

In The Matter Of:

*ARKANSAS DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL*

August 13, 2019

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ARKANSAS DIVISION OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

AUGUST 13, 2019
10:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

DR. IVY PFEFFER	Chairperson/DESE Deputy Commissioner
MR. GREG ROGERS	DESE Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal and Admin. Services
MR. MIKE WILSON	Attorney & Education Advocate
MS. TOYCE NEWTON	Past State Board of Ed. Member
DR. NACCAMAN WILLIAMS	Past State Board of Ed. Member
DR. ANGELA KREMERS	Deputy Director - CTE/Ark. Dept. of Career Ed.

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. MARY CLAIRE HYATT DESE Specialist

ALSO APPEARING:

MR. REGINALD BALLARD	DESE Public School Program Coordinator
MS. KELLY McLAUGHLIN	DESE Public School Program Advisor
MR. FREDDIE SCOTT	DESE Operations Manager

LOCATION:

Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Auditorium
#4 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas

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E X H I B I T S

A-1: HOPE ACADEMY OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Good morning. Ladies and Gentlemen, the August 13, 2019 meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is called to order. I would like to welcome everyone to the ADE auditorium and ask if you'll take a moment just to check and make sure your electronic devices are silenced.

I'd like to introduce the Panel at this time. This Panel oversees the authorization, renewal, revision, and revocation of charters. We do have one member who is currently not with us this morning. Mr. Phil Baldwin will be coming in later, so he will not be here for this first agenda item. But I think instead of how we typically go through with me introducing panel members I'm going to let the panel members introduce themselves. We're kind of starting a new cycle with the hearing for new charters. So we'll start down here on the end and let panel members introduce themselves, who you are, your background, and how long you've been on the Panel.

MR. WILSON: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I'm Mike Wilson. I'm a lawyer from Jacksonville. I've been on the Panel -- I'm not sure -- a couple of years, I guess --

CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: I think so.

1 MR. WILSON: -- and thoroughly enjoying the work
2 of the Panel and the work of the Education
3 Department; very impressive.

4 MS. NEWTON: My name is Toyce Newton. I'm a
5 former member of the State Board of Education. I'm
6 from Crossett.

7 MR. ROGERS: Greg Rogers with the Department of
8 Education. Second time on the Charter Panel, but I
9 have six months now.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy
11 Commissioner for the Department of Education's
12 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

13 I'm practicing that new division language, so
14 we'll try to get that right.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Naccaman Williams. I'm a former
16 math teacher out of the Arkadelphia School District
17 and a former State Board member. I've been on the
18 Panel ever how long Toyce said she's been on the
19 Panel.

20 DR. KREMERS: Angela Kremers. I'm the director
21 for the Division of Career and Technical Education at
22 the Department of Education, learning all the new
23 acronyms as well. This is my second year -- the
24 start of my second year on the Panel.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So welcome, Panel Members and

1 Guests.

2 And we also want to always thank our court
3 reporter. Without her we could not have as good of a
4 hearing and she is always really good to make sure
5 everything is captured for the public. And we do
6 appreciate you, Ms. Sharon.

7 As Chair, my goal is to facilitate a fair and
8 responsible hearing. I will request that each person
9 speaking please state your name and title for the
10 record. And we also ask that you speak clearly into
11 the microphone, not only for the benefit of those
12 here but also for our audience who watches these
13 meetings via livestream. There will be a transcript
14 of the meeting and it will be posted on the ADE
15 website.

16 CONSENT AGENDA

17 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So we will go ahead and begin
18 on our Consent Agenda -- Mr. Freddie Scott. We have
19 our minutes from the June meeting, and hopefully
20 you've had a chance to review those minutes. If you
21 need a minute we'll take time to review that, and
22 then I'll accept a motion to approve those.

23 MR. ROGERS: I make a motion to approve the
24 minutes.

25 DR. WILLIAMS: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. All those in favor?

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. The Consent Agenda is
4 approved.

5 ACTION AGENDA

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: And we will now move on to
7 the Action Agenda, and for that we'll ask Mr. Reggie
8 Ballard to give us an update on our Action Agenda for
9 today.

10 MR. BALLARD: Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Dr.
11 Pfeffer. Reginald Ballard, Division of Elementary
12 and Secondary Education.

13 I wanted to give an update to the agenda. Our
14 third action item on the agenda is in need of
15 removal. We received notice from Winslow Community
16 School that they would like to voluntarily retract
17 their application and will not be presenting today
18 during the hearing.

19 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So do we need to make a
20 motion then to remove that or we just --

21 MR. BALLARD: (shaking head from side to side.)

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So we'll only have the
23 first two --

24 MR. BALLARD: Two.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: -- items on our agenda?

1 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

3 MR. BALLARD: Yes, ma'am.

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right.

5 MR. BALLARD: All right.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Any questions for Mr. Ballard
7 on that?

8 All right. And our -- before we start with our
9 first action item, we have one of our elected
10 officials with us today to speak on one of our -- I
11 believe on the Hope Academy. And Senator Bart Hester
12 is here and we'd like to give him an opportunity to
13 address the Panel.

14 SENATOR HESTER: Thank you, Panel. As she said,
15 I'm an Arkansas State Senator. I'm also a board
16 member of the Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter,
17 and soon-to-be Hope Academy. Mr. Wilson. And I'm
18 also speaking as a former foster parent and adoptive
19 parent. And if you've lived in this world at all,
20 you understand the incredibly unique challenges that
21 children who have been ripped out of their home and
22 their whole lives have changed -- the incredible
23 challenges they have; the challenges they have when
24 they go to regular school, things that teachers that
25 love them may not be uniquely qualified to understand

1 that something as simple as a child that has come
2 from foster care when they get hungry how they
3 respond versus my or your child would respond when
4 they get hungry. And we started talking about at the
5 Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter, as a board of
6 directors, that we have an incredible facility, we
7 have incredible staff, we have incredible support
8 from the community; we can do more than we're
9 currently doing. We started talking month after
10 month about what more we can do as a children's
11 shelter. At the same time we're learning, I'm sure
12 as you guys are keenly aware, that our school system
13 is dealing with more and more children that have
14 unique challenges. And we started looking at this,
15 thinking we have more and more children in our public
16 school with unique challenges. And our
17 superintendents -- I personally met with Dr. Jones at
18 Bentonville and they said this was one of their
19 greatest needs they need the Legislature to
20 understand was these children that are coming from
21 broken homes, in foster care, that need special
22 attention.

23 So the Children's Shelter started looking at
24 what can we do. This seemed to be a great fit. We
25 started looking into it. As you're going to learn,

1 you will see the quality of people working for the
2 Children's Shelter, and soon-to-be Hope Academy, we
3 hope -- the quality of people, the detail, the time
4 and the organization that's gone into preparing this.
5 You will see that we're going to in turn pour that
6 into the children. We love the children of Northwest
7 Arkansas, as people all over the state love their
8 children. We want what's absolute best. We feel
9 like we have the ability to hopefully open a new
10 chapter for the entire state of Arkansas of what we
11 can do for a unique challenge that's growing for the
12 state of Arkansas, a way that we hope we can help the
13 Department of Education and all of our public schools
14 help resolve this issue.

15 Thank you for your time.

16 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Thank you.

17 Okay. So, Mr. Ballard, if you'll go ahead and
18 present to us this first item.

19 HEARING PROCEDURES

20 MR. BALLARD: Yes, ma'am. Before we do our
21 presentation I would like for Mary Claire Hyatt, our
22 Counsel -- [clearing throat] -- excuse me -- to go
23 over our procedures.

24 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Very good. Thank you.

25 Ms. Hyatt, you are recognized.

1 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Division of
2 Elementary and Secondary Education.

3 So for the hearing today all persons, except
4 attorneys representing the parties who are going to
5 testify, need to be sworn by the Chair. They're
6 going to have 20 minutes for their presentation,
7 their initial presentation. You can grant additional
8 time if you think it's necessary. Any parties
9 opposed will then have 20 minutes. I don't believe
10 we have anyone signed up in opposition to either, but
11 I'll double-check before we get there. And then the
12 applicant will have an additional 5 minutes to
13 respond to anything that happened during the
14 opposition time. Following that, you have the
15 opportunity to ask questions of the applicant or
16 anyone from the Department or the Division, and then
17 issue a final decision. You also have a lot of other
18 options in terms of tabling matters and stuff, and we
19 can get to that if that arises at that time.

20 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

21 Panel Members, are there any questions before we
22 get started?

23 Okay.

24 A-1: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

25 APPLICATION: HOPE ACADEMY OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS, BENTONVILLE,

1 AR

2 MR. BALLARD: All right. So our first action
3 item is Hearing of Open-Enrollment Public Charter
4 School Application: Hope Academy of Northwest
5 Arkansas, Bentonville, Arkansas.

6 Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas is a proposed
7 open-enrollment public charter school to be located
8 within Bentonville School District. The sponsoring
9 entity is Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter. The
10 applicant is requesting to serve 40 students in
11 grades K-3 beginning in the 2020-2021 school year.
12 The applicant hopes to add grades each year until an
13 enrollment cap of 70 students is met serving grades
14 K-6 for the 2024-2025 school year.

15 We have representatives here who are going to be
16 doing a presentation for Hope Academy of Northwest
17 Arkansas.

18 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So will all
19 representatives of the charter and anyone speaking in
20 opposition please stand to receive the oath. Okay.
21 And if you'll raise your right hand -- do you swear
22 or affirm that the testimony you're about to give
23 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
24 the truth?

25 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay, thank you.

2 And we will begin with the presentation. If
3 you'll just come to the microphone and I'll go ahead
4 and start the timer. You'll have 20 minutes. And
5 just please state your name and title for the record.
6 And anyone else who may be coming up to assist with
7 the presentation just state your name as you come up
8 to speak.

9 MS. PETERSON: So make sure I know how to use
10 this [indicating the PowerPoint clicker].

11 All right. My name is Maury Peterson. I'm the
12 executive director of the Northwest Arkansas
13 Children's Shelter. And we're hoping that we're
14 going to be joined right now by phone by
15 Superintendent Debbie Jones from Bentonville Public
16 Schools.

17 Is Dr. Jones on the line?

18 SUPT. JONES: I'm on the line.

19 MS. PETERSON: Okay. Can you -- everybody hear
20 her?

21 Okay. Go ahead, Dr. Jones.

22 SUPT. JONES: Can you hear me?

23 MS. PETERSON: Yes, we can. Go right ahead.

24 SUPT. JONES: It's my honor to speak on behalf
25 of the Hope charter board. The Arkansas Children's

1 Shelter has long-time been a partner with the
2 Bentonville School District, and so we have had a
3 close working relationship. And it's true, when they
4 had the idea for a charter they came to us and asked
5 for input, and we agreed that this is the greatest
6 need in the school system. And I believe that they
7 have all the capability to provide quality education
8 for these kids, and we do value that and we offer our
9 partnership to help them with professional
10 development, to help them with curriculum, in any way
11 that we can to provide a superb education for these
12 students. We believe that they have wraparound
13 services far beyond what we can provide in the
14 schools, as hard as we try to meet the health and
15 mental health needs of these students. And so we are
16 in total support of Hope charter.

17 MS. PETERSON: Great. Thank you very much, Dr.
18 Jones.

19 SUPT. JONES: You're welcome.

20 MS. PETERSON: So I would like to thank --

21 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Ms. Peterson -- Dr. Jones,
22 will you be on the line in case there are questions?

23 SUPT. JONES: I can stay on the line, sure.

24 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. And just in case there
25 are panel questions, we'll just --

1 MS. PETERSON: Okay.

2 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: -- we'll see. Thank you.

3 MS. PETERSON: Okay, great.

4 So I just want to thank the Charter Authorizing
5 Panel for your time and attention to have -- that
6 you've given to review our application for Hope
7 Academy.

8 So we are here today because we believe we have
9 an innovative public charter school model that
10 currently does not exist in Northwest Arkansas, which
11 offers a unique educational environment for children
12 who have experienced trauma. There's a gap in
13 service in our community's -- for our community's
14 most vulnerable children and we know that Hope
15 Academy can fill that gap.

16 We view Hope Academy as an extension of our
17 mission at the Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter,
18 which is to provide a safe haven, high-quality care,
19 and hope for the future for children who have been
20 abused, abandoned, and neglected. Over the course of
21 26 years we have cared for more than 11,000 children
22 who have experienced trauma, and for more than 20
23 years we have operated a school for our residents at
24 the Children's Shelter in partnership with the
25 Bentonville Public Schools. What is now known as

1 trauma-informed education is something that we have
2 been practicing for decades.

3 Our goal with Hope Academy is to take our years
4 of experience and expertise in trauma-informed care
5 and expand into the community to reach even more
6 children at risk.

7 Our K-6 model will allow us to have longevity
8 with the students for even greater impact, and our
9 innovative wraparound services will allow us to
10 partner with families to help them access other
11 needed services that the public school districts
12 simply do not have the capacity to address. These
13 unique wraparound services will include such things
14 as assigning a case manager to each family, visiting
15 the families in their homes ahead of the start of
16 school so we can build trust and better understand
17 their needs, offering access to mental health
18 counselors, parenting training, vouchers to our
19 thrift store, and sending snacks and meals home.

20 The problem of childhood trauma in Northwest
21 Arkansas is real and it is pervasive. Consistently,
22 Washington County rates number two and Benton County
23 rates number three for confirmed cases of child
24 maltreatment. With 30-plus people a day moving to
25 Northwest Arkansas the problem continues to grow.

1 Hope academy will be a pacesetter and a first of
2 its kind education model for Arkansas. We look
3 forward to working hand-in-hand with our area school
4 districts to bring this innovative model to life. We
5 will work with the children not only with their
6 academics but with a strong focus on social-emotional
7 learning and their needs -- and their needs for self-
8 regulation, with a goal of transitioning those
9 children who can back to traditional classrooms.

10 Ultimately it's about the kids and our
11 community's future. We believe Hope Academy of
12 Northwest Arkansas will positively change the
13 trajectory of countless young lives and the family
14 members who care for them.

15 Jake Gibbs, who will be our principal for Hope
16 Academy, will now present our school mission and show
17 how we will meet the Arkansas Standards for
18 Accreditation. Thank you.

19 MR. GIBBS: Hi. Jake Gibbs, Education Director
20 of Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter.

21 Our mission for Hope Academy: the mission of the
22 Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas is to provide
23 students with a safe, positive, trauma-informed
24 academic environment that will nurture their love for
25 learning and confidence in life.

1 Okay. So the first thing that I want to do is
2 make clear what trauma means to us as it's relevant
3 to our school. The kids that we seek to serve are
4 going to come from chaotic backgrounds; they're going
5 to come from chaotic homes. That could be physical
6 violence, that could be neglect, that could be opioid
7 use. What that does is it actually -- the chemicals
8 in their brain, it affects the development of the
9 brain in the child, and as a result of that the child
10 has issues with decreased ability to process, to
11 communicate, and with memory consolidation. So
12 clearly those are three things that we would expect a
13 typically developing student coming into the
14 classroom to have to academically succeed. And so
15 our concern is we're wanting to pull these students
16 in who don't have any of those and we want to help
17 them out. Now the good news is research shows us
18 that we can reverse these processes in young
19 children, and what that means is you have to build
20 relationships; you have to start to foster a sense of
21 safety and a sense of trust. We feel confident that
22 we can do that because we have 20 years of experience
23 doing it already in a school setting.

24 So what we want to do now is provide small
25 classrooms with a high staff-to-student ratio so that

1 we can seek out these individual needs of students
2 and provide them with highly individualized services.
3 Beyond the classroom we seek out the needs of
4 families and children because we want to understand
5 the underlying causes of the symptoms, because that's
6 what we're seeing. We want to be able to get into
7 the homes and start to focus on the holistic
8 development of the family.

9 For my part, I have 15 years of experience in
10 education. The totality of that has included
11 alternative schools, behavior programs, and special
12 education. That's really all I've ever done. I feel
13 highly qualified to work with these kids and I also
14 feel highly qualified to lead a team in best
15 practices to reverse the course of these kids' lives.

16 So the academic piece: again, we're going to
17 have 10 students, we'll have a teacher and two
18 paraprofessionals in each classroom.

19 We want to use evidence-based models to provide
20 social-emotional learning and academic care as well.
21 We want to use principles of Understanding by Design,
22 and by that I mean that we want to start with the
23 mastery of the standard and work backwards from there
24 so that we're determining acceptable evidence of
25 understanding and then planning, learning and

1 instruction.

2 We also want to use principles of project-based
3 learning. The reason for that is we believe that
4 kids even at a young age need to start understanding
5 that they are part of a community. And so we want --
6 what we want to do is introduce them to these ideas
7 of seeking out a problem, finding a solution, and
8 then coming up with an authentic answer, and being
9 able to present that to an audience at the end in
10 order to foster some pride in their work.

11 The curriculum that we would like to use: for
12 English Language Arts we're going to use Wilson
13 Foundations, supplemented by Wit and Wisdom and
14 Geodes. The reason that we chose this is that it's
15 highly engaging material; it also aligns with the
16 Arkansas RISE initiative that the State is moving
17 forward with. So, clearly, when we were researching
18 programs that was the first priority in determining
19 one to use. For math, we're going to use Engage New
20 York. For science, to develop our instruction we
21 would like to use the Grasping Phenomenal Science
22 program. And social studies will be reinforced, as
23 well as science, during our social-emotional learning
24 focus time. I'm a previous social studies teacher
25 myself, so that's an important subject to me and I

1 look forward to working with our teachers on
2 developing some meaningful content there.

3 For us, success for a student is having them
4 transition back to public school. I know that sounds
5 strange to say coming from a charter school, but the
6 whole goal is to get these kids to a place where they
7 can function in a classroom and move forward with
8 their academic life. And that is our hope is to get
9 ahead of their social and emotional needs, to help
10 them develop coping skills, and to help them
11 understand what it means to be successful
12 academically.

13 For our social and emotional learning curriculum
14 we have chosen Positive Action. Time and again as
15 I've researched this it's shown really, really good
16 results. This is a program that is evidence-based.
17 The purpose of the school is to make a long-term
18 lasting impact on our community, and that's one of
19 the focuses of the Positive Action curriculum. What
20 it does is it helps the whole child development of
21 self, a sense of self in the class, the school, the
22 family, and the community. So there -- so those
23 components -- each one of those components is part of
24 the self curriculum. It's also a scope sequence and
25 it does spiral.

1 Okay. Student support services: this is really
2 the heart of who we are. We -- this is our strength
3 in knowing each individual student's needs and
4 catering to them specifically. We will have a
5 guidance program for social and emotional
6 development. We already are partners with Ozark
7 Guidance and they have agreed in principle to come
8 across with us on this charter school and work with
9 our kids. So when our children arrive at school they
10 will have a hot breakfast, then they will start their
11 day. And throughout the day Ozark Guidance team
12 members may come in and pull kids out of class or
13 push-in with kids as needed to help them with their
14 individual mental, social and emotional needs. Our
15 trained paraprofessionals will assist classroom
16 teachers in providing academic services and
17 restorative behavior interventions. Because of our
18 small numbers we can spend a lot of time
19 individualizing -- excuse me -- analyzing individual
20 needs and providing customized approaches to whole-
21 child development. Of course along with this we will
22 be providing our ESL services, our dyslexia services,
23 all of the mandates under the federal government --
24 of course, under IDEA. We are completely committed
25 to that and have a plan in place to serve kids with

1 regards to that.

2 Bentonville Public Schools has agreed to provide
3 us with professional development, especially in the
4 dyslexia awareness training area. So we already have
5 that lined up to assist our teachers in that regard.

6 We are not on the National School Lunch Program
7 and we don't intend to be. We have a trained chef
8 who runs our kitchen. All of our nutritional
9 services are run through him. He develops a
10 balanced-diet set of meals every week. We have fresh
11 food. We have a fresh salad bar every day. Many of
12 those vegetables come off of our learning gardens
13 that we have on our campus. And so that's been a
14 wonderful thing for the kids that we have and we look
15 forward to continuing that.

16 All of our fiscal operations will be managed by
17 Rick Brazile, our director of Finance and
18 Administration. We will have a separate accounting
19 system for monies that come from the State to support
20 the school. We will use eFinance. And we are
21 completely committed to keeping an ethical line
22 between the sponsoring entity and the school with
23 regard to money.

24 Campus maintenance is already provided. We have
25 that there. We have people that handle our

1 maintenance and so that will continue as well.

2 Our board of directors will consist of a chair,
3 a vice chair, a secretary, a treasurer, and one at-
4 large member. And that board of directors as it
5 relates to school decisions will have autonomy as it
6 relates directly to matters of the school day-to-day.

7 Human capital: this is perhaps the most
8 important part for me and it's what makes us go. And
9 so when I was reflecting on this and thinking about
10 what I need to do as a leader to make effective
11 teachers I really -- I thought of three areas that
12 are important:

13 One is continuous improvement in school culture.
14 The way we're going to do that is we're going to
15 promote collegiality, we're going to promote
16 reflective practices, and we're going to promote time
17 for self-care. Obviously, this will be a high-stress
18 environment. The teachers we have now already work
19 in that and they understand how it is -- and I do too
20 and want to make sure that our teachers have time to
21 take care of themselves.

22 We want to promote teacher development
23 strategies. We're going to keep informed on State
24 initiatives and we're going to provide appropriate
25 and relevant professional development for our

1 teachers. And part of that is making certain that I
2 am getting the appropriate training in order to
3 assess teachers and provide them with feedback in the
4 way that they're using the programs that the State
5 mandates.

6 And, finally, teacher empowerment; this is a
7 really important one to me. Going back to my special
8 ed. days, as a lead teacher I had three aids and I
9 always made sure that they had a voice because
10 they're working with the kids right alongside me.
11 And the importance of understanding each individual
12 child is not one that's lost on me. And I believe
13 strongly in developing teacher leaders and allowing
14 teachers as much latitude as they need to advance
15 their careers. Right now, one of our teachers who is
16 committed to following us over to the charter school
17 is currently getting her masters in Curriculum and
18 Instruction on the side, and we're very proud of her
19 for doing that and look forward to how she can
20 contribute with that.

21 So by systematically focusing on these three
22 areas we will succeed in developing well-rounded
23 teachers who feel supported and successful.

24 Stakeholder and family engagement: I wanted to
25 read sections to you of ESSA Arkansas state plan. It

1 mandates that we will work with parents to secure
2 assistance in improving the educational achievement
3 of children and youth to prevent involvement in
4 delinquent activities. That is an integral part of
5 our program. And we are absolutely committed to
6 getting into homes; that means meet-and-greets.
7 Before the school year start our teachers will be in
8 homes with staff. We're going to start to build
9 trust with families. We're going to start to allow
10 families who struggle to not see us as adversaries
11 anymore, to not see us as people who are out to get
12 them. We want to be a part of their team and we want
13 to let them know that we're going to meet them where
14 they are and we're going to support them. And
15 hopefully we can start to calm some of that stress
16 down in the home and that can have a lot of benefits.

17 Each family will receive a needs assessment and
18 a home language survey, of course, as needed. And
19 our family case manager will work with the families
20 throughout the year to provide continuous support.
21 This may look like going in and coaching on
22 restorative behavioral techniques that we use in the
23 school so that the kid -- the child is getting the
24 same behavior management techniques in the school as
25 he is at home; and so he's getting that consistency.

1 We also would like to provide vouchers to our
2 thrift store. We have a thrift store from the
3 sponsoring entity. And we are looking at potentially
4 sending home fresh frozen dinners in order to support
5 the families. We just need to figure out how to
6 streamline that and make it a healthy thing.

7 We're also going to continue our relationships
8 with our community partners. And we have also --
9 we've secured a meeting after this with the director
10 of the College of Education at the University of
11 Arkansas. And they're interested in getting in with
12 us and doing some longitudinal studies on this new
13 model to determine the effectiveness of it and to
14 sort of create a cyclical relationship where they can
15 provide us with feedback and we can provide them with
16 some content for study.

17 Facilities and transportation: everything we
18 already have is ADA compliant. We will have two
19 buses that run routes in mornings and afternoons, and
20 we will follow all school safety policies in
21 compliance with law.

22 About the numbers: so we have facilities and
23 fixed costs that are already related and are covered
24 by the Shelter. To date, we have \$700,000 in
25 contributions and we have another \$900,000 in

1 commitments from foundations and individuals pending
2 our approval. And we will, of course, continue to
3 apply for grants upon approval. And we have
4 fundraising events planned and we will continue to
5 seek individual donor contributions. Our board of
6 directors of the sponsoring entity has authorized use
7 of our 4.3 million dollar program fund, should we
8 need it as a last resort.

9 Okay. So this is our campus. We're on 80
10 acres. We have 65,000 square feet. We have two
11 playgrounds that are separated both geographically
12 and by fences. We have a full-size gym. We have a
13 library and we have outdoor sports fields with
14 backstops for baseball, nets for soccer, et cetera.
15 These are a couple of our classroom areas. But let
16 me assure you that we do have classroom space for all
17 of the grades that we are proposing to provide
18 services to. These are just a couple of examples of
19 what we already have.

20 This is our cafeteria. It has a capacity of 123
21 people. We have a fully functioning commercial
22 kitchen, again with a fully trained chef and his
23 staff who provide homemade meals every day for us for
24 breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the current
25 residents.

1 Okay. And if I have time available I would just
2 like to read a brief story about one of the kids that
3 we worked with this last year and how our process is
4 beneficial to these kids.

5 Austin is an 11-year old in our care. The
6 physical, emotional and social effects of trauma
7 exposure impact every aspect of his academic day. A
8 great deal of his written work was illegible, with
9 misspelled words that were constructed by a mixture
10 of upper and lowercase letters of various sizes
11 floating across the page. Writing struggles flowed
12 into math accuracy. Reading struggles flowed across
13 the academic curriculum. He began to retreat under
14 his ever-present red hoodie and sit with his head on
15 his desk. He would fly into angry outbursts and
16 refuse to complete his schoolwork. Through the
17 tenants of trauma-informed education Austin began to
18 believe in himself and make progress. Through the
19 collaborative efforts of our education team working
20 together with our paraprofessionals Austin has
21 emerged from the hoodie and is actively participating
22 in school activities. We recognize the small and big
23 successes. We help him recognize the traumas of his
24 childhood. We hold a caring expectation that giving
25 up, quitting, or hiding is not an option. We design

1 and construct targeted learning materials pertaining
2 to his interests and we helped him to overcome his
3 reading fears by providing time for him to listen to
4 teachers read and give him space to independently
5 listen to audio-books. He has improved his reading
6 assessment to an average 4th grader at the beginning
7 of the year and his math assessment to an average
8 midyear 4th grade student. This is a student who is
9 -- was in 5th grade at the time. More important than
10 test scores, however, he ditched the hoodie, he
11 participates in classroom coursework, and his
12 handwriting is legible. Currently his reading and
13 learning elements of real friendship through the book
14 Bridge to Terabithia. Now if he comes across a word
15 he doesn't know his hand automatically reaches for
16 the dictionary. We're proud of his -- of Austin's
17 achievements. And the next book he's chosen to read
18 is Moby Dick.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you. And you
21 ended that just right as the time ended.

22 MR. GIBBS: I heard it.

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Great.

24 MR. GIBBS: Thanks for giving me the five extra
25 seconds.

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: There you go, there you go.

2 Ms. Hyatt, is there anyone else --

3 MS. HYATT: (Shaking head from side to side.)

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. You do have an
5 additional five minutes if there's anyone else that
6 would like to speak or anything else before we get to
7 Panel questions?

8 MR. GIBBS: I do just have a closing statement.

9 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

10 MR. GIBBS: Today kids from all over the state
11 of Arkansas will be headed back to school. Many of
12 them will show up in new clothes, shoes and school
13 supplies. They'll be excited to see old friends and
14 meet new ones. Seeing the anticipation and
15 excitement in their eyes is one of the many reasons
16 why we teach. But there's going to be another group
17 of kids. These kids are going to arrive on their
18 first day dealing with struggles that most of us
19 can't fathom. Excitement and joy are replaced by
20 sadness, anger and confusion. In many cases these
21 emotions are fueled by a deprivation of social-
22 emotional support, a lack of basic physical needs, or
23 a hostile environment at home. As soon as they walk
24 into the school they become our kids. When they
25 leave for the day we don't stop thinking about them.

1 Teachers across the state do wonderful things for
2 students with significant and persistent trauma.
3 However, a booming population of -- excuse me -- a
4 booming student population and the reality of time
5 constraints make it difficult to provide these kids
6 with the extra attention they require.

7 At Hope Academy our intention is to provide
8 long-term solutions to persistent social problems.
9 We know the challenges of academic accountability;
10 they are real and the statistics bear them out.
11 We're not going to gloss them over, and our staff
12 will overcome them through commitment, hard work, and
13 best practices. We're willing to bear the weight of
14 academic deficiencies on behalf of these children.
15 We know that under constant stress their brains
16 haven't had a chance to develop in a typical manner.
17 Brainstem and lymphatic systems tell us there's
18 danger around the corner. When danger is the
19 constant reality of a child, why bother exercising
20 any other part of the mind.

21 Let's join together today to put the rest of the
22 nation on notice that our state is going to be a
23 leader in paving a path for kids with significant
24 trauma. Together let's decide now that we aren't
25 going to wait until it's too late. The days of

1 waiting for the juvenile justice and correction
2 systems to intervene are over. We want to let
3 children know from the earliest age possible that
4 they can be safe. We want them to know they are
5 intelligent, kind people who have a place in our
6 communities, that they have a safe place to come,
7 that they no longer must only survive but can in fact
8 thrive. Hope Academy is that place. We have the
9 experience, the resources, the commitment, the
10 community support and, most importantly, the people
11 -- people who have seen time and again how the
12 intersection of compassion, training, and teamwork
13 can make a difference in the lives of kids who need
14 us right here and right now. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Thank you very much.

16 MR. GIBBS: You're welcome.

17 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So as we -- before we
18 actually start with the Panel questions, this is a
19 process we used last time when we had a review of
20 open-enrollment charters and it seemed to kind of
21 work well and help facilitate the question process.
22 So if the Panel is good with this, what I'd like for
23 us to do is start with the legal review and let Ms.
24 Hyatt go through if there are any remaining legal
25 issues or questions that might need to be considered

1 first. We can then check to see if there's any --
2 anything, questions around finance that maybe we need
3 to be alerted to or be thinking through. And then we
4 can go to your individual questions.

5 So is that all right with the Members?

6 Okay. All right. So we'll actually start
7 probably with Ms. Hyatt, if she wants to come up.

8 And you can stay close in case we have some
9 questions.

10 Legal Review

11 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: But in just looking at the
12 legal review document, I know that there were a few
13 things that the applicant responded to and -- but
14 sometimes it's difficult to tell if everything has
15 been resolved or if there are any remaining
16 questions. So I was going to see if you would walk
17 us through that now.

18 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt.

19 All of the waiver issues have been resolved; we
20 worked them out through the legal review process. I
21 just want to say thank-you to Jake Gibbs for being so
22 helpful during that process, because we did work
23 every single waiver out.

24 The only thing I just wanted to note, since the
25 Panel likes to know when it's a first time we've

1 granted a waiver, is that Act 190 of 2019 repealed
2 the previous Student Services Act and replaced it
3 with the School Counseling Improvement Act. This
4 would be the first time we waived that act, just
5 because it's so new, not because you haven't waived
6 it in -- waived similar things in the past. But
7 since coming out of the legislative session this
8 would be the first time a waiver was granted of the
9 School Counseling Improvement Act.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So I think my question
11 then would be for the school.

12 In waiving that entire act, I think it would
13 help me to better understand, you know, what it is
14 that needs to be waived. Because to me, one of the
15 most important parts of that act was that the school
16 will develop and implement a comprehensive school
17 counseling program -- and so much of what you
18 described to me really is that. So I'm wondering by
19 waiving the entire act -- because there are some
20 provisions that maybe I could see where maybe waiving
21 the ratio or some of the other technical components
22 might make sense. But to me, I'm having a hard time
23 understanding why you would want to waive the entire
24 thing, because again that has even implications
25 beyond what your school might do.

1 MR. GIBBS: Right. So we -- with our 25-plus
2 years of experience with the Shelter and 20-plus
3 years of running a school, and the fact that we have
4 a strong partnership with Ozark Guidance, and we're
5 also going to hire a case manager to liaise with
6 family, kids, and us who has a background in school
7 counseling, we feel really comfortable with our
8 ability to handle that aspect of this program.

9 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. But again -- and,
10 Legal, this may be a question for you -- if this
11 entire act is waived I'm wondering is it going to
12 prevent them from implementing the kind of program
13 that they've described? And are there certain
14 components that could be waived without a waiver from
15 the entire act?

16 MS. HYATT: Sure. Sorry, you're a little bit
17 taller than me.

18 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Hyatt is pulling
19 down the podium microphone).

20 MS. HYATT: So I just -- I brought the act up
21 just so that we could have it up here if there were
22 questions about what exactly was in the act. I did
23 want to read you something from their legal review
24 about their request for this waiver. Because, if I'm
25 remembering correctly, they did say that they would

1 still be doing a comprehensive school counseling
2 plan; it just might not a hundred-percent meet the
3 requirements of what has to be in it under 6-18-2003,
4 which is then under the new act; but that they did
5 intend to still have a comprehensive school
6 counseling plan every year.

7 But now I can't find it; so if you'll give me
8 just a second I'll get it pulled up.

9 Okay, found it. Sorry.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

11 MS. HYATT: Thank you for your patience.

12 So what -- and this is in the legal review. So
13 it says Hope Academy is requesting a waiver of the
14 Guidance Counselor provisions. They will have
15 counseling services in place, will be moving an
16 existing member of staff over to the position of
17 student and family case manager. The staff member
18 has a master's in social work and has experience with
19 case management. They will be charged with carrying
20 out a written plan for a comprehensive school
21 counseling program that will include components
22 mandated by Act 190 of 2019.

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. And outside of that
24 was there anything else then in the legal review?
25 Or, Panel Members, do you have any questions?

1 No, okay.

2 MS. HYATT: No.

3 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right. Thank you.

4 MR. WALTER: If I may just add briefly?

5 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Please introduce
6 yourself and you're recognized.

7 MR. WALTER: Tripp Walter, Staff Attorney,
8 Arkansas Public School Resource Center.

9 I think Ms. Hyatt pretty much addressed it. But
10 again the main reason that Hope requested an act -- a
11 waiver, rather, of the entire act is not an attempt
12 to avoid providing any of the services required. But
13 again they're going to perhaps handle it in a
14 different way that's specified in the act. As Mr.
15 Gibbs mentioned, this is one of their hallmark
16 features; so they will certainly be providing it.
17 Things such as licensure of the counselor and things
18 of that nature are really why they're asking for a
19 waiver of the act itself. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Thank you.

21 Budget Issues

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. And if we don't have
23 anything else related to the legal review, if we can
24 pull up the updated budget sheet? And do we have
25 someone in here from our finance team?

1 Yes, okay. Were there any questions or anything
2 that --

3 MS. BARRICK: (Shaking head from side to side.)

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. All right. It looks
5 like there weren't any review issues there. And so
6 we may have some more questions later.

7 MR. GIBBS: Okay.

8 Misc. Panel Questions

9 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So I think at this
10 time we're ready for Panel Members who have
11 questions, and I'll just start down here on this end.

12 Dr. Kremers?

13 DR. KREMERS: You have models -- evidence-based
14 models filled out for behavior modification for the
15 social-emotional learning. Do you have an evidence-
16 based model you plan to use for that component?

17 MR. GIBBS: Yes. That is the Positive Action
18 program. That is our evidence-based model.

19 DR. KREMERS: Okay. And then I'm skipping,
20 complete opposite, to finance on the budget. Under
21 the classroom instruction -- and you do have teachers
22 and there's five at the salary listed. Is that per
23 teacher or that's total amount for the teachers?

24 MR. GIBBS: Could you --

25 DR. KREMERS: Yes.

1 MR. GIBBS: This would be a good one for Rick.

2 DR. KREMERS: On the budget I just had a quick
3 question. Under the regular classroom instruction --
4 I believe it's on the first page -- it has teachers;
5 there's five FTEs. It says a total of \$38,400. Is
6 that a supplement to what they're already doing
7 within the school or is that per-teacher? It looks
8 like that's the single salary.

9 MR. BRAZILE: Yes. My name is Rick Brazile; I'm
10 senior director of Finance and Administration. And,
11 yes, ma'am, you're correct. We've got five total
12 regular classroom teachers at an average salary of
13 \$38,400.

14 DR. KREMERS: Per. Okay.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Yes, Dr. Williams.

16 DR. WILLIAMS: Yes, a couple of quick questions.

17 One, you mentioned -- working with parents to me
18 seems to be just a major piece of this program. One-
19 on-one time will be conducted with the student, first
20 of all. Who's going to be in charge of that one-on-
21 one time? There's the teacher, there's support
22 people in the classroom. So who's actually handling
23 the one-on-one time?

24 MR. GIBBS: Would this be with regards to
25 academics or just in general, the social-emotional

1 time?

2 DR. WILLIAMS: Well, good question. Yeah, that
3 would've been my follow-up. So I'm having trouble
4 delineating between --

5 MR. GIBBS: Yeah.

6 DR. WILLIAMS: -- the academic and --

7 MR. GIBBS: Right. So under the guidance of the
8 classroom teacher what we will do is set up a model
9 in the classroom where there will be a great number
10 of transitions. Those transitions will be marked by
11 a visual and auditory timer so that the kids always
12 know when they're coming, on a visual schedule.
13 During those transition times throughout the day the
14 teacher will have some opportunity for one-on-one
15 time. We would also anticipate that our trained
16 paraprofessionals in the classroom, under the
17 guidance of the classroom teacher, would provide some
18 one-to-one assistance as well.

19 DR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Now a follow-up along
20 those lines: you mentioned a parent-teacher
21 conference will be held twice a year?

22 MR. GIBBS: Yes, sir.

23 DR. WILLIAMS: And also I feel like at the same
24 time that you're having a lot of conversations with
25 parents. Is the parent-teacher conference just the

1 academic aspect of it or is it all combined?

2 MR. GIBBS: Yeah, it's all combined. I mean the
3 parent-teacher conferences certainly will look maybe
4 a little bit more traditional in terms of the
5 academic piece. But also, you know, again, the
6 social-emotional aspect of this is such an important
7 piece of it, because again we recognize that that's
8 where we're starting. You know, time and again you
9 hear people say, "Well, you have to develop
10 relationships and then you can get to the academics."
11 But I'm not sure across the board we're doing such a
12 great job of that all the time. So what we want to
13 do is really focus in on that social-emotional piece,
14 building the sense of safety, building the trust.
15 And then during the two parent-teacher conferences,
16 yes, we will, you know, cover the academic piece and
17 how it relates to the social-emotional development of
18 each child.

19 DR. WILLIAMS: Uh-huh, okay. I was thinking the
20 social-emotional piece was almost more important than
21 the parent-teacher -- from the academic side.

22 MR. GIBBS: Well, we -- it is. But we also
23 recognize that we're still a school and we still need
24 to provide that academic accountability piece.

25 DR. WILLIAMS: Okay.

1 MR. GIBBS: And the parents and families need to
2 understand that we're serious about the academic
3 development of their child as well.

4 DR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Mr. Rogers?

6 MR. ROGERS: I just had a couple. How did it
7 come about on your budget calculating the Title 1 and
8 special ed. funding?

9 MR. GIBBS: I'll let Rick take that.

10 MR. BRAZILE: I want to make sure I understand.
11 On the special ed.?

12 MR. ROGERS: Well, I see on your budget you put
13 -- you budgeted \$16,000 and \$20,000 for the two years
14 in Title 1, and special ed. you did \$10,000, and then
15 Title 2 was \$3,000, and Title 4 was \$10,000. So I
16 was just trying to understand a little bit how you
17 came up with those in the budget.

18 MR. BRAZILE: Yeah. So one of the things we did
19 was we tried to look at a lot of other applications
20 from other applicants for charter schools to see what
21 they did per student. That's one of the ways. But
22 also just understanding our census. We get Title 1
23 aid today from Bentonville Public Schools for some of
24 our kids; so we used it as a guide also for the
25 students. We know that the money is going to be

1 based on the census of the school, so right now it's
2 the best guess that we had, and that's the way we did
3 it. We also had some help from the Public Resource
4 Center in determining the amounts.

5 MR. ROGERS: And Bentonville knows that with
6 this charter school opening, if you do open, that
7 they will lose that Title 1 funding that they
8 currently get that's sent to y'all?

9 MR. BRAZILE: Yes. So, none of that Title 1
10 funding is included in this budget. That Title 1
11 funding is for the existing school today.

12 MR. ROGERS: Right. But going forward, if y'all
13 are approved --

14 MR. BRAZILE: Absolutely.

15 MR. ROGERS: -- then Bentonville would lose that
16 --

17 MR. BRAZILE: Absolutely.

18 MR. ROGERS: -- whatever for the students.

19 MR. BRAZILE: Absolutely.

20 MR. ROGERS: Okay. And then -- well, can I ask
21 one more?

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Uh-huh.

23 MR. ROGERS: I just wanted to be -- so the
24 teachers are going to be employees of the charter
25 school. Correct?

1 MR. BRAZILE: The teachers will be employees of
2 the charter school and not employees of the shelter.

3 MR. ROGERS: Okay. And they will -- and
4 everything will be run through eFinance for them, as
5 well as the students?

6 MR. BRAZILE: We fully expect to implement the
7 finance program that's used by the State, eFinance.
8 We will use it. We will keep the funds totally
9 segregated. We're going to open separate bank
10 accounts, payroll. All bills will be paid from those
11 funds. The funds will not mix at all. Anything that
12 comes to us for the charter school will be used
13 solely for the charter school and will not flow the
14 other way. There may be funds that flow from the
15 shelter -- that's one of the reasons we kept it under
16 the same 501(3)(c) -- as we need it, because we're
17 going to still be providing all the maintenance, the
18 nutrition, everything that we pay for today.

19 Everything in the budget we wanted to keep -- we
20 wanted to reduce the questions about are you sure
21 that this is the cost of the school. So all we did
22 to -- all we included here is what we believe to be
23 incremental to what we already pay. We didn't have
24 any of the things that we pay for the shelter, for
25 any of the facilities in the financials.

1 MR. ROGERS: All right. Thank you.

2 MR. BRAZILE: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton.

4 MS. NEWTON: I don't know if it's as much of a
5 question as it is a comment about the whole
6 philosophy and ideology of the concept of the Hope
7 Academy or Hope school. I depend on my colleagues
8 here on this Panel that have an educational
9 background to ask those questions about finance and
10 programming. And my history of work has been more in
11 community development and capacity building, and I'm
12 more than excited about the comprehensiveness of this
13 application.

14 One of the things that also excites me is the
15 cooperation of Dr. Jones and the Bentonville District
16 to recognize the unique needs of these students. I
17 think that it's a very ambitious idea and concept,
18 though I get the feeling that you guys have done your
19 homework and that you have addressed all the needs.
20 I'm constantly made aware that teachers more and more
21 are expected to do the social things, and sometimes
22 the cry is that they don't have time for educational
23 things that are first and foremost for an educator.
24 But here's a concept that pulls all those elements
25 together. So looking at the social aspects and the

1 fallout from young people that have these issues as
2 they relate to negative outcomes for community and
3 negative outcomes for economics, I'm very excited
4 about the comprehensive support -- the comprehensive
5 approach that allows you to look at juvenile justice
6 and allows you to look at quality of life. And I'm
7 looking forward to your success and looking forward
8 to providing this as a model, if the plan is
9 approved, or if the application is approved, for the
10 districts. Because I think that even though
11 educationally you can't -- I mean realistically you
12 can't expect education staff to be social workers,
13 there is a need for a social component that allows
14 parents to be able to grow and develop those things
15 that they need to be able -- to better take care of
16 their children and to parent in a way that provides
17 -- and that's a commentary, I guess, a social
18 commentary. But I think that this is a comprehensive
19 approach. And starting small is probably the best
20 advantage to be able to build and have lessons
21 learned as it meets the scrutiny of educators and of
22 social scientists, as opposed to what the kids need.

23 MR. GIBBS: Thank you for those comments;
24 appreciate that.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Mr. Wilson, do you

1 have any questions?

2 MR. WILSON: I didn't have any questions, Madam
3 Chairman. I support --

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: We need to get the microphone
5 down.

6 MR. WILSON: I support the comments that Ms.
7 Newton made too; they're very perceptive. And I'm
8 also impressed with the community support, the courts
9 and other folks in the area that deal with the
10 children on the wrong end, so-to-speak, too. It's
11 gratifying to see that you have the support from the
12 school district and the juvenile courts and others
13 there.

14 And, Madam Chairman, I am going to have to
15 excuse myself. But if I were going to be here I'd
16 vote to approve the application. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. GIBBS: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: And I just had a couple of
20 things to ask about. So I do -- I'm very pleased --
21 and if Dr. Jones is able to still be on the phone, I
22 do want to commend the partnership that you all have
23 formed. And you talked about the curricular approach
24 using the curriculum materials based on the Science
25 of Reading, and with the partnership for professional

1 development I'm sure your teachers will get the right
2 kind of training that they need for that explicit
3 instruction.

4 MR. GIBBS: We already have a couple of teachers
5 in the RISE cohort with Bentonville.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay, that's very good.

7 My comments I think are along the line -- or
8 questions are along the line with what Ms. Newton
9 asked as far as, you know, this is a very
10 comprehensive model that's going to provide the
11 wraparound services. And I hear more and more from
12 school administrators about the issues that there are
13 with being able to meet all of the needs of students.
14 So have -- are there conversations or thoughts though
15 that if this model proves to be successful how do we
16 take that and provide that additional support in the
17 public schools? Is there an opportunity later on for
18 even like inter-local agreements or partnerships with
19 the public schools so that, you know, the -- your
20 numbers are going to be fairly small, and if we see
21 that this is working be able to extend that. So I
22 don't know if you've had any thoughts about that, but
23 that would be something I think could be beneficial.

24 MR. GIBBS: Yeah. Part of our goal is -- and
25 from the very start of this we didn't come out and

1 say, hey, let's start a school. This was a very
2 organic process that's happened over the last year or
3 so -- a lot of thinking and reflecting and
4 determining, you know, can we really do this, if
5 we're going to throw ourselves into it and commit to
6 it, and right away we knew that we could. And part
7 of that is that we want to be innovative and we want
8 to think about new ways of approaching kids who
9 historically we've had struggles with reaching
10 despite our best efforts. And so one of the things
11 -- one of our goals is to sort of flip the script on
12 the whole charter school/public school butting-heads-
13 relationship thing, and we want to go in and we want
14 to be partners. We met with Dr. Marlin Berry at
15 Rogers yesterday and had a really nice conversation
16 with him, and a lot of his thoughts sort of echoed
17 what we're hearing from Bentonville.

18 And so yeah, absolutely. I don't know exactly
19 what that would look like right now, but what I will
20 tell you is there isn't anything off the table. If
21 it's helping kids and if it's helping families and if
22 it's within our resources to do it, then we're going
23 to give it a hard look.

24 MS. PETERSON: I'll just add that for many years
25 -- we're all about collaboration, and so what we

1 learn we want to share. And I think that forming a
2 partnership with the University of Arkansas to do
3 some research and to be able to really document our
4 best practices would be really key. And then, you
5 know, hopefully we can share that model with others
6 in the state and help more kids outside of just our
7 corner in Northwest Arkansas.

8 MR. GIBBS: And I would add, local agencies that
9 deal with adoption and family needs, we can reach out
10 and have reached out to them to consider potential
11 relationships and where that might go.

12 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. My final question is
13 around the -- you're not participating in USDA's
14 National School Lunch Program. Are there -- I just
15 want to make sure that there aren't any opportunities
16 that maybe you would miss out on on having additional
17 supports for students. And was curious is that a --
18 is there a particular reason that we could assist
19 with that would enable that participation, or is this
20 just something you feel like for the model you have
21 is going to be a better approach?

22 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Mr. Wilson exited the
23 meeting at 10:55 a.m.)

24 MR. BRAZILE: Yeah, absolutely. I really
25 appreciate you asking that question because I do

1 think that there's also funding that is available
2 that is based off of the census from the National
3 School Lunch Program. We had the National School
4 Lunch Program at the shelter several years ago and
5 made a very conscious and deliberate decision to move
6 away from it. We feel like the nutritional meals and
7 the taste of the meals -- it's all home-cooked -- is
8 much better for these kids because of the hunger
9 issues that they face in their past. And we found
10 that when we were on the program they were not eating
11 their meals; in fact, most of them were going into
12 the trash -- and now they're eating. We have
13 fantastic proteins every week. We have a salad bar
14 with every meal except breakfast, and there's two
15 options for breakfast every day. And we were able to
16 reduce our food budget by about \$60,000 in the first
17 year from the net amount on the School Lunch Program
18 because without the administrative effort that you've
19 got to go through on that program we could take the
20 donations from the community. And so all around, it
21 helped us.

22 But we are missing out on additional funding
23 opportunities, I think, because there is funding
24 that's out there that's available -- pretty
25 significant amount per student. It's based off of

1 the census for the School Lunch Program. But we know
2 our kids would qualify for some of that funding.
3 With the census I believe it will; obviously, we've
4 got to wait and see what the enrollment looks like.

5 But there are things that can -- that y'all can
6 help with and that would be great. We're going to
7 apply for every bit of funding that we possibly can.
8 There were other things that were left off of the
9 budget, some of them intentional because we weren't
10 real sure that it would be meaningful right now to
11 put them in. But we do intend to come back later
12 with opportunities for help.

13 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

14 MR. BRAZILE: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Williams.

16 DR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, just a comment. I had
17 opportunity to tour the facility and to see the
18 kitchen, the classrooms, all of it. Outstanding
19 facility. And the chef is pretty good too. So a
20 choice between the food that they're currently
21 serving and the traditional school lunch program,
22 it's not a hard decision. But we appreciate you
23 trying to get as many resources as possible. But I
24 can understand your dilemma. The chef is really,
25 really good, the food is really good.

1 Just another point though -- I want to just
2 reiterate what you said and what someone else said.
3 I noticed the letters of support from two judges and
4 two state legislators, one in writing and Mr. Hester
5 here. I can't say enough about all the school
6 districts participating in Benton County at the same
7 time, and like the idea of changing the relationship
8 that you're having with the Bentonville School
9 District and with the other districts. It's really
10 the way the charter/public ideal should be working.

11 So given all that, I just wanted to just really
12 note the support from the community.

13 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Do you have anything?

14 DR. KREMERS: One more.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. One more question.

16 DR. KREMERS: On the PD that's specific for
17 teachers to prepare them for dealing with students
18 that may have behavioral issues, do you have a
19 specific plan yet on PD to prepare your teachers for
20 being in the classroom?

21 MR. GIBBS: We do. We use three different
22 trauma-informed strategies for working -- truth-based
23 relational interviews, conscious discipline, and then
24 managing aggressive behaviors. There are several
25 different varieties of that, but it's the verbal de-

1 escalation program that really all schools utilize.
2 That's the one we use. So they'll get 40 hours of
3 training just in that per year.

4 DR. KREMERS: Okay, thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Do we have any
6 additional questions?

7 All right. Ms. Hyatt, any remaining issues?
8 Anything?

9 MS. HYATT: (Shaking head from side to side.)

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So if there are no
11 additional questions, I will accept a motion
12 regarding Hope Academy.

13 MS. NEWTON: Madam Chair, I have a motion.

14 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

15 MS. NEWTON: I move approval of the application
16 for charter for Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas.

17 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. I have a motion.

18 DR. WILLIAMS: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: And a second to approve.

20 All those in favor say "aye."

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Any opposed?

23 Okay. Congratulations.

24 MR. GIBBS: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: And we will be recording our

1 votes with comments, if you would like to wait just a
2 few minutes to hear some feedback on the rationale
3 behind each of the decisions.

4 MR. GIBBS: Okay.

5 [A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE]

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Let's start with Dr.
7 Kremers and let each person state their reasons for
8 their vote.

9 DR. KREMERS: I voted to approve the motion.
10 They have a very strong plan, a history of serving
11 the population the charter will serve, and a unique
12 model that will be a potential game-changer in the
13 space of treating the population that they're going
14 to serve. So kind of exciting to see this happen and
15 how the results will show.

16 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Dr. Williams.

17 DR. WILLIAMS: I support the motion. The school
18 has broad community support and will meet a need of
19 serving children that have experienced trauma.

20 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Mr. Rogers.

21 MR. ROGERS: I voted for the motion. I think
22 it's a good partnership with Bentonville, allowing
23 for increased opportunities to help kids with
24 different backgrounds.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Ms. Newton.

1 MS. NEWTON: I voted in favor. And my
2 explanation is a comprehensive approach and an
3 innovative -- innovative strategies further enhance
4 the solid academic approaches.

5 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you again. It
6 was a well-written application and a very well-done
7 presentation, which also makes it enjoyable for us to
8 get to sit and hear and to give you feedback. So,
9 thank you very much.

10 MR. GIBBS: Thank you, Panel. We appreciate you
11 hearing us and look forward to working with you.

12 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right.

13 [AUDIENCE APPLAUSE]

14 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So, Panel, at this time we
15 can go ahead and continue with the second item, if
16 that's good for everyone? All right. Let's take
17 about a 2-minute break and we do have coffee down
18 here now, if anybody wants coffee, or something to
19 drink. And so in about two minutes we'll get started
20 with the second action agenda item.

21 (BREAK: 11:03 - 11:10 A.M.)

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right. I think we're
23 ready to get started back.

24 A-2: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

25 APPLICATION: DR. ELAM LLOYD ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Mr. Ballard, will you come
2 introduce us to our second item?

3 MR. BALLARD: Yes, ma'am. Reginald Ballard,
4 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

5 Our second action item is Hearing of Open-
6 Enrollment Public Charter School Application for Dr.
7 E. Lloyd -- excuse me -- Dr. Elam Lloyd Academy of
8 Excellence.

9 Dr. Elam Lloyd Academy of Excellence is a
10 proposed open-enrollment charter school to be located
11 within North Little Rock School District. The
12 sponsoring entity is Transforming Life Ministries
13 Care Center. The applicant is requesting to serve
14 200 students in grades 6-8 beginning in the 2020-21
15 school year. The applicant hopes to add grades each
16 year until the enrollment cap of 400 students is met
17 serving grades 6-12 for the 2024-2015 school year.

18 We have representatives here from the charter
19 applicant that would like to present.

20 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Will representatives
21 of the charter and anyone speaking in opposition
22 please stand to receive the oath? Okay. If you will
23 raise your right hand -- do you swear or affirm that
24 the testimony you're about to give shall be the
25 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

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(ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. If you want to go ahead and come forward, we're ready for you to begin your presentation. And if you'll state your name and title for the record you'll be recognized.

MS. MILLER: Good morning. My name is Ashley Miller and I will be speaking on behalf of Transforming Life for the application of the Dr. Lloyd C. Elam Academy of Excellence and Innovation.

All right. Who is Transforming Life?

Transforming Life is a 501(c)(3)(9) profit organization that was formed in 2007. The mission of Transforming Life is to revitalize low-income, underserved communities by addressing the needs of families through educational, nutritional, career, wellness, and emotional support. Transforming Life realizes the ills of our communities are complex and we constantly pursue avenues to address the multifaceted challenges that the affected families face, which also affects the state of Arkansas at large.

The question was asked earlier this week who is Lloyd C. Elam. Lloyd Elam was the son of a carpenter; he was born here -- he was born in Little Rock. And he is the past-president of Meharry

1 Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. He is also
2 a member of the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame. One of
3 the things that he did that made him famous was he
4 was the first African American to earn a medical
5 degree from the University of Washington School of
6 Medicine. And he established the Meharry Medical
7 College Psychiatric Department and the Psychiatric
8 Residency Program, which is why we chose to name this
9 institute after him.

10 The mission and the vision of the Lloyd C. Elam
11 Academy is three-fold:

12 The first is a culture of excellence. The
13 mission of the Dr. Lloyd C. Elam Academy is to create
14 a culture of excellence by fostering innovation,
15 critical thinking, and accountability through
16 rigorous academia and integrity expectations --
17 traits that are essential to creating model community
18 and global citizens.

19 The second is a 21st century curriculum. By
20 adopting a curriculum model that addresses the whole
21 child and educator best practices, the Dr. Lloyd C.
22 Elam Academy hopes to create an environment conducive
23 to creating and supporting 21st century learning
24 experiences and opportunities for learners of all
25 abilities, all backgrounds, and styles. In addition

1 to encouraging student achievement, LEA hopes to
2 empower educators to be active partners in the
3 learning process.

4 And third is community. To achieve this mission
5 we will create a sense of community and family by
6 adopting the idea of houses within a school that will
7 allow students and teachers, regardless of
8 background, to have a sense of family and
9 intentionally create opportunities for mentorship,
10 ownership, accountability, and service learning. The
11 LEA culture will further support its goals and
12 mission by integrating STEM basics, such as coding,
13 communication, creative and critical thinking within
14 the core content Arkansas standards-based curriculum.

15 The house system -- what is the house system?

16 When we were researching -- excuse me --
17 researching different innovative techniques that
18 seemed to really incorporate family and community --
19 because that's what we miss in schools -- one school
20 we looked at was the famous Ron Clark Academy. And
21 one of the things that they incorporate is a house
22 system. And the way the house system works, they're
23 just smaller communities within the school that allow
24 kids, no matter where they come from, what background
25 they come from -- literally they won -- they spin a

1 wheel; it's random, and you become a part of this
2 house. Well, we named our houses based on
3 characteristics or traits that we expect to embody in
4 our students.

5 So the House of Kuumba is Swahili for
6 "creativity." We want to foster creativity within
7 students.

8 House of Timon is Greek for "respect." Respect
9 is a big deal, and we want to -- these are traits we
10 want to foster in our students.

11 DiWali -- or actually another name for it is Dia
12 -- is Hindu for "light" which represents knowledge
13 and wisdom.

14 And Juntos, which is Spanish for "unity" or
15 common purpose.

16 So within the school they will have smaller
17 communities that are their own. They have -- they
18 will have a faculty or staff member that will help be
19 mentors, but it expands grade levels and spans
20 students because it is random. But -- and they
21 basically -- it's like a competition, because
22 students thrive off of competition. You know, at the
23 end of every quarter you get points based on whatever
24 so that you can have at the end of the year a house
25 of the year; so you also get bragging rights. And

1 that's one tactic that I have experienced personally
2 that helps with students is they will rise to the
3 expectation.

4 So what is the educational need for the Dr.
5 Lloyd C. Elam Academy?

6 Our target population is that of children in the
7 city of North Little Rock. However, as an open-
8 enrollment public charter school children may enroll
9 from any area.

10 The educational need for this institution is
11 based on the following factors: a lack of school
12 choice in the middle and high school levels; student
13 performance; and the student achievement gap.

14 Lack of school choice in the middle and high
15 school level -- middle and high school choices in
16 North Little Rock are simply North Little Rock Middle
17 School, North Little Rock High School, and we also
18 have the Capital City Lighthouse Upper Academy.
19 Furthermore, there is a lack in school choices as far
20 as sizes. There's this transition we take from
21 elementary to middle school where we go from 400 to
22 500 students in an elementary school and just
23 transition to 500 to 600 students in just one grade
24 alone in a middle school or a high school, which
25 results in nine to ten elementary schools but only

1 two middle schools and one high school. So we take
2 them from this intimate setting to this grand large
3 setting, and that doesn't work for everyone.

4 Student performance -- if we look here -- and
5 this is not an attack on the North Little Rock School
6 District; this is just numbers as they are. When it
7 comes to the ACT Aspire from the last school year,
8 there was an overall decrease from the 2018 numbers.
9 The North Little Rock Middle School, 6th, 7th and 8th
10 grade, as you can see here, in math, well below the
11 state average at 39.5%; 7th grade, 28.1%; 8th grade,
12 27.6%. And if we go to the high school you're
13 talking 22.4%, 18.1%. These are students who are
14 ready or exceeding compared to the state average.
15 The same in ELA, English Language Arts: 42.6, 30.8,
16 35, 35, 30.2. These are the numbers of students who
17 are actually reading at that level or higher.

18 And if we go to the school choice, which I left
19 out of the presentation -- if we go to our school
20 choice schools within North Little Rock, you have
21 Capital City Charter School. Capital City Charter
22 School -- and let me back-track. A bigger part of
23 ELA that's really important in Arkansas right now is
24 reading, because we know that the ELA scores are a
25 combination of reading, writing and language --

1 reading, writing and language arts. Reading for the
2 6th grade level is actually 40% met, which means 60%
3 didn't meet the readiness mark. In 7th grade it was
4 26% in reading, which leaves a lot of children not
5 meeting the benchmark; 8th grade, 37% met; 9th grade,
6 31% met; 10th grade, 22.5% met. It leaves a large
7 group of kids not meeting the benchmark. And if we
8 go to the school choice school that we do have in
9 North Little Rock, we have Capital City Charter
10 School. The numbers aren't really much better, just
11 on the numbers. For math, 28.6% of the 6th graders
12 met the benchmark; 5.6% of 7th graders met the
13 benchmark; no percent, 0% of 8th graders met the
14 benchmark in math. ELA, 23.8% of 6th graders; 11.1%
15 of 7th graders. And in reading by itself 23.8% of
16 6th graders, 5.6% of 7th graders, and 30% of 8th
17 graders met the benchmark. We have a group of kids
18 who we are leaving out, and the goal is that maybe a
19 new environment is the answer.

20 The next part that's really important -- that I
21 think is really important is the student achievement
22 gap on the middle and high school level. On the 2018
23 ACT Aspire, the North Little Rock School District in
24 literacy, 62.68% of white students met or exceeded
25 the benchmark compared to 21.78% of African American

1 students met the benchmark. In math, 60.98% of white
2 students met the benchmark or exceeded compared to
3 only 20.24% of African Americans. And even in the
4 2019 scores, which are before any appeals -- pre-
5 appeals, in ELA 66.81% of our white students compared
6 to 22.31% of African American students are meeting or
7 exceeding in ELA. With math looking close to the
8 same -- 62.98% of our white students are meeting or
9 exceeding compared to 18.84% of our African American
10 students are meeting and exceeding the benchmark.

11 If we look at graduation rates -- because now we
12 go into high school -- we have a graduation rate in
13 the North Little Rock School District of 78%; 8 out
14 of your 10 students are graduating on time. But out
15 of that 8-out-of-10, 70% of them need remediation.
16 So we graduated but we're still not ready. And we
17 can tell based on the average ACT composite score in
18 2018 -- because 2019 scores were not available -- but
19 it's an 18.51 and that's well below -- or that's
20 below the benchmark or remediation score for pretty
21 much every college. So the goal here -- and these
22 are just the numbers. It is not an attack; it is
23 just to show that we need more help. We need more
24 boots on the ground to help our children.

25 And so the disciplinary actions, same thing.

1 And it's to note that in January 2018 there was also
2 an article that came out talking about the racially
3 disproportionate suspension rates of the North Little
4 Rock School District, and so these are simply the
5 numbers.

6 So the question -- and the real deal is parent
7 choice is the ultimate need. Families deserve an
8 opportunity to choose a quality free educational
9 option that works for their children from a diverse
10 menu of options and not be defaulted to one
11 institution due to a lack of options, because
12 education is not and probably will never be a one-
13 size-fits-all arena.

14 So what will the Lloyd Elam Academy be?

15 The Dr. Lloyd C. Elam Academy of Excellence and
16 Innovation will consist of grades 6 through 8 middle
17 school, grades 9 through 12 high school. The opening
18 year will simply be middle school, followed by a
19 grade added every consecutive year until we reach a
20 full 6-12 campus.

21 So what will be the difference? How will we
22 address the need?

23 That is the bigger question. In studying and
24 looking at schools that really meet our target
25 population, the Brooke Academy School in Boston

1 really stuck out to us. They use self -- what we
2 call semi-self-contained classes for the core
3 subjects. And what that really is is instead of
4 going to see four different teachers for math,
5 science, English and social studies, what you do is
6 you have a teacher in a block schedule that's
7 certified in math and science, and you have a teacher
8 that is certified in social studies and ELA. And
9 what they do is in the block time -- instead of a
10 parent having to talk to four teachers, you have two
11 teachers who really get to know that student, to know
12 their strengths, their weaknesses, and be able to
13 address it and create that relationship with students
14 -- because that's what we're missing in the
15 classroom.

16 We have intervention time that's included in the
17 weekly schedule for math and English, because just
18 learning grade level information is not enough when
19 you're already below the benchmark. So those
20 intervention skills will be included in weekly after-
21 school tutoring to further help with intervention and
22 helping our -- meeting our children where they are
23 and helping them get to where they need to be.

24 We have innovation in teaching methods that will
25 be shared through an annual best practices

1 conference.

2 I agree with the last school that charter
3 schools and public schools tend to butt heads. But
4 if the true goal is meeting the needs of our
5 students, no matter what capacity you do it in, then
6 we need to share. And that's -- I believe the
7 intentional sharing is what's missing. And so we
8 want to host best practices conferences where we
9 invite schools that are making it happen and really
10 meeting those needs to come share what they're doing,
11 so that it's not just for us, but every student needs
12 these practices. Every student needs to be met where
13 they are through some innovational teaching methods,
14 because what works for one does not always work for
15 the other.

16 A true STEM educational opportunity through
17 hands-on learning -- we propose using Project Lead
18 the Way. They do a really, really great job in the
19 computer sciences.

20 An emphasis in reading -- reading is a problem,
21 but reading is necessary across the board. And so we
22 look at the Science of Reading and the RISE
23 initiative. We plan for all of our teachers to be
24 trained in the Science of Reading. It's all -- it's
25 -- training is available everywhere. APSRC provides

1 training in the RISE initiative and the Science of
2 Reading. The -- I lost it -- it's an online training
3 --

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Arkansas IDEAS.

5 MS. MILLER: Thank you. Arkansas IDEAS also has
6 I believe like eight parts to the Science of Reading
7 so that every teacher, not just your English
8 teachers, understand the importance of reading. And
9 data-driven instruction is very important to me
10 because your data tells you exactly where your
11 students are. It gives you a starting point to where
12 you're going to meet this student and get them to
13 where they need to go. The vertical alignment is
14 actually included in a lot of the data that I've used
15 in the past, even with NWEA testing and things like
16 that. It tells you where they are, what happened
17 before, what do they need to learn next in order to
18 get to where the student needs to be.

19 And intentional parent/community involvement
20 opportunities -- we want our parents to be involved.
21 We want our community to be involved. Even in the
22 process of this idea of the charter school we talked
23 to community members. We got with pastors. We
24 talked to parents that said, "This is what we need."

25 The novice teacher mentor program -- teachers

1 need to be built up to do what it -- to be great
2 teachers -- Professional Learning Communities and
3 extensive professional development opportunities.
4 And even within a daily schedule there are 90 minutes
5 that will be allocated in giving teachers
6 opportunities to just work on being a good teacher.

7 And we also want to include service learning
8 opportunities. One that we included was an onsite
9 food pantry that we could open up once a month,
10 because our students have needs and sometimes those
11 needs aren't just educational. Some of our parents
12 struggle. One of our board -- team members is
13 retired from DHS, and there are some people who fall
14 just below that threshold to even receive those
15 benefits that DHS can provide. They make just a
16 little bit too much, but they still need the
17 resources. And so that's one of the things we want
18 to teach our students about service learning and
19 giving back to their community.

20 And then cross-curricular learning opportunities
21 -- the semi-self-contained core classes give us that
22 opportunity when you're incorporating your math with
23 your science, your ELA with your social studies --
24 and even taking those four and giving them the
25 opportunity to collaborate with each other across

1 multiple curricular areas.

2 So this is what we plan to do to address those
3 educational needs that our students have. The ELA
4 experience will be this: grades 6-8 will have the
5 semi-self-contained schedule, which I explained about
6 earlier. The core teachers will teach the two
7 subjects, math and science or ELA and social studies.
8 We talked about how it eases that cross-curricular
9 learning threshold and it helps teachers to really
10 learn their students. Because instead of teaching
11 seven or eight different groups of students, you
12 really have about two or three groups that you really
13 get to dig into -- feel their families, feel their --
14 feel everything about them so that you can make that
15 difference in their lives.

16 And we will also have the nine core courses. We
17 want to have fine arts, physical education, health
18 and safety -- any of the approved career and
19 technical education courses that will enrich our
20 students, especially in the coding. That's been a
21 big push in Arkansas, our coding, you know -- and
22 Project Lead the Way does an awesome job pushing that
23 into our schools. Arkansas History we plan to be
24 taught on the 8th grade level.

25 And LEA will seek ADE approval to offer 8th

1 graders the opportunity to get ahead and earn high
2 school credits for Algebra I, 9th grade English, and
3 physical science. Because we want to promote STEM,
4 Algebra I is important because when you get that high
5 school credit in the 8th grade it opens up areas like
6 calculus to you before you graduate, which is a
7 critical course when you start to move into the STEM
8 education in college.

9 Grades 9-12 we're going to roll out year by year
10 and courses will be offered in compliance with the
11 graduation requirements set aside by the ADE
12 Standards of Accreditation. And if a course is
13 needed that we may be unable to offer in a
14 traditional classroom setting we do plan to utilize
15 online platforms, like Virtual Arkansas, in order to
16 meet the needs of our students.

17 Our traditional classroom instruction will be
18 supplemented by individualized learning; that would
19 be through differentiated instruction, our data-
20 driven remediation, and intervention. We also have
21 researched supplemental materials like ALEKS and
22 MobyMax; Lexia is really big when you're talking
23 about your ELL students.

24 Small group pullouts -- some people just need
25 small settings; that's what I've learned through

1 experience. And then our weekly ELL small group
2 pullouts will also take place.

3 In food services, LEA plans to serve breakfast
4 and lunch onsite in accordance with the nutrition and
5 food safety guidelines and will encourage food
6 service to be Safe -- ServSafe certified.

7 Transportation -- some of the charter schools
8 that we looked at are still effective even though
9 they do not provide transportation, such as your LISA
10 Academies and your eSTEMs that utilize public
11 transportations. And we plan to do the same thing.
12 But when -- to help those students in which
13 transportation is a barrier, and specialized
14 transportation, we will do what we need to do in
15 order to make those accommodations if they are
16 absolutely necessary.

17 [THE TIMER BELL RINGS]

18 MS. MILLER: According to facilities, LEA is
19 currently working with a realtor in the facilities
20 search process and currently considering some
21 favorable options. Two areas are the Rose City area
22 and the 17th and Pike area. We want to place that
23 school in the neighborhood to try to make it in
24 walking distance where those students can get to that
25 school.

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So your time is up.

2 There's no one here to speak in opposition. And
3 so there -- you would -- you do have an additional 5
4 minutes.

5 MS. MILLER: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: If you want to wrap something
7 up or if someone else is going to speak, we can start
8 that at this time.

9 MS. MILLER: If I can finish this in 5 minutes?

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Yes.

11 MS. MILLER: Okay. All right.

12 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: You'll have 5 minutes. Yes.

13 MS. MILLER: All right. I'm close to the end.

14 Our growth goals -- I'm very passionate about
15 this. Our growth goals -- we want our kids to grow
16 an average of 1.25 grade levels on NWEA. That may
17 not be individual, but as an average it is a possible
18 annual growth on the ACT Aspire. Our target
19 achievement goals are to exceed the state averages in
20 every area and subgroup of the ACT Aspire. And by
21 year-three the goal is for at least 50% of our 8th
22 graders to be enrolled in Algebra I so that they have
23 access to those upper level math classes. And at
24 least 60% parent participation in conferences.

25 For college and career goals, we want a

1 remediation rate of less than 25%. We know it is
2 absolutely necessary sometimes, but we can work extra
3 hard to make sure that doesn't happen. And at least
4 50% of our juniors will meet college readiness scores
5 on the ACT.

6 And to sum it up, the function of education, it
7 is to teach one to think intensively and to think
8 critically. Intelligence plus character, that is the
9 true goal of education and that is what LEA
10 represents -- excellence in all we do. And the motto
11 is Every Student, Every Day.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay, thank you.

14 Legal Review

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So before we do individual
16 Panel Member questions, we'll do kind of as we did
17 before and start with the legal review. And I'll ask
18 Ms. Hyatt if she will give us an overview, if there's
19 anything that remains unresolved from the legal
20 issues or if there's anything unique about any of the
21 waiver requests that maybe the Panel ought to be
22 aware of.

23 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Division of
24 Elementary and Secondary Education.

25 There are several remaining issues on the legal

1 review, so I'll just go through them in order.

2 On page 2, under the heading Principals, in
3 their application, on page 32 where it lists the
4 requirements for the principal, one of the
5 credentials is an administrator's license. But they
6 have requested waiver of principal licensure in the
7 legal section. So there's some contradiction between
8 what's listed in the application and what's listed in
9 the waiver section that needs to be addressed.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

11 MS. MILLER: All right. So I believe that was
12 just simply an oversight. The goal is to hire a
13 principal who is licensed with an administrator
14 license. But if that -- and the goal is to search
15 and to find the best fit principal. If that is --
16 let's say our best fit principal that we feel would
17 best represent what we want to embody in our children
18 is not licensed; we want the flexibility to hire this
19 person but encourage them to get licensure. Same
20 with teachers.

21 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So they just -- that
22 just needs to be confirmed that they do need to waive
23 the applicable sections?

24 MS. HYATT: (Nodding head up and down.)

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

1 MS. HYATT: Yes. And they did request them in
2 the legal section. I just -- there were so many
3 inconsistencies.

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

5 MS. HYATT: Then she actually just cleared up
6 one of the other issues, because the same
7 inconsistency with teacher licensure -- the
8 application said all the teachers will be licensed,
9 and then the waiver section asked for a waiver of
10 teacher licensure. But I'm assuming the same --

11 MS. MILLER: Yes, ma'am.

12 MS. HYATT: -- applies there. Okay.

13 On number 4, which is Teacher Licensure, there
14 is still a remaining issue. So the Arkansas
15 Department of Education rules governing Educator
16 Licensure -- if they're going to have an unlicensed
17 teacher teaching in the classroom, they don't need a
18 waiver. If they're going to have a licensed teacher
19 teaching outside of their licensure area, they need
20 to waive Section 7 of those rules. There was -- I
21 was confused kind of in the back-and-forth if they
22 wanted a waiver of the whole rule, of nothing at all,
23 or just of Section 7. So I would like them to
24 clarify.

25 MS. MILLER: All right. I apologize if I didn't

1 send that. I thought I did.

2 What we really want is the entire. Because if
3 we have a teacher who may be -- they may not be
4 licensed in an area but they're still good in that
5 area, we want to give them the flexibility to do
6 that. And in addition, the same way with the
7 principal; we want to encourage them to add that area
8 to a licensure or encourage them to be licensed in
9 the other area as well.

10 MS. HYATT: Using that rationale only a waiver
11 of Section 7 would be necessary because that's the
12 section that talks about licensed teachers teaching
13 outside of their licensure area. The other sections
14 just talk about how you go about getting a license
15 and the requirements of getting a license, but don't
16 have prohibitions on an unlicensed teacher or a
17 teacher teaching outside of the licensure area. So
18 Section 7 is the section that they need, if you'll
19 just confirm?

20 MS. MILLER: I am confirming that we need
21 Section 7.

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Thank you.

23 MS. HYATT: Okay. On number 6, which is the
24 school year dates -- and this was kind of an
25 oversight on my part -- since the legislative session

1 we -- the legislature added the recess provisions to
2 6-16-102. Those provisions only apply to elementary
3 schools; so not this school. But just in an effort
4 to be careful on granting waivers, if we -- since it
5 doesn't apply to you, since you're a middle school,
6 6-16-102(a)(5), which is all of the recess provisions
7 that go through 40 minutes of recess a day and
8 explains how you get a waiver -- since it won't
9 apply, if we could extract that from the waiver
10 request I think that would be more exact.

11 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Wait a minute. I just
12 want to make sure that I'm understanding. So you're
13 saying they don't necessarily need to ask for a
14 waiver from the recess because it's not going to
15 apply to them since they're a middle and high school
16 only?

17 MS. HYATT: That's correct.

18 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

19 MS. HYATT: So I think they still need the rest
20 of 6-16-102 because it does talk more about the
21 instructional day. But just the section (a)(5) that
22 has all the recess provisions -- if you granted it
23 with (a)(5) included in it, it would be the first
24 time that you've granted that waiver and it does have
25 specific language about granting waivers. And I

1 think it might just be easier to not grant (a)(5)
2 since it won't apply to them anyways, if that's okay?

3 MS. MILLER: Yeah, I agree with everything that
4 she just said about not needing the recess part of
5 the waiver.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

7 MS. HYATT: Okay. On Section 8, which is the
8 Student Support Services, this goes to ALE and
9 guidance counseling. There are a couple of remaining
10 issues here. The first is kind of in the back-and-
11 forth of the legal review. They rescinded their
12 request for 6-18-1001, which was the previous Student
13 Services Act. They did not ask for a waiver under
14 the new School Counseling Improvement Act. I think
15 that they need some or all of that, based on what
16 they've put in their legal review as a rationale for
17 asking for waivers of guidance counselors. So I
18 think that piece needs to be addressed -- what, if
19 any, under the new School Counseling Improvement Act
20 they need.

21 MS. MILLER: All right. So the rationale behind
22 the school counselor is that, just like the principal
23 and the teachers, I have -- we have been talking with
24 other counselors, and basically it's the Arkansas
25 licensed school counselor. We will have a

1 comprehensive guidance plan and counseling plan.
2 It's just that licensure part that we're seeking to
3 waive.

4 MS. HYATT: So the act, as it's written, does
5 allow the plan to be implemented by someone that's
6 employed under a waiver of licensure. So there's not
7 a licensure requirement in the law. But in addition
8 to the comprehensive school counseling program, there
9 are requirements that only 90% of the school
10 counselors' time is dedicated to school counseling
11 activities; only 10% can be administrative duties,
12 which is defined in the law as being the 504
13 coordinator, being the ELL coordinator. And so I
14 just want to make sure that you plan on meeting those
15 requirements under the new law.

16 MS. MILLER: Yes, ma'am, we plan on meeting
17 those requirements under the new law.

18 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So that brings me back
19 to the question then, why do they need a waiver from
20 the entire act? Because we're talking about a high
21 school and we're talking about students who need the
22 guidance counseling all the way through. I didn't
23 hear in this application the same kinds of supports
24 built around, you know, wraparound services. So I
25 would just have a real strong hesitation with

1 granting a wholesale waiver for that entire act. I
2 can understand needing to waive a section to maybe a
3 type of licensure or a number ratio. But for the
4 entire act I would have very serious concerns based
5 on this application for a wholesale waiver from the
6 counseling act.

7 MS. HYATT: And as it's written, they haven't
8 requested a waiver from the new act at all.

9 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

10 MS. HYATT: I think they probably intended to
11 because they did originally ask for a waiver of the
12 Student Services Act and then rescinded that. One of
13 my comments noted that it had been repealed in the
14 legislative session. So that's what I'm kind of
15 trying to get from them is do they -- are they going
16 to meet all of the requirements of the new School
17 Counseling Improvement Act or are there provisions of
18 it that they need waived?

19 MS. MILLER: The only provisions that we are
20 seeking to be waived is the ratio portion and the
21 Arkansas licensure. That's it. The plan, everything
22 will be -- we will follow that.

23 MS. HYATT: So the licensure requirement is not
24 in the new act because this specifically allows it to
25 be implemented by someone employed through a waiver.

1 So based on that rationale I don't believe they need
2 a waiver at all from the School Counseling
3 Improvement Act. And what they need a waiver of can
4 be accomplished through a couple of code sections
5 that they've already requested and a waiver of the
6 ratio and licensure requirements in the Standards,
7 which they have requested.

8 The second part, also under that same section
9 about ALE -- so, the applicant indicated that they're
10 not going to have ALE services. They were missing a
11 couple of waivers. So Arkansas Code 6-48-101 through
12 103 is the -- are the code sections that actually
13 deal with ALE and go through how the program is to be
14 set up, and they didn't request those. So I think
15 they need to add those to their application in order
16 to fully effectuate the ALE waiver.

17 MS. MILLER: All right. And I believe we need
18 to request the said waivers to effectuate that.

19 MS. HYATT: Okay, just a couple more.

20 Okay. On curriculum, which is the last one,
21 number 12, since they are rolling out by grade level
22 they do need a waiver of 1(a)(1)(3) since it's not
23 going to be operating all 9 through 12 until 24-25.
24 So they need just a waiver of that until 24-25 so
25 that they're not mandated to meet all of the

1 curriculum requirements when they don't have all of
2 the grades. Understanding that, of course,
3 graduation requirements can't be waived, but just
4 since they're in that grade roll-out so that it won't
5 flag on the students' accreditation monitoring tool.
6 That's 1(a)(1)(3) of the Standards.

7 MS. MILLER: And so we just need it until the
8 last year?

9 MS. HYATT: Until 24-25.

10 MS. MILLER: Okay. And I agree with everything
11 she just said.

12 MS. HYATT: Okay. One of the remaining concerns
13 about planning periods I believe that they addressed
14 in their presentation by saying that they would be
15 abiding by the Duty-Free Lunch and the Daily Planning
16 Period times. So that concern has been resolved.

17 The only remaining concern is just based on
18 their application, on page 22, which deals with
19 dyslexia services. I wanted to make sure that they
20 were aware that, you know, they're not waiving
21 dyslexia services, that they must be provided, and
22 that the students have to be screened as it states in
23 Arkansas law.

24 That's it.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Would you confirm the

1 dyslexia concern, that you do understand?

2 MS. MILLER: Yes, ma'am. I confirm that our
3 students will be screened and we will provide all
4 dyslexia services. We have a team member who's
5 already certified to screen for dyslexia.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

7 Budget Issues

8 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Let's go to the budget. We
9 have a budget sheet. That is budget and salary
10 that's posted online. There's not any updates to
11 that; is that correct?

12 MS. BARRICK: (Shaking head from side to side.)

13 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: We're using what's posted,
14 okay.

15 So if there are any concerns, things that need
16 to be brought out for the Panel's consideration --

17 MR. ROGERS: Do you want me to start now, or
18 wait?

19 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: You can, unless we have
20 someone from our Finance --

21 MR. ROGERS: The first thing on the budget is
22 under your first year of operation you're asking for
23 a cap of 200. You also budgeted that at 200.

24 MS. MILLER: Uh-huh.

25 MR. ROGERS: And the reason that concerns me a

1 little bit is because the first year you're showing
2 \$95,000 to the good, in the black at the end if you
3 get all 200 students. So I just wondered, the first
4 thing, is how you came up with saying the 200. And
5 do you want me to just -- I don't want to -- I'll
6 just start with that one.

7 MS. MILLER: Okay.

8 MR. ROGERS: I have a couple of issues
9 concerning the budget -- or a couple of questions;
10 sorry.

11 MS. MILLER: Okay. So when we were calculating
12 just based on the numbers we were given, and just
13 research, around 150 was where we figured our bottom-
14 line really is. And we just wanted that extra 50 to
15 say okay, we don't want to -- we want to be able to,
16 lack of better terms, comfortably do that with 200
17 students versus your very -- just shooting for your
18 very bottom-line, is really where 200 --

19 MR. ROGERS: So you're saying 150 students is
20 your cut-off line? If you don't have 150 students
21 you wouldn't be able to balance?

22 MS. MILLER: The goal would be between -- that
23 bottom-line was really between 100 and 150 students;
24 200 would be a number that we could still comfortably
25 serve without just barely hitting the bottom-line.

1 MR. ROGERS: And then I guess the other one is
2 that when you say that 100 -- the other line item on
3 your budget for funding aid is you estimated 180 kids
4 would be under ESA or NSL funding --

5 MS. MILLER: Uh-huh.

6 MR. ROGERS: -- at 90 to 100 percent, which
7 would be the \$1,576. But in the Little Rock -- North
8 Little Rock School District right now their school
9 district is 71% --

10 MS. MILLER: Okay.

11 MR. ROGERS: -- which would mean that they were
12 only doing the -- that would mean that they were
13 getting \$1,000 per NSL -- ESA student. I'm trying to
14 get used to saying that. So that would be another --
15 if you're taking the five -- the hundred -- so now
16 I'm trying to do the math. If you're estimating in
17 the first year you're going to have 180 kids who are
18 ESA students but now you just said 100 is -- 150 is
19 more realistic, how many of those do you anticipate
20 being NSL? And now that I just told you that you
21 probably wouldn't get the \$576 extra per kid that
22 would also affect the bottom-line. So I guess I'm
23 trying to understand how you would overcome if you
24 don't get the 200 students plus the 180 at the \$1500
25 to make that bottom-line still be in the black?

1 MS. MILLER: Okay. So even in addition to this,
2 I think this was -- our budget is strictly based on
3 foundation funding. We still -- and even our
4 sponsoring entity are still going through -- we've
5 applied for grants on a rolling basis. We always
6 seek funding from outside sources. So if we were to
7 say fall below, I believe we will have the cushion to
8 -- or the additional resources -- I'll say it that
9 way -- the additional resources in funding.

10 MR. ROGERS: Do you -- I'm sorry; do you want me
11 --

12 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Yes.

13 MR. ROGERS: Do you have those additional
14 resources already lined up or is this -- because when
15 I was looking at this budget it looked like you've
16 got \$10,000 for fundraisers on there and that was it.
17 But I just -- if -- \$6,700 times -- you know, I've
18 already talked -- we've already -- \$600,000 in
19 funding probably isn't --

20 MS. MILLER: Right.

21 MR. ROGERS: -- realistic on that. And your
22 bottom-line is only in the black by 95.

23 MS. MILLER: Okay.

24 MR. ROGERS: So I guess you can see my concern
25 now. If after -- and I have some questions also on

1 the expenses, but I don't want to keep -- I don't
2 want to keep going.

3 MS. MILLER: Okay.

4 MR. ROGERS: I mean I'll let some people ask
5 questions. But that's just my concerns.

6 MS. MILLER: Okay. Well, Transforming Life has
7 agreed to -- or committed to donating funds for the
8 charter school as well. So they would be in a --
9 they would be a resource of funding. And again just
10 on the rolling basis of finding grants, we've already
11 begun to look at the APSRC grant, the Walton
12 Foundation grant, Wal-Mart Community grant. All of
13 these things have been, even in the past, granted to
14 schools, so --

15 MR. ROGERS: And I --

16 MS. MILLER: Yes.

17 MR. ROGERS: So, and that's just what I was
18 trying to understand. Do you have those commitments
19 already lined up?

20 MS. MILLER: The Transforming Life commitment,
21 yes; the others, no.

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Can you -- do you have a
23 letter of commitment that you could share with us
24 today with the amount from the Transforming Life?

25 MS. MILLER: I do not.

1 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So I think what --
2 from the Panel's standpoint --

3 MS. MILLER: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Because one of our tasks is
5 to make sure that there's a technically sound
6 application --

7 MS. MILLER: Yes, ma'am.

8 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: -- provided. And when we
9 look at this and look at the budget that you're
10 proposing, you're basing your entire budget on having
11 a minimum of 200 students that first year and having
12 a minimum of 180 who would meet the qualifications to
13 be at the threshold for the \$1,576 in the former NSL
14 funds -- and that has been renamed. So the issue
15 that we have as we look at this budget, that doesn't
16 have a lot of room for error in it as estimated.

17 If that is not a sound budget and if there are
18 this many questions around the budget, then it gives
19 us pause on, you know, the application because it --
20 so that's how we have to look at it and that's why we
21 have to raise the concerns.

22 MS. MILLER: Okay.

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So, and I understand it's
24 difficult to do. But if -- you know, if we had seen
25 a budget that was based on 100 students, knowing that

1 if you had more students you would have additional
2 funds and you could add to it -- but it's much more
3 difficult to look at something that's set at 200 and
4 think what's going to happen if only 100 students are
5 there and if the funding isn't.

6 MS. MILLER: Okay.

7 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

8 MS. NEWTON: I have a question.

9 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Yes.

10 MS. NEWTON: And there are so many questions and
11 so many unanswered questions. Is there -- is it
12 better for this application to proceed, if that's the
13 desire, or to be withdrawn and resubmitted at a time
14 when some of the things -- you know, I don't know if
15 it counts that -- because it's not going well as far
16 as I can see, and so that doesn't give me any hope
17 that -- you know, from my perspective. So is it
18 better to go back and start over? There are
19 absolutely too many questions for me to be in support
20 of the application --

21 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: To be comfortable in
22 proceeding?

23 MS. NEWTON: -- and concerns. Yeah. So I would
24 just pose that question to you and your -- the
25 charter application and the nonprofit, as to whether

1 or not you would want to consider -- because if I had
2 to decide today I would not decide in favor of the
3 application just based on -- because I don't think we
4 have any clear questions [sic] about hardly any of
5 the issues. And the ambiguity of it all is very
6 concerning to me and the incompleteness just causes
7 me to be uneasy about it, just to speak frankly to
8 you. So I don't know if that's proper or I should
9 just, you know, raise that issue at this point.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: No, I think it's a fair
11 question. And also just the lack of comfort with so
12 many of the waivers being agreed to on the fly; you
13 know, you really --

14 MS. NEWTON: Absolutely.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: You really -- it does cause
16 you to pause and consider do we know exactly what
17 we're dealing with here.

18 So, Ms. Hyatt, would you -- what would be
19 options if the applicant decided that they needed to
20 go back and maybe do some additional work with the
21 application?

22 MS. HYATT: There are a couple of options. One
23 is that the applicant could withdraw from further
24 consideration now, requiring no motion by the Panel
25 except to accept their voluntary withdrawal, and then

1 reapply next year. The Panel could vote to deny the
2 application and then, of course, they'd have the
3 opportunity to reapply next year. You can table the
4 matter if you think that if given an additional month
5 or two -- I think your next meeting is scheduled in
6 October, although you could schedule another one next
7 month -- that they would be able to come back with
8 the information and address the concerns that you
9 guys have. You could vote to table it until your
10 next meeting, which could happen either in September
11 at a special meeting or in October. Just keep in
12 mind that if you do that it does kind of throw the
13 timeline off for how long they have to prepare for
14 opening school next fall.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Do we have any
16 recommendations?

17 MR. ROGERS: I would just still like to -- one
18 of the things -- even holding off till October I
19 would have an issue with just because we don't have a
20 school building yet. And that's -- in my mind,
21 that's a big thing too because part of the other
22 questions I was going to ask was the overhead costs
23 of getting that building ready to hold children and
24 to hold lunches and all the different things that
25 come in that probably you haven't even had an

1 opportunity to think about yet -- the cost of getting
2 that building, wherever it is in North Little Rock,
3 ready to have kids. And so unless you can tell me
4 today that you'll for sure have a building in October
5 and have a plan for the overhead and getting that
6 building, I would still be hesitant. Because that --
7 in my mind, that was one I was -- as I was reading
8 the application too that was just one of my issues,
9 is knowing how much that's going to cost once you get
10 that building and how are we going to pay for that
11 too. And like Ms. Newton said, I was just being real
12 with you because that's just -- that was one of my
13 big concerns when I was reading the application as
14 well.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Just a comment from me is just
16 that the -- you made a great case for need for
17 options for parents; an outstanding case there. And
18 I just made a note to myself as I was listening the
19 application is not reflective of the goals you want
20 to achieve. And you have great goals, but the
21 overall application process from the financial aspect
22 of it needs to be much tighter.

23 MS. MILLER: Okay.

24 DR. WILLIAMS: And so I think from our
25 standpoint you either have the option to withdraw the

1 application and go back and maybe get some help to
2 kind of tighten it up some or if it stays before us
3 then we're going to have to do what we think is best.

4 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Go ahead.

5 MS. MILLER: Okay. So what I'm going to do at
6 this time, we're going to respectfully withdraw the
7 application. And I do thank you for your comments so
8 that next year we will be right back here and we will
9 be much more prepared.

10 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. If it would help, we
11 could ask each Panel Member to send to Mr. Ballard
12 maybe a list that he could share with you as far as
13 what are the main concerns --

14 MS. MILLER: Okay.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: -- and then that gives you
16 something to work from. Would that be okay with
17 everyone to do?

18 DR. WILLIAMS: Oh yeah, uh-huh.

19 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: So we'll --

20 MS. MILLER: We appreciate it.

21 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: We'll each independently send
22 a list to him. That way, they can communicate with
23 you as you're working on this for the future.

24 MS. MILLER: Yes, ma'am.

25 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. And we appreciate your

1 time today and appreciate the thoroughness of -- you
2 were very well prepared with your presentation and it
3 is obvious that you're very passionate about this.
4 So, thank you very much.

5 MS. MILLER: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

7 DR. WILLIAMS: Do you need a motion to accept --

8 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Do we need a motion to accept
9 the withdrawal?

10 MS. HYATT: Yeah. So since they did engage in
11 presentation with you, it would make me more
12 comfortable if you would just make a motion to accept
13 their voluntary withdrawal and proceed that way.

14 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: I move that we accept the
16 voluntary withdrawal of the Dr. Elam Lloyd Academy
17 from consideration.

18 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. I have a motion.

19 Do I have a second?

20 DR. KREMERS: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All those in favor?

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. The motion is
24 approved.

25 CLOSING COMMENTS

1 Okay. So that is our last action agenda item.

2 And before we do closing I wanted to -- well,
3 first of all, are there any other concerns or any
4 other questions related to any of the applications?

5 MR. BALLARD: No.

6 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So our next scheduled
7 meeting -- Mr. Ballard, would you update us just
8 really quickly on that?

9 MR. BALLARD: Yes. Reginald Ballard, Division
10 of Elementary and Secondary Education.

11 Our next scheduled meeting is October the 15th
12 -- October 15th.

13 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: 15th?

14 MR. BALLARD: Uh-huh.

15 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: And that will be for district
16 conversion --

17 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: -- charters?

19 Okay. And how many do we -- do we know how many
20 we have?

21 MR. BALLARD: Four.

22 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Four at this time?

23 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. Okay.

25 What I wanted to ask the Panel Members -- so the

1 -- and Ms. Coffman may have to weigh-in here. I know
2 last year after the accountability results and school
3 letter grades were issued we had a meeting. I think
4 we had a work session where we went through and
5 looked at performance by open-enrollment and district
6 conversion charters, and they did a great job of kind
7 of updating everyone on the accountability system.
8 Is that something that you would want to do again
9 this year in conjunction with the meeting? I don't
10 know if by October 15th if that would be a good time
11 or if we would wait until October to set a future
12 date. You think wait till October, Ms. Coffman?

13 MS. COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and down.)

14 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Okay. So maybe just be
15 thinking about that though, that sometime later in
16 October/November we might have a chance then to look
17 at all that. Because that would then give us time if
18 we felt like there was any school that needed to come
19 before us, we could do that in a timely manner.

20 Okay. All right. Panel Members, anybody have
21 anything?

22 MS. HYATT: Can I say something really quick?

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. HYATT: Okay, thanks.

25 I just wanted to give you, the Panel, kind of a

1 heads-up because I think we'll probably see a lot of
2 amendment requests coming before the Panel in October
3 for the School Counseling Improvement Act and the
4 recess provisions. We just sent a Commissioner's
5 Memo out last week letting everyone know that any
6 waivers they had under the previous Student Services
7 Act expired on July 24th and any waivers of 6-16-102,
8 the Instructional Day, did not automatically include
9 a waiver of the recess provisions. So I think we'll
10 probably have some open-enrollments coming in October
11 to request those. And I wanted to make sure you're
12 mentally prepared ahead of time so that if we had a
13 whole bunch of them it didn't catch you off-guard.

14 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: Any questions about that?

15 Okay. We'll just work through those as we know
16 a little bit more and communicate with you to make
17 sure we can do the best job in scheduling anything we
18 need to review.

19 Okay. All right. Do -- if there's nothing
20 else, do I have a motion to adjourn?

21 DR. WILLIAMS: So moved.

22 MR. ROGERS: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right. All those in
24 favor?

25 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

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CHAIRMAN PFEFFER: All right. We're adjourned.

(The meeting was concluded at 12:02 p.m.)

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A-1: HOPE ACADEMY OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on August 13, 2019, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have no contract with any parties within this action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: August 16, 2019.

SHARON K. HILL, CCR
 Certified Court Reporter
 Certificate No. 670

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