

**In The Matter Of:**  
*BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL*

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*October 18, 2018*

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

OCTOBER 18, 2018  
8:30 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

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

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. LORI FRENO	ADE General Counsel
MS. COURTNEY SALAS-FORD	ADE Deputy General Counsel
MS. MARY CLAIRE HYATT	ADE Specialist

ALSO APPEARING:

DR. ALEXANDRA BOYD	Asst. to Director - Public School Accountability
MS. KELLY McLAUGHLIN	Public School Program Advisor

LOCATION:

Arkansas Department of Education  
- Auditorium  
#4 Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, Arkansas

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E X H I B I T S

A-5: HOPE COLLEGIATE AND PROESSIONS ACADEMY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Sample Student Schedule: 10th Grade

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Good morning, everyone. Okay. Ladies and Gentleman, the October 18, 2018 meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is called to order. I'd like to welcome everyone to the Department of Education, and ask that you check your electronic devices and please silence those.

The Charter Authorizing Panel oversees the authorization, renewal, revision, and revocation of charters. The Charter Panel has seven members, and I'll introduce everyone today. I'm the chair of the Panel, Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner for the Department. We have a newly appointed member and that is Greg Rogers, ADE Assistant Commissioner for Fiscal and Administrative Services -- not actually new to the Panel, but returning to the Panel. So we have Dr. Mike Hernandez, State Superintendent for the Office of Coordinated Support and Service. We have Dr. Angela Kremers, who's the Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education at the Department of Career Education. We have Mike Wilson, one of our education advocates and attorney from Jacksonville. And Toyce Newton, who is a former State Board of Education member. And Dr. Naccaman Williams is unable to be with us today.

1           As chair, it is my goal to facilitate a fair and  
2 responsible hearing. We will ask that each person  
3 speaking come to the microphone and clearly state  
4 your name and title for the record. And we are live-  
5 streaming this meeting, so we will ask you to please  
6 speak clearly in the microphone for our viewing  
7 audience. That will be important for them.

8 CONSENT AGENDA

9           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So at this time we will  
10 begin the meeting with the Consent Agenda, which has  
11 the minutes from the September meeting. I would ask  
12 you to make sure that you've reviewed that consent  
13 agenda -- and if no one has any questions, I will  
14 take a motion on the Consent Agenda.

15           MR. WILSON: Move the approval.

16           DR. KREMERS: Second.

17           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: I have a motion and a  
18 second.

19           All in favor of the motion?

20           (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

21           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

22           Okay. Motion is passed.

23 A-1: REQUEST FOR CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENTS: STANDARDS FOR  
24 ACCREDITATION

25           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We will move forward with

1 our Action Agenda. And if -- can I have Dr. Boyd or  
2 Ms. Hyatt talk to us about the process for our first  
3 item on our Action Agenda please?

4 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Hyatt steps forward  
5 to the podium.)

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Ms. Hyatt, if you will  
7 explain the process that we're going to go through?  
8 And we've got several items listed on the first item  
9 under Standards for Accreditation.

10 MS. HYATT: So just by way of -- oh -- Mary  
11 Claire Hyatt, Arkansas Department of Education. Just  
12 by way of background -- you saw some of these last  
13 month -- but July 1, 2015, we adopted a new Standards  
14 for Accreditation rule making waivers under the old  
15 Standards for Accreditation kind of be repealed. So  
16 we've been working with open-enrollments and the  
17 district conversions to move them from their waivers  
18 under the old standards to the waivers under the new  
19 standards. You saw some district conversions last  
20 month. These are the remaining district conversions,  
21 as well as all of the open-enrollment charter  
22 schools.

23 So in terms of these, we're going to review them  
24 all as one chunk since they're presented as amendment  
25 requests. But because they're just a mapping over

1 from the old standards to the new they'll be reviewed  
2 together. So we're going to do the district  
3 conversions as kind of one piece, and then the second  
4 piece will be the open-enrollments. There are two  
5 separate -- (c) and (d) -- oh -- (c), which was a  
6 separate amendment request for Haas Hall -- but that  
7 issue has been resolved and so we actually need to  
8 remove that from the agenda. And then there was also  
9 -- oh, okay. Sorry. And so that issue -- we  
10 resolved that issue late yesterday afternoon, so we  
11 actually don't need to visit that on the agenda  
12 today.

13 So we just need to do the district conversions  
14 and then the open-enrollments and vote separately on  
15 the two of them.

16 (a) DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTERS

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So we will begin  
18 then with item (a) under the Action Agenda. So item  
19 (a) are all of our district conversion charters that  
20 need to have their standards -- or, excuse me --  
21 their waivers from the old standards mapped over to  
22 the new.

23 So at this time, just looking at the list from  
24 item (a), Panel Members, do you have any questions  
25 for Dr. Boyd or any member of the Department?

1           Okay. And, Dr. Boyd, were there any issues you  
2 needed to make us aware of?

3           DR. BOYD: No, ma'am. I believe everything you  
4 discussed in the last meeting -- there were similar  
5 things that happened with these, but there's nothing  
6 new came up.

7           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So, Panel, if there  
8 are not any questions, I will accept a motion on item  
9 (a).

10          MR. WILSON: So moved. Move the approval of  
11 item (a).

12          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We have a motion to  
13 approve.

14          DR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

15          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And a second.

16          All those in favor say "aye."

17          (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

19          Okay. Those are all approved.

20          DR. BOYD: Thank you.

21          (b) OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTERS

22          DR. BOYD: And then item (b) is the open-  
23 enrollment. There's -- there is nothing unusual  
24 about these as well.

25          MR. WILSON: Move the approval of item (b).



1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So I have a motion.  
2 But prior to that motion, I wanted to ask if  
3 anybody have a -- has a question from the Panel. Did  
4 any panel member have any questions about any of  
5 these?

6 Okay. I did want to check to see that on the  
7 open-enrollment charters there were a few of those  
8 that had a waiver from the health and safety  
9 standards. And those new health and safety  
10 standards, the way they're written under the  
11 Standards of Accreditation are fairly broad. So I  
12 was going to ask to see if we had some clarification  
13 on how those schools are using those health and  
14 safety standards?

15 DR. BOYD: Yes. I believe Tripp Walter from  
16 APSRC will be speaking on behalf of those schools  
17 that have those waivers.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

19 MR. WALTER: Good morning, Dr. Pfeffer, Panel  
20 Members. My name is Tripp Walter; I'm a staff  
21 attorney with Arkansas Public School Resource Center.  
22 I have asked those charters -- open-enrollment  
23 charters who hold the waivers that have been deemed  
24 health -- the three waivers that have been deemed  
25 health and safety by the Department for information.



1 services. They are using the waivers for flexibility  
2 purposes in that all of them may not have either  
3 fulltime nurses or nurses who are direct school  
4 employees -- but rather, they have the flexibility to  
5 hire nurses on contract and perhaps on a part-time  
6 basis. I have really not seen any where there has  
7 been any kind of absence of nursing services or  
8 health services that have been -- that are out there.  
9 They're all providing some level of service. Even  
10 those that do not have a nurse that affiliates with  
11 them, they have increased training for the staff to  
12 be able to respond to minor medical emergencies. And  
13 all of them have a plan in place for student health.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel Members, do  
15 you have any questions?

16 Okay. Do you want to go ahead and move to  
17 2-E.2?

18 MR. WALTER: Okay. 2-E.2, a common response  
19 there was that the schools were following all  
20 federal, state, and local government safety for  
21 buildings and ground requirements to insure student  
22 safety. Of course, one distinctive with open-  
23 enrollment charters, as opposed to school districts,  
24 is many are in leased facilities and do not own the  
25 facilities. But, obviously, they are insuring to the

1 best of their ability that there are plans in place  
2 and all applicable laws and codes concerning building  
3 and school safety are followed.

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And then the last  
5 one was -- was it 6-A.2?

6 MR. WALTER: Yes, ma'am. That's what I have is  
7 6-A.2.

8 I'm getting to a common response here.

9 In 6-A.2, many of the charter schools,  
10 especially the larger ones, do have an individual who  
11 acts in a facilities manager capacity and does  
12 oversee the facilities and building safety plan for  
13 the school. Students are participating in regular  
14 drills concerning fire, tornado, and active shooter  
15 scenarios. And appropriate materials are in place  
16 and distributed to visitors and patrons of the school  
17 and school facilities to advise them of the practices  
18 being taken.

19 Another measure I would mention, and failed to  
20 on the previous waiver, is that schools also  
21 indicated that they were investing in safety  
22 equipment, hardware, et cetera also to further help  
23 safeguard their facilities and protect the students  
24 and staff and patrons of those facilities and the  
25 school.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And on 6-A.2, that  
2 standard specifically talks about adopting and  
3 implementing school safety policies and procedures in  
4 accordance with laws. So I guess my question -- you  
5 know, it would waive them from the requirement of  
6 adopting policies and procedures. But I would -- I  
7 guess, with the conversations you have, you're not  
8 saying that they don't have policies and procedures  
9 for safety?

10 MR. WALTER: Absolutely not.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

12 MS. WALTER: I view it as a way -- similar, for  
13 example, to a discipline policy. For example, a  
14 large percentage, as you're aware, of the open-  
15 enrollment charter schools hold a waiver from student  
16 discipline policies, and what that means -- as well  
17 as their provision of other services. It doesn't  
18 mean that they're going without, so-to-speak; it's  
19 just they want some flexibility to implement it in a  
20 way that works especially for their school. So I see  
21 it in a similar fashion. It's not that they're going  
22 without plans, by any means; it's they're just  
23 perhaps doing them in a little different way that's  
24 more particular to their school.

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

1 MR. WALTER: But they are insuring that the  
2 services are being provided.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel Members, do  
4 you have any questions then?

5 DR. KREMERS: Dr. Pfeffer, would we want to  
6 consider perhaps a waiver conditionally, on a  
7 conditional -- on condition that they submit their  
8 policy and procedure for health and safety --  
9 especially for the safety -- as a consideration?

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So in -- and we may need  
11 help from Legal on this one here, typically in terms  
12 of safety policies and procedures within schools.

13 MS. HYATT: Can you repeat the question?

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Kremers, do you  
15 want to ask your question?

16 DR. KREMERS: Could we ask for a conditional  
17 waiver pending them providing a copy of their  
18 policies and procedures for safety, that those are in  
19 place?

20 MS. HYATT: So to my knowledge, we've never done  
21 anything like that before. I think that it would  
22 kind of reduce the impact of having the waiver;  
23 because if they get the waiver then they are  
24 essentially waived from having that requirement, so  
25 then it would essentially be operating as if they

1 didn't have the waiver. So I don't know how  
2 effective that would be in terms of granting the  
3 waiver.

4 I do know that I worked very closely with Mr.  
5 Walter and we've had conversations about the school  
6 nurse and safety policies for several months now. He  
7 has been diligent in talking to every school that had  
8 the waiver and insuring that the students' needs were  
9 being met and that the students were safe at school  
10 -- to a point, I think, that we feel that he's  
11 answered those questions for us. But if there are  
12 remaining concerns, we can talk about --

13 DR. BOYD: I think I can help add some  
14 assurance. I definitely understand where you're  
15 coming from. There are a couple of things going on  
16 across the Department that I think would suffice for  
17 this. So for one thing, charter schools that are  
18 eligible for facilities funding are required to  
19 submit documentation that supports that their  
20 facilities are safe and that they are doing the  
21 procedures they're supposed to to keep those  
22 buildings safe. So that's something that has to be  
23 done, and there's an assurance signed annually in  
24 order for them to get facilities funding. Then, in  
25 addition, there's a statement of assurance that's

1 signed for Standards for Accreditation -- and if  
2 there were to be an on-site monitoring from Standards  
3 for Accreditation or from Standards and Systems  
4 Support, that might be something that they ask for  
5 and the school would have to produce at that time.

6 DR. KREMERS: Okay. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Dr. Hernandez, did you  
8 have a question?

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. This may be for Mary  
10 Claire.

11 So safety policies -- I understand the concern  
12 about, you know, we want to make sure they have  
13 those. But are they -- are those safety policies  
14 part of that protection that's not supposed to be  
15 public or made public? Do those fall into that?  
16 Because I could obviously see if they have -- how  
17 they evacuate and all those things and being out  
18 there where it was submitted to us that that could be  
19 problematic.

20 MS. HYATT: So the standards, as it's written --  
21 and it's very broad and it doesn't necessarily point,  
22 I think, to one type of plan. I would say that it  
23 probably includes things like evacuation plans, what  
24 happens in case of like a weather emergency, that  
25 kind of stuff. But also like an evacuation plan in



1 case of like an active shooter situation and also  
2 things like how to make sure the building is  
3 operating in a safe manner and that the students are  
4 safe there. It's really broad the way that it's  
5 written, so -- and since it's so new I'm not sure we  
6 have that much clarification on exactly what -- if it  
7 meant one thing.

8 Does that answer your question?

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. That was just the -- I  
10 know when I think about safety plans -- and I'm not  
11 speaking for you, Dr. Kremers, but I'm imagining  
12 you're thinking about safety of students and how they  
13 -- what they would do in these different safety  
14 scenarios. I would think that that's something we  
15 probably wouldn't want submitted to us.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel, are there  
17 any other questions?

18 Okay. If not, I believe we have a motion.  
19 Would you like to continue with your motion for  
20 approval?

21 MR. WILSON: Well, I move the approval of item  
22 (b).

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So we have a motion  
24 to approve item (b), the mapping of the waivers for  
25 open-enrollment charters. A second?

1 MS. NEWTON: Second.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Motion and a  
3 second.

4 All those in favor say "aye."

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

7 Okay. The motion passes.

8 Do we need to go ahead and fill out the voting  
9 sheets on items (a) and (b)?

10 DR. BOYD: No. No, ma'am.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We're not doing --

12 DR. BOYD: Yeah, not for item (a) and (b),  
13 because you would all be saying the same thing, I  
14 believe.

15 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So we do not have  
16 the voting sheets for item (a) and (b) on those.

17 (c) REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT:  
18 HAAS HALL ACADEMY OF BENTONVILLE

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. So at this  
20 time we will move on to -- I believe it's item 2.

21 So item (c) has been pulled. Do we need to take  
22 any action to pull that item from the Action Agenda?

23 As noted earlier, item (c) was addressed -- has  
24 been addressed and there are no issues with that, so

25 --

1 MS. HYATT: So since there are no formal  
2 operating procedures, I think if you would prefer to  
3 vote to remove it I think that's fine or it can just  
4 be removed. The issue that was actually in item (c)  
5 was resolved and was actually approved as part of  
6 item (b), so --

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So they've been approved;  
8 they've been taken care of?

9 MS. HYATT: Yes.

10 A-2: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT:  
11 KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. If there aren't any  
13 objections, then we'll go ahead and just move on to  
14 Item 2 on the Action Agenda, which is a request for  
15 an amendment with KIPP Delta Public Schools. And I  
16 see Dr. Boyd coming.

17 DR. BOYD: I'm so sorry, Madam Chair. Mr.  
18 Shirey is not here yet.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

20 DR. BOYD: Would it be possible if we could move  
21 to Item 3?

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. I don't think that's  
23 a problem.

24 So if -- Panel, anybody have any objections to  
25 moving on?

1 A-3: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT: THE  
2 EXCEL CENTER

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We will move on to  
4 Item 3, which is an amendment for The Excel Center.

5 Dr. Boyd, you're recognized.

6 DR. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair.

7 The Excel Center -- on October 19, 2016, the  
8 Charter Authorizing Panel approved the application  
9 for The Excel Center. The charter is approved to  
10 serve students grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment  
11 of 125. The representatives from The Excel Center  
12 are appearing before the Charter Panel to request an  
13 amendment to the current charter.

14 And just as a reminder, this is an adult  
15 education charter, so the students at this school are  
16 19 years and older. So I just wanted you to keep  
17 that in mind as you review their amendment request.

18 In addition, they have been operating for a  
19 short time. So I believe the request is in an effort  
20 to kind of clean up some things that they realized  
21 they needed to operate successfully.

22 So on behalf of The Excel Center we have Tomiko  
23 Davis, who's the principal.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So will all  
25 representatives of the charter and anyone speaking in

1 opposition please stand to receive the oath. Okay.  
2 All right. Would you raise your right hand?

3 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're  
4 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth,  
5 and nothing but the truth?

6 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. You are recognized,  
8 Ms. Davis.

9 MS. DAVIS: Good morning. Again, my name is  
10 Tomiko Davis; I'm the school director/principal of  
11 The Excel Center.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Can you --

13 MS. DAVIS: I'm sorry?

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: I'm sorry. I don't think  
15 the audience can hear you.

16 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Davis pulls the  
17 microphone closer to her mouth.)

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Is that better?

19 MS. DAVIS: Is this better?

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. Okay. Thank you.

21 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Again, I'm Tomiko Davis, the  
22 school director/principal of The Excel Center. And I  
23 come before you today to request some additional  
24 waivers from the Standards of Accreditation.

25 The first one is Standard 1-A.1.2.9 [sic], which

1 reads, "A unit of Arkansas History shall be taught as  
2 a social studies subject at each elementary grade  
3 level in every elementary school in the state, with  
4 greater emphasis at the 4th through 5th." But then  
5 it leaves one semester of Arkansas History being  
6 taught to all students 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and  
7 12th. We're seeking this waiver based upon the  
8 second part of the standard because it requires a  
9 semester to be taught during grades 7-12 -- and the  
10 students that we enroll have various education  
11 backgrounds, some with and some without secondary  
12 credit. And because Arkansas History is not a course  
13 required for actual graduation, we make sure that we  
14 cover the other courses -- the U.S. History, the  
15 World History, the Civics, the Economics. So we're  
16 meeting the standard for the history component for  
17 graduation requirements, and that is why we're asking  
18 for that waiver.

19 The second waiver we're requesting is the  
20 standard 1-A.5.1, which states that all schools  
21 should provide a minimum of 178 days of student/  
22 teacher interaction -- and we're doing that. We're  
23 asking for this one because The Excel Center model  
24 includes instruction that is accelerated; so  
25 therefore, we condense, similarly, anywhere between a

1 semester and a full year of coursework within one  
2 eight-week term. We have five eight-week terms  
3 within a school year, and our class times are  
4 anywhere from 90 to 180 minutes; it just depends upon  
5 how many credits we're granting for that course. So  
6 again, we're asking for that because with the adults  
7 that we're teaching we're trying to make sure we  
8 provide them a balance between school and work life.

9 Item -- the next two items were previously in  
10 the standards that were in the crossover that Dr.  
11 Boyd -- so they're actually duplicates, which were 1-  
12 A.5.2 and standard 2-D.1. Those two were duplicates,  
13 so --

14 And then the next one is standard 3-A.5, which  
15 requires that the school district employs a general  
16 business manager responsible for the fiscal  
17 operations of the school. And because The Excel  
18 Center is actually funded directly by Goodwill  
19 Industries of Arkansas, we utilize a person within  
20 their finance department to do all of our fiscal  
21 services, as opposed to hiring an additional employee  
22 for The Excel Center.

23 And then the last standard that we're requesting  
24 a waiver from is standard 4-D.2, and it reads that  
25 each public school district should not employ an

1 individual, including a substitute teacher, whether  
2 directly employed by the school or through a teaching  
3 services contract, whose license has been suspended  
4 or revoked by the State Board of Education for a  
5 disqualifying offense, or those licensed or  
6 unlicensed individuals who have been sanctioned for  
7 an ethical violation, in accordance with the laws of  
8 the State of Arkansas and the rules of the  
9 Department. And we're requesting this waiver because  
10 we understand the reasoning behind the standard and  
11 the need for this standard in a traditional setting,  
12 with protection of minors. But because The Excel  
13 Center is an adult high school, we are asking for  
14 this waiver. Additionally, because Excel Industries  
15 of Arkansas and Goodwill Arkansas Industries'  
16 initiatives are second-chance employers, we have a  
17 waiver of Teacher Licensure in a qualified candidate  
18 serving -- deserving of an opportunity within The  
19 Excel Center -- and he has passed the Child  
20 Maltreatment Registry and all the other background  
21 checks. So this individual was previously a licensed  
22 teacher, and he was convicted of a crime 11 years  
23 ago. He served his time, completed the re-entry  
24 program at the Goodwill, and -- which was a 16-week  
25 program with a focus on soft skills, re-entry to



1 society, and career goals. And upon his completion  
2 of the re-entry program, he was hired to teach in the  
3 academy at Goodwill, which is licensed by the  
4 Arkansas State Board of Private Career Education.  
5 He's been -- he had been teaching in the academy for  
6 over a year, when The Excel Center was being  
7 implemented, and he expressed interest in working at  
8 the school. And then -- so therefore, at that time  
9 management reached out to ADE's Ethics Department and  
10 was told if we could document the success of him, and  
11 because the school is for adults, we could hire him.  
12 But we just want to make sure that he is covered so  
13 that he's not in fear of his job and to make sure  
14 that we are within standards. So, of course, we  
15 wouldn't employ anyone that we know would be of  
16 danger. He's one of our best teachers; he's one of  
17 the most supportive teachers we have. He's actually  
18 our EAST facilitator; our EAST program that we have  
19 at the school he's the facilitator for that.

20 In addition to the standards that we're  
21 requesting waivers for, we're also requesting  
22 amendments to our measurable goals that were  
23 submitted in our original charter -- and within that,  
24 in our original charter the measurable goals outlined  
25 included the outcomes for the ACT Aspire. But upon

1 review of our student body, our operations, we  
2 realized we don't have any students that qualify to  
3 take the ACT Aspire; so therefore, we need to make  
4 adjustments, and so -- and then also taking into  
5 account the ESSA indexes, the five categories for  
6 that. So we're trying to align what our measurable  
7 goals would be with -- along with -- along those  
8 indexes so that you can see how they kind of cross  
9 over so that we can be graded and have a reasonable  
10 or a very informative school report card. Because as  
11 of right now, even when you look at our student --  
12 our school info, there's nothing out there for us,  
13 and we want people to be able to realize what we're  
14 doing and how successful we truly are being.

15 So the first indicator of weighted achievement,  
16 which is 35% of the school's report card rating,  
17 we've identified the weighted achievement for The  
18 Excel Center to be the number of graduates that earn  
19 an industry recognized certification or concurrent  
20 enrollment credit. So, as you know, as our students  
21 are going through the high school courses and the  
22 requirements for high school, we're trying to make  
23 sure that we prepare them for what comes next, what  
24 comes after high school. We don't want them to just  
25 focus on receiving a high school diploma. So we're

1 proposing that 60% of our graduates earn an industry  
2 recognized certification or concurrent improvement --  
3 concurrent credit by the time they're complete at The  
4 Excel Center, along with 50% of our students that are  
5 enrolled to earn at least one credit per term. So  
6 we're not having adults just come into the school  
7 wasting time, killing time; they're actually  
8 progressing and they're improving -- making  
9 improvements within themselves.

10 The second is the growth school value score,  
11 which is also 35% of the school's report card, and  
12 we're identifying that for us to be the i-Ready  
13 assessment. Of course, we don't take the ACT Aspire,  
14 so the i-Ready assessment is the assessment that we  
15 utilize for our students. When students come in,  
16 they take it upon initial enrollment, and then they  
17 take it again midway through their enrollment, and  
18 then they'll take it a third time at the end of their  
19 enrollment. And so with that, we're looking and  
20 hoping that as students are progressing within -- you  
21 can see our actual growth in our students with that  
22 i-Ready assessment. And then with the i-Ready  
23 assessment they give -- the typical growth of -- a  
24 student who is two years below grade level has a 30-  
25 point gain over the course of a year. And, again,

1 because we're doing eight -- I mean, we're doing five  
2 eight-week terms in a school year, we're proposing  
3 that on average our students will have a 10-point  
4 gain, so that we can say that they're making those  
5 strides to improving.

6 And then the fourth index -- I mean, the third  
7 index, school quality and success score -- at the  
8 start of 2018-19 school year a post-graduate survey  
9 was created to help The Excel Center track the  
10 success of our graduates. And because we're  
11 educating adults, one of the goals for determining  
12 school success is the economic impact our students  
13 have once they leave. So with that in mind, those  
14 factors are affected by employment and education. So  
15 with the implementation of the post-graduate survey  
16 The Excel Center has placed a goal on itself to  
17 insure at least 50% of our students, whether it be  
18 employed or further their education after graduation  
19 -- and that post-graduation survey is actually  
20 completed six months after they leave The Excel  
21 Center, to give them time to show improvement.

22 And then the final, of course, is the graduation  
23 rate. The final goal with that amendment that is  
24 being requested, because it falls under the  
25 graduation index of ESSA -- in a traditional school

1 the on-time graduation rate is calculated by the  
2 four- and five-year cohorts. But because our  
3 students enter at various ages and at different times  
4 of the year, with various credit, time, and history,  
5 it is best for our graduation rate to be calculated  
6 taking the number of graduates at the end of the  
7 academic year and dividing it by the school's actual  
8 enrollment over the five terms. This method also  
9 creates a standard for determining the school's  
10 annual enrollment, as opposed to the set date used by  
11 other districts due to ongoing enrollment every eight  
12 weeks. Because we have the eight-week terms, if  
13 we're not at capacity, we receive in additional  
14 students to try to get to capacity.

15 In previous goals, we identified a 10%  
16 graduation rate the first year, 15% the second, and  
17 20% every year after. But after completing our i-  
18 Ready assessments over the course of the first year  
19 and a review of the students' previous education  
20 completion via transcripts, many of our students  
21 enter at a much lower level and with far fewer  
22 credits than anticipated. Due to the accelerated  
23 structure of our curriculum, if a student does not  
24 score on grade level in math or reading, remediation  
25 with students is required so that we can insure we're

1 not setting them up for failure. So we're not trying  
2 to become a diploma mill. So if they're not -- they  
3 do not have the content knowledge, we don't just  
4 automatically say, "Okay, you go to the next thing on  
5 your transcript." We make them go through  
6 remediation -- and it's because of the overwhelming  
7 need for remediation by our student body we are  
8 requesting the amendment of the percentage of  
9 graduates. During our first year we did not have any  
10 -- not the 10% set as the goal originally. We're  
11 requesting the goal for the first year, of course, to  
12 be zero, the second year to be 10%, and the goal for  
13 year-three and beyond to be 15%. I will say, this  
14 coming December we actually have five students -- our  
15 very first graduation we will have five adults who  
16 will receive their high school diplomas. They will  
17 actually be complete with class in three weeks, but  
18 the actual ceremony will take place in December.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. So you  
20 do have just a little bit of time left.

21 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Is there anything  
23 remaining that you want to share with us, or are you  
24 ready for the Panel to ask questions?

25 MS. DAVIS: They can ask questions.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Is there anyone  
2 here to speak in opposition before we go --

3 DR. BOYD: No.

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No. Okay. All right.

5 So, Panel, we'll go ahead and go to questions.  
6 Do you have any questions about the amendment  
7 requests?

8 Mr. Wilson?

9 MR. WILSON: Not as such. It struck me that the  
10 vast majority of your students are female, three or  
11 four times as many as male. And that doesn't have to  
12 do with your waiver requests, but that looked very  
13 unusual.

14 MS. DAVIS: I will say it is growing. When I  
15 first got to the school, in March of this year, we  
16 had maybe 10 male students -- and that number has  
17 doubled to 20. They come and go, of course, because  
18 they're adults and different life barriers. But we  
19 are getting greater male interest into the school.

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton?

21 MS. NEWTON: My question is about the licensure  
22 and the individual -- the gentleman. It's not  
23 necessarily for you but for the Department as to how  
24 we'll proceed in setting a standard as to how we deal  
25 with situations like this in the future, because it's

1           likely this could come up again in another  
2           environment.  So --

3                   CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER:  Yes.  And that was my  
4           question as well.  It's my understanding that there  
5           is a process in place to mitigate for a circumstance  
6           like that that came up at your school, and the waiver  
7           would not be necessary in order for you to go through  
8           that process.  So that's where I wanted to get some  
9           clarification from Legal as far as, if we actually  
10          waive this standard, are we opening it up too far.

11                   MS. HYATT:  Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas  
12          Department of Education.  I will let Alexandra give  
13          you more information about the process that they went  
14          through.  In terms of 4-D.2, the standard, I think --  
15          one, I just want to make sure that it's clear that  
16          it's different than a waiver of the background checks  
17          themselves.  That's in law and is a prohibited  
18          waiver.  So anyway if they received a waiver of 4-D.2  
19          under the standards, the person would still have to  
20          pass the required background checks.  This is the  
21          only school that has requested a waiver of this to  
22          date.  Granting a waiver of 4-D.2 would not just be  
23          for the one individual, because we can't really limit  
24          waivers of the standard in that way, like give an  
25          exception for one individual.  So granting the waiver



1 would be a waiver of the provision as it stands for  
2 anyone. That doesn't mean that they would not have  
3 to comply with background checks and stuff like that.

4 And Alexandra has more information about the  
5 process that they went through with PLSB.

6 DR. BOYD: Okay. So I'm learning a few things  
7 in the moment. So after speaking to Deborah Coffman,  
8 the Assistant Commissioner of Public School  
9 Accountability, about the intention of the standard,  
10 which is a brand-new standard to the Standards for  
11 Accreditation, it seems like the ideal approach would  
12 be that the teacher request for their license to be  
13 reinstated. Which I know The Excel Center has talked  
14 to the Professional Licensure board, but I don't  
15 think that it ever made it to the State Board for  
16 consideration to reinstate the license. So I guess  
17 we need a little bit more discussion.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And, Dr. Boyd, I think I  
19 can also help out with some additional clarity, now  
20 that I'm thinking through this.

21 It's my understanding that this was added as a  
22 part of the Standards for Accreditation, that the  
23 whole licensure process still is in place. The  
24 request for a waiver from a disqualifying offense,  
25 all of that is still in place. What this standard

1 does is put in place for school districts that the  
2 school district has to insure that the people that  
3 they are employing have either passed the background  
4 checks or, if there are cases where they're not, they  
5 go through the process to get that person a waiver  
6 from the disqualifying offense. Should a school  
7 district not, this standard is in place then, if the  
8 Department should need to work with that school  
9 district to correct that situation. Because,  
10 otherwise, it's simply a matter of employment and  
11 school districts could be hiring people and not  
12 really adhering to the process and there is no  
13 sanction from the Standards of Accreditation  
14 perspective. So the addition of this standard was to  
15 elevate that, as far as a standard for public  
16 schools, to insure that they're following the  
17 employment process for the background checks and  
18 going through a process to clear up anything, as you  
19 all did.

20 So in my mind, really the waiver is not  
21 necessary for you to be able to employ those folks;  
22 it's just a matter of going through that process and  
23 insuring then that the district would not be in  
24 violation of the standard to protect students.

25 MS. HYATT: One thing I do want to note is that

1 I believe if the license has been revoked that the  
2 State Board doesn't have the authority to reinstate  
3 it. If it's been suspended, or something like that,  
4 I think it can be revisited. But if the license has  
5 been revoked, then there's not a way to reinstate  
6 that license. So for an individual whose license has  
7 been revoked I don't think following this standard  
8 they would be able to be employed by a district,  
9 because I don't think they can go through a process  
10 that would allow them to obtain a teaching license or  
11 to have their license reinstated. And it's my  
12 understanding that in this individual's case the  
13 license has been revoked, so the waiver would be  
14 necessary. But, again, it wouldn't be limited to  
15 that individual because it would just be a waiver of  
16 the standard in general and not for one particular  
17 person.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So to clarify, if this  
19 standard is not in place you're saying that a  
20 district can employ an individual whose license has  
21 been revoked?

22 MS. HYATT: Yes, ma'am.

23 MS. NEWTON: I think I'm more confused than I  
24 was before.

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yeah. I think I am too.

1 I think that this -- yeah, I think we have more  
2 questions. I'm not sure if a license has been --  
3 okay.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: So I guess I just have probably  
5 more of a general question. Sorry. If a school  
6 district has a waiver from Teacher Licensure and they  
7 have a person that has their license revoked, are  
8 they allowed to employ them or not?

9 MS. HYATT: Under this standard, I would say no.  
10 Because it says that anyone whose teaching license  
11 has been revoked or suspended cannot be employed --  
12 shall not be employed, basically in any capacity,  
13 including as a substitute teacher. So even if they  
14 had a waiver of Teacher Licensure and the person was  
15 not operating as a teacher with the license, and was  
16 operating under the waiver, if their license was  
17 under active suspension or had been revoked I don't  
18 think the district could employ them unless they had  
19 a waiver of 4-D.2 in the standards.

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: And just because the license has  
21 been revoked does not necessarily mean that they  
22 would show up on a negative background check. Is  
23 that a true statement -- or they would?

24 MS. HYATT: So I think there is a possibility  
25 that you could have your license revoked for

1 something that wasn't necessarily a disqualifying  
2 offense or something that put you on the Child  
3 Maltreatment Registry; that would pop up during a  
4 background check. So you could, I think,  
5 hypothetically have someone whose license had been  
6 revoked that didn't necessarily -- that would still  
7 pass a background check.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: There have been additions  
9 to the Code of Ethics rules, when 2017 legislation  
10 was passed, that also included those who were working  
11 under a waiver from licensure that would --  
12 basically, they would have the same sanctions as  
13 someone who was licensed. And there are -- for  
14 someone who has a suspended or revoked license, they  
15 are not able to be employed at that time of  
16 suspension or revocation, regardless of if they're  
17 licensed or not. I don't know how this actual  
18 standard plays into it. But, again, I think the  
19 standard was written so that if a school was in  
20 violation of that it would be a violation of  
21 Standards for Accreditation, beyond just having to  
22 operate as far as what the law says. It would  
23 actually be more of a visible violation of the  
24 Standards for Accreditation.

25 DR. HERNANDEZ: So in this scenario we have a

1 person that's employed by Goodwill already. And when  
2 they -- but what they're not able to do is cross over  
3 to the education part. Is that basically what we're  
4 saying?

5 MS. DAVIS: Well, right now, he is currently  
6 employed by The Excel Center and that's because this  
7 -- again, this standard is new. So when he was hired  
8 this standard wasn't in place. But now that this  
9 standard is now active and present, we're trying to  
10 make sure we remedy the situation.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And I think, again, one of  
12 Dr. Boyd's comments was that this waiver would not be  
13 limited to a one-person issue, if this waiver is  
14 granted.

15 MS. DAVIS: I will say that he has -- like was  
16 said, he went through our re-entry program with  
17 Goodwill. He is a hard worker. He has proven  
18 himself to be on the straight and narrow. So it  
19 would be heartbreaking if we were to lose him. But  
20 he's a good guy. He's one of our -- the biggest  
21 motivators to our students. He actually can identify  
22 with a lot of the students and the things that they  
23 have to endure. Because, of course, the demographic  
24 that we serve come from various backgrounds and have  
25 all kinds of legal issues, home issues, and things of

1           that nature, and he's able to identify with them and  
2           show them that there's an alternative; there is life  
3           after making mistakes.

4           MS. NEWTON: You know, while I understand that,  
5           I just worry about the ramifications of making a  
6           decision that's not an individual -- but, you know,  
7           what the future ramifications are in the decision. I  
8           think it's fairly clear what the rules state at this  
9           point in time about the revocation. So that's my  
10          concern, my question.

11          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Are there other questions  
12          related to that 4-D.2 standard from any of the other  
13          panel members?

14          Okay. Is there a possibility, because there  
15          does seem to be a little bit -- since this is a new  
16          standard and you're raising some questions here that  
17          we've not discussed, is there a possibility that in  
18          your request that might be a waiver that you would  
19          hold on until we could maybe do a little more  
20          investigation and really look and be sure that we're  
21          all very clear and comfortable as far as what a  
22          waiver from this standard would mean, going back and  
23          really reviewing the -- since we did have some  
24          updates to the law that include both licensed and  
25          non-licensed educators, and just looking at what is

1 the full scope of this waiver? Is that something  
2 that maybe then would be a potential to come back, if  
3 it needed to be added at a later time?

4 MS. DAVIS: (Nodding head up and down.)

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: I'm just asking that just  
6 because I can tell from -- we don't want to hold up  
7 other conversations here. There just seems to be  
8 some -- a little bit of concern with that. So that  
9 may be just something to consider as we go through  
10 this and talk about the final approval --

11 MS. DAVIS: Okay. That's fair.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- of your request. Okay.

13 Do we have additional questions then about their  
14 amendment requests?

15 Dr. Hernandez, did you have any questions?

16 DR. HERNANDEZ: I just want to make sure -- the  
17 first one on the curriculum -- so are they asking to  
18 it looks like waive the Arkansas History requirement,  
19 and that's because they're embedding that? And don't  
20 we have a process for embedding courses, or am I --

21 DR. BOYD: No, I don't think that's the case. I  
22 think the case is that at any given time they could  
23 have students who've already taken Arkansas History  
24 and have that from 7th or 8th grade, or something  
25 like that, and so then they wouldn't necessarily need



1 to offer it. So I think that's the situation just  
2 because their student body is so diverse.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: So this would just be a waiver  
4 from having to offer it at all times?

5 DR. BOYD: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Kremers.

7 DR. KREMERS: What would -- if we hold off on  
8 the decision on that piece and revisit that, then  
9 would they be operating then against standards in the  
10 meantime, since it's --

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: With the employment of  
12 that person. I think that's --

13 Go ahead, Dr. Boyd.

14 DR. BOYD: So if he remains employed, then they  
15 will be in violation of that standard, up until the  
16 point that they either get a waiver or he's no longer  
17 employed by the school. There is -- we do a monthly  
18 process now for looking at schools' status for  
19 Standards for Accreditation. The final accreditation  
20 doesn't happen until the end of the year; so that  
21 process is designed to identify errors and have them  
22 fixed in a timely fashion. So for their October,  
23 November, December, it would flag.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: But that is something then  
25 that we could look into immediately to set up a plan

1 --

2 DR. BOYD: Yes, that's correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- to correct that,  
4 whether it would then be coming back and receiving  
5 that waiver or --

6 DR. BOYD: That's correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And, again, that would be  
8 a decision today of the Panel, whether or not to keep  
9 that in there as part of the waiver requests or not.  
10 So, okay.

11 Mr. Rogers, did you have a question for the  
12 applicant?

13 MR. ROGERS: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No. I wanted -- there  
15 were just a couple of things that I wanted to ask  
16 about in your -- and I do appreciate the fact that  
17 you've gone back and re-evaluated your goals, and  
18 you've written goals that make so much more sense in  
19 terms of the structure of your school.

20 On the growth, you're using the i-Ready  
21 assessment?

22 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Are you thinking that that  
24 data then would be calculated for a school growth  
25 score instead of the data from ACT Aspire --

1 MS. DAVIS: Correct.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- to determine growth?

3 MS. DAVIS: Correct.

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And that may be a  
5 question -- Ms. Coffman, I'm not sure that we are  
6 pulling in data from different data sources on that.  
7 Is that something we've discussed that we could do  
8 for them?

9 MS. COFFMAN: Deborah Coffman, Assistant  
10 Commissioner, Public School Accountability. It's  
11 something certainly that in their charter would be  
12 appropriate to include in their goals and measures.  
13 As far as our federal accountability, we do have to  
14 follow the ESSA School Index, as approved in our ESSA  
15 plan. So I was making some notes back there. We  
16 have been in conversation with schools exactly like  
17 The Excel Center for how we might consider  
18 alternative accountability for future requests of  
19 review by the federal government -- but at this time  
20 we're not ready for that. We have looked at other  
21 states that have had alternative accountability  
22 measures approved, and our feedback from those states  
23 is they are struggling to implement those now that  
24 they did get them approved. Now to actually  
25 implement them, they're struggling. And so I think

1 we need to take a little time to figure out what's  
2 going on with them, learn from them, and get our  
3 plans together for a future consideration. But at  
4 this time they do fall under ESSA School Index.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. But in terms of  
6 setting these goals up as a measure for --

7 MS. COFFMAN: Their charter.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- their charter and  
9 whether or not they're progressing --

10 MS. COFFMAN: That would be appropriate.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- this would be  
12 appropriate?

13 MS. COFFMAN: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And we could assist with  
15 the calculation of that growth? I'm just wondering  
16 how they're going to have that calculation. Is that  
17 something that the assessment --

18 MS. DAVIS: So we could actually provide --

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Sorry. Go ahead.

20 MS. DAVIS: So we could actually provide someone  
21 at the ADE, in Charter Schools, with a log-in to our  
22 i-Ready assessment as an administrator, if we needed  
23 to, so that they could pull it themselves directly,  
24 so it wouldn't be secondary information, if we needed  
25 to do that.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

2 MS. COFFMAN: And we'd be happy to work with  
3 them.

4 MS. DAVIS: We'll just work together.

5 MS. COFFMAN: That's right.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And I think that  
7 was my only question regarding the information.

8 Panel Members, do you have additional questions  
9 that we've not discussed?

10 MS. NEWTON: I need clarification on the  
11 graduation rate again.

12 MS. DAVIS: Yes, ma'am. So our cap is 125. And  
13 so what we would do for our graduation rate is take  
14 the average number of students that are enrolled, of  
15 course, and that would be the denominator, and our  
16 numerator would be the number of students that  
17 graduate -- and that's how we would get the  
18 percentage of graduates. Because they come in at  
19 different levels, at different times of the year, it  
20 would be kind of hard to go based upon a certain date  
21 for enrollment or a certain space; because some of  
22 them do stop and then they come back eight weeks  
23 later or 16 weeks later. So we're just trying to  
24 look at the total enrollment and how successful we  
25 are with the total enrollment for the year.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Any other  
2 questions?

3 All right. So at this time we can -- I'll  
4 consider a motion for this charter request.

5 DR. HERNANDEZ: I'll try to make a motion and  
6 see if this works. But I would make a motion to  
7 approve the amendment request, with the exception of  
8 4-D.2 to be tabled until a later date.

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And, Ms. Hyatt, in terms  
10 of discussion, do we do a motion and second before  
11 discussion, or can we discuss the motion --

12 MS. HYATT: If you're discussing the motion,  
13 then move and then second, and then have discussion  
14 on the motion itself before voting.

15 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So we have a motion  
16 to approve the amendment requests, with the exception  
17 of the request for 4 dash -- what was it?

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: 4-D.2

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- 4-D.2.

20 MS. NEWTON: Second.

21 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So I have a motion  
22 and a second. Any discussion on that?

23 My thoughts would be -- we don't have anyone  
24 here from PLSB today, and so my thoughts would be it  
25 would be good to have the applicant come back within

1 a short-term process so that we could have PLSB here  
2 to make sure everyone is on the same page and we have  
3 a full understanding of what's in law, what's -- how  
4 this applies with this standard, what we would be  
5 looking at, since we know that it would just -- it  
6 would go beyond one individual, unique situation.

7 Any other discussion?

8 MR. WILSON: That would be perhaps at our next  
9 meeting?

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We could do that or we  
11 could call a special meeting to have within the next  
12 30 days. And that would then work with the school in  
13 terms of the timeline regarding Standards for  
14 Accreditation.

15 Okay. Any other discussion?

16 Okay. So we have a motion and a second.

17 All those in favor?

18 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

20 Okay. So the motion passes.

21 Do we have voting sheets ready, Dr. Boyd?

22 DR. BOYD: (Nodding head up and down.)

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So at this time we  
24 would ask everyone to go to their voting sheets and  
25 record their responses.

1 MS. DAVIS: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And if you'll wait for  
3 just a moment here, we will go through and confirm  
4 our feedback.

5 [A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE]

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We'll now provide  
7 feedback.

8 Dr. Hernandez.

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: I made the motion. The  
10 amendment request aligns with the mission of the  
11 Excel program. I do have concerns about their  
12 request for 4-D.2 and need clarity on the  
13 implications of granting this waiver.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Kremers.

15 DR. KREMERS: I voted to support, especially  
16 with the exclusion of the 4-D.2 to assist with final  
17 concerns I had to approve.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton.

19 MS. NEWTON: I voted for the motion, with the  
20 reason that all questions concerning waivers were  
21 answered satisfactorily, except -- with the exception  
22 of 4-D.2.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Mr. Rogers.

24 MR. ROGERS: Similar to everybody else, 4-D.2  
25 gives me concern, but the rest of it I was good with



1 it.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And Mr. Wilson.

3 MR. WILSON: I voted for the motion, with the  
4 understanding that an effort would be made soon,  
5 perhaps before our next meeting, to resolve the  
6 licensure question.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And, Ms. Davis, we  
8 will get with you, probably the end of the day when  
9 we discuss our next steps and our next meetings. And  
10 we do appreciate you being here.

11 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And congratulations on  
13 your first five that will be graduating. We look  
14 forward to that.

15 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Davis is holding up  
16 six fingers.)

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Oh, six?

18 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Six. Okay. And so that's  
20 really exciting and some good news. Thanks for  
21 sharing that with us.

22 MS. DAVIS: Thank you, all.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Thank you.

24 A-2: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT:

25 KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We will now go  
2 ahead and proceed. We're going to go back to Item 2.  
3 Is that right, Dr. Boyd?

4 DR. BOYD: Yes, please.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel, are we good  
6 to keep going?

7 All right. So we're going to go back to Item 2,  
8 which is the Request for an Open-Enrollment Charter  
9 School Amendment for KIPP Delta Public Schools. Dr.  
10 Boyd, you are recognized.

11 DR. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 On March 11, 2002, the State Board of Education  
13 approved the application for KIPP Delta Public  
14 Schools. The charter is approved to serve students  
15 in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 2,600.  
16 Representatives of KIPP Delta Public Schools are  
17 appearing before the Panel to request an amendment to  
18 the current charter. And on behalf of KIPP Delta  
19 Public Schools we have Scott Shirey, who is the  
20 executive director.

21 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Will all  
22 representatives of the charter and anyone speaking in  
23 opposition please stand to receive the oath?

24 Okay. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
25 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole

1 truth, and nothing but the truth?

2 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We are ready for  
4 your presentation. You'll have 20 minutes. If you  
5 will, state your name and position for the micro --  
6 for the -- in the microphone, you'll be recognized.

7 MR. SHIREY: Scott Shirey, Executive Director,  
8 KIPP Delta Public Schools.

9 Good morning, Members of the Panel and Madam  
10 Chair. You'll see a PowerPoint you should have in  
11 your packet, and I'll go through this hopefully  
12 rather quickly. You've had it in advance. But as  
13 stated, we are seeking a waiver from a very specific  
14 portion of the most recent NSL rules under 6.07, 1  
15 through 4. While this waiver may appear to be new,  
16 it's actually -- as you'll see, the flexibility of  
17 NSLA has -- some of the flexibility has gone away  
18 over the last few revisions. And so we're asking for  
19 this waiver to return to sort of a state of how we've  
20 operated in the past -- and we'll walk through some  
21 of these prior versions so you can see. Again, I'm  
22 not going to read everything on the PowerPoint.

23 As you well know, sort of where we are in  
24 eastern Arkansas, we are a quintessential high-  
25 poverty school district. The whole purpose of NSLA

1 funding was really to help close that equity gap  
2 between schools in low-income areas and wealthier  
3 areas. So I think the flexibility in that money has  
4 been essential to being able to do what we do. Part  
5 of that is hiring the right instructional  
6 specialists, facilitators, coaches to really give  
7 academic support in our region.

8 And this is the section where -- this is  
9 actually the broad section, 6.07.01. You can see  
10 employing instructional facilitators in literacy,  
11 math, science and specialists K-12 that meet the  
12 following requirements --

13 According to the 2015 report, 21% of all NSL  
14 expenditures across the state were used for  
15 instructional facilitators, math or literacy coaches.  
16 So, obviously, a big portion of how NSLA money is  
17 being used across the state is for this very purpose.  
18 190 of 238 school districts use these funds this way,  
19 and in 2013-14, this was by far the most common use  
20 of NSL funds. However, it talked about the rule and  
21 the flexibility for NSL funds has become more  
22 restrictive over time. In 2007, in order to be  
23 eligible for this you only had to have three years of  
24 experience, specific knowledge, and a bachelor's  
25 degree. You can see, in 2010, the years of

1 experience increased to four, but they did add a  
2 Teach for America provision, which would help retain  
3 some of those Teach for America teachers. If they  
4 had stayed in the classroom and had wanted to go into  
5 a specialist role, they could do that. In 2016, it  
6 became even more restrictive, adding that you must  
7 have a valid Arkansas teacher's license for all  
8 specialists and coaching positions, and in some areas  
9 went up to five years. And just to walk this  
10 through, you can see the 2007 NSL rules; it's  
11 highlighted there, just the three years and  
12 bachelor's degree. So this was the flexibility that  
13 we had used and utilized to help get some really good  
14 talent in those seats and pay for those -- and pay  
15 for that talent without depleting operating funds.  
16 You can see, in 2010, it shifted to four years, but  
17 said "or completion of the required two-year training  
18 by Teach for America." In 2012, there was no change.  
19 And then, in 2016, there were significant changes,  
20 revised specialist qualifications, added a data coach  
21 position, added school improvement specialists, and  
22 then each position now required a valid Arkansas  
23 teacher's certificate and did not permit an exception  
24 for Teach for America. And you can see it as it is  
25 today, which created a major hurdle for us in the

1 Delta.

2 So the impact of -- you can -- we've talked  
3 through all this. So the impact of that really is  
4 creating a couple of things. The number of teachers  
5 and staff eligible to serve in this type of role for  
6 us has been reduced to a select few. And then one of  
7 the primary ways our region has been able to expend  
8 NSLA funds has become more arduous and more  
9 challenging.

10 As you well know, the purpose of our schools is  
11 to empower students from underserved communities to  
12 develop the knowledge, skills, and character traits  
13 to pursue a college education and a life of value,  
14 joy, and integrity. Without this talent and the  
15 ability to pay for it, it makes our jobs incredibly  
16 -- it makes our already challenging work in the Delta  
17 that much tougher. When we look at the national  
18 talent landscape, student enrollment will increase by  
19 three million by 2027; yet, teacher preparation  
20 programs have seen a 35% drop in enrollment. And the  
21 chart very clearly shows supply and demand; there's a  
22 real issue -- and I know you are all well aware of  
23 that challenge.

24 In order to be competitive, we have always  
25 recruited statewide and nationally. In the waiver of

1 -- the waiver we've had in all these years has helped  
2 tremendously in order for us to get talent into our  
3 schools and allowed us to be creative. We believe  
4 strongly that young talented staff who are coming to  
5 the Delta need a career ladder. This offers a way to  
6 pay for them. And as an interesting side note, in  
7 2014, 46% of our staff was Teach for America. Due to  
8 some national Teach for America shifts we've really  
9 lost that talent pool -- dropped down to 6% last year  
10 -- and so we've had to rebuild our talent team. And  
11 you can see in the 15-16 school year we received 139  
12 applications, 400 applications the year after that,  
13 and last year 468 applications. So we are successful  
14 in getting new applicants; we are successful in  
15 getting some good talent to replace that Teach for  
16 America pipeline that has been wiped out -- and we  
17 are simply requesting that we're able to pay some of  
18 that talent in those coaching positions. And you can  
19 see our current reality: 22% of our teachers and  
20 academic staff have an Arkansas teacher's license,  
21 yet most are considered AQT.

22 While we are the only district seeking this  
23 waiver, we believe it could really substantially help  
24 the other schools in the Delta, if they decide to  
25 pursue that way.

1           And, again -- this is just more context --  
2           according to the ADE, the number of college students  
3           pursuing education has dropped from about 7700 to  
4           3300. You can see the shortage challenges, in 15-16,  
5           supply and demand. There's 337 vacancies or long-  
6           term substitutes and 1,184 teachers on waivers who  
7           are not certified. And so, again, putting these  
8           restrictions on the NSL funds creates a real  
9           challenge.

10           So, in summary, we think it limits the  
11           flexibility to get to develop and retrain our amazing  
12           teachers, to financially support these positions.  
13           And over the last couple of years it's become a  
14           challenge as we've dipped into operating with funds  
15           to cover these positions that we have traditionally  
16           been able to use NSL for.

17           So that's the challenge and that's our request.  
18           And I'm happy to field any questions or go back -- I  
19           know I went through that rather quickly, but wanted  
20           to be respectful of everyone's time, as this was in  
21           your packet already.

22           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

23           Dr. Boyd, is there anyone here to speak in  
24           opposition -- or Ms. Hyatt?

25           MS. HYATT: She went to check.



1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

2 DR. BOYD: No.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No. Okay. And you do  
4 have some remaining time, but if you are ready to go  
5 ahead with questions we can proceed.

6 MR. SHIREY: Questions are great. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. Thank  
8 you very much.

9 So, Panel, we'll go ahead and start -- start on  
10 the end there. Any questions?

11 MS. NEWTON: I have a question for the  
12 Department. Are there any other waivers -- I know  
13 once a waiver is granted to a charter then it's  
14 available for the districts to use also. And so I'm  
15 wondering how often this waiver is requested for  
16 these funds, given that the funds are specifically  
17 directed toward the students with the most challenges  
18 and who are often --

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

20 MS. NEWTON: -- overlooked or under -- not  
21 overlooked, but maybe under-served as it relates to  
22 special considerations.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And I think that  
24 the audience is having trouble hearing, but Ms. Hyatt  
25 is coming up, I think, to answer that question. The

1 question was though how often this waiver has been  
2 requested. So I'm going to let Ms. Hyatt answer.

3 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas  
4 Department of Education. It's my understanding that  
5 this would be the first time that a waiver of these  
6 rules would have been granted. I don't believe that  
7 any other charter school has a waiver of the NSL  
8 rules or any provision on how they can spend that  
9 money.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And also, as you  
11 noted then, once a waiver is granted then there is  
12 the potential for other districts to seek a waiver  
13 through the Act 1240 process.

14 MS. NEWTON: And that was my concern and my  
15 question, because I know the controversy that has  
16 surrounded these funds for a number of years in  
17 whether or whether not they're adequately directed  
18 toward the student population, and, you know, the  
19 fact that people or districts accumulate a large  
20 balance of funds and, you know, the questions that  
21 circle that. So it's very educationally driven, the  
22 questions, and politically impactive, and I think  
23 that it's something that should be given  
24 deliberation.

25 I certainly understand your request, and the

1 ability to be able to operate your unique charter has  
2 proven successful. But that's just an overriding  
3 concern of mine. It's not to say it would be  
4 prohibitive of me approving this, but I think that we  
5 should be very deliberative about it, now and later.

6 MR. SHIREY: May I -- just one other thing.  
7 Given that the new -- the rule is relatively new, I  
8 think that may explain why we're the only one seeking  
9 it at this point. But I've been around long enough  
10 to remember that challenge when NSLA funds were first  
11 put out there; they were -- it was incredibly  
12 restrictive; there were huge balances -- and the  
13 Department did a fantastic job working through that.  
14 And so some of the flexibilities I showed from 2009,  
15 2007, those were essential to helping eradicate some  
16 of those fund balances to serve children. I worry  
17 that as this has become more restrictive we'll end up  
18 back in that same place.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Dr. Hernandez, questions?

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. So I definitely understand  
21 the reason for seeking the waiver. I think my  
22 question is more about the implementation and how  
23 it's used. So I'm going to kind of talk and then  
24 I'll kind of arrive at my question, I guess.

25 So, you know, the things that I could see that

1 would be of benefit of doing this process and needing  
2 that would be big. But with the -- have you given  
3 any consideration to looking at more of a -- if you  
4 were to grant this -- get this waiver granted,  
5 looking at it more from a teacher/leader perspective  
6 and thinking through -- and a lot of the work I've  
7 seen going on in the Delta and things like that is  
8 pulling teachers out of the classroom and then making  
9 them facilitators and replacing them with teachers  
10 that, you know, are brand-new to the profession and  
11 may not have that pedagogy background. And so when I  
12 think about the licensure not being there and having  
13 that background, it kind of would be worrisome of who  
14 the people are that are coaching those teachers. And  
15 so would you have any consideration of keeping some  
16 of those teachers in the classroom, at least part-  
17 time, and saying, "Hey, we'll give you an extended  
18 contract; part of your day is facilitating and  
19 coaching," but not necessarily completely pulling  
20 them out of the classroom?

21 MR. SHIREY: Yeah. Great question. So I'll  
22 answer it two different ways. First, we're designing  
23 a master teacher pathway program now. So we don't  
24 actually want teachers to feel like the only way to  
25 get additional income is by becoming a coach or

1 becoming a specialist. We want it to be because they  
2 can be a really effective coach or they can be a  
3 really effective master teacher. But in terms of  
4 compensation, it should be equal. So we're piloting  
5 that out. We've got six teachers right now who  
6 otherwise would've considered going into a coach  
7 position, but we're saying, "Hey, you can actually  
8 make just as much by being a new -- having an  
9 exemplary classroom, having a model classroom."

10 And then, as an outside, so the second part to  
11 that -- one individual, who we'd use these funds to  
12 pay for, is actually someone who grew up in Helena,  
13 an incredible educator; has spent a lot of time  
14 outside, in Maryland and in a lot of high-performing  
15 districts; has come back to Helena to make a  
16 difference. So she's got 25 years of experience; she  
17 does not have a valid Arkansas license. So that's  
18 the type of talent we want to bring in, that right  
19 now we can't use NSLA funds to pay for.

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And so my question is kind  
21 of a follow-up with that. Is the major barrier with  
22 the requirements with the Arkansas teaching license  
23 specifically, or is it more about having people that  
24 have the background and experience? Because when you  
25 look at the entire rule --

1 MR. SHIREY: Yeah.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- you know, you've got  
3 several different criteria there. An additional  
4 piece, you know, is someone who does have the  
5 experience, the requisite experience. So if you're  
6 waiving that as well, I guess -- I guess what are  
7 those assurances that would be there in terms of a  
8 candidate, like you described, who maybe has  
9 educational experience outside of Arkansas, and just  
10 doesn't have the Arkansas license? But if you  
11 eliminate the entire section you've eliminated all  
12 the qualifications.

13 MR. SHIREY: Yeah. I think that the ones that  
14 are most important to us are, first, the license, and  
15 then, second, the years. I do -- I think you have to  
16 be careful with the years because you just don't want  
17 people without that experience. But I have found  
18 that sometimes you have extraordinary young people  
19 who in three to four years are ready to really  
20 leverage their talents and skills. I think most  
21 people would be well beyond five years, because it  
22 takes most people that long to build up that skill  
23 base and that talent base. But I can think of one  
24 person in my building right now who's doing  
25 instructional facilitating. She is under the five-

1 year mark, but she runs some of the best professional  
2 development I have seen in 17 years. Again, I think  
3 those people are anomalies but they do exist, and I  
4 would want this to take consideration of that.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So if granted the waiver,  
6 and given the fact that these funds really are  
7 intended to be those used to support our most  
8 struggling students, what are those things that  
9 you're going to put in place when you're considering  
10 people for these roles, these very specialized roles  
11 within school districts? And how are you going to  
12 know that you're being successful?

13 MR. SHIREY: Great. So, first of all, data is  
14 essential to everything. So if we're looking at  
15 individuals who are in the classroom, we're going to  
16 look at their student results. We also use what's  
17 called a KIPP Framework for Excellent Teaching; we  
18 use it for the master teacher. We evaluate all the  
19 teachers based on that -- are they using the  
20 appropriate pedagogy, are they using the appropriate  
21 teacher models. We have a performance management  
22 system where everyone has their goals -- are they  
23 meeting their benchmarks and goals, whether that's  
24 around attendance, attrition, academic progress,  
25 leadership development. We also, being part of a

1 national network, have access to KIPP basically  
2 residencies, summer programming -- they nickname it  
3 KIPP Boot Camp, right, where we send people away for  
4 two to three weeks during the summer; along with  
5 other KIPP teachers and leaders from around the  
6 country, they get training on instructional coaching.  
7 So, there's a lot of systems and processes in place  
8 so we're not just saying, "Hey, like, we want you to  
9 stick around and go do this." We will put them  
10 through the rigorous training and make sure they're  
11 evaluated through every step of the process.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

13 Dr. Kremers?

14 DR. KREMERS: Mine is kind of a comment along  
15 with Ms. Newton -- and, Dr. Pfeffer, what you're  
16 saying. And I'm a strong supporter of data to inform  
17 decision-making; I think that's extremely important  
18 -- an important piece. I just -- I feel like there's  
19 still a little bit of a gap between the intent of the  
20 funds, which should be at the student level. So once  
21 you receive your data you identify those areas. The  
22 funds seem that they should be at the student level  
23 on the implementation of what you do next.

24 So the things you kind of described a few  
25 minutes ago is still identifying what your plans will



1 be. But then will the funds go directly towards the  
2 implementation at the student level?

3 MR. SHIREY: So specifically on this, again, we  
4 go back -- I have found without strong instructional  
5 specialists, coaches in the building, working  
6 directly with teachers, modeling for teachers it's  
7 really hard to leverage impact. So that's the  
8 intent. Again, you've got to have both. You have to  
9 have strong model teachers and then you have to have  
10 strong coaches of teachers so you can pair both of  
11 those together. So this isn't -- I don't want this  
12 for someone in the backroom, right, writing out the  
13 perfect assessment model; it's someone who is going  
14 to directly impact kids.

15 And like I say, we worked really hard to  
16 increase some bench steps, bring in some talent. I  
17 showed how in the loss of Teach for America I think  
18 we've brought some talent back. Again, Dr. Deb  
19 Price, who I mentioned earlier, has come back to make  
20 a difference in her community. That's the type of  
21 expertise we want in front of our students. She's in  
22 the building every day, doing instructional coaching  
23 with kids. But we can't use this money to pay for  
24 her, and so that cuts into other areas.

25 Does that answer your question clearly?

1 DR. KREMERS: It does. I think I'm -- I think  
2 in my mind I'm just thinking of afterschool tutoring,  
3 programs like that that really assist directly at the  
4 student level.

5 MR. SHIREY: Yes.

6 DR. KREMERS: So you may have coaches and  
7 others, but that's just where my --

8 MR. SHIREY: So just one quick follow-up on  
9 that. I mean, having been at this awhile, we are  
10 pretty good at spending down NSL funds and using  
11 federal entitlements as well. And we would not be  
12 here in front of you if we had not scoured every  
13 other possible use, and some of that is included --  
14 right; so the afterschool tutoring program, the  
15 Saturday, some of the summer programming -- all of  
16 that. But between federal money and NSL we're still  
17 not able to spend it down. The only way to spend it  
18 down -- and I think this is the biggest impact for  
19 kids -- right -- we could buy a bunch of superfluous  
20 materials that usually met the requirements, but I  
21 don't think that yields the biggest impact on  
22 students.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And how many instructional  
24 coaches or facilitators are you employing using your  
25 NSL funds?

1 MR. SHIREY: Right now, this waiver would allow  
2 three to be paid for. We have additional ones; some  
3 of those have an Arkansas license. But this would  
4 allow three. So that's about, when you add in  
5 benefits, close to \$250,000.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: But throughout your  
7 schools, do you know how many --

8 MR. SHIREY: I don't have those -- the exact  
9 number off the top of my head. I can look that up  
10 and get it back to you.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

12 Mr. Rogers?

13 MR. ROGERS: I had a similar question about  
14 that. I needed a clarifying question. In your  
15 presentation I thought you said you were asking for a  
16 waiver of 6.0.1 through 4. But your amendment just  
17 was 6.07.1, because I think you want all that. So I  
18 just wanted to make sure which ones we're actually  
19 talking about?

20 MR. SHIREY: I believe it's 1 through 4. I'm  
21 going to check with -- it should be 1 through 4.

22 MR. ROGERS: 6.0 --

23 MR. SHIREY: -- 0 --

24 MR. ROGERS: -- 7.1?

25 MS. HARMON: Yes.

1 MR. ROGERS: 1 through 4?

2 MS. HARMON: Yes.

3 MR. ROGERS: Okay. That's --

4 MS. HARMON: (inaudible)

5 MR. ROGERS: Okay. That's what I wanted to make  
6 sure of.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Let's have -- in  
8 the microphone, let's have someone clarify exactly  
9 what -- yeah.

10 MS. HARMON: Hi. This is Charity Harmon with  
11 KIPP Delta. We're seeking the waiver from each of  
12 the specialist positions, which is the 6. -- it's the  
13 01, 02, 03, 04.

14 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I think in the PowerPoint  
15 it's just missing a 1, is what happened.

16 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas  
17 Department of Education. In the original amendment  
18 request, the request was for 6.07.1. I believe what  
19 they're saying right now is they're referring to  
20 6.07.1.1 through .4, which includes all of the  
21 specialist and coach positions. So I think there  
22 does need to be a little bit of clarification on that  
23 point, just in terms of the record, because that is  
24 different than what it says on paper in the amendment  
25 request. And here's a copy of the rules, if you need

1           them.

2           MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

3           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So if you could clarify  
4 for us for sure what it is you're waiving?

5           MR. SHIREY: Yes. 6.07.1.1, 6.07.1.2, 6.07.1.3,  
6 and 6.07.1.4. So that would be for instructional  
7 facilitators, specialists, coaches and instructional  
8 facilitators, data coaches, and school improvement  
9 specialists.

10          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Thank you very much.

11          Mr. Rogers, do you want to continue?

12          MR. ROGERS: With that saying, when is KIPP up  
13 for renewal?

14          MS. NEWTON: What was the question?

15          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Make sure you're  
16 right in the microphone. I think our microphones are  
17 pretty soft today.

18          MR. ROGERS: He probably turned me off.

19          MR. SHIREY: 2021-2022.

20          MR. ROGERS: Because I was just -- if this was  
21 granted, the waiver was granted today, just how would  
22 we be able to see from where they are now what  
23 difference it makes for not having teacher license  
24 for those most needy kids with NSL money with what  
25 the money is supposed to be used for going forward?

1           Because, I mean, looking -- then we have the ESSA  
2           School Index now that we could look at, and I'd like  
3           to just see how that relates into how their scores  
4           are on that. And so if we granted the waiver and  
5           it's not till 2021 -- wow, you got really -- how is  
6           that helping those most needy kids, is really what  
7           I'm kind of trying to get at?

8           MR. SHIREY: And so I would, I think -- so  
9           clearly their scores have dipped a little bit in the  
10          last couple of years. Part of that -- part of our  
11          success in the early years was very much built on the  
12          model of getting the best talent, regardless of who  
13          they were. And, again, as I said, in 2014, we went  
14          from 46% Teach for America to 6%. So we lost a lot  
15          of talent because of national policies not related to  
16          us. I think we're working to backfill that. We  
17          clearly believe in accountability and I have no  
18          problem with that being under part of the  
19          conversation and consideration.

20          DR. BOYD: So the contract expires June 30,  
21          2023. That means if the calendar stays the same for  
22          hearings you would see them for renewal in December  
23          of 2022.

24          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Anything further?

25          MR. ROGERS: Not right now. I want to --

1 because I don't know if I'm comfortable with it being  
2 that far out. I'd like to see how it's relating to  
3 achievement, if we open up -- and when I say "open  
4 up" -- I know that it's changed now in the rules.  
5 But if we do open up how NSL is supposed to be and  
6 allow for KIPP to have this waiver, then other  
7 schools can have this waiver. And I don't -- I want  
8 to know how we're tracking to know that those kids  
9 that this money is supposed to be used for -- NSL and  
10 Title 1 -- to help close the achievement gap, are we  
11 getting there or is this not working? And that's  
12 what I'm most concerned about.

13 MR. SHIREY: We'd be glad to create a report  
14 that says sort of here's the NSL funds that were used  
15 to pay for these people who coached. I mean, I think  
16 we can connect student results to who is being  
17 coached through this. So it's something we would --  
18 we'd be glad to share that information as we go  
19 through it.

20 MS. NEWTON: The other side of that coin for me  
21 though is being able to compare apples with apples  
22 and to have that same question -- the same measure  
23 apply to people that are getting the funds now, you  
24 know, to serve that population. So I think, you  
25 know, maybe the progress is dismal; maybe the

1 progress is average or above average. But I think we  
2 could apply that same measure to, you know, not just  
3 the person that's asking for a waiver necessarily --  
4 and that may be a larger policy question or decision.  
5 But I, you know, expect that we would look normally  
6 at progress and not necessarily look -- pinpoint it  
7 related to the waiver but look at progress overall,  
8 assuming that the waiver, if granted, has an impact  
9 on that population of students. As a person -- I'm  
10 not an educator, so I can't look at it from the  
11 standpoint of the educational goals and the knowledge  
12 that goes into making those decisions. But just as  
13 an individual, as a citizen, you know, you're  
14 concerned that everybody progresses. And certainly  
15 it seems like a logical approach at this point, but  
16 measurement is important. But I think if we single  
17 out that approach you may have some problems -- or I  
18 would have some problems. But what do I know?

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel, so do we  
20 have remaining questions then?

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: Just one more.

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Hernandez.

23 DR. HERNANDEZ: You mentioned that -- I did have  
24 a question about training. And you mentioned that  
25 you had the boot camps at the national group that's



1 on.

2 MR. SHIREY: Yes.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: Do you require your  
4 instructional coaches to attend the specific coaching  
5 training?

6 MR. SHIREY: I'm trying to think of an example  
7 where we have not sent them. I don't think it's  
8 required in writing, but it's strongly encouraged.  
9 And I think there are random exceptions. Dr. Price,  
10 who came back, has all that experience. She did not  
11 go through it. For a young person rising up,  
12 absolutely.

13 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel, if there are  
15 no remaining questions or things to discuss -- Ms.  
16 Hyatt, were there any remaining issues with the  
17 application that Legal needed to make us aware of or  
18 anything?

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

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. Well,  
21 seeing none, at this time I will accept a motion for  
22 this amendment request.

23 MS. NEWTON: I move approval for the KIPP Delta  
24 amendment request.

25 MR. WILSON: Second.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. I have a motion and  
2 a second. Are there any -- is there any discussion?

3 Okay. If not, all those in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

6 Okay. The motion passes.

7 If you will record your responses on the online  
8 form -- and we will give you some feedback in just a  
9 moment.

10 MR. SHIREY: Thank y'all. Stay here?

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. Give us just a  
12 minute here.

13 And it is Item A-2 on the document. It looks  
14 like you're all there.

15 [A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE]

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. We'll start  
17 with Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson, do you want to start us  
18 off with your feedback?

19 MR. WILSON: Oh. I voted for the motion. I  
20 believe that KIPP and other schools need the  
21 flexibility to utilize that money in the best way  
22 they can for the kids.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton.

24 MS. NEWTON: I voted for the motion. The plans  
25 to implement the waiver request are comprehensive and

1 logical in their approach to serving the designated  
2 population.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Hernandez.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: I voted for the motion. The  
5 amendment request allows the applicant to continue  
6 with current practices in employing facilitators  
7 before the change in standards. So I would encourage  
8 the applicant to insure proper training of the  
9 facilitators.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Kremers.

11 DR. KREMERS: I voted for the motion. My  
12 questions were resolved regarding the commitment to  
13 also use funds at the direct student impact level and  
14 that KIPP does have a need specific to hiring  
15 qualified teachers in the area that you are in to  
16 meet underserved students. So, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Mr. Rogers.

18 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it, due to this  
19 amendment being made due to changes to our NSL rules,  
20 to allow KIPP to continue to move forward with their  
21 achievement.

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. SHIREY: Thank you, all.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We appreciate your time  
25 here today.

1 MR. SHIREY: This is my first time in the new  
2 space. I love it.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: It is very nice, isn't it?

4 MR. SHIREY: Very nice. Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. Thank you.

6 MR. SHIREY: Thank y'all.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. We're going to  
8 take a short break, a 10-minute break, and we will  
9 get started back up at 10:15. And let's make sure --  
10 it'll be Item 4; is that correct?

11 DR. BOYD: (Nodding head up and down.)

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. 10:15  
13 we'll reconvene.

14 (BREAK: 10:04 - 10:19 A.M.)

15 A-4: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT:  
16 NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CLASSICAL ACADEMY

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. I think we are  
18 ready to reconvene with Item 4 on our Action Agenda,  
19 the Request for Open-Enrollment Charter School  
20 Amendment, Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy. Dr.  
21 Boyd, you are recognized.

22 DR. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. On November  
23 11, 2012, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved the  
24 application for Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy.  
25 The charter is approved to serve students in grades

1 K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 1200.  
2 Representatives of Northwest Arkansas Classical  
3 Academy are appearing before the Charter Authorizing  
4 Panel to request an amendment to the current charter.  
5 Speaking on behalf of the Classical Academy we have  
6 Superintendent Steve Gast.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Will all  
8 representatives of the charter and anyone speaking in  
9 opposition please stand to receive the oath? Okay.  
10 If you'll raise your right hand -- do you swear or  
11 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall  
12 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
13 truth?

14 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

15 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.  
16 Mr. Gast, if you'll state your name and position  
17 for the record, you are recognized.

18 SUPT. GAST: Good morning. My name is Steve  
19 Gast, superintendent for Responsive Education/  
20 Arkansas. I brought along with me several of our  
21 staff members and have included the campus director  
22 for our Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy in the  
23 event that there are any questions that you want some  
24 more detailed answers to.

25 Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, as you

1 remember, was brought before you in December for  
2 renewal and it was awarded a 10-year renewal. And  
3 what I've done, for the benefit of current board  
4 members, as well as board members that were not there  
5 during the renewal and board members who are back on  
6 the panel, is prepared a very short review of  
7 Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, so that you  
8 have a better understanding of that campus. And then  
9 just a little bit of information about the  
10 combination, you know, of those schools.

11 Our amendment request for Northwest Classical  
12 Academy -- or, excuse me -- for the classical academy  
13 is a request that Quest Academy of West Little Rock,  
14 the charter, be placed under the LEA number of  
15 Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy at the start of  
16 the 2010-2020 school year. The current year, we're  
17 already covered under the current charter.

18 We request an enrollment increase from 1200 to  
19 1500 students to accommodate the addition and future  
20 expansion of the Northwest Arkansas Classical  
21 Academy, as well as the West Little Rock campus.

22 Looking at our organization in Arkansas, we have  
23 ResponsivEd/Arkansas. And what we're looking to do  
24 is to continue to build the future in Arkansas, by  
25 having two distinct brands actually represented in

1 the state. One is the Premier high school brand. We  
2 have a campus in Little Rock; we also were approved  
3 at the last meeting for a new campus in North Little  
4 Rock -- and all future Premiers would fall under  
5 obviously that section of our organization. The  
6 second side would be our Classical education side,  
7 which is Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, which  
8 is located in Bentonville, and then we would have a  
9 campus in West Little Rock -- and then, of course,  
10 future campuses under the classical brand. So they  
11 would all -- we basically have two distinct sets of  
12 curriculum taking place in the state.

13 The Premier is a credit recovery, a credit -- or  
14 a dropout recovery kind of school, geared  
15 specifically for an underserved population of kids  
16 that have specifically dropped out in communities.  
17 The Classical model is a college preparatory with  
18 extreme emphasis on certain areas that we'll look at  
19 here in just a second.

20 Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy provides  
21 the most time-tested method of educating students.  
22 It's committed to providing our future leaders with a  
23 college preparatory education focused on classical  
24 liberal arts. The Classical academy will promise a  
25 rigorous academic program fostering intellectual

1 curiosity, critical thinking, virtuous character  
2 building, and a lifelong passion for learning.  
3 Students of all ages will be required to study  
4 different foreign languages in order to better  
5 understand the English language and to best prepare  
6 them for the modern language study. Informal Latin  
7 instruction begins in the 3rd grade and continues  
8 through 6th grade, with our English From the Roots Up  
9 program. Formal Latin instruction begins in the 7th  
10 grade, and Latin 1 also is offered in high school.

11 Now some of these slides you should remember;  
12 they're the exact -- similar slides that we went  
13 through as we gave you a very detailed explanation of  
14 what the academy looks like.

15 The mission of Northwest Arkansas Classical  
16 Academy is to provide young people with a rigorous  
17 classical education in liberal arts and science that  
18 cultivates intellectual excellence, wisdom, and  
19 virtue.

20 A demographic slide gives you a current look at  
21 not only West Little Rock's enrollment, but also the  
22 enrollment at Northwest Arkansas. We broke it down  
23 into male and female; then we looked at the programs.  
24 As you can see, in the Title 1 program we have 10%,  
25 up in our classical academy; West Little Rock right



1 now is at 22%; ELA -- or ELL, 13% and 1%; special  
2 education, 6% and 25% in West Little Rock; students  
3 serviced by 504, that number actually for Northwest  
4 Arkansas Classical Academy is 4%, and in West Little  
5 Rock it's at 7%. If you combine the two of those  
6 numbers together, you basically -- actually, based on  
7 percentages in math, you can't just combine them and  
8 divide by two. But if you look at those percentages,  
9 when you add the two campuses together as one  
10 particular district you find that those numbers fall  
11 much closer in line with what a school should have as  
12 far as their percentages are concerned. The Quest/  
13 West Little Rock campus right now services -- about  
14 35% of that population is either special education or  
15 in a 504 or special needs program.

16 The classical education provides well-rounded  
17 education that is distinctly classical, pursuing  
18 knowledge, promotes virtue, and prepares students for  
19 prosperous lives in a free society. Classical  
20 education has been around a long time, over 2,000  
21 years, and is based on the teachings of the greats in  
22 philosophy: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle.

23 We're committed to providing our future leaders  
24 with a college preparatory education focused on  
25 classical liberal arts. Northwest Arkansas Classical

1 Academy promotes a rigorous academic program  
2 fostering intellectual curiosity, critical thinking,  
3 virtuous character building, and a lifelong passion  
4 for learning.

5 This slide was actually quite a bit longer.  
6 We'd started listing the awards and the recognitions  
7 that Northwest Classical Academy had, and we decided  
8 we would take some of them off and just kind of give  
9 you a basic -- I'm not going to go through and read  
10 all of these. But as you well know, in your renewal,  
11 when you granted the 10-years, it's one of the top  
12 performing campuses in all of Arkansas. In 2016-17,  
13 it was -- the high school and the lower school were  
14 both given grades of A. The 17-18 ratings that came  
15 out -- that have come out also have that school both  
16 as an A in high school and an A at the elementary  
17 school.

18 Our goal in West Little Rock is, as I have said  
19 in the application, is to secure land and put up a  
20 building that looks either exactly like or very  
21 similar to this. This was the most recent classical  
22 academy that we built, in Frisco, Texas, and it is  
23 the model that we would use for our upper school and  
24 our lower school. I included in the amendment  
25 request, not only a picture of the building but we

1 also included a floor plan so that you'd have a  
2 better indication of what that would look like. We  
3 are also in the process of -- very interested in  
4 looking for land up in Bentonville, and also building  
5 a K-12 campus as well. Right now, they have a very  
6 nice building but it's not built as a school; it's a  
7 building that's been retrofitted. And we want to  
8 make sure that those students are not only rewarded  
9 for their performance, but also that they have a  
10 really nice building to go to as well. So I wanted  
11 to include this particular slide because it is the  
12 blueprint that we are using as we look for the land  
13 that we need to be able to put the size building that  
14 we want to put in.

15 The whole purpose of the amendment really is to  
16 take a giant step forward in West Little Rock and to  
17 replicate the success that we currently have. To do  
18 that, we would look at growing and adding grades K-5.  
19 The charter is for a K-12 school for the Classical  
20 Academy campus in 2021-22. The reason we're a few  
21 years down the road on that is, obviously, building  
22 takes some time. We're committed for two more -- for  
23 this school year plus another two years in the  
24 current building that we're in. That building is not  
25 equipped size-wise, nor really structure-wise, to

1 incorporate a K-5 group. We would want to mix those  
2 kids with older kids, and it's all one building right  
3 now. So it would be a phased-in gradual process that  
4 we would start with that school in the coming years.  
5 So basically those elementary school kids that would  
6 start would start in the new building; that's when  
7 they would enter the building and we would begin the  
8 process of the classical education at the lower  
9 grades. We'd create an upper school, which is grades  
10 7-12, and a lower school, grades K-6, in West Little  
11 Rock, beginning in the 21-22 school year. We look at  
12 a maximum of three sections, in grades K-4. The only  
13 way that that could move to four sections is  
14 depending on the demand. Right now, we -- as you  
15 know, we had a waiting list -- still do -- up in  
16 northwest Arkansas. And we expanded our lower grades  
17 to three sections in each and we still -- right now,  
18 it's a size issue that's causing us to not be able to  
19 fulfill the entire waitlist that we have for people  
20 that are still wanting to get into that particular  
21 campus. We have absolutely no doubt that we would  
22 end up with that same type of demand and that same  
23 type of interest in a campus in West Little Rock.

24 To summarize, we're requesting that West Little  
25 Rock be placed under the same LEA number as Northwest

1 Arkansas Classical Academy. And we're requesting to  
2 expand the enrollment from 1200 to 1500 students,  
3 just to accommodate the increase that could extend or  
4 could happen over the next 10 years within that  
5 campus.

6 And that concludes what I have as far as a  
7 presentation is concerned. We'll now address any  
8 questions you might have.

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Dr. Boyd or Ms. Hyatt, is  
10 there anyone speaking in opposition?

11 DR. BOYD: No opposition.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay, no opposition.

13 You do have some time left, if you want to do  
14 any closing remarks -- or otherwise, we'll go ahead  
15 and proceed.

16 SUPT. GAST: No. I just -- as you know, I'm  
17 extremely excited about what the future brings. I'm  
18 just finishing up my second year as superintendent  
19 here in Arkansas, and I truly believe that we're not  
20 only heading in the right direction but that there's  
21 really, really good things on the horizon for our  
22 kids here in Arkansas. And I appreciate the  
23 opportunity to speak in front of you.

24 And I know that Mr. Wilson has had the  
25 opportunity to visit that campus, and I would

1 encourage all of you -- in fact, I've already invited  
2 one of you -- to come join us at either one of our  
3 premier or our classical academies, to just actually  
4 see the quality and the type of education that's  
5 taking place there.

6 So, just appreciate your time.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Thank you.

8 Okay. Before we start with panel questions, I  
9 was going to see if there were any questions -- and  
10 since it had a little more in your amendment request  
11 -- were there any questions by the ADE staff as you  
12 looked at -- that we need to call attention to before  
13 we get into our questions?

14 DR. BOYD: I just want to clarify that the  
15 single LEA is the district level LEA and not -- so  
16 there would be a single level district LEA and then  
17 an LEA per school building.

18 MR. GAST: Correct.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

20 MS. NEWTON: That's what I don't understand.  
21 What's the benefit or the disadvantage of creating a  
22 new one, as opposed to putting the two together?

23 DR. BOYD: So I believe that is the request, is  
24 to -- currently, Quest/West Little Rock and Northwest  
25 Arkansas Classical Academy have two separate district

1 LEAs.

2 MS. NEWTON: Uh-huh.

3 DR. BOYD: And they would like to put them all  
4 under a single district LEA, under the Northwest  
5 Arkansas Classical Academy district LEA, and  
6 replicate that programming for elementary.

7 MS. NEWTON: So the LEA specifies the goals and  
8 objectives of the school and they're so aligned that  
9 they want to have both of those together; is that --

10 DR. BOYD: That's correct. So the LEA itself is  
11 part of the charter contract, and the charter  
12 contract specifies programming.

13 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Were there any  
14 questions or anything from our staff?

15 DR. BOYD: (shaking head from side to side.)

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Hyatt, did you  
17 have anything you wanted to --

18 MS. HYATT: I just had kind of one point of  
19 clarification in terms of the amendment request. So  
20 I spoke with Carmen Jordan from the Department of  
21 Education about the LEA number. And the way that the  
22 amendment request is worded, it asks that they be  
23 combined under the current LEA number of Northwest  
24 Classical. So through the process of doing that, I  
25 think there is a chance that the LEA number for the

1 district might change. So in the wording it may not  
2 actually be the LEA number that's currently assigned  
3 to Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy. So I just  
4 wanted to note that. Because the way that's worded  
5 in the amendment request asks for it to be the same  
6 number, but that might not be possible because we  
7 have to go through the -- getting the number changed  
8 through a process through the Department. So --

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. But that basically  
10 is kind of a technical issue then that the Department  
11 would just have to work out and insure that whatever  
12 number designation was tied to anything from past or  
13 future, that would need to be recorded. Is that  
14 correct?

15 MS. HYATT: Yes, ma'am.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

17 SUPT. GAST: And we have been talking with the  
18 Department. I met with Dr. Boyd and Ms. Perry  
19 probably a year, year-and-a-half ago to start the  
20 discussion about doing this exact same thing. And so  
21 it's not something that we've just decided we're  
22 going to do; we've been kind of preparing and leading  
23 up to it, you know, to this point.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Okay. Well, we'll  
25 go to panel members and see if they have any



1 questions. I'll start on this end with Mr. Rogers.  
2 Questions?

3 MR. ROGERS: (Shaking head from side to side.)

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Dr. Kremers?

5 DR. KREMERS: No.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No. Dr. Hernandez?

7 DR. HERNANDEZ: So the plan is to -- at the end  
8 of this year Quest will no longer be in existence.  
9 Is that correct?

10 SUPT. GAST: That is correct. The name would no  
11 longer be in existence.

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: And so it would be a 6-8  
13 classical academy?

14 SUPT. GAST: It would be a 6-12, still, campus,  
15 just like it is now; however, we would start  
16 incorporating some classical components. But at the  
17 same time we want to protect the current families  
18 that are at that school, that have the specific  
19 program that they've got going. And so our plan is  
20 not to just do a wholesale change curriculum-wise in  
21 the high school or 6-8. That is a gradual type thing  
22 that will take place, and it will be very emphasized  
23 when we open the K-5 part of it, and then as they  
24 move up. Our plan is to never just have classical  
25 education be the sole thing provided at that high

1 school. We believe that there are other tracks and  
2 other things that benefit the students, even within a  
3 classical education. And so we plan on keeping those  
4 and having those remain and not to completely change  
5 things over. And, again, that has a lot to do with  
6 the promise that we've made to our current parents  
7 that are there, as well as gradually phasing that  
8 program in, so that we can pretty much guarantee our  
9 most success.

10 DR. HERNANDEZ: So I may have a question for Dr.  
11 Boyd. So this is -- this seems -- it's different,  
12 but it's very similar. So it's similar to KIPP in  
13 that they've always requested -- through the  
14 amendment process they've asked for licenses to open  
15 other campuses around the state. But it's different  
16 in that this is taking place of a current --

17 DR. BOYD: Uh-huh.

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: -- charter school. So are they  
19 -- is everything -- I guess I'd expect to see  
20 something in the amendment request, like specifically  
21 where they're going to house it, all those types of  
22 things. But if they're going to be in the same  
23 place, is that the same building, same staff,  
24 everything is basically staying the same?

25 SUPT. GAST: It's the same building for a couple

1 of years, because we have to have time to build a new  
2 building, and then we're totally out of that location  
3 and we're in our own new building. And that building  
4 -- the areas that we're looking at are within  
5 probably a mile-and-a-half to three miles of the  
6 current location. So the location physically  
7 changes, but we're going to stay in the same general  
8 area.

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: So when those -- when that  
10 building change happens, or all those things, they'll  
11 come back to us to say "we're asking for an amendment  
12 to move the location" and all --

13 DR. BOYD: Right. So, just a couple of  
14 clarifying things. So this has happened before. So,  
15 for example, eStem used to be three separate charters  
16 and then they became one; Lisa used to be two  
17 separate charters and now they've become one. So  
18 that's been done before. Then, also, depending on  
19 where the new building is, at the very least they'll  
20 have to ask the Commissioner for a debt request  
21 approval to occupy that building, more than likely,  
22 and the lease will have to be approved by the  
23 Commissioner's office too, at the very least. That's  
24 if, say, for instance -- I know the building that  
25 they're in, there's space around that building. So

1 if they were to build a building right next door and  
2 it's not necessarily a new address, then at the very  
3 least they would have to seek approval through the  
4 Commissioner's office for debt request in the lease  
5 contract.

6 At the most, if it's another physical address,  
7 then they would have to come forward with an  
8 amendment request at that time to occupy that space.

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton?

10 MS. NEWTON: No.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Mr. Wilson?

12 MR. WILSON: I didn't really have a question. I  
13 did -- I do think I ought to tell the Panel that I  
14 was thoroughly impressed with the classical academy  
15 operation that I visited last year. It's a first  
16 class school, the kids are doing great, as evidenced  
17 by their A rating. And I'm glad that you all are  
18 proposing to expand this operation here in Little  
19 Rock.

20 SUPT. GAST: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. I do have a  
22 question. I'm looking at your goals that you have on  
23 -- I don't think the pages are numbered. But just --  
24 I just want to clarify where you've got goals to  
25 demonstrate measurable success, student success in

1 literacy, then you have a math -- and you're talking  
2 about meet or exceed state average in overall  
3 literacy. I'm just kind of looking across here in  
4 terms of how you're going to be measuring success,  
5 because this is what we want to look at.

6 SUPT. GAST: Sure.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And when you come back be  
8 able to look back and say were you meeting those  
9 goals, are you -- when you talk about overall  
10 literacy, are you talking about like grades 3-10  
11 combined or will you be looking each year at each  
12 grade level to determine where your students are and  
13 using that as part of your success? I mean,  
14 obviously, the ESSA School Index is out there, which  
15 will show it by school, but then you also obviously  
16 want to drill down to individual grade levels. So I  
17 guess I just want to kind of understand, with your  
18 goals are you going to lump it all together in one  
19 overall or are you looking at it per grade?

20 SUPT. GAST: I think a successful school always  
21 looks at it by grade and pulls down the individual  
22 scores and the individual programs that are happening  
23 in that particular grade level to help make  
24 determinations for the future as to what they need to  
25 do to be successful in those grades. I think that

1 obviously there's a certain way that the scores are  
2 reported out by the state and we want to make sure  
3 that we mirror that. But at the same time, I think  
4 we're always -- and I know that we're always looking  
5 at the individual performance of a grade level to  
6 make the determination as far as what we're doing,  
7 what's being successful, you know, what's not  
8 successful. In fact, we just had a -- yesterday, we  
9 had a leadership meeting, a district-wide leadership  
10 meeting with all the campus directors, and one of the  
11 initiatives was to not only -- to break down your  
12 data -- when you break down your data, break down it  
13 by, you know, looking at the grade levels. And then  
14 I want a plan showing what was successful and what  
15 worked, what your expectations are for next school  
16 year, and how you're going to reach those  
17 expectations in each one of the particular levels.  
18 And also I might include not just in the levels that  
19 are reported out by the state -- we do that in every  
20 single grade with our MAP testing and with our other  
21 things to take a look at that and have a plan in  
22 place. Because the grades in-between the testing  
23 grades are every bit as important to get them lined  
24 up and ready to go for those testing grades.

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

1           SUPT. GAST: So it may be reported out one way.  
2           But I guarantee you that we specifically look at the  
3           grade levels and the programs and what we're doing in  
4           those grade levels to maximize the success for those  
5           kids.

6           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So when you're coming back  
7           at any point to talk to us about whether or not  
8           you're meeting your achievement goals, you'll be  
9           reporting it out to us, at the very least, by school  
10          level and not --

11          SUPT. GAST: That's correct. And we would drill  
12          down, if you would prefer, to a specific, you know,  
13          structured class size -- or, excuse me -- a grade  
14          level or whatever you might have. Yes, because -- we  
15          would be prepared to do that.

16          CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And Dr. Hernandez  
17          mentioned this and you were speaking of it as far as  
18          your current students. What is -- what are their  
19          reactions to the change in the school structure? Do  
20          you have most of them who will go ahead and continue  
21          with you or --

22          SUPT. GAST: Yeah, because nothing is really  
23          changing that much for that current high school. The  
24          current group that's there, that program is a program  
25          that is still going to be available as we move over

1           towards the classical model. So the only real impact  
2           or negative responses that we've got is what's a  
3           typical response you'd get from a parent when they  
4           realize that their school district is about to build  
5           a new building, is, "Dagnabbit, my kid is a junior;"  
6           you know, they're not going to walk into the new  
7           building. And so, you know, we have been talking  
8           with that group of parents and with that school for a  
9           number of years about a building, and I think that  
10          there's a lot of excitement because we are now taking  
11          those steps necessary to get there. And so there  
12          hasn't been a lot of pushback because of the program,  
13          because we have 100% reassured and guaranteed that  
14          we're not changing anything for the current students  
15          that are there because it's -- now we may offer some  
16          other things that they might take advantage of, but  
17          not at the expense of the current program that they  
18          believe that they signed up for.

19                 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And so, then as you  
20                 expand into those elementary grades what are some  
21                 things that -- I'm thinking about challenges with  
22                 staffing. As you start expanding in those grades in  
23                 terms of -- are there specialized trainings? Are  
24                 there specialized qualifications to operate a  
25                 classical academy model that are different from, you



1 know, what you do? And I realize right now you don't  
2 have those elementary grades. But what are going to  
3 be those considerations you've thought through?

4 SUPT. GAST: Yeah. Without question, there are  
5 certain characteristics and certain techniques  
6 teaching-wise that we're going to want to make sure  
7 that those teachers have to be able to prepare -- to  
8 actually deliver the classical curriculum. We have a  
9 huge advantage in going to this structure in that we  
10 have the Bentonville school. And I look at that as a  
11 school that could not only bring potential leaders,  
12 but individuals that -- teachers that would want to  
13 come down and lead the program to, you know, start  
14 working it. We have not only the staff development  
15 component up in Bentonville, but we also have some of  
16 our classical academies that are very successful in  
17 Texas that we can send our staff to -- or we can  
18 bring staff members from our other classical schools,  
19 you know, to train them. Our goal would be so that  
20 when those elementary kids open the doors the  
21 teachers that they have in front of them know exactly  
22 what they're doing, are trained, have been through  
23 all the trainings. And the good news is we have the  
24 infrastructure already in place to be able to provide  
25 that training for them so that we're not just opening

1           what -- you know, we're not calling it a classical  
2           building, but that there's classical education not  
3           actually taking place. Those teachers will be  
4           trained and we actually have the in-house capability,  
5           for the most part, to do that. And we have the  
6           experience of bringing other people in to deal with  
7           the curriculum, based on past experience and  
8           trainings.

9           CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

10          Remaining questions?

11          Dr. Kremers.

12          DR. KREMERS: I'm just curious, from a parent  
13          perspective, let's say I have a child that's in the  
14          existing program and then I have a younger child then  
15          that would start in the new -- at the elementary  
16          level, let's say. What would that experience look  
17          like for that parent observing the differences  
18          between the two and for the students themselves?  
19          What are the major differences that will occur  
20          between those for that same family --

21          SUPT. GAST: Sure.

22          DR. KREMERS: -- the experience that would be  
23          different?

24          SUPT. GAST: Well, obviously, the first is that  
25          because we don't have an elementary school that they

1 would compare it to -- you know, they would be coming  
2 into a totally new experience. I think they would --  
3 one of the things that they would find is they would  
4 find that the elementary level, compared to the  
5 school that they may have come from, whether it was a  
6 -- let's say they had a child who's in 1st grade in a  
7 charter school or in the local public school  
8 district; when they come into this particular school  
9 they're going to find a very strong emphasis on  
10 phonics training, a very prescriptive type of program  
11 that we know is successful to help those kids,  
12 emphasis -- strong emphasis on writing, strong  
13 emphasis on reading, strong emphasis on different  
14 virtues. And it just -- the instructional delivery,  
15 the type and the quality of the curriculum, as well  
16 as the core components of the things that we provide  
17 at the early years for those students are what help  
18 guarantee success later on. Probably one of those  
19 parents, what they would say is, "I wish my junior  
20 would've had the opportunity to go through this" or  
21 "I wish my sophomore would've had the opportunity,"  
22 because it provides such a strong base for these  
23 students. And that's why you see the writing,  
24 reading, and math scores off the charts as far as  
25 that other campus is concerned. So I think that

1 they're going to see a difference, but it's going to  
2 be a real positive one. It's going to be one of  
3 those "doggone, I wish we would've had that here  
4 sooner."

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Remaining  
6 questions?

7 Okay. Mr. Rogers.

8 MR. ROGERS: I actually had a question for Dr.  
9 Boyd concerning funding, of how this would be looked  
10 at at the Charter Unit.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

12 MR. ROGERS: Because the law now -- the law says  
13 if you add a campus, add a grade or anything to a  
14 charter you're current year funded. So I was just  
15 wondering how -- are we going to look at this as  
16 there's not a change and they'll still be on prior  
17 year or will both campuses be current year funded  
18 next year?

19 DR. BOYD: So from my understanding, the law  
20 doesn't get into specifying like LEA numbers and  
21 things of that nature. So they would be considered  
22 -- the campus would be existing, and right now both  
23 campuses are on prior year funding. So until they  
24 build a new building and start adding an actual  
25 campus then they will be on prior year funding. And

1 then the year that they open that new campus they'll  
2 switch to current year funding.

3 MR. ROGERS: Just something to keep in mind when  
4 you do open that building --

5 SUPT. GAST: Right.

6 MR. ROGERS: -- because that can get tricky when  
7 you go to current year funding. That's why I just  
8 wondered.

9 SUPT. GAST: I knew you couldn't get away  
10 without asking one finance question.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Anything remaining?

12 Okay. Dr. Hernandez.

13 DR. HERNANDEZ: So the charter that we're -- or  
14 the amendment that we're approving will be -- Quest  
15 was a 5-12. We're approving a K-12. Is that  
16 correct? I know it's not going to be a K-12 starting  
17 next year, but that's what we're --

18 DR. BOYD: Right. So you're approving the  
19 combination of the LEA is at the district level; you  
20 would be approving them to increase their enrollment  
21 cap; and you'd be approving for them to add the new  
22 campus to phase in in coming years.

23 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

24 DR. BOYD: And just one other thing I want to  
25 make sure that you understand -- I should've said

1 this at the beginning -- is that if the Northwest  
2 Arkansas Classical Academy charter absorbs Quest  
3 Academy, then that means that Quest Academy will be  
4 under the contract of Northwest Arkansas Classical  
5 Academy, which means they'll be under that same  
6 contract time. And, remember, Northwest Arkansas  
7 Classical Academy was just approved for a 10-year  
8 renewal, so they'll be on that same contract phase --  
9 which means if you approve it today and the State  
10 Board chooses not to review it, then in December  
11 you're not going to see a renewal request for Quest  
12 Academy. So I just wanted to clarify that.

13 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Remaining  
14 questions?

15 No? All right. So if there is nothing  
16 remaining, at this time I will accept a motion for  
17 this amendment request.

18 MR. WILSON: Move the approval of the waiver --  
19 or amendment request.

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. I have a motion to  
21 approve the amendment request.

22 MS. NEWTON: Second.

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And a second.

24 Any discussion?

25 All those in favor say "aye."

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(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Any opposed?

Okay. The motion passes.

SUPT. GAST: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Thank you very much. And we are going to record our responses and give you the feedback. Thank you.

[A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE]

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We'll start with Mr. Wilson.

MR. WILSON: I voted for the motion. I'm impressed with the presentation and the thoroughness of it, as well as the proven track record of the applicant in northwest and Little Rock.

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Newton.

MS. NEWTON: I voted for the amendment approval. And the reason is the plans are comprehensive and well thought-out and directed toward achieving continued success.

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Hernandez.

DR. HERNANDEZ: I voted for the motion. The applicant is seeking to replicate a model that has been proven successful in the state and have a plan to phase in the changes to the current school.

CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Dr. Kremers.

1 DR. KREMERS: I voted for the motion. They've  
2 been communicating with ADE regarding their long-term  
3 plans and improvement of earlier iterations of their  
4 charter. At the present time it doesn't appear that  
5 any significant negative consequence would occur from  
6 the changes in their curriculum format.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Mr. Rogers.

8 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it. I don't have any  
9 concerns right now. And I hope they're able to  
10 replicate the success of the northwest classical  
11 model.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. Thank  
13 you very much.

14 SUPT. GAST: Thank you very much. We appreciate  
15 it.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We appreciate your  
17 time today.

18 A-5: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOL: HOPE  
19 COLLEGIATE AND PROFESSIONS ACADEMY

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And we are ready to go  
21 ahead and continue on with the next item on our  
22 agenda, which is Item 5. We'll give everyone a few  
23 minutes to transition.

24 Okay. So Item 5 on our agenda is the Request  
25 for District Conversion Charter School application



1 for the Hope Collegiate and Professions Academy.

2 And, Ms. McLaughlin, I'm going to let you kick this  
3 off for us.

4 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Okay. Kelly McLaughlin,  
5 Charter School Office. Hope Collegiate and  
6 Professions Academy is a proposed district conversion  
7 public charter school in the Hope School District.  
8 The applicant is requesting to serve students in  
9 grades 10-12, with a maximum enrollment of 150. ADE  
10 staff reviewed the application and concerns were  
11 shared with the applicant for response. The  
12 application, the ADE evaluation, and the applicant's  
13 response are included for review by the Charter  
14 Authorizing Panel.

15 Superintendent Bobby Hart and Mikki Curtis will  
16 begin the presentation. But Representative Danny  
17 Watson is here to speak on behalf of Hope Collegiate  
18 and Professions Academy. If you will permit, I do  
19 have an updated 10th Grade Sample Schedule to pass  
20 out to you.

21 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. If you want to go  
22 ahead and give that to me, we'll pass that out. And  
23 we'll go ahead and invite Representative Watson to  
24 come forward and --

25 (WHEREUPON, A-5 Exhibit One (1), the 10th Grade

1 Sample Student Schedule, was marked for  
2 identification and entered into evidence.)

3 Good morning, Representative.

4 REP. WATSON: Good morning.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We appreciate having you  
6 here with us.

7 REP. WATSON: Good morning, Board.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And you may go ahead and  
9 speak to us about this.

10 REP. WATSON: My pleasure to be here. It's easy  
11 to -- by the way, I'm Representative Danny Watson. I  
12 cover Hempstead and Nevada County. I'm proud to have  
13 UA-HT and the Hope School District in my house  
14 district. I can grant you this: this will be the  
15 quickest one up here today giving testimony.

16 I've got a note here. I just want to make sure  
17 that I'm politically correct as far as the  
18 terminology, the name.

19 In reference to the request for district  
20 conversion charter school for the Hope Collegiate and  
21 Professions Academy, just to let everybody know that  
22 I have looked at this long and hard and this is an  
23 easy decision for me. My goodness, the positives are  
24 just numerous. The enthusiasm that I have been  
25 seeing for awhile, the positive talk -- not only in

1 Hempstead County but also in the Hope School District  
2 -- is unbelievable.

3 By the way, I have more than a decade -- I  
4 served on the Hope School Board. All of my in-laws  
5 are educators or retired educators. My late father-  
6 in-law was a past-superintendent of Hope School  
7 District before I became on the scene -- came on the  
8 scene, living in the state of Louisiana. But this is  
9 a humongous stake, I believe, in a start of breaking  
10 the cycle -- the cycle that I have seen -- even when  
11 I was on the school board, as referenced -- of  
12 apathy, "I can't do this," "why should I further my  
13 education." Some choices made to just go ahead and  
14 drop out of school and go right on to work, that is  
15 something naturally -- and I'm preaching to the choir  
16 -- that we are working so hard in the legislature  
17 right now. I just came out of a budget hearing a  
18 while ago -- I'm not privy to give that information,  
19 but in reference to funding on an entity, and I am  
20 all for that.

21 I'm just totally, totally, honestly enthused  
22 about what has transpired thus far on the UA-HT  
23 campus. I can't give Chris Thomason -- Chancellor  
24 Thomason, Superintendent Bobby Hart, Ms. Curtis -- I  
25 know I'm going to leave out names -- Ms. Duke, Brian

1 Berry -- this is not a fly-by-night knee-jerk thought  
2 that they did in the back room, I grant you that.

3 But, again, I just want to say -- I'm fixing to  
4 have to leave out of here in a minute, if there's no  
5 questions -- but I hope that you will be favorable on  
6 the granting of this conversion charter, through the  
7 collaboration of the Hope School District and the  
8 University of Arkansas at Hope and Texarkana. I'll  
9 close there.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Thank you very much.

11 Panel, do you have any questions for the  
12 Representative?

13 Okay. We certainly appreciate your time. And  
14 you're welcome to stay with us as long as you can,  
15 but we also understand if you need to leave. So  
16 thank you for being here.

17 REP. WATSON: I'd better get on. Thank y'all  
18 though. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. Thank you very  
20 much.

21 So at this time if we can have everyone who  
22 would be speaking, either in support or opposition of  
23 this -- if you will raise your right hand. Do you  
24 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to  
25 give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

1 the truth?

2 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So we'll go ahead  
4 and begin. And, Mr. Hart, are you starting the  
5 presentation?

6 SUPT. HART: I believe I am.

7 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

8 SUPT. HART: Or Ms. Curtis and I together are.  
9 I'm not certain.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

11 SUPT. HART: It's not up and running yet.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: All right. We'll get that  
13 --

14 TECHNOLOGY PERSON: When you stand out from the  
15 mic like that, it's not picking you up.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Yes. They need you  
17 to be in the microphone.

18 Okay. And so do we have their presentation?

19 TECHNOLOGY PERSON: (inaudible)

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Hang on. Let's  
21 see. Yeah.

22 [A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE]

23 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Are we able to pull it  
24 from the agenda?

25 TECHNOLOGY PERSON: (inaudible)

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We're getting it. It's --  
2 do you want to go ahead and start, and then we loop  
3 it in? We have --

4 SUPT. HART: Whatever is the pleasure of the  
5 Board.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Well, if you're not able  
7 to see it, it may be difficult for you to present, so  
8 -- I think we're getting it emailed. We just have to  
9 get it emailed and uploaded. So if y'all are --

10 SUPT. HART: I just don't want to stand between  
11 you-all and lunch.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: We're going to be all  
13 right. And we can be -- I think most of us are  
14 probably just kind of glancing -- kind of going back  
15 through it right now to familiarize.

16 Okay. There we go.

17 SUPT. HART: I want to thank you for spending  
18 the time reviewing our application and for your  
19 patience this morning. I know you-all have an  
20 arduous task always for these things, so I appreciate  
21 your energy and your patience. And I appreciate the  
22 kind words that Representative Watson said on his way  
23 out. We are very appreciative of the work he's done,  
24 as a board member and as a state legislator.

25 We think we have developed a plan that is not

1           only innovative but is in the best interest of kids  
2           in our community. If you'll look at this first  
3           slide, you'll see that less than -- or that 12% --  
4           this is by 2010 census data -- 12% of the students --  
5           or not the students -- the citizens of Hempstead  
6           County hold a bachelor's degree or higher. 27% of  
7           our students of our county lives at or below the  
8           poverty line, and the average household income is  
9           \$32,000. 54% of the students in our district are  
10          directly certified for free and reduced lunch. Now  
11          that doesn't -- that means that -- 54% are directly  
12          certified, that means they're either on food stamps,  
13          they're in foster care, or they're classified as  
14          homeless. When you run the figures as a district,  
15          we're 84.6% -- almost 85% free and reduced lunch in  
16          our district. 73% of the students in Hope High  
17          School are from low income -- are low income  
18          students. With that, we know the challenges that  
19          come with educating students of poverty. We face  
20          that daily in our school system, grades K-12. We  
21          also know that in order to break that cycle of  
22          poverty we've got to find a way to get more kids with  
23          more education and with college degrees. We're not  
24          going to break that cycle by doing the same thing  
25          we've been doing.

1           So we've put together what we feel like is an  
2           innovative plan and a program that will allow  
3           students that desire and are qualified and can  
4           progress an opportunity to leave Hope High School  
5           with an associates degree from the University of  
6           Arkansas at Hope-Texarkana and their high school  
7           diploma. There are numerous -- you say, "Well, there  
8           are other schools that are doing that." Yes, there  
9           are. You know, I can think of some in central  
10          Arkansas, Greenbrier being one that has a similar  
11          program. And that's good for them because -- I'm  
12          proud for them, but 85% of their student population  
13          doesn't live in poverty. And so they're getting an  
14          opportunity well ahead of time. They're coming to  
15          school on grade level; they're coming to school ready  
16          to go. So anyway, we want to try to make sure that  
17          we give kids an opportunity to graduate with those  
18          two degrees, because we know -- and later in this  
19          slide it will show you that we know that if we can  
20          get kids 60 hours of college while they're in high  
21          school the greater likelihood of them finishing a  
22          four-year degree increases dramatically.

23                 So what we have -- who I have with us today is  
24                 the interim dean of the Collegiate and Professions  
25                 Academy, Ms. Mikki Curtis. And I'll let her speak to



1 the program. There are other team members, and she  
2 may introduce those folks as your questions arise or  
3 what-have-you. So, thank you for your time.

4 MS. CURTIS: Good morning. As Mr. Hart said, my  
5 name is Mikki Curtis and I'm employed with the  
6 University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana. And Mr. Hart  
7 pointed out the data of our Hempstead County data and  
8 our Hope Public School District data, and to kind of  
9 summarize what he said is this data tells us that  
10 there's a relationship between education and poverty.  
11 And as you can see, there's a lack of higher  
12 education in our area which ultimately leads to more  
13 poverty, and we would like to help to come up with a  
14 solution for this problem.

15 We believe the solution to our problem is that  
16 college completion combats poverty through total  
17 college immersion. The Collegiate Academy messaging  
18 emphasis is consistently towards college degree  
19 attainment. The Collegiate Academy cultivates the  
20 students and their families into the unique culture,  
21 customs, and language of higher education. It causes  
22 students to focus on their life goals and successful  
23 transition into a two-year degree. Finally, the  
24 Collegiate Academy faculty are geared towards first  
25 generation students, because two-thirds of UA-HT

1 students are first generation.

2 The mission statement is that at the Hope  
3 Collegiate and Professions Academy our mission is to  
4 provide academic and career pathways through a three-  
5 year curriculum, towards simultaneous degree  
6 attainment by focusing on college level degree  
7 achievement instead of college and career readiness.

8 Our vision is to see that every student receives  
9 a strong educational foundation to continue toward a  
10 postsecondary degree by meeting students'  
11 educational, personal, social, and career development  
12 needs.

13 And our motto is Learning Today, Leading  
14 Tomorrow.

15 Now we will move to some information about the  
16 Collegiate Academy.

17 It will provide academic and career pathways  
18 through a three-year curriculum. The students will  
19 be able to either get an Associates of Arts degree  
20 and/or a trade in the industry proficiency  
21 certificate. The students can complete the  
22 requirements for a high school diploma and an  
23 associate degree simultaneously. The Collegiate  
24 Academy will be for students in 10th through 12th  
25 grade. It is a joint venture between the Hope Public

1 School District and the University of Arkansas Hope-  
2 Texarkana. The Academy will be located on the  
3 University of Arkansas-Hope campus, specifically in  
4 the Rapert Library building, which is undergoing  
5 innovative changes to provide a unique learning  
6 environment for the students. And it is also a  
7 public school that is free of charge to the students.

8 So how do students get accepted into the  
9 Academy?

10 There are three tiers of acceptance for students  
11 to fall into. If a student is in Tier 1, they are  
12 fully qualified with an ACT 19 or equivalent  
13 ACCUPLACER score in reading, English and math. This  
14 means they are prepared to take any college course  
15 that the college campus offers. If a student is in  
16 Tier 2 or Tier 3, there are some deficiencies in  
17 writing and math for Tier 2 and in all categories in  
18 Tier 3. For these students, they are needing to get  
19 their scores to an ACT of 19 by the 11th grade to be  
20 able to take the college level courses or at least a  
21 17 or 18 so they can take the courses needed to  
22 continue with the college courses. And during the  
23 student's 10th grade year they will be provided with  
24 tutoring, study halls geared towards their  
25 deficiencies, and an ACT prep course.

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So what can students expect while in the Collegiate Academy?

They can expect a customized high school experience with the rigor of college. During the 10th grade the students will be taught their high school courses by college professors, with the rigor and expectations of a college course to help prepare them for college immersion in the 11th and 12 grade year. They can expect a transition to college in a flexible, supportive, and academically enriched environment. They can expect to earn a college degree while earning a high school diploma. They can expect an environment that helps students acclimate to college level standards, and engages school immersion into the collegiate environment. One of the things that students struggle with when they start college is understanding the expectations of college courses, because they are different than the expectations of high school courses, and they also struggle with the collegiate environment. With the Collegiate Academy starting in the 10th grade, the students start to understand the expectations of college faculty and are introduced to the college environment and how to be their own advocate. And they also learn about the different resources on the

1 college campus and how to use them.

2 Finally, the students will be able to  
3 participate in sports, band, or cheer at Hope High  
4 School while being a part of the Collegiate Academy.

5 Now we are going to look at a sample student  
6 schedule for a 10th grader, 11th grader, and 12th  
7 grader. The 10th grade schedule that was placed on  
8 the PowerPoint is actually a duplicate of the 11th  
9 grade schedule, which is a mistake. So I have made  
10 copies of the 10th grade schedule for you to take a  
11 look at.

12 Looking at the 10th grade schedule, you see that  
13 the students are taking the majority of high school  
14 courses with a few college level courses. Just a  
15 reminder, the courses will all be taught by college  
16 instructors with college level expectations. You  
17 will also see where cheer and band are first thing in  
18 the morning and athletics is the last class of the  
19 day. Transportation will be provided by the district  
20 for students, to and from the college and high  
21 school. You will see that the schedule is set up  
22 like a college schedule, with there being  
23 Monday/Wednesday/ Friday courses and Tuesday/Thursday  
24 courses, with different time lengths for each course.  
25 This is completely different than a traditional high

1 school, which is typically Monday through Friday  
2 courses that are 50 minutes in length, with a bell  
3 between each class. This schedule helps teach the  
4 students time management and the structure of a  
5 college. The students will also have an advisory  
6 period. During Tuesday's advisory for the 10th  
7 grade, we are looking at using it for career  
8 connections, which I plan on bringing in community  
9 members to talk to the students about different  
10 careers and the educational expectations for those  
11 careers. The 10th grade year is a great time for  
12 students to start career exploration. This is also a  
13 very important part to the Collegiate Academy because  
14 when the students graduate they will continue on, if  
15 they choose, as juniors at a four-year university --  
16 which those courses are major specific, so it is  
17 important that we help the students determine what  
18 they would like to major in while they are with us.  
19 On Thursdays the students will work on their student  
20 success plans and also be given time to just have a  
21 little break. As a college student, there are times  
22 in their schedules where they have a break between  
23 their courses, and this time-slot allows us to teach  
24 the students how to start using their time wisely.  
25 Because when they get to college they will have

1 breaks and they will not know how to use them -- and  
2 then sometimes it's just to give them a break because  
3 even like us as adults, we need those breaks too.  
4 There is also a place in the 10th grade schedule for  
5 electives, which will be used for students to make up  
6 college credits that 9th graders from the Hope  
7 Academy of Public Service have already taken, which  
8 include Intro to Computers, and Edge, which is a  
9 college lifestyles course. There is also a place for  
10 a study hall, which provides the students a time  
11 during the day to work on homework and assignments,  
12 which is very important since the majority of  
13 students in our community either are involved in  
14 extracurricular activities or have to work to help  
15 provide for their families.

16 The 11th grade schedule has some similarities  
17 with the 10th grade schedule, including activities,  
18 athletics, cheer and band, study hall, and advisory.  
19 During 11th grade, the majority of students' courses  
20 will be out on the college campus with at least one  
21 course being in the Rapert Library building. The  
22 students will be allowed to take elective courses  
23 that they are interested in to help them explore  
24 career options. This schedule, like the 10th grade  
25 schedule, is set up like a college schedule, with

1 class lengths being different and the classes being  
2 Monday/Wednesday/Friday and Tuesday/Thursday.

3 The 12th grade schedule also has the same  
4 similarities as the 10th and 11th grade schedule.  
5 The majority of their classes will also be out on the  
6 college campus, with at least one course being in the  
7 Rapert Library building. And they will also be  
8 allowed to take elective courses geared towards  
9 career options that they're interested in.

10 So now we will look at how cost effective the  
11 Collegiate Academy is.

12 When looking at the average per-year cost of an  
13 Arkansas four-year university being \$7,906 for the  
14 first two years, a student would pay close to  
15 \$16,000. When looking at the average per-year cost  
16 of an Arkansas two-year university being \$3,561, for  
17 the first two years a student would pay a little over  
18 \$7,000. For the first two years of college for a  
19 student who attends the Collegiate Academy, it is  
20 free. Also, the students who attend the Collegiate  
21 Academy, if they choose to attend a four-year  
22 university, will be able to pull from the Arkansas  
23 Academic Challenge scholarship as a junior, which is  
24 \$4,000 for the first year, and as a senior, which is  
25 \$5,000 for their second year. They will also



1 possibly be able to receive a transfer scholarship,  
2 which ranges from around \$2,500 to \$3,000 per  
3 semester. So a student who attends the Collegiate  
4 Academy can get their bachelor's degree possibly at  
5 little to no cost at all, which is huge for our  
6 students, especially when you look back at the data  
7 for our county on poverty level.

8 If a student does not choose to go to a four-  
9 year university, they will leave high school with an  
10 associate's degree and be able to enter the workforce  
11 with a degree and experience that gives them a  
12 competitive advantage. And as we all know, jobs also  
13 help combat poverty.

14 So how is the Collegiate Academy different?

15 First of all, students will not only have access  
16 to the district's resources but they will have access  
17 to the college resources, which include tutoring  
18 provided by instructors and other college students,  
19 student activities and clubs, career services,  
20 counseling and guidance, trio student support  
21 services, disability support services, safety and  
22 security, and financial aid services. One major way  
23 this College Academy is different than a traditional  
24 high school is that 10th grade year. The high school  
25 curriculum is taught by college instructors with

1 college level expectations and rigor. Students are  
2 taught responsibility and time management. Students  
3 are provided with a personalized schedule, including  
4 their career interests. Students will be allowed to  
5 take different elective courses geared towards their  
6 career interests. And students are also provided the  
7 support that is needed to help them improve their  
8 deficiencies and their ACT scores so they can  
9 continue taking the college level courses. We plan  
10 on doing this through the ACT prep course, the  
11 rigorous curriculum, and focused study halls towards  
12 the students' deficiencies. The 10th grade year is  
13 what we're going to consider kind of like that boot  
14 camp here, because it will prepare the students for  
15 college, including the expectations, the class  
16 schedule and times, time management, being their own  
17 advocate, and help them gain the skills that are  
18 necessary to be successful in college. There's also  
19 going to be a community service component included in  
20 the Collegiate Academy. There will be a capstone  
21 project during the 12th grade year. They will start  
22 a research course during the 11th grade year. The  
23 senior capstone project provides students an  
24 opportunity to select a topic of interest and to  
25 assume responsibility for their learning by

1 collecting, selecting, and reflecting on their  
2 educational experiences at the Collegiate Academy.  
3 It must be a project that benefits others, which  
4 means it needs to have a public service component.  
5 It will also include internship hours, which will  
6 involve utilizing the strong industry partners of the  
7 college. The capstone project, in summary, is like a  
8 mini dissertation where the students will pick a  
9 topic, perform research on that topic, and then  
10 present their project. The Collegiate Academy will  
11 also have a reading focus, which will include  
12 required readings. There will also be required  
13 readings during the 10th grade year in each of their  
14 high school courses. And, finally, the College  
15 Academy is different because of the full immersion on  
16 the college campus, which provides the students a  
17 college experience while in high school.

18 So how is it different than concurrent credit?

19 Looking at average total credits earned by Hope  
20 High School students prior to graduating high school,  
21 from 2015 to 2018, we see that the average amount of  
22 credits earned is 15.4, which is nowhere near the 60  
23 credit hours needed for an associate's degree. For  
24 students to have a chance to attain an associate's  
25 degree at the traditional high school they would have

1 to take a combination of online classes and night  
2 classes, which would be very difficult for our  
3 students because the majority of students do not have  
4 Wi-Fi access at home, they're involved in  
5 extracurricular activities and, as I said before,  
6 they even have to work to help provide for their  
7 families. So overall, concurrent credit is great for  
8 the high school enrichment but it is not for college  
9 completion, which is what we are wanting to do with  
10 the Collegiate Academy.

11 So here I have a chart really looking at the  
12 differences between concurrent credit or dual  
13 enrollment and early college high schools. Dual  
14 enrollment is done either at a high school, a college  
15 classroom, online, or a hybrid approach, but you will  
16 see that the early college high schools are either  
17 located on a college campus or a small standalone  
18 school. Dual enrollment is usually completed by 11th  
19 and 12th graders -- and sometimes it's allowed for  
20 10th graders, depending on that student. But with  
21 your early college high schools it starts in the 9th  
22 grade, and that's going to start in the HAPS school  
23 in the district with a few college credits during  
24 that time. Dual enrollment targets mid- to high-  
25 achieving students and, you know, your early college

1 high schools target students from backgrounds under-  
2 represented in higher education. And dual enrollment  
3 students select individual courses that potentially  
4 allow them to earn both high school and post-  
5 secondary credit, where early college high schools  
6 have a cohesive curriculum, integrating high school  
7 and college level coursework into a single program.  
8 The credit accumulation for dual enrollment varies,  
9 depending on the student and state policies, where  
10 early college high schools expect their students to  
11 complete an associate's degree or enough credits to  
12 enter a four-year institution as a junior. Dual  
13 enrollment students may take courses in core academic  
14 subjects or in career technical education, but in  
15 early college high schools post-secondary courses may  
16 be focused on a specific subject area.

17 And then, dual enrollment students may receive  
18 little to no guidance from the high school or post-  
19 secondary institution, but for early college high  
20 schools all students will receive guidance and  
21 support. The Collegiate Academy students will not  
22 only receive guidance from the high school counselor,  
23 but they will also receive guidance from the guidance  
24 counselors on the college campus.

25 So now to look at a little research that

1 supports early college students. Research shows that  
2 early college students are more likely to graduate  
3 from high school than comparison students, 86%  
4 compared to 81%. Research shows that early college  
5 students are more likely to enroll in college than  
6 comparison students by the end of high school, 64%  
7 compared to 24%, and by two years after high school,  
8 81% to 71%. Research shows that early college  
9 students are more likely than comparison students to  
10 enroll in two-year colleges, 61% to 40%, and were as  
11 likely to enroll in four-year colleges, 54% to 50%.  
12 And research also shows that early college students  
13 are more likely to earn a college degree than  
14 comparison students by the end of high school, 21% to  
15 1%, and by two years after high school, 24% to 2%.

16 So, overall, the research shows us that students  
17 who participate in early college programs are not  
18 only more likely to graduate high school but they are  
19 more likely to graduate college with a degree -- and  
20 the college completion is the piece that we are  
21 wanting to provide students the opportunity to get.

22 Now we are going to look at a few testimonials  
23 from future students of the Collegiate Academy.

24 Na'Khia Green said, "The Collegiate Academy will  
25 definitely be one of the greatest academic

1 opportunities I could ever receive. It will put me  
2 in a position to become the most successful young  
3 woman I can be."

4 Annabeth Martin says, "The Academy will give me  
5 many opportunities that I wouldn't receive anywhere  
6 else. I am very thankful for the teachers and other  
7 adults who believe in the students at Hope enough to  
8 give us this opportunity."

9 And, finally, Hector Vasquez says, "This academy  
10 will mean a lot to me because it will help me with so  
11 much. It will allow me to get my associate's degree  
12 and give me a better chance of finishing college,  
13 since my parents can't afford it."

14 The testimonies of these kids speak for us all  
15 here in support of the Collegiate Academy. We want  
16 to do what is best for our students and our  
17 community. These kids, and many others like them,  
18 may not have the opportunity to go to college if it  
19 were not for this Collegiate Academy.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you, Ms.  
22 Curtis.

23 Dr. Boyd, is there anyone here to speak in  
24 opposition?

25 DR. BOYD: No, ma'am.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No, okay. You do have  
2 five additional minutes for anybody at the school who  
3 would like to say something.

4 Okay. If you would state your name and title  
5 for the record, you're recognized.

6 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: Good morning, Madam Chair,  
7 Members of the Panel. I'm Chris Thomason; I'm the  
8 Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Hope and  
9 Texarkana. And it is an honor for me to be before  
10 this panel today asking that you favorably review the  
11 application for the creation of the Hope Collegiate  
12 and Professions Academy.

13 I want to give you assurances. I know that you  
14 have quite a bit of experience with the Hope Public  
15 School District, but I wanted to give you assurances  
16 that in this joint venture that they have a partner  
17 that is completely committed to the success of the  
18 Collegiate High School -- that is, a partner in the  
19 University of Arkansas at Hope-Texarkana.

20 You know, we didn't start out that way. We  
21 started out as Red River Vo-Tech back in 1965,  
22 located in Hope, Arkansas, right down the road from  
23 Hope High School. There has been -- especially since  
24 1991, when we became a community college, and then in  
25 1996, when we became a comprehensive college under



1 the University of Arkansas' direction -- an absolute  
2 commitment to the success of Hope High School. It  
3 has always been one of our primary partners. I can  
4 assure you, over the years as our campus has changed,  
5 that that commitment has grown even more. I believe,  
6 as the Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at  
7 Hope-Texarkana, the proposal that you're looking at  
8 today is not just the most significant evidence of  
9 that commitment to Hope Public Schools, but I think  
10 it's one of the most innovative and unique programs  
11 that some day will demonstrate to the entire state,  
12 especially in rural Arkansas where campuses will have  
13 access to a college campus and can move their  
14 students forward in a way that's real and  
15 appreciable, and changing not just the students'  
16 lives but changing the trajectory of those rural  
17 communities.

18 I will also tell you, as the Chancellor I'm one  
19 of the most senior in the state. Out of 22 colleges  
20 in the state I'm the third most senior, and I'm the  
21 second most senior chancellor in the entire  
22 University of Arkansas system. I've seen a lot, and  
23 I can tell you that this is a personal -- personal  
24 desire of mine. My experience in K-12 education and  
25 serving K-12 education partners goes far beyond my

1 11-year tenure as the Chancellor at University of  
2 Arkansas at Hope-Texarkana. I was a member of the  
3 Arkansas General Assembly from 2003 to 2006, at a  
4 time when our policy considerations were dominated by  
5 K-12 education. I can tell you, at that time,  
6 coupled with my own experience in education, that I  
7 became committed to moving not just Hope and  
8 southwest Arkansas forward, but the entire state of  
9 Arkansas.

10 You know, my service beyond the legislature, in  
11 K-12 policy, also kind of extends to my old job  
12 before I became Chancellor. I served as the elected  
13 prosecuting attorney for the 8th Judicial District-  
14 North. And before that, even before my service as  
15 the elected prosecutor in the House of  
16 Representatives, I was a deputy prosecutor, primarily  
17 assigned to juvenile court. I have seen the  
18 challenges that our communities face. I've been on  
19 the front line of those challenges. And I can tell  
20 you I have been blessed in my opportunities to serve  
21 in roles and capacities that I think have helped me  
22 make a difference in changing that trajectory. But  
23 as Chancellor of the University of Arkansas Hope-  
24 Texarkana I have been afforded the even greater  
25 opportunities to help change that trajectory -- and I

1 tell you, I believe the Collegiate Academy proposal  
2 that's before you today is the single most  
3 significant one that I've been engaged with so far.  
4 It's also a little personal to me; I'm a proud Hope  
5 High School graduate, 1991 -- and I can assure you my  
6 wife has taught in the school district, my son has  
7 attended there.

8 One of the primary reasons that I made the  
9 transition to the University of Arkansas at Hope and  
10 Texarkana, back in 2008, was because I wanted to be  
11 an active partner with Hope -- with the Hope Public  
12 Schools, in moving that district forward and  
13 addressing headlong the issues that poverty has  
14 caused our district to face. I serve a whole lot of  
15 school districts in my capacity as Chancellor, and I  
16 think this is a phenomenal opportunity to demonstrate  
17 to them all ways that we can deepen our partnerships  
18 to break the chains of poverty and move us forward.

19 I can assure this panel this is a very well  
20 thought-out process. I'm thankful to Representative  
21 Danny Watson for his comments. I'd also, for the  
22 record, like to point out that your -- our  
23 application contains the support and approval of  
24 Senator Larry Teague, our Senate member from Hope and  
25 Hempstead County. But I'd also like to say to you

1           that the HAPS component of our application is now --  
2           HAPS, the Hope Academy of Public Service, the 5-9  
3           program, now in its third year, was part of the  
4           formation -- the formative aspect of planning for the  
5           collegiate high school.

6           You saw the challenges we face. Our model is  
7           based upon the Northwest Florida State College  
8           Collegiate High School, which has a 15-plus year  
9           record of achievement, from Niceville, Florida, being  
10          the number one high school in the state of Florida.  
11          They serve a very different population than we serve;  
12          their population is not nearly as impoverished. And  
13          I think you will see part of the planning and the  
14          deliberate nature of this program is seen and  
15          embedded in the Hope Academy of Public Service, and  
16          you have some of the data from those first three  
17          years of success in changing the trajectory of many  
18          of our students in the Hope Public School.

19          I'll end with this: we're also a very successful  
20          partner to partner with. Since 2008, the University  
21          of Arkansas at Hope-Texarkana has moved from 19th out  
22          of 22 in enrollment in the state of Arkansas for  
23          colleges to number 9. At that same time we've seen,  
24          the last five years, the largest record-breaking  
25          classes for graduation from the University of

1 Arkansas at Hope and Texarkana. And, lastly, under  
2 Governor Hutchinson's new outcomes based funding  
3 model for higher education, in the first year -- two  
4 years ago -- we were number 7 in the state out of 22  
5 in outcomes for our students. And this last year we  
6 were number 2 in the entire state and number 1 in the  
7 University of Arkansas system. That includes the  
8 University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

9 So, again, thank you for your time. Thank you  
10 for the consideration of our innovation. I'll be  
11 happy to accept questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you,  
13 Chancellor.

14 Okay. Thank you, all, for being here for your  
15 presentation. And we're going to go through a  
16 process to answer some questions and move forward.

17 So, Panel, before we get to your individual  
18 questions I want to go through -- I know that just  
19 initially, after the initial ADE review, there were  
20 some remaining questions. So I wanted to start with  
21 Dr. Boyd, just going through and reviewing the  
22 application and those questions to see if all of that  
23 has been cleared up and if there's anything  
24 remaining.

25 So, Dr. Boyd, if you can kind of direct us to

1 any sheets you're looking at and --

2 DR. BOYD: Thank you. So I just quickly looked  
3 through the summary sheet where it had the list of  
4 remaining concerns from the Internal Review  
5 Committee, and it appears that all of those concerns  
6 have been addressed through an attachment called the  
7 Supplemental Response Materials on the Boardbook. So  
8 you can see that. It's about the fourth document  
9 down; it's called Hope Collegiate and Professions  
10 Academy Application Supplementary Response Materials.

11 So they addressed all the concerns that we had  
12 there in writing; however, it brought up another  
13 question. They discussed using the ACCUPLACER and  
14 the ACT, and so I just want to confirm that those  
15 tests are -- if they'll be of any cost to students or  
16 if they'll be free for students.

17 SUPT. HART: Bobby Hart. Excuse me -- Dr. Bobby  
18 Hart. I just finished my dissertation defense last  
19 week.

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Congratulations.

21 SUPT. HART: That was the first time I have --  
22 that's the first time I've introduced myself like  
23 that. Imagine that.

24 No cost to the students on the ACT or the  
25 ACCUPLACER. We understand that sometimes those

1 things can be cost prohibitive to students, and we're  
2 willing to absorb those costs.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Boyd, were  
4 there any -- anything else then that you have from  
5 the review of that application?

6 DR. BOYD: No, Madam Chair, not from the  
7 Internal Review Committee. They satisfied all the  
8 questions and concerns we had.

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Next, Ms. Hyatt, if  
10 you will come forward, I wanted to see if there were  
11 any issues from the ADE legal review that we need to  
12 note before we get into questions.

13 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas  
14 Department of Education. There are a couple of  
15 things. I have one -- if you'll -- we can just go  
16 through them.

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. And if you'll tell  
18 us what document we can be looking at.

19 MS. HYATT: Sure. So, well, the first one kind  
20 of piggybacks off of Alexandra's question and is  
21 about the ACT requirement. So I have a question, I  
22 guess, as to whether those ACT requirements for  
23 admittance into the school were set by the district  
24 or is that part of an agreement with the community  
25 college partner?

1           SUPT. HART: Those requirements -- that ACT and  
2           ACCUPLACER score are requirements at the college  
3           level. They can't admit a -- fully admit a  
4           collegiate student, whether they be in the 10th grade  
5           or graduate from high school, without those  
6           requirements.

7           MS. HYATT: So I would just note a little bit of  
8           concern about how that might disproportionately  
9           impact students that are special ed. or 504 students  
10          and their ability to be admitted into the program.  
11          It's my understanding that we don't have another  
12          charter school that has admissions criteria, so they  
13          would be the first. And a review of the charter  
14          school rules and the charter school laws don't speak  
15          to whether or not a district conversion can have  
16          admissions criteria, so I don't believe it's  
17          prohibited at the state level. But I do have  
18          concerns about the impact on special ed. and 504  
19          students.

20          DR. BOYD: At the federal level -- the school  
21          would not meet the definition of a charter school at  
22          the federal level, and so that would keep them from  
23          applying for planning and implementation grant  
24          funding. But to my knowledge, that's the only impact  
25          that it has.



1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

2 Yes, if you'll come to the microphone and state  
3 your name and position for the record.

4 MR. BERRY: Brian Berry, Executive Vice  
5 Chancellor, University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana.  
6 If I could offer a clarifying point: the Arkansas  
7 Department of Higher Education requires a 19 in  
8 reading, English, and mathematics for students to be  
9 able to take those college level courses,  
10 specifically before they've graduated from high  
11 school -- and so that's a bit out of our hands. And  
12 that's an Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
13 regulation and so that's how those scores were  
14 arrived at. Of course, students can get  
15 accommodations for the ACCUPLACER, which we offer on  
16 our campus, as well as the ACT, through ACT, to make  
17 sure that they have an opportunity to take that test  
18 with accommodations that meet their special needs, to  
19 hopefully alleviate some of those issues.

20 MS. HYATT: So I think my concern remains in  
21 that this would be an Arkansas public charter school  
22 that had admissions criteria that excluded students  
23 who didn't achieve at a certain level and might  
24 disproportionately discriminate against certain  
25 subpopulations. So I'm not saying that the

1 admissions criteria is prohibited; I'm just noting  
2 the concern for the Panel.

3 So I can move on to --

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So in that line, I'm  
5 looking at the additional -- that supplemental sheet  
6 that was sent, where the indicators -- and I'm  
7 assuming that's the criteria that was asked about.  
8 So you went over the tiers, the three tiers. So then  
9 you've got the Level 2 and 3 with the conditional  
10 admission. The others would be the ACCUPLACER test,  
11 as you spoke to, previous concurrent courses,  
12 persistence, class attendance, and discipline  
13 incidents. The previous concurrent courses, I guess,  
14 would be another criteria that would fall along that  
15 same line because students are not going to be able  
16 to enroll in those concurrent courses -- or I guess  
17 the question would be: are they going to be able to  
18 enroll in concurrent courses or is that limiting also  
19 with some of our students with special needs, that  
20 population? So I'm wondering if there's not an  
21 additional criteria there that might also be  
22 prohibitive?

23 MS. HYATT: And I can let them respond to  
24 concurrent courses and how that's working, because I  
25 think they do that now.

1 MS. CURTIS: The criteria that you're talking  
2 about is relating to the serious student, which was  
3 placed within our application. And I think there was  
4 some confusion on what a serious student is and how  
5 do you actually, you know, judge that and figure that  
6 out based off of data-points. So we tried to figure  
7 out some data-points that we could use to justify for  
8 a serious student. But, you know, with us having  
9 three tiers we are, you know, allowing students -- we  
10 understand that there are a lot of students who do  
11 not have the college readiness scores, and that's  
12 something we struggle with. And I think it's  
13 statewide, struggling with students not receiving  
14 those scores. So the tier system has provided -- you  
15 know, opened up an opportunity for us to allow  
16 students who are still -- really, they're not ready  
17 for the college level courses -- for us to be able to  
18 focus in on those students and be able to assist  
19 them. So what you were talking about is a question  
20 that was based on one statement that was placed  
21 within our application.

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Would you please  
23 state your name and title for the record?

24 DR. DUKE: Dr. Carol Ann Duke, president of the  
25 Hope Academy of Public Service, the 5-9 school that

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was referenced in the application.

Currently, all the 9th graders that are on our campus attend six hours of college credit at the University of Arkansas -- that includes our 504 and special education students -- because the courses that they take are pre-ACCUPLACER/ACT required courses. So they have that experience as 9th graders. And, additionally, while they're taking those classes they're out there Monday/Wednesday/Friday in a college course. Tuesday and Thursday we're doing ACCUPLACER prep with them as well, so that they are exposed to that test early and often. We do a lot of benchmarking with them with some other resources we have on our campus so that they're prepared for that level of standardized testing. And at that point in time they and their families are already having a college-based experience to see if there needs to be adjustments in their IEPs or their 504s, or other barriers to education, so that if they're truly serious about joining the Collegiate Academy, when and if that takes place, they've already got them a growth mindset for that. And I can tell you that this is the second year we've had 9th graders in the program at the college. And one of the collateral pieces of data we have is the ramp-

1 up of parental engagement to really understand that  
2 this is a unique opportunity for students in our  
3 community, that early on -- even with our 5th graders  
4 we begin to discuss college opportunities. And so  
5 parents are learning early and hearing often about  
6 this opportunity, as well as the expectation, so  
7 that, through engagement with advisory on our campus  
8 and the college campus, we're able to meet those  
9 specific needs of those students and remove some of  
10 those barriers that may be seen as underserved  
11 population barriers.

12 MS. NEWTON: So if I could ask another question  
13 stemming from that: what is the difference in the  
14 percentages that -- so what increase do you see as a  
15 result of those interventions? So could you tell us  
16 how many more students that are intervened with in  
17 order to get them ready? Because that is a concern  
18 and it is something that's very -- you know -- when  
19 you think about charters, open-enrollment charters  
20 are for everyone.

21 DR. DUKE: Sure.

22 MS. NEWTON: So, you know, I can't see the  
23 rationale of being able to exclude anyone, even based  
24 on ACT, if that's the -- you know -- and I have two  
25 sons; one never got a 19 on an ACT and graduated from

1 Mississippi State University. So they struggle with  
2 the --

3 DR. DUKE: Standardized test.

4 MS. NEWTON: -- standardized test.

5 DR. DUKE: Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. NEWTON: You know, and one managed to do,  
7 and the one that didn't did better than the one that  
8 did.

9 DR. DUKE: Yes.

10 MS. NEWTON: So that would have been prohibitive  
11 for them to even get enrolled in the program. So I'd  
12 like for you to give me some idea of how  
13 interventions help that group of students to be able  
14 to overcome that barrier, because oftentimes the  
15 scores are not indicators of whether or not they can  
16 be successful.

17 In addition to that, I think that the two-year  
18 campus and the two-year philosophy -- the campus --  
19 the philosophy of two-year institutions is to give  
20 that extra boost, to give that extra level of help.  
21 So I think that kind of is a counter-indicator to me.

22 DR. DUKE: The difference between the  
23 traditional pathway to a two-year school and this  
24 college immersion collegiate experience for high  
25 school students is, as Mikki referenced, for the

1 serious student who is academically hungry for a more  
2 rigorous, ramped-up college preparation experience  
3 that currently, because of the poverty level in our  
4 district, the high school is not always able to  
5 provide. My campus is a 5-9 campus that's -- we're  
6 in our third year, as Chancellor Thomason told you.  
7 So those interventions that we've done early and  
8 often, and started with 5th graders and moved forward  
9 with them, has allowed the other campuses to focus  
10 more on those children with more academic needs,  
11 because these kids and parents that are academically  
12 and college mindset-ready have a different avenue to  
13 be involved in. So the difference between the  
14 traditional -- if Mikki and I are both juniors in  
15 high school, and I'm in the regular concurrent credit  
16 aspect and Mikki is in the Collegiate Academy, Mikki  
17 is fully immersed in what it means to be a college  
18 student. I, on the other hand, still spend part of  
19 my day -- the bulk of my day at Hope High School,  
20 taking classes to earn a high school diploma, and I  
21 may or may not have a concurrent experience that  
22 leads me to a certificate of proficiency or an  
23 associate pathway.

24 The Collegiate Academy difference is that from  
25 the 10th grade on those students are immersed in a

1 full college experience to help them overcome the  
2 barriers of poverty and low income, first generation  
3 college students, and take that moving forward so  
4 that they're in a like-minded environment with high  
5 school and college professors who are shepherding  
6 them through what normally doesn't take place till  
7 I'm a freshman in high school and I move away from  
8 home for the first time and all of my support system  
9 has been removed from me.

10 MS. NEWTON: And I understand that. But a lot  
11 of times the difference between those two students is  
12 simply background and the educational attainment of  
13 their community. So the hunger -- the lack of hunger  
14 doesn't necessarily suggest that the other student is  
15 not hungry for it.

16 DR. DUKE: That's right.

17 MS. NEWTON: It's the motivation and the  
18 background. So that's what concerns me in terms of  
19 who determines who's hungry, you know, and what the  
20 level of hunger -- you know --

21 DR. DUKE: We open this application up to any  
22 student that's going to be in the 10th grade. Any  
23 student that is currently served in the Hope Public  
24 School District can make application. And depending  
25 on the tier that they come in at with that score will



1 depend on the level of intervention they will get  
2 initially and the support that will be provided, to  
3 make sure that if I'm a Tier 3 student by the end of  
4 my 10th grade year I've moved up to Tier 2 or Tier 1  
5 and can be unconditionally admitted.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And, Dr. Duke, I'm  
7 going to ask that we pause here and go back and go  
8 through -- stick to these as legal requirements right  
9 now.

10 DR. DUKE: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And then we'll come back  
12 to the questions in more detail about the process and  
13 the students and accessibility.

14 So just, you know, noting for the Panel then, we  
15 do have a concern raised about whether or not the  
16 criteria for this would limit some students, as  
17 noted, and we may have some more detailed questions  
18 later.

19 MS. HYATT: Yeah. And I think there's a  
20 difference between having a program within a school  
21 district that does that versus having a public  
22 charter school that has that same criteria, just  
23 because it's a public school and it's -- of its own,  
24 that would be --

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: A separate entity, in

1 effect?

2 MS. HYATT: Yes, ma'am.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

4 MS. HYATT: So kind of piggybacking off of that,  
5 one of the things that was noted in the Internal  
6 Review Committee was that there seemed to be concern  
7 over whether the applicant understood exactly what  
8 its role would be in providing services under IDEA  
9 and 504 for the students that completely attended the  
10 college courses, in that they would have remaining  
11 duties under those laws to provide services for those  
12 students. And so if we could just get a little bit  
13 of clarification from the applicant that they are  
14 understanding of their duty to provide services for  
15 special ed. and 504 students, despite the fact that  
16 they might not actually be present on campus, I think  
17 that would relieve that concern.

18 SUPT. HART: Yes. Thank you. IDEA would be --  
19 will be addressed through the same means that would  
20 be addressed if that student were on the Hope High  
21 School campus. Our special education teachers would  
22 work with the college professors to develop and sit  
23 in on the IEP committee, and the IEP that came from  
24 -- came with that student from the 9th grade would be  
25 implemented throughout his or her 10th through 12th

1 grade career. We understand -- completely understand  
2 the need and the requirement for servicing students  
3 through IDEA.

4 Does that answer -- I hope that answers your  
5 question.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And I guess just even to  
7 the point if it were to require a teacher --

8 SUPT. HART: Regardless of --

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- with certain  
10 qualifications?

11 SUPT. HART: If those accommodations required an  
12 aid, if it required -- same thing we would do if that  
13 child were on the regular campus.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Was there something  
15 we didn't answer fully on that?

16 MR. WALTER: Well --

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Go ahead.

18 MR. WALTER: All right. Thanks. Tripp Walter,  
19 Staff Attorney, Arkansas Public School Resource  
20 Center. I visited with the Hope team, specifically  
21 Ms. Curtis, after that comment came out. And I just  
22 want to, I guess, just support what Superintendent  
23 Hart says. I mean, they realize -- they have the  
24 whole time and they realize that these students are  
25 Hope High School -- or Hope School District students,

1           regardless of where they're located, and their  
2           obligation to provide services does not end when they  
3           step off the Hope School District campus and when  
4           they go to UAHT. And I think that, again, just to  
5           back what Superintendent Hart says, they have a clear  
6           and complete understanding of that.

7                   CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

8                   MS. HYATT: The next was regarding the waiver  
9           request for Alternative Learning Environments. It  
10          was put on there after the original review of the  
11          application. And the rationale is that the ALE  
12          services would be -- are being provided by the  
13          district, not necessarily the charter school in and  
14          of itself. The laws and the standards just require  
15          that the services be offered by the district -- be  
16          provided by the district. So I'm unclear. I want to  
17          make sure if it's necessary to have a waiver -- I  
18          don't believe it's necessary to have a waiver if the  
19          district will be providing the ALE services. And if  
20          they're not going to be providing ALE services, then  
21          the waiver is necessary and I just wanted to clarify  
22          that with the applicant.

23                   SUPT. HART: In response to the question, yes,  
24          ma'am, the district has a robust and a strong ALE  
25          program right now and the district will be providing

1 those alternative services.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So will you rescind that  
3 waiver request?

4 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

6 MS. HYATT: Okay. The last thing that came up  
7 during the legal review is kind of unique to this  
8 applicant. We have never had a school district that  
9 is under a Consent Decree apply for a charter school,  
10 district conversion charter school. So in the deseg  
11 analysis you can see -- it's attached on the agenda  
12 -- the district maintains to the Department that it's  
13 still under court supervision and under an active  
14 Consent Decree, an enforceable desegregation order  
15 regarding the effects of past racial discrimination  
16 and student assignment, and has represented to us  
17 that it is unitary in all respects except for being  
18 able to participate in the public school choice  
19 program. However, the district has never been  
20 declared unitary and the Arkansas law doesn't allow  
21 the authorizer to approve any public school that  
22 hampers, delays, or negatively impacts the  
23 desegregation efforts of a public school district.  
24 So I just wanted to point that out to the Panel so  
25 that you guys could carefully consider whether

1 granting this district conversion charter school  
2 would negatively impact the district's ability to  
3 achieve unitary status.

4 MS. NEWTON: I have a question too, because I  
5 was thinking about that and all that has happened in  
6 the past relative to school choice. And I know  
7 there's been contention between -- within the  
8 district, Springfield -- is that -- yeah, I know --  
9 when I look at the student population and I look at  
10 the majority minority population I have to wonder  
11 where those students are. So I know that's an  
12 ongoing battle. So if we're looking into selective  
13 -- if they elect to select a certain group of kids to  
14 go into that, how does that play into the overall  
15 contentiousness around -- and I don't know if you  
16 guys are in a legal situation or not, but what does  
17 that say -- how does this situation impact that?

18 SUPT. HART: We are under a current Consent  
19 Decree and we have asked Judge Hickey, the federal  
20 judge in our area, to rule on whether we would be  
21 breaking our Consent Decree or violating our Consent  
22 Decree if we participate in school choice. You're  
23 correct in that. And she issued a temporary  
24 restraining order in August of this year that said  
25 that we should for this year, but that was only for

1 kids leaving the district.

2 MS. NEWTON: You should?

3 SUPT. HART: We should participate in school  
4 choice this year.

5 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

6 SUPT. HART: But, as I was about to say, that  
7 was only for students leaving. Those who may have  
8 been interested in coming to our district had missed  
9 the July 1 deadline; so therefore, we reaped no  
10 benefit there.

11 I think to further answer your question, that  
12 answer is -- or that question is in front of Judge  
13 Hickey and I expect or hope that she'll rule on that,  
14 one way or the other, within the next three to four  
15 months. I serve at her pleasure.

16 We understand that 80% of our student population  
17 is minority. So we feel very confident that the  
18 demographic breakdown of this building will mirror  
19 what our district-wide demographic is. Selection  
20 process or application process, alone or separate,  
21 80% of our students are either African American,  
22 Hispanic. We're not -- I don't believe we'll be in  
23 violation. We've discussed the matter with our legal  
24 team. We don't feel that we'd be in violation of our  
25 Consent Decree.

1 MS. NEWTON: But would you be in conflict with  
2 it, violation and conflict?

3 SUPT. HART: I don't believe we'd be in conflict  
4 with it. No, ma'am. Again, that's for Judge Hickey  
5 to decide at some point, whether or not we are or  
6 aren't. But our legal team has stated that they  
7 don't believe that it would be a conflict of that  
8 Consent Decree.

9 MS. NEWTON: But it does seem to kind of skew  
10 the numbers, don't you think? Maybe not.

11 SUPT. HART: So I'm not following your line of  
12 questioning.

13 MS. NEWTON: I'm wondering how it doesn't create  
14 the same situation.

15 SUPT. HART: Well, I still don't -- I'm not -- I  
16 don't think that we're going to be segregating by  
17 race at all because --

18 MS. NEWTON: But looking at this --

19 SUPT. HART: -- we're pulling from our  
20 population.

21 MS. NEWTON: Looking at the SPED population and  
22 looking at the other children and looking at those  
23 youngsters that might not be geared up and ready,  
24 excited about it, based on family history, based on  
25 -- I think it would skew -- I'm not saying that's



1 something that you have --

2 SUPT. HART: Not intended.

3 MS. NEWTON: -- the ability to control, but  
4 certainly it does skew the opportunity for minority  
5 and for students that haven't had college-going folks  
6 to be involved in the process. So it inadvertently  
7 -- what do you call it -- unintended consequence --

8 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. NEWTON: -- is what it made me --

10 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: Madam Chair, may I address  
11 Ms. Newton's question?

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: You may.

13 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: I appreciate your concern.  
14 And given my background, I hope that you know that I  
15 have that same concern as well. The intentional  
16 design that I discussed about was engaged in to  
17 combat just that concern. As I told you earlier, the  
18 collegiate high school at Northwest Florida is a very  
19 different demographic, for example. And that very  
20 question got asked to me when our visiting team went  
21 there to visit with them, "How are you going to deal  
22 with the demographics you have and insure that you  
23 have the opportunity -- that all these students have  
24 that opportunity?" And my response to that question,  
25 first and foremost, from a policy perspective, was,

1 "That's why we're designing this." It is targeted to  
2 meet the needs of all the students that are in Hope  
3 Public Schools right now -- and you know what those  
4 demographics are. The 5-9 component was one of the  
5 insurance policies that was created at the Hope  
6 Academy of Public Service; that's why that component  
7 was created, to insure that all the issues that  
8 poverty creates for these students -- and it does  
9 disproportionately impact those minority students in  
10 our district -- which we are vastly a majority  
11 minority district now. But those are combated at an  
12 earlier age.

13 We heard reference to Greenbrier. That's part  
14 of the frame of reference. We'll actually go back to  
15 Greenbrier's proposal at the University of Arkansas  
16 System board, almost 10 years ago, with UA-Little  
17 Rock. And those -- that was the reality that I had  
18 when I sat there, is we have to insure that we  
19 address these deficiencies that are generated by  
20 poverty in the community that we serve at a much  
21 earlier age and across a broad spectrum of diverse  
22 students.

23 And if you'll look at the success, especially in  
24 minority populations, of the Hope Academy of Public  
25 Service, you will see that the impact is not an

1           unintended consequence, but it is a -- it is an  
2           exceptional -- an exceptionally positive impact on  
3           those populations that you have concern about.

4           I guess I can speak -- you know that in its  
5           second year of creation the Hope Academy of Public  
6           Service was issued an A rating. That's the first A  
7           rating that this school district has ever received.  
8           Those kids that are on that campus came from campuses  
9           who in the past had -- at Hope High School had  
10          received an F rating, and Beryl Henry, which I  
11          attended, a D rating. At the same time that those  
12          students that populated the HAPS Academy, which is a  
13          majority minority school within the district, those  
14          other campuses saw an elevation in their performance  
15          as well. So that success at the HAPS campus, which  
16          will buoy what we suspect, based upon our data, about  
17          50% of the applicants to the collegiate high school  
18          who come from the HAPS program, those successes have  
19          also created successes on the other campuses. So the  
20          populations that you are concerned about have seen --  
21          during the formative aspects of this program, have  
22          seen some of the greatest successes from those  
23          initial steps that we've taken to insure that this  
24          opportunity is broad and open to everyone. Thank  
25          you.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Ms. Hyatt, kind of going  
2 back to the Consent Decree -- and I'm not sure if the  
3 entire panel is comfortable or had a chance to really  
4 look at everything there -- I just want to make sure  
5 I'm understanding the actual Consent Decree. It was  
6 specifically with intra-district -- right -- issues,  
7 as far as the assignment of faculty, students,  
8 insuring -- I'm looking here -- faculty assignments,  
9 student assignments, and treatment of black and other  
10 minority pupils within the school system. So, am I  
11 correct in that?

12 MS. HYATT: Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So with regards to  
14 what Mr. Hart said while ago, really the Consent  
15 Decree is more about what's going on within the  
16 school system, as much as or more than students  
17 transferring outside?

18 MS. HYATT: So that's kind of a point of  
19 contention, I think, between the Department and the  
20 school district. That's pretty much the crux of the  
21 litigation that's ongoing. The Hope School District  
22 applied for an exemption from inter-school district  
23 school choice this year, based on its Consent Decree,  
24 and was denied. And then appealed in front of the  
25 State Board of Education; their appeal was denied.

1           And that is the basis of the litigation now, that the  
2           district is requesting the court to decide whether  
3           the Consent Decree prohibits inter-district. The  
4           Department's position has always been that the  
5           Consent Decree prohibits intra-district, some  
6           movement within the district, in terms of student  
7           assignment; does not prohibit inter-district, outside  
8           of the district, student assignment. The district's  
9           position, I believe, is that it prohibits inter --  
10          outside of the district -- student assignment as  
11          well.

12                   CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. But  
13          given the fact that it does seem that there is a  
14          Consent Decree, and there would be caution as far as  
15          intra-district organizational structures or the  
16          decisions made with regard to that, I do have  
17          concerns about an opportunity that would be limited  
18          to a total of about 150 students, at the max, as far  
19          as opportunities for those with regards to the  
20          Consent Decree. Is that a valid concern?

21                   MS. HYATT: So the charter school law and the  
22          charter school rules say that the authorizer must  
23          attempt to measure the likely impact of a proposed  
24          charter school on the efforts of the district to  
25          achieve or maintain unitary -- a unitary system, and

1 shall not approve any public charter school or any  
2 other act, or combination of acts, that hampers,  
3 delays, or in any manner negatively affects the  
4 desegregation efforts of a public school district or  
5 public school districts in the state.

6 And since the Hope School District has not been  
7 declared unitary, I do think that the Panel should  
8 carefully consider whether this charter would  
9 negatively impact the desegregation efforts of the  
10 district.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Are there any other  
12 legal things that we need to be thinking through  
13 before we start our questions?

14 MS. HYATT: No, ma'am.

15 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

16 SUPT. HART: If I could --

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

18 SUPT. HART: If I could address what I think may  
19 be a sticking point -- and I'm not sure of the  
20 process here. But it appears to me that one of our  
21 sticking points in this conversation is the  
22 application process, if I'm hearing Ms. Newton  
23 correct -- and that's a valid concern, if I believe  
24 I'm hearing you correct. If that piece were removed  
25 from the application, and it was on interest alone --

1 I'm not trying to sweeten the deal necessarily -- but  
2 would that -- could that eliminate some of your  
3 concerns?

4 MS. NEWTON: Initially, from my initial concern.  
5 But then to go into the unitary status --

6 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. NEWTON: -- that was something that was  
8 discussed after that.

9 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

10 MS. NEWTON: So that's an additional concern for  
11 me.

12 SUPT. HART: I just want to make sure that I had  
13 in my mind phrased your concerns correctly.

14 MS. NEWTON: I think that would, yes, address  
15 that initially. But the subsequent questions and  
16 concerns that come up from Legal and from just past  
17 knowledge of these situations, and how much that the  
18 lack of unitary status impacts decisions that  
19 necessarily are not good decisions but -- puts us in  
20 that gray area of the law.

21 SUPT. HART: I understand.

22 MS. NEWTON: That is a little bit uncomfortable.

23 SUPT. HART: I understand.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Do you -- is it  
25 along this line?

1 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: So I guess I struggle, because  
4 the plan is good, you know, as to what you're wanting  
5 to do. I think it's just the mechanism. And so,  
6 several schools around the state are doing very  
7 similar things, partnering with their university or  
8 colleges and doing this type of work. I think the  
9 major issue that I see here is that by asking for a  
10 conversion charter as a small subset of your high  
11 school, as opposed to saying our entire high school,  
12 is a conversion charter and this is one of our  
13 pathways, is the issue that -- you know -- and then  
14 whether or not it even needs to be a district  
15 conversion charter, just some waivers that could be  
16 granted.

17 SUPT. HART: I understand.

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: So I worry about the deseg part  
19 of it and making a mess out of something that should  
20 be very simple to do, you know. And so that's -- I  
21 think that's --

22 SUPT. HART: Your concerns -- Dr. Hernandez,  
23 your concerns and questions are matters that over the  
24 last 18 months that this group of people have had  
25 those similar conversations and similar debates



1 around. We felt like this was the best avenue. I  
2 think your point is well received that, you know,  
3 maybe there's some things done through waivers that  
4 we could do that would accomplish the goals that  
5 we're wanting to accomplish. We felt like this route  
6 was the aboveboard way to say, hey, we want to do  
7 something innovative, we want to do something  
8 different. And, you know, it's better to ask for  
9 permission upfront sometimes. I can't believe I just  
10 said that. Usually, it's better to ask for  
11 forgiveness. But we're just trying to be above-board  
12 and transparent in what we're doing. So I appreciate  
13 your thoughts.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Anybody else have a  
15 question with that regard?

16 Okay. And so I guess piggybacking off of what  
17 he said, before I see if there are other questions  
18 related to the application -- could this work without  
19 it being a district conversion charter? Could this  
20 work as far as just an option that you have within  
21 your high school for students?

22 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am. We have a very robust  
23 concurrent credit program right now in our high  
24 school. We can make that work. Yes, ma'am. I'm not  
25 trying to give up on the idea of the conversion

1 application. In all honesty, in response to Dr.  
2 Hernandez's question the second time, we all  
3 understand -- or I think we as a team understand that  
4 that label of charter is a marketing tool that wakes  
5 people up, gives people -- that puts some attention  
6 on the program that it otherwise wouldn't. I'm just  
7 being blatantly honest and brutally honest. But we  
8 can make this work in a number of different ways.

9 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. So let  
10 me go through and see what other questions maybe are  
11 remaining.

12 Mr. Rogers, did you have anything?

13 MR. ROGERS: No, not right now.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Dr. Kremers.

15 DR. KREMERS: I do have multiple comments/  
16 questions. Since we're dealing with two different  
17 structures -- so K-12 and then postsecondary -- in  
18 meeting the requirements of special education, all of  
19 those, you have a higher ed. faculty member who  
20 you're going to ask to follow K-12 policy on  
21 attending IEP meetings and all of those. So how  
22 would you get a higher ed. faculty member to comply  
23 with K-12 policy? How would you be able to enforce  
24 something like that?

25 MS. CURTIS: Well, and I know Ms. Laura can talk

1 on that. But the faculty that we are looking at  
2 picking believe in this model. I mean, they believe  
3 in the Collegiate Academy and what it can provide for  
4 the students; so the ones who are interested in  
5 helping and teaching this are 100% onboard. So they  
6 understand beforehand what is expected of them. But  
7 you will have to adhere to the special education  
8 policy. And they understand what those requirements  
9 are and they're willing to do whatever it takes to do  
10 that. So, you know, I think it takes that 100% buy-  
11 in to get somebody to do -- you know, follow what  
12 needs to be done.

13 DR. KREMERS: I think the challenge is though  
14 they're not technically an employee of the district;  
15 they're an employee of the higher education  
16 institution.

17 MS. CLARK: I'm Laura Clark; I'm Vice Chancellor  
18 of Academics at the UA Hope-Texarkana. The faculty  
19 members -- a lot of our faculty members actually come  
20 from public school districts, so many of them have  
21 experience. We have some that actually still have  
22 their licensure to teach in public schools. And so  
23 in developing the charter and in developing the  
24 courses, and even as we progress into the 11th and  
25 12th grade years, what makes us very unique is that

1 -- I'm one of those academic -- those faculty  
2 members, and we select those faculty members who,  
3 number one, they're onboard; number two, hopefully,  
4 they have a background in public education; and,  
5 three, they're willing to do above and beyond. And  
6 so that is where we are at. This is not a mandated  
7 "you will be doing this." This is a "who is  
8 willing." We have had an outpouring of a number of  
9 faculty who -- some have even attended Hope School  
10 District, some have been previous employees, teachers  
11 of Hope School District, who -- they want to be that  
12 faculty member who is teaching that 10th grade piece  
13 so that they can prepare them for their 10th grade or  
14 their 11th grade college class as well. So I hope  
15 maybe that may be helpful, hopefully has answered  
16 your question.

17 DR. KREMERS: Thank you for sharing that.

18 For one part of your presentation you talked  
19 about the student using lottery scholarship funds for  
20 part of their schooling. Do you have a waiver or  
21 discussion from Arkansas Department of Higher Ed. on  
22 the fact that they --

23 MS. CURTIS: That's not for these first two  
24 years. That's for when they transfer as a junior to  
25 a four-year university. So because they're already

1 going to have their freshman and sophomore year  
2 completed while as a high school student, they will  
3 transfer as a junior then to a university. So  
4 they'll be able to pull from the Arkansas Academic  
5 Challenge Scholarship as a junior and senior. It's  
6 not going to be used for their high school, for the  
7 two years they're with us on our campus.

8 DR. KREMERS: Okay.

9 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: Just as a clarifying point  
10 on that as well -- Mikki is exactly right. But I  
11 would like to point out that that's a very important  
12 piece of this model that maybe has kind of not been  
13 highlighted -- and I think it addresses some of Ms.  
14 Newton's concerns as well. These students that are  
15 successful in the Collegiate Academy model will still  
16 at the end of that model be impoverished students.

17 Now at the University of Arkansas at Hope-  
18 Texarkana we recognize that the number one barrier to  
19 the success of our -- of students in our region in  
20 engaging and being successful at higher education,  
21 the number one barrier is cost. So we're the most  
22 affordable college in the state of Arkansas for a  
23 reason. It is that reason. We're trying to address  
24 the barriers every day, and I think that that's one  
25 of the magical points. One of the students suggested

1           that topic and some of the energy and excitement that  
2           you've seen or you've heard about that's been  
3           generated in our community as we've had public  
4           meetings about this program are just that, that, you  
5           know, "We're a family of two kids and we appreciate  
6           the fact that the University of Arkansas at Hope and  
7           Texarkana is an affordable college option for your  
8           students -- but, what then?"

9           So my point to you is this program will help  
10          provide a diverse group of students who all share one  
11          thing in common -- they're impoverished -- with the  
12          opportunity to finish their associate's degree while  
13          they're in high school. That saves them over half  
14          their cost of a college education. It also insures  
15          that they receive that degree before they engage the  
16          junior and senior year of university study -- for  
17          example, under the Roger Phillips Transfer Act. That  
18          degree alone guarantees a whole host of things, like  
19          an additional \$500,000, half a million dollars in  
20          earning power; the drop in the unemployment rates;  
21          the satisfaction in their employment. But it also  
22          helps elevate them from a \$1,000 reward -- you know,  
23          we've watched the policy discussion about the lottery  
24          scholarship and how those awards have changed, and I  
25          understand those dynamics. But that student then not

1           only graduates with their first two years of college  
2           paid for and with a degree, so if something happens  
3           in their life, in their junior and senior year that  
4           has them opt out, they still have that degree. It  
5           elevates them from a \$1,000 a year lottery  
6           scholarship award to a \$4,000 a year lottery  
7           scholarship award. You couple that with PEL  
8           eligibility and that helps completely offset the cost  
9           of a higher education, whether it be at Southern  
10          Arkansas University in Magnolia, whether it be at  
11          Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, or the  
12          University of Arkansas at Little Rock. It makes that  
13          completion option -- it knocks down that barrier,  
14          that cost barrier to the completion option -- to the  
15          completion option for the students.

16                 DR. KREMERS: Okay. So I still think there's --  
17                 I still think there needs to be further clarification  
18                 on the lottery scholarship funding. So you're saying  
19                 the first two years of their college are paid for  
20                 while they're in high school?

21                 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: Yes.

22                 DR. KREMERS: So what funds are paying for those  
23                 courses while they're in high school, that you're  
24                 saying are free in high school?

25                 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

1 DR. KREMERS: Okay.

2 SUPT. HART: Two-fold. Currently, right now,  
3 UA-HT is involved in a pilot program with the federal  
4 government that allows concurrent credit students to  
5 apply for and receive PEL. As I said earlier, 85% of  
6 our student population lives at or below the poverty  
7 -- or lives -- qualifies for free and reduced lunch.  
8 The majority, vast majority of our students that are  
9 -- would be in the program would be qualified for  
10 PEL. Apart from that, that 15% who may not be , the  
11 district is prepared to pick up that cost, again,  
12 simply because UA-HT's cost per hour is so affordable  
13 that we know we can swing that number.

14 DR. KREMERS: Including books and all of those  
15 things they would need as well?

16 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am. UA-HT -- I want to  
17 brag, and I hate to do it in front of the Chancellor  
18 because they've done a really good job. They've  
19 created a tremendous savings opportunity with a  
20 textbook rental program that saves students, whether  
21 they're a concurrent student or a regular student,  
22 thousands of dollars in book fees. So we're very  
23 confident in that.

24 DR. KREMERS: So could you just further clarify  
25 where the lottery scholarship benefit is for what



1           you're doing? Because that would be available then  
2           once they are --

3           SUPT. HART: On the back-end. And it's a  
4           benefit for that student and that family on the back-  
5           end.

6           DR. KREMERS: So --

7           SUPT. HART: Because when they go -- when they  
8           leave UA-HT with their associate's degree they're no  
9           longer an entering freshman. They're now an up,  
10          arising junior. That \$4,000 -- I believe it's \$4,000  
11          --

12          DR. KREMERS: Well, that's what I was going to  
13          say. There's two separate ways you get dollars,  
14          whether you're at a two-year school or a four-year  
15          school, and you -- the \$4,000, I believe it's  
16          restricted more for two-year schools than it is for  
17          the four-year schools. And you have --

18          SUPT. HART: I'll yield to Higher Ed. on that.  
19          I'm not positive.

20          DR. KREMERS: Yes. What I'm saying is there's  
21          -- you get less money going to a two-year school. So  
22          to confirm that it is the \$4,000 -- and I think you  
23          have to be in your final year to receive that. So if  
24          you're at high school -- so for the lottery  
25          scholarship you have to be a high school graduate,

1 first, to qualify; then you have to be continuously  
2 enrolled. And so if they're at the high school  
3 receiving the college credits, how would Higher Ed.  
4 -- have you received confirmation that they would  
5 retroactively get the \$1,000 for the first year, the  
6 \$2,000 for the second year?

7 SUPT. HART: Yeah, please --

8 MR. BERRY: The legislature -- Brian Berry,  
9 Executive Vice Chancellor, UA-HT. The legislature  
10 actually year before last -- so this is the second  
11 year of that change -- and so when students graduate  
12 high school they can petition ADHE -- if they've  
13 completed 30 hours they can petition ADHE to get  
14 their sophomore lottery money, or if they've  
15 completed 60 hours they can petition ADHE to get  
16 their junior money when they start. And so that  
17 scholarship is graduated -- \$1,000, \$2,000, \$4,000,  
18 and \$5,000 -- for their senior year. So students  
19 have the option -- they don't have to take that  
20 option; they can -- the ADHE gives them the option to  
21 either enter in as a freshman after they've earned  
22 their -- if they earn an associate degree while  
23 they're in high school or they can petition to be  
24 considered whatever classification they meet in terms  
25 of hours taking stuff. If they've completed 30

1 hours, they can petition ADHE to get the \$2,000 as a  
2 sophomore, or if they've completed 60 hours they can  
3 petition to get the \$4,000 as a junior. And then  
4 when they were a senior they would automatically be  
5 able to do the \$5,000 level. So they would not  
6 actually utilize any lottery scholarship money while  
7 they're in high school; they have to graduate high  
8 school before they have access to that scholarship  
9 money.

10 DR. KREMERS: And in that process it's still no  
11 guarantee that they would receive; they still have to  
12 petition as a separate process?

13 MR. BERRY: No. If they petition, it's granted.  
14 So they just have to write for permission. So as  
15 long as they have the 30 hours or the 60 hours  
16 completed on there, on a college transcript, they  
17 just notify ADHE. So it's -- that money is -- it's  
18 in the statute how that award is funded.

19 DR. KREMERS: Okay. And I just know the top-end  
20 of that, I didn't realize the \$4,000 or \$5,000.  
21 You're sure on ADHE? I just would like -- if we  
22 could get clarification from someone on eligibility?  
23 Because I didn't think two-year schools could receive  
24 the high-end of that; you had to be --

25 MR. BERRY: We could not. So it's actually the

1 same at all campuses now, but -- in terms of freshman  
2 awards, sophomore awards, and junior awards. So you  
3 cannot get a junior award at a two-year college; you  
4 would have to be transferred to a four-year --

5 DR. KREMERS: Yes.

6 MR. BERRY: -- institution. Correct?

7 DR. KREMERS: Yes. Okay.

8 MR. BERRY: And so these students will be  
9 leaving us as they graduate high school, because they  
10 were already earning their associate degree. So they  
11 would be transferring to a four-year.

12 DR. KREMERS: So that's kind of the point I'm  
13 trying to get to, is the benefit you're talking about  
14 for the lottery scholarship and those funds will be  
15 beyond -- after everything that you've done?

16 MR. BERRY: Yes.

17 DR. KREMERS: But you're talking about it as a  
18 benefit of what you're doing, where it's -- they have  
19 to go on then to qualify that.

20 MR. BERRY: Yes.

21 DR. KREMERS: So it's not really a benefit of  
22 while they're in your system of what --

23 MR. BERRY: It does not benefit us. The benefit  
24 is directly to the student that they pay for half  
25 their bachelor's degree with no out-of-cost pocket --

1 out-of-pocket cost. And then they are able to get  
2 the enhanced award for their junior and senior year,  
3 and so -- instead of having to cover that out-of-  
4 pocket.

5 DR. KREMERS: Okay.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So I'm going to kind of  
7 come back to an area we were talking about, because I  
8 think we could probably ask questions all day. But I  
9 think we need to go back because there was, for me  
10 anyway, the serious consideration around what we need  
11 to take into account with the desegregation analysis,  
12 from that aspect. So I think what I would like is to  
13 ask the Panel to have a discussion about that right  
14 now and thoughts on that regard.

15 And I do feel like I need to say the plan -- I  
16 mean, you've developed a good plan; you've gotten the  
17 partnerships; there are obvious opportunities for  
18 students. I think our concerns up here range around  
19 whether or not there is going to be a problem with an  
20 active desegregation Consent Decree, number one, and  
21 then, number two, those -- the qualifications that  
22 were out there, and do those qualifications -- while  
23 they may, you know, hold legitimate value in terms of  
24 students needing to be ready for college courses  
25 though, when you're talking about the obligation of a

1 public school to provide opportunities for all  
2 students, are those qualifications that are there  
3 limiting to certain student populations which could  
4 create other challenges? So I think if I would ask  
5 us to maybe kind of have a discussion there and --

6 SUPT. HART: Before that discussion, if it would  
7 help the process, if there was some documentation  
8 from our legal -- from our legal representation  
9 explaining our thoughts and our processes on how it  
10 will or will not affect our current Consent Decree is  
11 something that we could always come back with, if the  
12 board would like to see that. I'm just throwing that  
13 out there as an option for you, Ma'am.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yeah. Well, and I think  
15 any information that we would have as a panel could  
16 be helpful. Are you saying before making a decision?  
17 Are you saying in terms of whether we would decide to  
18 --

19 SUPT. HART: I'm at your --

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- delay a decision, I  
21 guess?

22 SUPT. HART: Yeah. If you wanted to delay a  
23 decision, I know that I could get -- I feel confident  
24 that I could get that and you could take that matter  
25 up at your next meeting, if that's what -- if that

1 would please the board. I just want to make that an  
2 option available to you in your conversations.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Panel, I would  
4 entertain discussion around this.

5 MR. WILSON: Well, that was sort of my  
6 suggestion or my thought is temporarily table the  
7 application until we receive some substantive report  
8 on the deseg effect, if any. And whether the removal  
9 of the qualifications for the students, that Ms.  
10 Newton raised -- if that were eliminated, it seems to  
11 me like that eliminates the -- or might eliminate a  
12 deseg problem all together.

13 MS. NEWTON: I don't know, just --

14 MR. WILSON: Maybe not.

15 MS. NEWTON: Every case is individual. But I  
16 look historically at the quagmire that this has  
17 presented when I was on the Board in keeping up with  
18 affairs that -- typically it is -- it's a slippery  
19 slope and it is something that is involved deeper  
20 than I can understand in terms of what becomes a  
21 violation of unitary status. So I don't know that a  
22 delay would do me any particular good. It could  
23 clear up some questions maybe, but not remove concern  
24 I have about the unitary status and the current --  
25 the lawsuit that the district is involved in around

1 that -- which seems to bring in a lot of those  
2 components that seem to, you know, prompt some more  
3 questions and concerns and not toward a positive  
4 resolution. That's my perspective.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Do you have any thoughts?

6 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I think I'm kind of in  
7 the same place that Ms. Newton is. I just think that  
8 by creating this standalone with criteria -- even  
9 though there might not be initial criteria, there's  
10 still criteria because they won't get the credit if  
11 they don't have the -- and be able to stay junior and  
12 senior year. I just hate it because it's a really  
13 good program. I just wish there was a way to do it  
14 and it be a program of a larger conversion charter,  
15 if that makes sense.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Other -- Panel, any other  
17 comments?

18 MR. ROGERS: So I'm just trying to catch-up. I  
19 thought Mr. Hart said that he would -- if that's what  
20 y'all wanted, anyone that was interested could go to  
21 -- go into it, that they're willing to change that  
22 right now. So I think that would take care of the  
23 qualifications questions that I had.

24 The question I have is: can you not do it now?  
25 I mean, why do we need the conversion charter?



1           That's what I'm a little -- still a little foggy on,  
2           is if there's nothing to keep you from doing it right  
3           now and we don't get into trouble with the unitary  
4           stuff, then why don't you go do it? And that's -- I  
5           mean, I didn't mean it like that.

6           SUPT. HART: Right.

7           MR. ROGERS: But, I mean, that's just --

8           SUPT. HART: That's fair.

9           MR. ROGERS: -- you know, my questions.

10          SUPT. HART: That's fair. And, again, I go back  
11          to what I was -- how I responded to Dr. Hernandez  
12          earlier. This conversation goes back 18 months or  
13          more with the Chancellor and I when we were first  
14          throwing the idea out, and we really felt like that  
15          it was the best option so that we would be  
16          transparent in what we're doing, so that we're not  
17          trying to sneak anything around anybody. We felt  
18          like that it was the best option available. So for  
19          that very reason, so because of some of those  
20          tensions that Ms. Newton refers to. The first thing  
21          that people think when you do create something  
22          similar is that it's -- there's an ulterior motive  
23          behind the creation. And so we were trying to be  
24          above-board. And if that's a flaw in my decision-  
25          making process, I'll accept full responsibility. So

1 I appreciate your comments, Mr. Rogers.

2 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yeah. And I don't think  
3 that we feel like it's a flaw. I think it's just a  
4 matter of, in terms of approving a district  
5 conversion charter, the role of this panel of having  
6 to look through all of those considerations. So I  
7 guess we're kind of at a point right now in terms --  
8 I mean, I don't mean to not have you speak. But I'm  
9 not sure --

10 CHANCELLOR THOMASON: It's not going to add  
11 anything.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: I think this is more than  
13 -- and then, you know, a decision that we need to  
14 make right now as a panel and you-all need to make as  
15 an entity.

16 Do you want to go on forward and us consider a  
17 motion here today regarding this application? Do you  
18 -- and I think that may be where we are. And if  
19 someone on the panel wants to speak up -- I think Mr.  
20 Rogers --

21 MR. ROGERS: I would be uncomfortable right now  
22 voting for any motion to move forward with ADE Legal  
23 bringing up the questions about unitary and approving  
24 this. If we could have something brought back that  
25 had been vetted and looked at to make at least ADE

1           Legal feel a little bit better about it would help  
2           alleviate my concerns -- because I'm going to defer  
3           to them every time. If they're saying that I'm about  
4           to make a policy on deciding whether this is unitary  
5           or not, then I'm not comfortable voting on that at  
6           all today. That's just something that I don't think  
7           that I could wrap my head around today on this.

8           MS. HYATT: Mary Clare Hyatt, Arkansas  
9           Department of Education. I did want to point out  
10          that in the application itself -- I think it's page  
11          62 or 63 -- the applicant did provide information  
12          from them about how it might impact desegregation  
13          efforts in the district. So in addition to what's on  
14          the agenda as the desegregation analysis, which is  
15          what I put together, there is something from the  
16          district in the application itself. So you do have  
17          something from the district. I just wanted to make  
18          sure everyone knew that, since I wasn't clear if  
19          everyone had had an opportunity to review it.

20          DR. BOYD: If you're looking for it, it's prompt  
21          19 in the application. It says Application and ADE  
22          Review.

23          SUPT. HART: Madam Chair, to keep the board from  
24          having to further delay their lunchtime I think it  
25          would probably be in our best interest and in the

1 board's as well if we withdrew our request and  
2 withdrew our application. I don't want to waste your  
3 time and put you in a spot where you have to vote.  
4 By many of your accounts, you said we have a good  
5 idea, a good plan, and I don't want to put you in a  
6 spot where you have to make an uncomfortable vote on  
7 something that you really can't support right now.

8 I do want to invite you -- as Mr. Rogers said,  
9 we will probably do the implementation of this  
10 program, beginning in August, and I'd like to invite  
11 you to participate in the groundbreaking in the  
12 beginning of this program. We've got a fine idea and  
13 I think it has a chance to do a lot of good for a lot  
14 of kids. So with that being said, we will withdraw  
15 our application.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

17 DR. HERNANDEZ: I have some questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes, go ahead and ask a  
19 question.

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: I just -- so will you come back  
21 and ask for any of these waivers to fully implement  
22 your program?

23 SUPT. HART: More than likely, yes, sir.

24 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And that was --

1 SUPT. HART: That would be through the waiver  
2 process.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: And I appreciate that, and  
4 that was something that I was going to say that. As  
5 you do this, if we can be of assistance in that  
6 regard --

7 SUPT. HART: Sure.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- we would definitely  
9 help you do that and look forward to seeing how this  
10 opportunity --

11 SUPT. HART: Sure.

12 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- starts working for  
13 students, so --

14 SUPT. HART: Thank you.

15 MS. NEWTON: But just as -- you know, just as  
16 importantly for me is the unitary status --

17 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

18 MS. NEWTON: -- and how that breaks down and how  
19 it doesn't create a problem, you know, with your  
20 pending --

21 SUPT. HART: Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. NEWTON: And I don't know what you do if you  
23 -- unless you drop your suit, you know, or the  
24 pending suit. I'm not suggesting that.

25 SUPT. HART: Sure.

1 MS. NEWTON: But I'm saying that's lingering.

2 SUPT. HART: I understand.

3 MS. NEWTON: And so how all those things -- it  
4 just -- like the quagmire.

5 SUPT. HART: We live that every day and we're  
6 very aware of our obligations. And we're trying to  
7 make sure we do things right for everyone involved.  
8 So I appreciate your voicing your concerns. Thank  
9 you.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. All right. So is  
11 there any formal action that needs to be taken, Dr.  
12 Boyd or Ms. Hyatt?

13 DR. BOYD: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No, okay.

15 MR. WILSON: Madam Chairman, I would just like  
16 to personally say I don't think y'all wasted  
17 anybody's time here today.

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: No.

19 MR. WILSON: I think every one of us is mightily  
20 impressed with the team effort that you-all have got  
21 down there in furtherance of the education of those  
22 kids -- and hooray for you. Let's keep working on  
23 it. I think everybody here feels that way.

24 MR. BERRY: Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

25 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes. And especially

1 appreciate the thoughtfulness that's put into by the  
2 higher ed. partner in how do we provide early  
3 opportunities for students and the thoughtfulness  
4 around the savings for students. So, yes, I  
5 appreciate Mr. Wilson for saying that. This has not  
6 been a waste of our time at all.

7 MS. NEWTON: And just FYI, I had an opportunity  
8 to visit the same configuration of partnership in El  
9 Paso, Texas, and it also was one of the major --  
10 supported in a major way by the Gates Foundation. So  
11 there might be something you could look at that, that  
12 campus.

13 SUPT. HART: All good ideas, just thought of by  
14 someone else. So we've stolen a lot of things from a  
15 lot of people.

16 MS. NEWTON: Yeah.

17 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

18 SUPT. HART: Thank you.

19 CLOSING COMMENTS

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So, Panel, I know  
21 that we've got things coming in the next couple of  
22 months, and Dr. Boyd can go over some of those  
23 specifics. But before we do that, I wanted us to  
24 have just a really short discussion around the  
25 possibility of having a work session. And I know we

1 also need to discuss coming back to look at The Excel  
2 Center, you know, as we get some clarification there.

3 My thought around a work session was last week  
4 we issued our state and federal accountability  
5 reports to schools. We have that data ready to share  
6 with schools much, much earlier than we've done in  
7 the past -- and it's been a really good process and  
8 there's a lot of really good information out there.  
9 We do have some charter schools that I think it would  
10 be worthy of us looking at performance of some of  
11 those charter schools. And so a work session -- if  
12 you all feel like a work session would be beneficial,  
13 that might be something good we could do, going  
14 through and really looking at the My School Info  
15 data, looking at some different things, and just  
16 maybe having our charter offices give us kind of an  
17 overall analysis of how well our charter schools are  
18 doing. We could look at -- get kind of a summary of  
19 open-enrollment and also district conversion charter  
20 schools. And then at that time maybe determine  
21 whether or not there are some schools that are  
22 elevated to a high level of concern that we may need  
23 to take a look at. So I was going to see what your  
24 thoughts are about that. Is that something you would  
25 like for us to do?



1 DR. KREMERS: (Nodding head up and down.)

2 MS. NEWTON: That would be good.

3 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So thinking of timing, we  
4 actually have a meeting scheduled on November 14th.  
5 I think that date was held in case we had any  
6 amendment requests or if something came up. We could  
7 go ahead and -- since that date is there go ahead and  
8 plan for that day; plan for, if it works out, maybe  
9 The Excel Center hearing on that day, if they want to  
10 come back, and we'd look at their request and do the  
11 work session both.

12 MR. WILSON: We don't have otherwise other  
13 applications?

14 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Right. No, no others  
15 right now. And I wouldn't anticipate that we would  
16 necessarily have anything unless something just came  
17 up that would be necessary, so --

18 DR. BOYD: Right. So I think this is a good  
19 idea. I just wanted to note that if you have your  
20 work session, and at that work session you would like  
21 to put schools on notice that they will be up for  
22 review by the Panel, then that would have to be an  
23 agenda and an action, if you want to hear them in  
24 December. If you want to hear them later, then that  
25 can be -- then you can have like a public action -- I

1 mean, a public meeting agenda where you have an  
2 action to call them forward at a later date. But you  
3 have to be in a public meeting, taking action so you  
4 can call them forward.

5 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: So if we have the work  
6 session first, and then if after we have the action  
7 item for The Excel Center -- if we were to identify  
8 schools during the work session, could we then bring  
9 that up on the action agenda?

10 DR. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Would that work?

12 DR. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

14 DR. BOYD: And right now the date that we've  
15 been holding for November is the 14th.

16 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Yes.

17 DR. BOYD: Is that date still good for you-all?

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Does that work?

19 DR. BOYD: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. So if we could --  
21 if we can schedule that -- if we could schedule the  
22 work session for -- do we want to say 9:00? Does  
23 that give everyone a little more time?

24 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. Not much more, but a little  
25 bit.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Or I'm open. I mean, we  
2 could start it later and --

3 MS. NEWTON: Nine is fine.

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And then plan for  
5 the -- we may need to have a discussion. We may need  
6 the Charter Office to kind of review and see how much  
7 time they think going through and giving the overview  
8 of the data and walking through -- how much time that  
9 would take, and then we would plan the action agenda.

10 DR. BOYD: Okay. So just --

11 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: What are you thinking?

12 DR. BOYD: Yeah. I just wanted to know what all  
13 you want to know, because that will determine how  
14 long it will take. I mean, with all the schools  
15 combined there are over 50 of them. So we're talking  
16 -- and then in some of those there are multiple  
17 campuses. So, I mean, do you want groups --

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Well, I think --

19 DR. BOYD: -- or --

20 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: I think that maybe there  
21 could be just an overall summary provided, where at a  
22 quick glance --

23 DR. BOYD: Okay. Like --

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- information about open-  
25 enrollment and charters, district conversion charters

1 maybe -- an overall picture of that. But then maybe  
2 --

3 DR. BOYD: Okay.

4 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- a summary of some of  
5 the -- you know, if there are some common data, you  
6 know, when -- if we look at schools that are very  
7 high-performing or schools that maybe are under-  
8 performing, maybe going into that ESSA School Index,  
9 where we stand; you know, are we seeing more of the  
10 issues with regards to the weighted achievement; do  
11 we have some schools that have -- that are showing  
12 really high growth. So that, for me, I think is  
13 always helpful. And I think also just a review for  
14 those who maybe aren't as familiar with where the  
15 data are. So just maybe a short, you know --

16 DR. BOYD: Uh-huh. Okay. I think that'll take  
17 about --

18 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: -- a short little overview  
19 of how to go in and find that information.

20 DR. BOYD: Yeah. I think at the least it'll  
21 take about two hours.

22 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. And we could do  
23 10:00 to 12:00, and take a lunch break, and then come  
24 back at 1:00 for the action agenda.

25 DR. BOYD: I think that's a good idea.

1 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: That may be -- that may  
2 give a little more time if someone wanted to drive  
3 in. Would that work?

4 DR. BOYD: I think it's a good idea. I think  
5 it's a good plan.

6 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay.

7 DR. BOYD: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Does anybody else --

9 DR. BOYD: Okay. And, just real quickly, I want  
10 to thank you, guys, who have already been out to  
11 schools to visit that are up for renewal this year.  
12 We're still trying to get those completed before  
13 December; so just a reminder there.

14 Also, I would like to take the time to thank  
15 everyone in my office and Mary Claire Hyatt for  
16 working very diligently on the standards transitions.  
17 So far, you have -- at this point you've seen all the  
18 transitions for all of the charter schools, and  
19 hopefully next month, at the State Board, they'll be  
20 confirmed and we'll have that done. It's been a  
21 tremendous undertaking and I appreciate everyone,  
22 including the school leaders, in working with us and  
23 getting that done.

24 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. Well, thank you,  
25 and we appreciate all of you. I know you're kind of

1 doing a dual role right now, so we appreciate that --  
2 and appreciate everyone, because I know it takes a  
3 lot of work to get us to this point.

4 And if there's not anything else, then I will  
5 accept a motion to adjourn. And we do have lunch in  
6 the conference room.

7 MR. WILSON: So moved.

8 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Had a motion.

9 DR. KREMERS: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON PFEFFER: Okay. We are adjourned.

11 Thank you very much.

12

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15 (The meeting was concluded at 12:35 p.m.)

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A-5: HOPE COLLEGIATE AND PROFESSIONS ACADEMY

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 State Department of Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on October 18, 2018, 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: October 28, 2018.

---

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



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