't feel so totally solid on it in terms of the programming I felt great about; it's the recruitment and enrollment. Right, that's the part I, and maybe we should just be clear with ourselves about that. I don't think, I don't know if we necessarily need the same or whatever, but it really isn't the programming. It's really just the numbers. It's the numbers, the numbers. I can, that, I'm gonna ask a question just because I know my memory, my memory reporting the meeting, so that if I looked at the notes from this one, I could make a reminder to myself.

[01:09:09,918]Okay, then I can do, I will do those two updates because that doesn't make sense to me, just that reframing and then the date, and I will resend that to Maya. Thank you. Any other questions before we move on to other updates? There are two reports, one I will get from the executive committee, and then I will yield to Jen to do for governance updating. A couple of things have happened in terms of relating to executive board; Dr. White's evaluation from last year was done. The executive committee met and made a decision related to Dr. White's performance bonus for this year. There was one other thing that I can infer in my contract. Oh, yes. I mean, we knew Dr. White's contract; I was like, there's something else.

[01:10:05,819]Yes, it's September; okay, at least it's still happening at the beginning of the year. And those are things that have already taken place. I will yield to Jen to update because there are a few governance updates; yes, thank you. So Erin and I met over the summer, and we met early this week, and she created this really cute chart that's in the governance committee format. We can take a look, laying out our goals for the year. And those three goals are to ensure board procedures are updated for succession plans for the school and for the board leadership and CEO evaluation. So that includes finalizing the CEO succession plan and then developing the CEO evaluation plan, which we are working with.

[01:10:52,498]And we're already taking the lead on that, developing templates, and we

just want to document the process so that those who come behind us or just report currently can have a look at that and see what that looks like and what went into that process. The second goal is to ensure procedures are in place for recruitment and onboarding of new board members. We took the orientation guide that was designed for someone who's coming up to the board; what would they immediately need, and then what should they just have access to and know where things are in order to acclimate them to board service and aspiring leadership. It also includes confirming some recruitment blurbs, their parent trustee that was our board trustee, and then Erin took a hand at drafting the first, and so we'll definitely be leading on our newest board member, Lori, to get her feedback on what what else needs to be included, what would help someone coming in to get settled, and we'll be reviewing the recruitment process overall.

[01:12:10,348]Last year, just showing we have a full board in compliance with the bylaw, so just doing that annual review, and we're just keeping that up. There are three terms, three terms that are up for renewal; there are two for this month. Sorry, yes, two for this month, and you're in November. Yes, no, actually we have three. Um, Brittany, what... uh, Brittany, we... um, sorry, oh, we did already; she's on the roster, but remember we actually voted Brittany in um, the June meeting because she, her daughter was graduating, and so we we renewed her term early, and so started in the June meeting, right? I mean, I feel we switched her term still would be, oh, her term would be okay. So that's my misunderstanding, I apologize, but she has agreed to continue on in life.

[01:13:12,211]So we can, let's, which is the critical point. Yeah, we'll continue from that outside the meeting. We didn't want to pressure you in the meeting, and you just let us know what she already reports. Okay, that was a statement, okay, with Ms. Winston as well, and then that is not correct. Okay, um, and then Kevin's up in November, but she has confirmed, and Dr., so yeah, um, like. just because I'll lose it, um like as far as like someone that's coming on, like particularly like if they come from like not a background of education. I think like an ABC of all or ABC of the board, so people know what acronyms like me, um especially yes, just a shout out to whoever organizes the website.

[01:14:07,614]Um, there's so many resources on there, so we're thinking about kind of doing maybe something like a checklist where folks can click links to where things are and yeah, um, be able to use what's there. But there's so much there, so shout out to them. Yeah, yeah, um unless there's one question, no, um and so we will begin with Ms. and I'm asking the question now because in my head it's not, it's the same order we ask motion vote. I just wanted to make sure, I just need to confirm. Yeah, are we doing the vote today? We can't do it today because we're not meeting in October, so we can't since they did confirm. Yeah, and then I mean Winston will do in you and this one's in with them being there, and so we'll, since we'll go in or starting with the farthest away, we'll start with Ms.

[01:15:09,070]Wood. Can I ask very much for the floor to for to for Ms. Wood to continue her term for three years, beginning in 20? With the 25-26 school year, absolutely. Thank you, Sterling, second, thank you, Shamira and I. will starting reverse order with um Jen,

yeah thank you Sterling yes yes Erin, Emma yes yes yes yeah and I'm meeting you, I'm assuming okay um and so we will move on to Dr. Malakai's term for a motion for thank you Sally and thank you Sterling um and so I will start with Ms. Wood yes yes yes yes yes yes okay, so we have Ms., so Dr. Malakai will continue for a three-year term beginning with the 25-26 school year good question absolutely my child graduates in two years hopefully I won't be here for her for three years, but does that mean I get to be here?

[01:16:20,048] You can, it would just, we would just transition to like a parent, like a nutrius. Okay, yeah. Well, it's like what happened with Ms. Wood. So, we still need to have parent trustees. Now, at this point, we still have two parent trustees. By-laws require us to have two parent trustees, and so you and Ms. Wood are the, Ms. Wood, whatever her name tag is, are the official parent trustees. But Ms. Wood wanted to stay on, and so she became, I'm sorry, Ms. Winston, Ms. Winston. So, Ms. Wood is now a regular trustee, if you will. There's not another name for it, right? And Kemba was never a parent trustee, per se; she wasn't designated as that. So originally, I think when they made the by-laws, they wanted to make sure there were at least two parents represented.

[01:17:10,507] But one of the decisions that Kemba and I made as chair, when we were chair and co-chair, was we wanted to try to recruit our board more from the parent community, which is the way a lot of private schools that have their own individual boards do it because, obviously, there are advantages to that while there are also advantages to having expertise outside of it, right? So it's nice to have a balance, but we felt that having that designated only two parents versus you could have parents, but you just gotta make sure there are at least two. So the by-laws say at least two, and then anybody else is a trustee who happens to also be a parent, or maybe is an educator, or maybe is.

[01:17:54,207] So you have to have two, I guess, active parents, parents of current students, that's right. And then beyond that, they can be parents of alumni or whatever other, but they can also be parents. We can also have parents of current students, like Kemba's a parent of a current student, but she's not designated as one of the parent trustees, so that's not confusing. But, and so that's when we, at the end of, when at the graduation, basically, Brittany could no longer, was no longer qualified, no longer eligible to be the parent trustee, but she wanted to stay on, and that would be the same thing in two years for you. So it makes sense. The parent trustee is determined and once your child leaves school. That's right. So thank you.

[01:18:37,668] That's easier, like the moment you graduate or the end of whatever you're—at the end of the term. Okay. Yeah. It's early graduation. I don't know. I would assume that that would also coincide with the end of the parents, the parent trustee. Okay. Yes. Graduation for her. You're not letting her go? She'll be gone. She won't go, but she won't go early. Oh, on the date that he or she no longer has a child. So on the date, you know, okay. So that graduation, that may have been okay. Will be on its own for sure. Any other questions on term for this year? Okay. Any other questions about anything else we've covered? Okay. We do not meet in October unless there, I will, with the caveat, we have

two meetings a year that we traditionally do not have unless there is an issue.

[01:19:49,168] October is one of those meetings, places where we are not scheduled to meet. So we will see each other again in November. It is November 18th, but we do have executive at SCC, but mine is gonna change the date because they both fall on Indigenous Peoples Day. So we'll see whether or not you all can do that on that Tuesday. It was lovely to see you all in person. I am always joyful and good information about ways that we are starting the school year in a strong step. One thing I got a phone call about. One thing I do want to say is, I know that it is not traditional to share information about people's performance, but I just want to say thank you to the executive team who participated.

[01:20:41,728] I want to make a public acknowledgement to Dr. White, but also to your executive team. As a HR professional, I am normally getting to do processes like these when things are going tragically wrong and when people hate each other, and you're doing evaluations for how people to recover. This was one of the most delightful experiences for people who truly enjoy working together and respect each other, and their team and their strengths. And so I just wanna speak to, and as a parent thinking about how that then has ripples out into the community and impacts your child. And so I just want to say that, like just remarking on how remarkable that is, that even in giving criticism, people were effusive. And it came from, and there were a lot of explanations; your team is a little loquacious, a little.

[01:21:34,603] I mean, I just wanna reflect that the length of your review was less than the notes that I took from any of those conversations, so try to make it concise. But just the level of respect that they have for you and to each other is really quite special. So as a parent, I wanna say that I appreciate that that is an environment my child gets to come and learn, but also as a professional, I wanna give you kudos for creating that environment for yourself, but also for your team, because it is really worth it. Yeah, I know, it's a great team; it's a great environment to be able to work in. Yeah, it feels very safe and that every person's safe. Thank you, and I'm cheering; it's a lot.

[01:22:29,803] We better adjourn really quick. So, on that note, I'd like to thank you all for coming here today. I'll see you all in November. My gift has swag bags back there for everyone. You can pick a bag; it has, there's a t-shirt inside it, so pick a bag that aligns with your t-shirt. Really?

Paul PCS November 2025

Board Meeting Transcript

[00:00:05,060]Okay, well, let's welcome everybody to our November meeting. I think it makes sense that we start with reciting the mission of Paul, as we do with most meetings, so let's start there. The mission of Paul is to educate our students and to develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers, and leaders. I want to thank everybody for joining us today. We did not have an October meeting, so as we are beginning our meeting, we are going to look at the, actually, before we do that, we need to do something else; we need to start with renewal of two board terms. One of those is mine, so I am going to yield to our vice chair, to Shamira, so she can lead the vote on my term. For Ms.

[00:01:06,844]Winston, since she's not here, do we vote when the person returns or can we vote in absentia? You've already checked with her, right, and she's agreed? Everyone froze for me. I'm going off camera. I did not hear your answer, Erin, because it froze. She's already consented to have her term renewed, is my understanding. Is that right? Yes. Then in that case, we can vote for her. She doesn't have to be here. Okay, perfect. Shamira, I yield the floor to you and I will mute myself. Thank you. Someone has to move and second. I need someone to make a motion on the floor for the renewal of terms for Kimba. So moved. Thank you. We will go around and do a vote. Lori? Yes. Erin? Yes. Ann? Yes. Brittany? Yes. Kimba? Yes.

[00:02:29,399]I vote yes as well. It has been moved, seconded, and voted on. Kimba, welcome back. And a motion from the floor for Ms. Winston. I motion that Ms. Winston's term be renewed. Okay, and a second? Second. Okay, it has been moved and properly seconded. And so now we will go and do a roll call vote. Brittany? Yes. Pam? Kimba? Yes. Erin? Yes. Lori? Yes. And I am a yes, so welcome back, Ms. Winston. And I will pass it back to Kimba. That is great. Now that we still have all of our board members and we can continue with general business, I want to make sure that everybody in their board book was able to review the minutes from September. I will assume if nobody comes off mute and says that they had issues getting into their board book, that that means that everyone was able to and I will look to the floor for a motion to approve the September minutes.

[00:03:59,979]Oh, I thought Pam was going to do it because she was unmuted. I did too. Oh, I'll move. I'll second. Oh, sorry. I was trying. Okay. Yep. Motion something and I will do a roll call vote. Erin is directly beneath me, yes. Shamira? Kimba? Yes. Yes. Lorian? Yes. And somebody moved, Ms. Wood. I was like, somebody moved. Yes, okay. Thank you. So it has been first and second, and we have approved the September minutes without any

edits. And I will now yield the floor to Dr. White for the CEO's report. got it before we move on to the um ceo's report because i think miss wood has to leave a little early so while we have a quorum um i want to request that you all vote that we have an executive

[00:05:02,319]session in our january meeting um not only are there going to be a couple of data points that come out um in december but there are also just some staffing things that I want to talk about as we get ready to enter the budget season that should be discussed in the executive realm so we will be having an executive session under the um the the rationale or reason because we're going to be um discussing sensitive student and or employee issues and I know that's one of the boxes on the list so I just want you all to vote on that now um so we would be in good standing can I get a motion from the floor to host our january meeting um as an have an executive session connected to our january meeting sorry I just have a question money am I correct that we have to actually cite the reason by number on that or we do and I will pull it up and screen share so that we can okay because I can okay if you can probably get to whatever whoever has it first um but oh yeah sorry I should have realized we're going to need to do this

[00:06:26,420]well that might be on me because I don't have it in the master folder, so let me move it. It's not in the compliance documents; it used to be, and no, it's not. I don't know why I took that out of there. Oh okay, but we did have one in August, so that means we voted on it in June. So we also come up;

[00:07:00,819]it's not in the governance folder either.

[00:07:26,539]Oh you know where I should look, it's not in the June one. I'm gonna look in obviously in um August when we did it; it'll be in the minutes. minutes from let's see when were these minutes. These minutes were our September minutes so we need our September minutes. It should all right guys, I gotta apologize. I love that there are all these great minds here together and that we can collaborate. There we go, thanks Manya. Can you make it just a touch bigger, Cooch? Thank you to see all of the options,

[00:08:28,239]so there's one. So it's 15, um, is one of them. Yep, that's one, and then there's one about the staff. Yeah, and I think that's the, um, I just saw it, the number 10. Leave, yep, yep, yep, yep, that's it, 10 and 15, 10 and 15. So, um, if you don't mind going to the top of the document, Manya, I think I can do the motion. the right way when that was pre yeah but i'm just going to say so um yeah so i mean i'll i'll so it's madam chair, i move that upon a motion that has been properly recorded and board of paul public charter school meet in closed session pursuant to section 2-575 code of the district of columbia to address the following number 10 and number 15 on the list that is to discuss personnel matters and to discuss personally identifiable information of students okay we have a motion from the floor, is there a second?

[00:09:39,973]a second Thank you, Ms. Wood. It has been, there's been a motion and it has been seconded I'm gonna do a roll call vote, beginning with Lori, Ms. Smith, Lori

Anderson-Smith. Yes, thank you. Ms. Wood. Yes, Pam. Yes, Shamira. Yes, Tracy. Not Tracy, I'm looking, Erin. Yes, okay, and I'm- I can think over later how you can tell the difference between me and Tracy. There are a couple of, you know, key things that you can look for. I could only see, cause it was just at the top of the screen. I could, I was looking at name and I was looking at names and reading them, and not at people, so apologies, but both beautiful people. So it was probably moved and seconded. We've done a roll call vote.

[00:10:39,330] And so we will document in our notes that our January meeting will be held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, but it will be an executive session. And I yield back to the floor for Dr. White. All right. So I want to, what do you call it? I want to resurrect a practice that existed with the board that over the years we stopped doing. And it may not be as formal, but I do think it's important. Like one of the things that we've made sure that we do this year at the beginning of every single meeting is just like the board, we recite the mission. But the other thing that we do is like, we make these CHAMPS connections because CHAMPS is the acronym for who we're supposed to be as adults And it stands for courageous.

[00:11:31,310] We're supposed to move with humanity, we're supposed to be focused on achievement, model on what we expect of our students, and then we're supposed to plan and make sure that we're well-planned so that our students can be successful. And so, not necessarily doing that, but do want to revive kind of those mission moments where we used to open the board meeting, not just by reciting the mission, but then as the organization being responsible to come and share just kind of a mission moment because so many amazing things happen with our students over the course of the year that I think it's just important for us to kind of bring some of that goodness into the board space.

[00:12:09,350] So, the mission moment that I want to share with you all today is about our dual enrollment scholars, who I am so proud of our organization for the contingency of, oh, not for the contingency, for the culture that we have created amongst our students, actually starting in middle school, to really strive to be ready and prepared to go to college and then pursue whatever their life streams are for their career and beyond. And so to that piece, this year, we've always like killed it with ATC to the point where the state of DC has actually shut us down and limited the number of seats that students from Falken occupy because we were taking up all the seats in ATC.

[00:12:59,370] From the beginning of that kind of dual college enrollment program, Paul students have been at the forefront in terms of attendance and success. Well, Ossie has a secondary dual enrollment program where they send kids to colleges all over the country because some of the classes are offered virtually. So we have children who will be going to like Norfolk and they'll be going to Virginia State and some of the Ivy League colleges Well, we've never had more than, like, 10; has been like the highest number we've ever got to. And years ago, like we started to like tell kids, it's not even a choice; you're coming and you're gonna do it. So it wasn't from student interest; it was like kind of the mother

bear in us, which was like, no, all of you kids are going to do this dual enrollment stuff.

[00:13:52,630] We have transitioned you all. This year, 27 children applied, and I think of the 27, 25 got accepted into Ossie's dual enrollment programming for the spring. So they will be again, both completing their high school graduation requirements and starting on their college coursework. And the babies aren't just taking one class. A lot of them are taking multiple classes at one time, and so 27, that's self-interest. We did not invite them; we just said, hey, who's interested? 27 children applied, so we are so proud of them. I mean, that is, you talk about living the mission, like wanting our kids to take control of whatever their next steps are, getting to that space where then our biggest issue then became kind of pushing and making sure that staff got the letters of recommendation because it's a whole application process; it's a full college application process.

[00:14:59,092] And they treat, which I got to have some conversations with Asi about this, cause I don't agree, but they treat the children as college students, which you know, when your kids go to college, the college only talks to the parent if they need money. They don't share the kids' report cards and stuff like that. And so we have to remind them that I understand they're in this dual enrollment program, but this baby is 16. I need you to email me and let us know if there's a document that you need to finish their enrollment process or if they're struggling. Like us, we still have got to open up those lines of communication because they don't exist right now. But I just wanted to share that because it is, it's just, it's beautiful: 27 kids, which is huge.

[00:15:48,832] So, and we only have 74 seniors, so that's outstanding. And I just have to add one piece to it, which is the most important indicator of whether students matriculate, whether they actually graduate from college, is that experience that they have in high school as to, because, and so the fact that they're actually doing college coursework and completing it in a supportive environment is the absolute best preparation because they will have actually done it. You know, other schools are preparing kids so that they're doing the high school work. And then when they get to college, that'll be the first time they're encountering all of this college experience. But the fact that they're going through the admissions process, getting in, but then actually doing college work is the best indicator of whether they will not just get in later, but whether they will graduate.

[00:16:41,573] I mean, that's been shown numerous times in lots of studies, so what we're doing is really increasing the chances of those kids graduating. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, that's so, so fabulous, so I am deeply, I'm so proud of the children. Like, we had an amazing year last year with our AP data, highest number of children, you know, getting that three or higher on AP assessments in the history of ever for us. And not just us, but like we are contenders in the city in terms of our kids and their AP performance. Again, remember, half of our children have unique learning needs, right? So we're doing it, right? And the last thing that I'll share is, so all of the kids who are in any type of, you know, we have our own internal programming, career technical education programming.

[00:17:39,373] We're in year two of that now, that will also result in yielding dual credit for, and also certifications. We have our children who are in the ATC program, which is dual enrollment. And now we also have kids who are in ASI, so we're talking about over 50 of our high school students who are in some sort of dual enrollment programming in a high school with only 400 kids. So now we're buying all of them varsity leather jackets because how cool is it going to be for you to walk around with these varsity jackets on that are not necessarily connected to a sport, because we're trying with sports too, but it's connected to your academics and the kids hate their uniforms.

[00:18:23,073] So when they see these kids with these cool coats that look like, you know, they're not uniform, they're going to want to know how can I get a coat? Absolutely, ask one of the kids; they'll tell you start your college career while you're still in high school, and you can get a jacket. So, really, really happy about that. That's our kind of small live in the mission moment. Yeah, all right. So, we're going to dive in. In your board folder, what you're going to see is that there's a folder that says supplemental materials. We're going to talk more about this in the January board meeting, but we are going to make sure that you all always have information that includes very detail-oriented information.

[00:19:06,871] But we also want to make sure that we summarize this information and that we're sharing it with you all and also sharing with the public that gives updates about not just the performance of the organization as it relates to academics, but also finances. So, I'm going to ask Manga if she will screen share. Let's start with our academic report out. It's November. We closed out Advisory 1 in October, and I just want to share some of the highlights from the first advisory and the learnings. Thank you. There is the supplemental. There we go. Thanks, Bundy. Wait. Give me one second. I want to do the full. Mm-hmm. That's what I call the better, the clearer view of the actual slide deck.

[00:20:10,275] So, while Bundy is pulling that up, one of the things that we're going to talk about this evening is just our academic performance as, you know, per, you know, what we've seen on our first round of interim assessments. And the tagline for that is that we're seeing good growth and progress with math, but with ELA, we definitely have some concerns, very strong concerns. Specifically, let me reframe; we have some pretty significant concerns with the middle school, and we've had those concerns for the last two years. Not as strongly concerned with the high school because we've shifted assessments for grades nine and ten, but the data are fine, like in terms of the growth and progress that we're seeing with our ninth and tenth grade students.

[00:21:04,554] And so, I'm going to talk mostly about our middle school scholars. Bundy, if you can go to the next slide. And so, if you take a look at the more detailed slides that just share some of the actual numbers from the interim assessment, assessments for our middle school, comparing last year to this year, one of the things that you'll see is that performance varies across the grades, you know, showing early growth in some areas and identifying clear targets in some other areas. This year, and actually last year, but I would say because of the way that we're using data this year, it is very clear in ways that it was

not as clear last year. We have some major concerns about literacy with our middle school students.

[00:21:48,875] We have, as you all know, for years, implemented RE-180 and MATH 180 programming. In addition to RE-180 and MATH 180 programming for intervention, we do recovery work across all grades for all students with IXL. I can't remember the other names of the platforms because I'm over 50, and it's gone, sorry. But there are multiple platforms that our kids do recovery work on outside of just IXL. All of the kids, either in reading or in math or in high school, it's both. This year, we have in the middle school, we have over 20 students whose current reading proficiency is so low that they are actually in a program that's called CODE, which means that we are starting with letter and sound recognition, and that's across the middle school.

[00:22:47,875] We just got in our current CAPE data, so we get CAPE data at the end of the year, but at some point in time during the year, OSSE submits a folder that has CAPE data for all of the new kids that you've received. And what we're seeing is that there are some significant challenges in terms of the performance of our middle school students. And the third thing is that we're seeing with our middle school in particular is that our ELL scholars in the middle school, in terms of their proficiency both in reading in Spanish and in English, is low. And so this has actually been a trend for the last two years when we went back and looked at the data. And so we're being very, we're watching this very closely and implementing some things.

[00:23:40,535] We have a whole kind of, I can't, do you remember what it's called? It's called like brain, something about regenerating brain. I'm sorry, you all. It's late. I'm over 50. But we have a whole initiative coming where we're trying to, brain what? Brain boost. Brain boost. That's it. I need a brain boost. We're starting another initiative, it's called brain boost where we are, you know, begging parents to support scholars by doing additional work on these different platforms because of the current performance level of our middle school scholars with ELA, in particular. They need it for ELA and MAP, but with ELA in particular, so we're really, really focused. We're dialed in using the data well, making sure that we have a good read on where our children are; but just know that, you know, this is an area of concern.

[00:24:36,249] However, we definitely have plans in the works to address it. Okay, next slide. Can I just ask, isn't this kind of a switch, because it's always been the other way around, right? Yes, it is. But what I was going to ask about though is, isn't this for middle school students? Thank you. This is the group of middle school students who basically didn't learn to read because they were home during COVID, right? Correct, they were in either kindergarten or first grade; they missed it all. Yep, that's exactly right, Erin, 100%. That's what happened. Yeah. So that's why, like we, you know, again, one of our assistant directors was so proud of one of our students who was literally working on phonemic awareness.

[00:25:31,319] He's in the seventh grade and like working on recognizing the letter, the sound of the letter, and then putting the letters together to be able to sound them out to make a word in the seventh grade. We also this year have submitted to OSSE. We've never had more than two children take the alternate assessment; this year, we submitted to OSSE, I think 18 children who qualified to take the alternative assessment because of their current levels of performance. So we are seeing a significant, we have a significant challenge as it relates to where our students are right now academically, and in particular with their literacy skills. COVID is not over; it may be over from a viral standpoint, but the effects of that period of time continue to reverberate in schools.

[00:26:25,079] We don't talk about it anymore; the funding is dried up, but the impact is still very real, and we're feeling it this year in the middle school. We've been feeling it for the last two years in the middle school. We've had challenges with the data, particularly as it relates to ELA. We've been able to put some things in place to kind of create a slight stop gap with math, but ELA is definitely an issue. Question, Tracy, do you think it so we had such good engagement with students during COVID? Do you think that's why there's the difference between where the high schoolers are? They're not our kids; they were not our kids during COVID. Okay, that's what the high school kids were not at PAW.

[00:27:06,921] Well, most of the, some of the high school kids were ours. I think that's why we see these higher than ever AP scores in those types of things, right? Those kids were our kids in middle school. Now they're, you know, they're at the end of their high school career. The middle school kids that are here now were not our children. They were babies; you know what I mean? They were in other schools, they were in elementary school. So it's like, I understand the middle school, but I was trying to, like, say, look at what we did for the high school kids, our high school kids, right? Yeah, exactly, but look at what we did for the high school kids. Right, but we're getting the impact of that.

[00:27:44,360] We're seeing some of the most severe needs in terms of our students with IEPs that we've ever seen. You know, we've taken in this year, you know, children who are non-verbal, who are at the highest level in terms of being on the spectrum. You know, we have one kid who has a one-on-one teacher. We're not talking about a teacher; we actually have two of those students. And so, one of the things that's on our docket over the course of next year is to actually build out, and we'll talk about this more: school within a school programming to be able to service the needs of children who have this high level of need. Not behavioral, but it's definitely academic.

[00:28:26,085] We're having a grand time as it relates to behavior this year, to be honest, which is great, but the academics is definitely an area of concern. Okay, but we're going to do it; we're going to do great things. These kids are amazing. All right, next slide. So getting into student experience and school climate indicators, student experience is a major area of focus for us because we want kids to love school. And with some of the feedback that we've got from our students over the years, it is that they didn't love it. We were very tough in a lot of different areas to make sure that they were there showing up and they were

behaving the way that they needed to behave so that they can learn, but school was not fun.

[00:29:17,507] And I want school to be fun for our kids. I'm old, but I'm not that old school; I want work to be fun. I want school to be fun for them. And so we're watching Scholar and the student experience very closely. Some of the things that we have been focused on in terms of behavioral patterns, I just wanna share a couple of wins. This has been a great year in terms of our children doing the things that they need to do, right? We're not having issues with cell phones in our school; we have a tent outside. They put that joker in their lock box; it doesn't come in the building. We don't have AirPod issues; we're not even having a ton of uniform issues.

[00:30:00,367] So when we talk about uniform expectations, like the impact or the incidences are very, very low. Some of the biggest issues that we struggle with are about tardiness and then being late to school, and going to that darn McDonald's, no matter how many times we ask McDonald's not to serve them frappuccinos in the morning because they need to be in school by 7:45 or eight o'clock. McDonald's does not care about our goals with our children, and they continue to be tardy, so that's one of the biggest behavioral patterns that is actually impacting their academics because we do have tardy hall. If you're late after X number of minutes, you don't get to go to first block because it's disruptive for the children who were there to have this constant flow of kids coming in throughout the first 75 minutes of class.

[00:30:54,626] Major incidences, the highest number of major incidences were in high school, and most of those major incidences have not been about violent acts, but it's been about the use of narcotics, particularly marijuana. So trying to get a vape into school or coming into the building smelling like marijuana or us actually finding kids in possession has been the biggest issue and challenge, and it's not been huge, but it's been enough that we are most definitely concerned, Shamira. And I appreciate that you guys are like doing something about that. Cause I've been in schools where you smell and see things, and they're like, well, we can't do anything. And it's like, what do you mean you can't do anything? Just kind of going back, is there not like any like DC ordinance, like when it comes to like serving kids during school hours?

[00:31:58,126] Like I'm asking cause I know in Baltimore, businesses can be fined if they are serving like minors during school hours. That's amazing, and thank you for sharing that. And I'm going to find a way to steer that to the council because no, there's not. Okay, yeah. And thank you for also for the piece around the marijuana use. The other thing that we do with our students is that if you are found, not only is there a consequence, in a lot of times that consequence is out of school suspension, and we've not had a ton of those, but you also have to come back and you have to go to therapy for substance abuse because we want to unpack what is happening.

[00:32:41,626] Our kids are not deciding to use marijuana before they come to school or

choosing to try to bring a vape pen into school because they want to be bad. Something is happening, and it's a relief for them. So we have to get to the core of what's happening with them that makes them want to use that vice. And so there's always a consequence, but there's also some sort of therapeutic intervention that happens as a result of them coming into the building with that. Any questions? Any other questions? All right, next slide, Bundy. Attendance, attendance, attendance. You all, we are spending a lot of money on attendance, but I will, I'm happy to share that we are part of a consortium of schools that does kind of this open data sharing, where we can't see other people's specific data, but you can see where your school performs across the sector.

[00:33:42,346] And right now, our high school and middle school have some of the highest attendance rates, some of the lowest truancy rates, and lowest chronic absenteeism rates across the sector of schools that participate in this EK-12 setting. We are so proud of them. Our middle school attendance is at 95% in-seat attendance; that is high. Our high school attendance is softening a bit, but it's still at about 92%, which is amazing for a high school. Our chronic absenteeism is around roughly 21%, with our middle school being lower than our high school. Our truancy rates are low, being at 1% and 2% for the middle school and high school. We are very proud of both our students and their families, who have been very responsive.

[00:34:28,984] And we're also proud of our staff that continues to come up with new and innovative ways to encourage our children to show up for school every single day, feeling very proud about that. We watch attendance like a hawk; it is discussed probably in about seven different meeting structures every single week. We're keeping note of this because at some point in time, we're gonna go and start to do our presentations at conferences across the country about how we are combating poor attendance and chronic absenteeism rates, because we know that there's a direct correlation between our kids showing up to school on time every day and their actual outcomes. Okay. Next slide. Actually, looking ahead, we are expecting some DC school report card data in the month of December.

[00:35:27,464] And then also, there's a lot going on with Aspire. You all know that we are transitioning assessment systems next school year. The DC public charter school board and us here trying to figure it out. It is not the way that the change process should flow according to every model that's ever been created on earth, but it's where we are. So I don't know what's gonna happen next year, but whatever data comes out of these two accountability frameworks for this year, we will be set to share with the full board in January. Okay, any questions? All right, so we're gonna move to our next slide deck really quickly, which is our finance committee slide deck. Just two quick slides. Want to, I see you, Pam. Love you, see you later.

[00:36:24,704] Merry Christmas, Happy New Year. Thank you. Sorry, I've got to give a presentation to a class tonight on health policy. No worries, happy Kwanzaa, all of that stuff. I'll see you later, bye everybody. Give me wine too, Pam, bye. You know that. And so if you want more detailed information, again, there's information in your board book. I just want

to give you a summary of a couple of different pieces: strong financial position, really good, amazing praise report I need to share. Manya, bless her, love her soul, I have drug her through the mud for almost nine years now, but she just takes a lickin' and keeps on kickin'. Back in 21, again, I shared this with you all before last year, but I need to share it again.

[00:37:09,404] Ed Ops was like, hey guys, you ever heard of this employer retention credit thing? We're like, no. They brought someone in who told us about it, was like, yeah, you all should apply for this because you all retained your same level of staffing throughout those COVID periods for those 18 months. And so, as a result, the IRS was giving those organizations a tax credit, and they were like, you should apply. You're not gonna hear anything for years. This is back in 21. I was like, Manya, you need to do this work. She did it, had to create an 11-page narrative, bless her soul. This was before Chad GTP existed, y'all, okay? Because now we can do it in like five minutes, but there was no Chad GTP. She did it, we submitted it.

[00:37:54,725] It was like, set it and forget it; we never thought about it again. All of a sudden, last year, we received a check for \$1. 2 million in the mail. Wow. Last week, I got a random letter from the IRS, like, hey guys, sending you another check for the second quarter that you all applied for the employee tax credit for and randomly got a deposit of \$1. 1 million. Nice. So, I am really excited about that. This report doesn't even include that good news, but we're really excited because, as you all know, I am on the executive committee for the DC Alliance. We meet regularly with the deputy mayor, the state superintendent, and with the head of the PCSB.

[00:38:39,045] As we closed out that meeting, what we know to be true is that next year for DC is going to be a very difficult budget year. This year was hard. Our per pupil allocation increase was about 2%, which is less than the 3% raise that we give people. Next year, in the budget that was passed, it's anticipated that it's going to be actually reduced from what we got this year. Although the chair says that he doesn't believe that that's what's gonna happen, you don't know, and what we do know is that it's not gonna be high. And so we are grateful to receive that money and are actively working with the finance committee and with our internal financial team and ed ops to figure out how to leverage this unexpected revenue to make sure that our staff, especially our teaching staff, is whole in the upcoming year, given the very glum picture that's being projected as it relates to budget.

[00:39:43,212] Okay, not to mention it's also an election year. DC residents, y'all, please, please, guys. Erin, Kimba, Lori, do you live in DC or are you in Puget County? I'm in Puget County. Anybody who lives in DC, guys, please pick the right person. Okay, I'll leave that there, please. All right, so right now we're in a strong financial position. We're well above all of our key performance indicator thresholds. The one that's most important, the two are our debt service coverage ratio, which is well above the 1. 15; we're close to three. And our 60 days of cash, we're well above 60 days of cash. We have a very strong forecast, which shows positive net income for FY 26. And again, I already shared our debt service

coverage ratio is where above where it needs to be.

[00:40:37,432] Something I just want you all to know, the finance committee is watching is we are coming up, and Erin, you're not gonna believe this, cause you're one of the original, the OG board members was here when we did not have that beautiful construction project. But soon, it's gonna be time to renegotiate the terms of that loan, and I'm actually looking forward to that I'm just praying that interest rates will drop because we're locked into a very good interest rate right now on that \$16 million construction loan. But in about two years, we're gonna have to renegotiate that because based on the terms of that negotiation, it's going to come up. And one of the things that we're hoping to do is to negotiate out of this debt service coverage ratio because that debt service coverage ratio prevents us from being able to use our reserves in ways that we would like to, to differently compensate staff.

[00:41:32,091] So just be on the lookout for that. We're watching it, staying very closely connected to our reps at Eagle Bank, who love us and we love them. But I just wanted to put that in, plant that seed for your consideration in later time. Currently, quick question on that. So our original loan was 16 million, is that right? And do we, I mean, sorry, I didn't wanna put you on the spot, but off the top of your head, what would we have to renegotiate? Like how much have we paid off? Or is it one of those things we've been basically just paying the interest, and we still owe 16 million? It's that. All right, thank you. All right, we still owe 16 million.

[00:42:15,311] Okay, so, well, you know, we're in a position where we need to think about whatever we need to, I wanna get out of the debt service coverage ratio realm. And I don't even know what that means. I have a meeting with Ad Ops tomorrow to like talk about whether or not that's even plausible, you know, for that level of loan, but I don't want it anymore. I don't, it's not the loan, but I don't want the debt service coverage ratio because it's limiting, and yeah, that's the thing that we need to start thinking about. I don't like the terms of the loan, but it's fine. We're gonna figure it out, but we can't figure it out in this environment because interest rates are garbage, and so our interest rate is very low; it's like 3%.

[00:42:57,892] And that doesn't exist right now So we gotta get, we gotta figure that out. You know what I mean? Not to me, yeah. So we're gonna figure that out. A couple of drivers of our current forecast, good revenue stability. Our spending is tracking as expected. And then, you know, our routine cash flow timing is good, and you'll see that in the current projections if you need to look at other areas in your folders. Okay, next slide, Bundy. Our forecast has strengthened because there was a grant that we did not include in our original forecast, which is our Perkins grant that funds our internal ATC program, our CTE program, Career Technical Education Program, which is about \$110,000.

[00:43:53,072] We did not include that in our original forecast, and then we also have a contingency in case our interest rate changes, which is about \$11,000 a month. That also

improved our forecast. There are some offsetting expense increases that connect to student support; we're spending more money on getting kids to come to school, and then also there are some adjustments in terms of our planned capitalized expenses categories that connect to some of our wifi work that we've had to do internally. And then one of the things that I just want you all to be on notice about is that we are going through the enrollment certification process. There's something happening citywide where between September 30th and October 1st, a bunch of kids fell out of the at-risk category.

[00:44:51,092] It's crazy; it's suspicious. The good news is that we did a data pull on September 30th because of something that happened years ago so that we could have an accurate picture of all of the children who, at the time of enrollment, were categorized as at-risk. We took that screenshot and, sure enough, on October 1st, about over 50 kids dropped off that list. OSCE and the Department of Human Services are trying to figure out what happened with that; but it cost us over \$130,000. We've already accounted for that in our budget, so it's fine, it's not fine, but you know what I mean? Like it's not creating a situation for us right now, but we want our money back. And we've met with the deputy mayor, OSCE.

[00:45:43,073] OSCE is working very hard with human services, who does not have a reasonable answer for why that happened. But I just want you all to be aware of that because what we projected in our budget is different from our actuals in the at-risk line, and then any other shifts that we may anticipate seeing is that if we have children who, when they came into our organization, we thought they were one level of special education. And then, we also forecast certain levels of special education were always pretty conservative. But now that we're actually doing the enrollment audit and certification, we'll actually be able to line up students with their actual dollar amounts. Okay. Oh, and then the last thing is that we just got our audit report; doesn't look like there are any findings from our annual audit, which is always good to have a clean audit. And those things will be—it's very good to have a clean audit. And we have had a clean audit every single year I've been on the board, so kudos, clean audits; we love them. Yep. Any questions? Okay. All right. That's it for me. Back to you, Kimba. Have to remember to unmute myself. So we have just one or two. I appreciate people for holding on. We're a little over.

[00:47:10,472] A couple of closing things as we move on and close out towards our next meeting. We do not have a December meeting, and so I want to remind everybody of that. So our next meeting will be the January one, where we are meeting in closed session. And, Kimba, just to clarify that. So are we meeting in closed session for the whole meeting? Or we're going to have an executive session at the end. We'll have an executive session after we have a regular. Yes. And that was for January. Yes, but we don't have a December meeting. No December meeting. Our January meeting, we meet as a regular meeting, and then we adjourn to an executive session after a regular meeting. Yes, yeah, okay. Thank you.

[00:47:55,832] Thank you for that clarification, especially since this is a public-this is going

to be forecast. I want to make sure that it is all clear and on the record, so I just want to flag that Also, there haven't been any updates to our board goals, but I do just want to make sure that people within their committees are revisiting and making sure they are on track and on target, so that they're keeping up with our board goals. The only change from our 24-25 school year was the one where we implemented the oversight and of our strategic plan, moving away from some other. um goals that was the only new one for this year, so I just want to make sure and have direct people to those.

[00:48:39,294] It is in um if you if because it's not outside the last, I went to look today just to make sure where I can find it, so people can find it. It is in the folder for our September meetings. I will go in and update it because I there's a place I didn't update it. Updated board goals, what I didn't do is update the footnote, so it says the 24 board goals. Um because I edited the document, so I need to go in and do that change in there, because when you look at it, it says the 24 board goals but the the goals in it are correct. So if you're looking for it, so you can visit it, please do look for it in our September um folder because that is where our board goals are located.

[00:49:17,741] But um if I don't see yours, go ahead Erin. Yeah, no, I was just going to see what along those lines. So um Jan and I have been working on the governance ones, and we will have some things, I'm sure she's mentioned in the executive committee, but just to alert everybody else, we'll have some things to present to you um for January. I I don't know if if she's planning to send them ahead of time or how she's going to do that, but because we've been working on revising the trustee agreement and the, um, and we're now currently working on, uh, revising the orientation handbook, and then there was one other thing which now I'm forgetting, but anyway, so that we're just, um, trying to make sure that the documents that have to do with recruiting and onboarding our trustees are all up to date, because those got pretty out of date, um, for COVID.

[00:50:05,705] I don't know why, um, seems like that wouldn't be a thing that COVID affected, but it did, so some of our practices kind of went by the wayside, and, um, so we're picking that up and updating those, and you'll see those in January. But what we'll be asking for at that point is for everybody, since many people came on board recently, we'll be asking for input like what what should you have gotten had we done things better, what would have been helpful. So just um kind of come with that mindset, to be prepared, maybe think back over you know how when you came on the board how it was and what would have made it better.

[00:50:40,031] I appreciate that forecasting, especially since it gave me a little break um in our convening, so thank you Erin, and just to revisit those as you're coming in and for those. of you that I don't speak or um hear from um in this next winter wonderland season. I hope you all have um restful close to 2025, and I look forward to seeing you all in the new year. Also, if you need anything from me or if you even I want to extend this invitation, if anybody wants a touch base or anything in this this period since we don't have a meeting next month, please let me know, and um I will set some time for us to either speak on the

phone or to meet in person for those people who are closer and local, um per your wish. But um I hope you have a happy winter and looks forward to seeing you all in the new year. Thank you.