

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

October 19, 2016

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

October 19, 2016
8:30 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

MS. DEBORAH COFFMAN	Chairman/Chief of Staff
DR. MARK GOTCHER	Vice Chair/Deputy Commissioner
MS. IVY PFEFFER	Asst. Commissioner - HR/Educator Effectiveness & Licensure
DR. ERIC SAUNDERS	Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal & Administrative Services
MR. GREG ROGERS	Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal & Admin. Services
MS. JENNIFER LIWO	PLSB Attorney
MR. BOBBY LESTER	Director of Federal Programs
MS. STACY SMITH	Interim Asst. Commissioner of Learning Services

ALSO APPEARING:

MS. ALEXANDRA BOYD	Public School Program Coordinator
MS. KELLY McLAUGHLIN	Public School Program Advisor

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. JENNIFER DAVIS	ADE Deputy General Counsel
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Arkansas Department of Education
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Little Rock, AR 72201

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E X H I B I T S

A-1: HAAS HALL ACADEMY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Letter from Mayor Greg Hines (10/14/16)

EXHIBIT TWO (2)

NWA Editorial: A Well-Earned Expansion (10/17/16)

EXHIBIT THREE (3)

Letter from Raymond Burns, Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce (10/17/16)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Good morning. I'll call the meeting to order for October 19, 2016, meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel. I'd like to welcome everyone to the ADE auditorium and ask you to please silence all electronic devices. The Charter Authorizing Panel oversees the authorization, renewal, revision, and revocation of charters. Today we will facilitate a fair and responsible hearing. I will ask that each person speaking please state your name and title for the record. I will ask that you continue to speak clearly into the microphone for the benefit of the Panel, the audience, and the viewing audience. The entire meeting is being livestreamed and recorded and will be posted on the ADE website. In addition, our court reporter, Ms. Sharon Hill, will be providing a transcript of the meeting and it too will be posted on the ADE website.

All right. I have no Chair Report. Is there a report from any member of the Panel?

CONSENT AGENDA

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Seeing none, we'll move to the Consent Agenda for the minutes and the 2017 meeting schedule. I'll accept a motion for approval.

DR. GOTCHER: Motion to approve consent.

1 MS. SMITH: Second.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: A motion by Dr. Gotcher, a
3 second by Ms. Smith. Any questions? All those in
4 favor?

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion
7 carried.

8 A-1: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENTS:
9 HAAS HALL ACADEMY, FAYETTEVILLE

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Moving to the Action Item,
11 Action Item 1, Ms. Boyd, you're recognized.

12 MS. BOYD: Madam Chair, on the Consent Agenda we
13 also had a draft set of dates for your meetings for
14 next year. Did y'all approve those?

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We did.

16 MS. BOYD: Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We're on a roll.

18 MS. BOYD: Super efficient. Okay. Don't let me
19 slow you down. All right. Thank you.

20 The first agenda item you'll hear is Haas Hall
21 has a request for an additional campus and Jennifer
22 Davis can remind you of the hearing procedures before
23 we get started with that.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We'll recognize Ms. Davis.

25 MS. DAVIS: Good morning. Jennifer Davis, Staff

1 Attorney for the Department. The procedures that
2 you're going to follow today will be all persons with
3 the exception of attorneys will need to be sworn in.
4 The applicant will then have 20 minutes to present
5 its presentation to you, followed by 20 minutes for
6 opposition. After any opposition speaks, the
7 applicant will then have an additional 5 minutes to
8 rebut anything or make any final comments. You may
9 then ask any questions of the applicant, of the
10 Department, or of anyone else. And at that point you
11 can either choose to make a decision today to vote
12 for or disapprove their amendment or their request,
13 and then if you choose to take it up at a later time
14 you can do so as well. You also have a Google doc to
15 mark your reasons for your vote.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you very much.

17 And, Ms. Davis, if you will check for public
18 comment at the end of that time period.

19 Ms. Boyd.

20 MS. BOYD: Speaking for Haas Hall, to begin
21 their presentation, we have Dr. Martin Schoppmeyer.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If everyone that will be
23 speaking on behalf of Haas Hall Academy and anyone
24 speaking in opposition would please stand and raise
25 your right hand. Do you swear or affirm the

1 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,
2 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

3 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Dr.
5 Schoppmeyer, you're recognized.

6 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Haas Hall's PowerPoint
7 presentation is available for viewing on the ADE
8 website.)

9 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: I'm Martin Schoppmeyer; I'm
10 the founder and superintendent of Haas Hall Academy.
11 Our background, our mission, our vision is to insure
12 that every scholar today is college bound. We're the
13 number one ranked public high school in the state of
14 Arkansas for the past five years. Niche picked us as
15 the best school in 2016; Business Insider, 2015;
16 we're number 19 in the nation; we're the only Gold
17 Medal school in Arkansas for three consecutive years;
18 ranked as America's most challenging schools with the
19 Washington Post for four consecutive years; earned a
20 letter grade of A with a perfect score of 300 on two
21 of the assessments by the state; and our school
22 newspaper receive the state's top award at the
23 Arkansas Scholastic Press Association conference for
24 four consecutive years and they were recently
25 inducted into the Hall of Fame.

1 Here are some of the colleges our scholars have
2 been accepted to over the past couple of years.

3 We have a campus in Fayetteville; we have a
4 campus in Bentonville; our campus in Springdale will
5 open up in the fall of 2017; and we'd like to also
6 open up a campus in Rogers at the Lane Hotel in the
7 fall of '17.

8 Population growth for this area is astronomical.
9 In 2010, 123,800 students, 129,302 students projected
10 for 2020 is 140,508 students. So you see positive
11 growth in every part of the area: northwest Arkansas,
12 Rogers, Bentonville. That requires more schools,
13 more places to educate, and I think charter schools
14 can help fill the void for that.

15 Twenty-two percent (22%) of our scholars
16 identify as non-white in our Haas Hall-Fayetteville
17 campus; 28% of our scholars identify as non-white in
18 our Bentonville campus; 30% of our children identify
19 as non-white in Fayetteville High; and 26% of
20 students identify as non-white in Bentonville High
21 School. So we are more diverse than Bentonville and
22 we're increasing the gap in Fayetteville.

23 We have a comprehensive outreach plan to
24 encourage low income families to participate in our
25 lottery system, to educate them about our programs,

1 and to get them excited about college. So we view it
2 as an opportunity to educate, inspire, and bring
3 those young men and women to our campus and get them
4 in a system that's going to allow them to be
5 successful.

6 We have a partnership with the Cisneros Center
7 and that's going very well. We have a lot of good
8 things going. We do a lot of community outreach;
9 we're going to different events, the Latino Heritage
10 Festival, the Salsa Festival, and there's a lot of
11 interest from the community about Haas Hall Academy.
12 And so we have people there that can translate,
13 people that can talk to each other and make sure that
14 it's a good fit for everybody. The goal is for them
15 to take something away from our table and hopefully
16 apply at a later time.

17 The Lane Hotel is in the heart -- I'm sorry --
18 is in the heart of downtown Rogers. It was virtually
19 abandoned over 15 years ago. It's the key element of
20 a collaborative Rogers downtown revitalization
21 process.

22 Lunchroom facilities will allow us to
23 participate in a free and reduced lunch program. So
24 this will be our first attempt to have a functioning
25 kitchen that does participate in the free and reduced

1 lunch program.

2 Downtown Rogers is a safe environment. A lot of
3 people walk, very friendly; it's convenient; there
4 are a lot of nice things to do. We can take various
5 fieldtrips. But I envision this being something
6 where most of our kids ride or walk with their bikes
7 every day.

8 We have -- we've talked to the Rogers school
9 system superintendent, I met with Mary Ley from the
10 Arkansas Arts Academy, I've talked to different local
11 businesses throughout the area, and they're all
12 thrilled about us coming and being a part of their
13 home. And we all do things really well; we all do
14 different things really well, and so I think that
15 with the inclusion of Haas Hall we offer some things
16 for other schools that they don't do and certainly
17 they offer some things in their schools that we don't
18 do. So the collaboration effort is going to be quite
19 big. I think you're going to see some really neat
20 stuff coming out of this. I was -- we were very
21 pleased with the Rogers superintendent and how he
22 thought -- I know he's new, but he also thought that
23 we were just limited to what we wanted to think we
24 could do. So I'm excited about that. I've talked to
25 the Fayetteville superintendent; we have some things

1 going on too. I've talked to Jared Cleveland a
2 number of times. You're going to see some really
3 good partnerships coming out from traditional and
4 charter schools.

5 So we're here today to get a license and we've
6 never been subjected to disciplinary actions, been
7 classified as academic or fiscal distress, had our
8 enrollment public charter school placed on probation,
9 we haven't been revoked or suspended.

10 I'm going to turn the mic over now to Heather
11 Holaway.

12 MS. HOLAWAY: Hey, I'm Heather Holaway and I am
13 over admissions for Haas Hall Academy. I'm going to
14 tell you a little bit about our lottery process and
15 the changes we've instituted within the last couple
16 of years.

17 First, though, let me touch on kind of what
18 we're doing with advertising. That's more of my
19 background and that's why I came to Haas Hall in the
20 beginning was to help with the marketing. Right now,
21 we're working on really increasing our visibility
22 within the community. We're working with radio,
23 we're working with print; we're doing anything and
24 everything we can do as far as advertising to reach
25 the largest amount of people in their space. And so

1 if you read the paper, great, but we realize there's
2 a lot of people that don't do that. We're really
3 working hard to maximize what we're doing within the
4 community, as well as what we're putting out there so
5 we can increase awareness about the school and also
6 drive applications. Our application period opened in
7 September and it will be open until February.

8 Our application form is online and that's
9 something that we have chosen to do because it allows
10 us an accountability within our own systems. It's
11 something that you're able to access that at any
12 time, any place on the web, or at any of our
13 campuses. We realize that there are people without
14 internet access, so this year we've actually
15 instituted a program at our campuses to help people
16 sign up online. They can come in, they can fill out
17 their application right there at the front desk, and
18 if they're interested in setting up an email we
19 actually have a dedicated staff person that will help
20 them with that. We also notate on there if a person
21 doesn't have email or doesn't have access to the
22 internet; we'll call them, we'll keep them up-to-date
23 on everything that we're doing. At their time of
24 application they either get an email, if they have
25 email, or they get a printed piece of paper within

1 the campuses that tells them their lottery ID number,
2 which is the way that we track our applications while
3 still protecting the privacy of the child, as well as
4 all of the important dates for the lottery process.
5 They know when their kids can come to the school to
6 shadow; they know when the lottery drawing will be;
7 they know pretty much everything there is to know
8 right when they make that first application. So if
9 we don't see them again until the lottery drawing or
10 after, they still have all of that information right
11 there available. And, again, it is available online
12 at all times.

13 Another thing that we've done to make sure that
14 parents and children know exactly what's going on at
15 all times with their lottery process is we've
16 instituted this lottery identification tracker. The
17 numbers that are assigned are all unique numbers.
18 And if you'll notice on the presentation,
19 Fayetteville, Bentonville and Springdale, we have a
20 way for them to apply at one time using the
21 guidelines that were outlined in the Best Practices
22 webinar last spring. On that you'll notice that
23 those numbers start with F, B and S, and that helps
24 us from just a tracking perspective. Every lottery
25 ID number is unique and that's assigned to a kid per

1 campus. And so they could apply for Fayetteville,
2 Bentonville and Springdale all at the same time and
3 they have that information available a hundred
4 percent of the time on the website. It is available
5 at HaasHall.org.

6 Our shadow process is a really neat process.
7 It's actually just started this week, and we are
8 actually scheduling those online this year. If you
9 call the campus and say, "Hey, I want my kid to
10 shadow," that's totally fine; we'll schedule you
11 online. But, again, it provides another layer of
12 accountability for us. We're able to look at those;
13 they're in a database, it's trackable; five, six
14 people can access it and get the information they
15 need from that. Within that shadow process what the
16 kids do, they come to the school, they attend a full
17 day of classes, they'll eat lunch with the kids, they
18 go to PE -- I mean, it's a full day of actually
19 attending class at the school and it's really neat.
20 It gives the kids a perspective that otherwise they'd
21 have to wait until they are actually enrolled to get.
22 It's not required; it is something that we offer to
23 the kids.

24 This year we are actually doing kind of a
25 different process with that shadow process. We're

1 doing some info sessions to help make sure that
2 everyone who applies for Haas Hall, who shadows, who
3 is interested in being admitted gets as much
4 information as possible during that process. So our
5 info sessions are actually going to be held October,
6 November, December and January. We have morning and
7 evening sessions to accommodate schedules of all
8 parents. We encourage the entire family to attend.
9 And basically what that is, they meet with faculty,
10 administrators, there's a short presentation, and
11 then they get a tour of the campus.

12 Our lottery drawing will be held on February
13 21st. We already have it scheduled so that we can
14 make sure that everyone gets that information from
15 the get-go when they first apply. Just like last
16 year, we're going to use a random number generator to
17 assign each application a certain number; it's going
18 to be sorted. It's right within the guidelines of
19 what was outlined in that Best Practices webinar.

20 Our seat acceptance form is something that we
21 first instituted last year. What that does is it
22 lets them know that they've been accepted to Haas
23 Hall after the lottery drawing. If they're accepted,
24 they get this email and then they go online and fill
25 out the seat acceptance or come to any of our

1 campuses to accept that seat, and that provides us
2 with a unique tracking number for each acceptance
3 that we have so we can actually track that and share
4 that better.

5 Here's our lottery timeline: September 1st is
6 when applications opened; October through February
7 we're shadowing students and holding our open house
8 events; February 1st, we will close applications so
9 that we can get everything ready for the lottery
10 drawing on the 21st of February.

11 Our lottery process is a transparent and
12 traceable process. I myself have worked really hard
13 to make sure it's as traceable as possible, and I'm
14 kind of a nerd for data, so I like it. It's open to
15 the public. It's supervised and audited by the ADE,
16 and we really appreciate you guys' help on this.
17 We're really excited about Rogers. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Is there anyone here to
19 speak in opposition or any public comment?

20 Dr. Schoppmeyer, you have 5 additional minutes
21 to close.

22 MR. HENRY: My name is Mark Henry and I've
23 worked with Haas Hall for several years now. What I
24 have brought is copies of -- first is a letter from
25 the Mayor, Greg Hines, of Rogers. I'd like to

1 circulate that with your permission. I also have a
2 letter of the President and CEO of the Rogers-Lowell
3 Chamber of Commerce in support of this addition, and
4 I'd like to circulate that with your permission.
5 And, lastly, I have a Northwest Arkansas newspaper
6 editorial that states -- the headline is, NWA
7 Editorial: A well-earned expansion. It says, "Haas
8 Hall sets the bar for public charter schools." It
9 talks about how, quote, "The old Lane Hotel facility
10 is being renovated and will no doubt make a fine home
11 for the academy. Never in our wildest imagination
12 did we envision a school going there, with that
13 limited parking." And it talks as well -- it talks
14 about "Mayor Hines says Haas Hall is a good fit for
15 what the future holds for the area."

16 So I think we glossed over a little bit about
17 the importance of the Lane Hotel and Rogers
18 revitalization. The Lane Hotel was abandoned, and if
19 you've been to Rogers in a long time it's a -- 10
20 years ago they desperately needed a facelift and
21 they've really made a plan to change and revitalize
22 it. And this is -- you know -- the Lane Hotel was
23 the albatross; it was for sale and boarded up and
24 filled with a lot of crazy things, meaning pidgins
25 and nuisance components. But this is a great

1 solution, one that's going to allow that neighborhood
2 an opportunity for students to walk, to ride bikes,
3 and to be accessible and open.

4 We've been here several times and what we stress
5 is the full transparency of our lottery process. We
6 hear that loud and clear. And now I believe that our
7 process is used -- not only is it in conformity with
8 Best Practices, but some of the things that we're
9 doing is also going to help other schools.

10 Dr. Schoppmeyer briefly spoke about talking with
11 the Rogers superintendent and Jared Cleveland of
12 Springdale. You know, you'll recall that Jared
13 Cleveland in Springdale spoke in opposition to the
14 Springdale expansion or that we should wait longer.
15 In response, we listened to him and we postponed the
16 Springdale expansion for a full year to allow full
17 collaboration. And Dr. Schoppmeyer met with Dr.
18 Cleveland again yesterday and there's a lot of
19 promising things.

20 Now I want to close in the last few minutes to
21 say the complaint you have about free and reduced,
22 about what are you -- what is your data, Rogers gives
23 us that opportunity to start tracking that
24 information and that's huge. We're going to be able
25 to offer lunches in Rogers, and that could -- the

1 kitchen in Rogers could be the platform to serving
2 meals for other locally -- local campuses. But in
3 the interim, Dr. Cleveland made some great
4 suggestions and statements on how the Springdale Haas
5 Hall, at the new location at the Jones Center, can
6 also cooperatively work. So maybe he needs to talk
7 briefly about the optimism that he feels in
8 connection with working collaboratively, which we
9 hear loud and clear from you, you know. Last board
10 meeting there was questions about what kind of
11 collaborative effort. And, in fact, they even said,
12 "We want to hear a report quarterly from you on how
13 you're collaborating with your area." And he's
14 energized and is doing that. So why don't you kind
15 of give an update in the last minute or so.

16 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Well, I think with Dr.
17 Cleveland we're certainly looking at sharing busing,
18 we're sharing food services because they already have
19 it all out planned. It would work well for everybody
20 because we want everybody to be fed. Fayetteville,
21 we're in the beginning of talks of how we're going to
22 collaborate and I think there's some wonderful things
23 we want to do; it's just getting it through
24 everybody's boards and things like that. With Mary
25 Ley on the Arkansas Arts Academy, we can pretty much

1 do it super fast because we're charters and so we can
2 collaborate a bunch. And we have some really neat
3 things going on there too, some academic and some
4 extracurricular activities that we can share.

5 So I'm really pleased how far we've come. We've
6 gone to the Hispanic Heritage Festival; we're going
7 to go to the Salsa Festival. Our kids are out pretty
8 much every weekend in the community trying to get
9 interest in applying to Haas Hall and our kids are
10 the best sellers of the school.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr.
12 Schoppmeyer.

13 All right. Ready to begin questions? Ms.
14 Pfeffer, do you have one?

15 MS. PFEFFER: Is this my mic or is this one
16 mine? Okay.

17 I just have a few questions. And before I
18 start, Dr. Schoppmeyer, I do want to acknowledge that
19 each time you come you all have addressed concerns,
20 and I do appreciate that. I know sometimes it
21 probably feel like you're always just in the line of
22 fire from us, and it's not that; we want the best for
23 kids. So --

24 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: So do we.

25 MS. PFEFFER: -- when those concerns are

1 addressed, it does help us. So your attorney
2 mentioned the complaint that we have about NSL data,
3 and I wouldn't call it a complaint; I'd call it a
4 concern because we do want to make sure that all kids
5 are having the opportunity to access the best
6 education opportunities within an area. So you are
7 then going to participate in the National School
8 Lunch program, or am I misunderstanding what you
9 said?

10 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: That is correct.

11 MS. PFEFFER: That is correct. Okay. And the
12 deadline I think is October 1st in order to do that
13 agreement each year --

14 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Okay.

15 MS. PFEFFER: -- I think. So just thinking
16 about next year I wanted to make sure you -- you know
17 -- you're aware and our Child Nutrition Unit will be
18 ready to assist you --

19 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Excellent.

20 MS. PFEFFER: -- in making that happen.

21 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: I'm going to hire somebody to
22 take that role over.

23 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Okay, good. Just let me
24 know if I can be of assistance there.

25 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: I will. Thank you, Ma'am.

1 MS. PFEFFER: The other question I had, you
2 talked about with the location, there was going to be
3 an opportunity for students living in that area. Do
4 you have an idea about an approximate number of
5 students in that immediate area that might be able to
6 take advantage of having this close location?

7 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: I think we did a five-mile
8 radius. It's about 3200 people that can technically
9 walk to school.

10 MS. PFEFFER: Students?

11 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Yeah.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. All right. And then the
13 other question I have -- and you may not be able to
14 answer it now -- I don't know if you hired very many
15 new teachers this past year for this school year in
16 your campuses. My question is: with the waiver from
17 licensure you are adhering to the Arkansas Qualified
18 Teacher rules. I was just curious to know if that
19 expanded flexibility that the AQT rules provide, if
20 there was any particular part of the expanded
21 flexibility that you see as being more valuable, just
22 to help inform our future decisions around that.

23 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: The system has worked well for
24 us because, again, I go for people that have masters
25 degrees or above in their respective fields. So to

1 teach at Haas Hall, you don't teach algebra four
2 times a day; you teach algebra, you may teach
3 chemistry, you may teach physical science, and then
4 anatomy and physiology at the end of the day. So
5 everything is -- it's all knowledge driven. So,
6 again, I think that the system that we have currently
7 in place works really well for us.

8 MS. PFEFFER: Do you more -- are your teachers
9 more likely to be qualified based on their degrees or
10 work experience, or is it a combination?

11 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: It's a combination of both.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Combination of both. Okay. All
13 right. I just -- I was just curious to have that
14 information.

15 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: I'd love to have you come see
16 it. I mean, you'd walk in and it's -- well, I was
17 fixing to say it's weird; it's different. It's not
18 traditional. And so they walk in, they're like, Wow,
19 this is -- it reminds them of college.

20 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

21 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Yes, ma'am.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Good morning.

24 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Morning, sir.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: I had a question. Looking at

1 trying to -- I'm sure you're familiar with -- I know
2 we will be in Springdale next week on our listening
3 tour concerning input into ESSA and some of the
4 requirements with that and opportunities that we have
5 before us. So with our new vision concerning
6 students, we want them to be able to be prepared for
7 college and career and community engagement. And
8 looking at the career side of that, specifically
9 looking in the area of career completers with career
10 and technical ed., looking at your pass numbers that
11 there haven't been students going along those tracks
12 and wondering what your plans are for the future with
13 that.

14 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Well, we're a college prep
15 institution. So our goal is to have all of our
16 scholars go off to college; right? Earn a degree.
17 And what they want to do after that, that's their
18 choice. But I think that we have various levels of
19 college degrees that fit well into other areas. So
20 we may have a person who decides to become an
21 electrical engineer and they can do something not in
22 that particular field. So I think it -- when you
23 have math- and science-minded folks, there's a big
24 opportunity for them to broaden their horizons. Did
25 that answer your question for you?

1 DR. SAUNDERS: I think so.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay. I've been struggling here
4 lately and I think it's been around the mission of
5 the school. Okay? And so I know this sounds like
6 it's being a -- it's criticism, but hear me all the
7 way out. Okay?

8 I've been trying to reflect on why all the
9 controversy about Haas Hall; you know, what is it.
10 And I've been to your school and I think that we all
11 accept the fact when we have someone come to us as a
12 charter and they say "our charter school is about
13 recovering kids who have dropped out of school, and
14 we're going to do this and we're going to do this in
15 those hardest to reach kids," and we all go, "That's
16 a good thing to go and do; go get those kids." And
17 then Haas Hall, your mission -- and you are college
18 -- I mean, you're very clear about what you are and
19 you've never said anything differently, so don't take
20 this as a criticism. Okay? I'm just -- but by
21 design -- and this is in your words in your handbook
22 -- "By design Haas Hall Academy is a school of
23 acceleration, attracting a scholar with higher
24 academic ability and desire." That's your mission.
25 That's the type of student that you attract. To

1 graduate from Haas Hall you have to have a GPA of
2 what to graduate? I've heard two different ones.

3 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Two-point-seven-five (2.75).

4 MS. SMITH: Okay. Your handbook says two-point-
5 five (2.5), but -- so that's been changed to two-
6 point-seven-five (2.75). So if you are a student and
7 you're not on track to have a 2.75 to graduate, what
8 happens to you?

9 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Well, you're put into tutoring
10 and we help you.

11 MS. SMITH: Okay. So you follow the academic
12 improvement plan that you have in here --

13 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Right.

14 MS. SMITH: -- which I think is very -- I mean,
15 the parents have to attend meetings every Tuesday
16 from 2:30 to 3:30.

17 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Right.

18 MS. SMITH: The student also has to attend
19 meetings on Wednesdays and Thursday for assistance.
20 And I think that's good; that's what you want. You
21 want to recognize those students and then you want to
22 provide intervention for those students. I think
23 what -- I think the problem that I think people have
24 -- and this is what I'm trying to decide is, is it
25 really a problem or is this what charters are, we

1 have a mission and we stay to it? You get to stand
2 up and say, "We're number one, we've been rated
3 number one, our students had the highest scores, our
4 students are this," and then we say, "But you only
5 take the highest students." And that's -- but that's
6 your mission; that's what you say you're doing.
7 You're not doing any -- you're not doing anything
8 you're not saying you're doing. That's what I'm
9 trying to point out here. So then when we push back
10 and we ask questions about diversity or
11 socioeconomics or what do you do with students who
12 have a 2.3 or 2.2 by the time of your senior year, I
13 mean, is that fair of us? Is it not fair of us?
14 That's where I'm struggling. I'm struggling that we
15 have a charter school that is a public school that is
16 aimed at the highest performing students in the
17 state, in your region, to come to your school. And
18 we look at the statistics and we see how well these
19 kids are performing, and they should be performing.
20 In your handbook you also talk about having a meeting
21 with students and their parents prior to them being
22 admitted to insure that it's a good fit. I guess
23 that's just -- that's my question, is how many
24 students once they get into Haas Hall see that it's
25 not -- it's too rigorous, it's not what -- it's not

1 the path that they want to take? How many of them
2 come to you, see that they can't do it and leave and
3 go back to traditional public school? I mean, do you
4 lose a lot of kids or --

5 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: No. It's a very --

6 MS. SMITH: -- is it a very small number?

7 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: It's a very small amount.

8 MS. SMITH: Okay.

9 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: And the whole reason for that
10 is because they have the opportunity to shadow, they
11 have the opportunity to come in and talk to faculty.
12 I mean, we help everybody; you know, a high tide
13 raises all ships. And so the school has to have
14 everybody perform to their fullest potential; yours
15 may be much higher than mine, but at least we're
16 trying every day. And so when that happens and
17 you're around those kinds of kids who have that as
18 their goal, that's what creates the type of
19 atmosphere that Haas Hall has that's successful,
20 because people are there to learn and they want to
21 learn; they want to go off to Model UN and Model
22 (inaudible) to get these wonderful opportunities.
23 But yet, they have goals, and we set their goals for
24 them. We sit down and talk about where you want to
25 go to college, how much is it going to cost, put

1 everything into something that they can understand,
2 and then you work from there. It's not all about the
3 books; I understand that. It's about being a good
4 person, being out in the community and those types of
5 things. But I feel really pleased with the number of
6 kids who come to Haas Hall. We don't know anything
7 about them when they're admitted. We have kids that
8 were C and D students who turned it around and become
9 A and B students because it's the environment; it's
10 the level of expectation for everyone.

11 MS. SMITH: Okay. Thank you for your answer.
12 And -- go ahead.

13 MS. HOLAWAY: Can I actually jump in really
14 quick?

15 MS. SMITH: Yeah.

16 MS. HOLAWAY: Before I worked at the school -- I
17 have a sophomore at the school this year. Her 8th
18 grade year, she was really, really struggling, and I
19 actually made an appointment and came in and sat with
20 Dr. Schoppmeyer and said, "Honestly, like we toured
21 Fayetteville schools; I really feel like that's a
22 better fit for her. She's just not handling the
23 accelerated curriculum like I'd like her to." And he
24 pulled up her grades and looked at me and said, "I
25 think you're making a mistake. Like I really think

1 she can turn this around. I really think that we can
2 get her a plan." And he sat there and made that plan
3 that day, which was, for me, an enormous favor but
4 also it was incredible to see that from his
5 perspective as the superintendent going, "No, no,
6 there's three things that we can fix right now." And
7 so I firsthand have seen what the school does in
8 these situations, and she's turned it around from
9 being a D student in math to really doing well. And
10 now her sophomore year she absolutely loves it and is
11 so glad that she wasn't at Fayetteville. So I've
12 seen this happen firsthand and I really do think that
13 their commitment to meeting with these parents and
14 meeting with these kids and getting them back on
15 track is really what makes it possible for us to have
16 those numbers.

17 MS. SMITH: Well, and I know my comments sound
18 like they're being critical, but I guess what I'm
19 doing is I'm just challenging us even as a charter
20 board to say why is it okay for a charter school to
21 focus on dropouts and then not a charter school to
22 focus on the highest group of kids? I mean, I feel
23 like we are struggling with the -- I mean -- I mean,
24 I struggle with this. And if I were a superintendent
25 sitting in a district, you know, I'd be all for the

1 charter school coming in and helping me with my kids
2 that are dropping out, but I wouldn't necessarily
3 like the one coming in that's going to take my
4 highest performing kids. And so I do think the fact
5 of being able to work closely with the school
6 district that you're -- and having -- I mean, I think
7 that's important.

8 The second thing that struck me that I had a
9 problem with -- but I want you to know that I dug
10 into it -- was I had a problem with uniforms and the
11 Lands End and having to have a brand-name uniform. I
12 went online, I looked at the prices; it's cheaper
13 than what I pay for my kids' school clothes. I mean,
14 \$20.00, \$18.00 a shirt with the insignia, it wasn't
15 outlandish but I thought it was going to be. I dug
16 into -- I looked; it wasn't. So, I don't know. I
17 guess that's why I'm just struggling right now is the
18 mission of the school. And when we ask you to be an
19 open-enrollment school for all kids, and kids coming
20 in who are struggling, I probably need to come and
21 visit and say, "Show me a kid who was struggling and
22 show me an academic improvement plan and what turned
23 it around for this kid."

24 MS. HOLAWAY: Okay.

25 MS. SMITH: And, Dr. Saunders, I actually wanted

1 to talk to you about this earlier in the week but
2 couldn't because we're on Charter Authorizing -- to
3 look at numbers of students that did attend and then
4 have left, and was it because of a GPA issue or was
5 it because -- you know -- just -- and I would
6 encourage you guys to go back and look at that data
7 also.

8 MS. HOLAWAY: Yeah.

9 MS. SMITH: Those are my comments.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. Could I follow-up on her
11 train of thought there? I think it poses a question
12 and exactly what she was talking about. I think
13 beneficial for us as a committee, when I look at your
14 student demographics and what we're trying to do, are
15 we -- you know -- we say that, "Well, we compare --
16 we're as diverse as other districts." You know, I'm
17 looking at a chart that has your demographics
18 compared with Springdale, Bentonville and Rogers
19 district. And within that, you look at the LEP
20 population; it's 0% for Haas Hall, 47% for
21 Springdale, 4% for Bentonville, 33% for Rogers.
22 Special ed. is 0% for Haas Hall, 10%, 10%, and 11%,
23 respectively for the other districts. And I bring
24 that up with the idea of asking is what you're doing
25 -- can we replicate it with a similar population or

1 is it for the niche population that you serve? In
2 other words, could we -- can this model that you're
3 producing the success with, could it work in an
4 environment as diverse as those other districts?

5 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: I believe it could. Yes.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: How so?

7 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Again, it's the whole idea of
8 bringing in quality faculty who hold advanced degrees
9 in their respective fields; engaging students in
10 learning. My mom was the GT teacher in Fayetteville
11 schools for 15 years and I always asked her, "If it's
12 such a good thing, why not let everybody do it?" And
13 so that's pretty much the mentality of Haas Hall.
14 You walk in the system and it's all GT, even if
15 you've never been exposed to GT before. But there's
16 something that happens when scholars get together and
17 work together and they do projects together that
18 learning takes a different turn and now they've
19 become leaders. I think it doesn't matter
20 socioeconomic, skin color, nothing. I think what
21 matters is you just bring in a group of people and
22 you engage them in the learning process, something
23 that they're interested in. And by the time they're
24 in high school they have some preconceived notions of
25 what they'd like to do. So if it's robotics or if

1 it's medicine or if it's art, we can plug them into
2 those certain areas and they can do some wonderful
3 things throughout the day that connects them to the
4 school. I mean, when we go to conferences -- we just
5 came back from Washington University, Model UN, and
6 there were kids telling our kids they want to come to
7 our school; they were so respectful, they just did a
8 beautiful job. That's the kind of people that we
9 have leave our institution, and we pride ourselves on
10 that. It's important that you act a certain way.
11 So, again, I think the atmosphere -- when you walk in
12 the building you don't see kids messing around with
13 each other; you see kids walking around the building
14 like adults and they say hi to everybody. It's a
15 different feel.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. And I understand that, I
17 respect that. I think there's one variable though
18 that is underlining and it's the idea that all the
19 students that attend there have the parental support
20 and attend there by choice. I think that's part of
21 the shadowing and the meeting, you know, that we
22 discussed.

23 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Yes.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: I mean, kids find out what
25 they're getting into and make a conscious choice to

1 abide by that environment and rules and everything.
2 And in some of the other districts you're dealing
3 with students that do not have that choice, do not
4 have that support, and they would rather not be at
5 school in general. And so I'm wondering how would
6 those students be served in -- with that type of
7 environment?

8 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Well, we have students that
9 come from broken homes and we work with both parents
10 and we work with the student because our goal is to
11 make sure that the student has options when they
12 graduate from high school. And so the best way for
13 them to get out of their situation is go to high
14 school, get a college scholarship, and do your own
15 thing. And so it's all about -- again, it's all
16 about being in this environment to where we have a
17 litany services and we take you through this stuff,
18 whether it's college placement, financial aid,
19 whether it's scholarships. We do all these things
20 multiple times a year with every child and every
21 parent. So there are going to be people that come in
22 and don't understand the whole college process, but I
23 can guarantee you by the time they're in 8th or 9th
24 grade they understand it. Like right now, we're
25 taking the PSAT; everybody in the building is taking

1 it. And for some it's a scary thing because they're
2 younger, but at least they get to gauge where they
3 are against their peers. Right? And they start
4 getting letters from colleges and universities, which
5 is a real big thing for them. The next couple of
6 weeks some of them will come in my office and say,
7 "Hey, Dr. S, I got a letter from SLU; they would like
8 to talk to me." That's the kind of stuff that I
9 didn't have, and I went to boarding school. We're
10 doing it here and the kids just -- it's just -- it's
11 a wonderful thing because they'll all bring their
12 letters in and show them to us and then the
13 scholarships start coming in. It's the environment,
14 I really believe that.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

17 DR. GOTCHER: Dr. Schoppmeyer, good morning.

18 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Good morning, sir.

19 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you for listening. I
20 appreciate -- Mr. Henry, I appreciate your comments
21 and I certainly appreciate the efforts of making the
22 transparency -- or the lottery process more
23 transparent. Thinking back -- and it's been awhile,
24 but I think back to our last Charter Panel and many
25 of the things that this panel brought forth you've

1 listened, and I appreciate that.

2 Certainly, seeing that 12% of applicants are
3 being served, sir, was a great demand for your campus
4 and we can't deny that. Seeing a 55% to 68%
5 difference in the other high schools regarding your
6 benchmark -- excuse me -- your readiness benchmarks
7 on the ACT Aspire, those are impressive numbers. And
8 so I believe that it's truly working and I do
9 appreciate you continuing to listen.

10 The two things I want to bring out is
11 partnerships must be ongoing. So as you and your
12 leadership team -- I would love to see -- if I was in
13 your shoes, I would want to make sure that an ongoing
14 partnership, whether that's done on a monthly basis,
15 every two months -- partnerships are based upon
16 relationships. And so I would just encourage that
17 that continue because there will be challenges; there
18 will be struggles because, to Ms. Smith's point, as a
19 former superintendent, it would be tough to see my
20 highest performing students choosing another campus.
21 But it also would make me better as a superintendent.
22 So all of the things that we've been challenged by,
23 or I personally have been challenged by, I just want
24 to encourage you that I appreciate you listening. So
25 I'm not asking for a response; I'm just encouraging

1 that ongoing partnership is going to be to the
2 success of all students, and I just want to commend
3 you for that. Thank you, sir.

4 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

6 MR. ROGERS: I just need to get some
7 clarification on a couple of things.

8 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Yes, sir.

9 MR. ROGERS: When you were talking about -- I
10 can talk loud anyway --

11 DR. GOTCHER: No, no, no, it's working; it's
12 just -- they're not looking.

13 MR. ROGERS: I can -- when I -- now I lost my
14 train of thought. Okay. When you were talking about
15 the lottery part of it, did I understand right that
16 you try to get all of them to apply to all your
17 campuses or is it just this specific campus? I
18 wasn't --

19 MS. HOLAWAY: We allow them to apply for all at
20 one time just so that they don't have to resubmit
21 three different applications -- or four, in the case
22 of Rogers. It's really up to what the parents can
23 do. And I feel like I have this conversation
24 probably two or three times a week with parents; they
25 call and they say, "Well, we really can't drive to

1 Bentonville, but like if we get into Bentonville
2 could we maybe like send our kid to Fayetteville?"
3 And that's one of those things that we've really had
4 to clarify a lot. If they get into Bentonville,
5 great; if they get into Fayetteville, great -- but
6 there is no cross between those things. It's just a
7 way to make it a little easier on the front-end for
8 the parents applying.

9 MR. ROGERS: So there's -- but kind of what I
10 was thinking about is on the waiting list, how do you
11 keep up with the difference in -- if they apply to
12 all three, are they on the waiting list all three
13 times?

14 MS. HOLAWAY: Three separate waiting lists. And
15 they could be drawn 24 on the Springdale waiting list
16 and 100 on the Bentonville waiting list and they
17 could get into the Fayetteville waiting list. So
18 it'll just be three different lists. Right now, we
19 maintain one waiting list for Fayetteville, one for
20 Bentonville, and that's, of course, by grade.

21 MR. ROGERS: Okay. I guess I'm kind of -- okay.
22 I don't know how that would work. It seems like
23 there would be -- I guess I would just need to see --
24 to get some --

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Let me just clarify that.

1 So if you were to say you had -- let me think of an
2 example -- 1500 on your waiting list, that may be 500
3 students because it would be counted three times on
4 three waiting lists?

5 MS. HOLAWAY: It'll be three separate waiting
6 lists. So each -- yeah, each waiting list would
7 consist of 500.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

9 MS. HOLAWAY: Yeah.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: So it could be just five unique
11 -- or, I'm sorry -- 500 unique students, but there's
12 1500 on the waiting list.

13 MS. HOLAWAY: 1500 total, yeah, if you combine
14 them all. We've just been instructed -- actually, we
15 met with Ms. Boyd and some of her associates back
16 last March and asked, "If you guys were approaching
17 this, what would you do in that situation?" And they
18 kind of walked us through how they would like to see
19 it set up, just from their perspective of their
20 understanding, and it's worked really well for us
21 this year. So we're going to continue that for next
22 year, I believe.

23 MR. ROGERS: Also, I had some questions about
24 the -- on the budget, of course.

25 MS. HOLAWAY: I can't answer those.

1 MR. ROGERS: On the 17-18 budget, on student
2 growth it used the number of \$6800. And the
3 foundation funding amount right now is \$6646. And
4 the adequacy committee is still doing their work to
5 set what the foundation will be for next year, and
6 they don't have to have that recommendation in until
7 November 1st. So I was wondering why the \$6800 was
8 used, which would be about \$154 over what it is right
9 now. So if I took that \$154 times the 380 that
10 you're projecting, it's \$58,000 and your first year
11 was only showing that you were going to have thirty-
12 five. So I basically just took that away.

13 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: I apologize for that. That
14 would just be something we would take out, some
15 general supplies and some classroom equipment,
16 because the lien will have everything in it when we
17 get there. So it's like --

18 MR. ROGERS: Okay. So --

19 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: -- open a door, everything is
20 there.

21 MR. ROGERS: So if it doesn't raise adequacy up
22 to \$6800, which is over what they've done more than
23 -- I don't believe it's going to be \$6800; but you're
24 saying you would just cut your expenditures to meet
25 whatever the revenues are?

1 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Right. Yes.

2 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

3 MR. HENRY: And, by example, what he's referring
4 to is the classroom equipment is \$110,620 and
5 relative to the Lane Hotel, since this is an ongoing
6 process -- I mean, this is a proposed advanced budget
7 -- he's telling you that -- or he's stating that the
8 Lane Hotel is a turnkey project, meaning that
9 \$110,000 is grossly overstated in this forecast given
10 the change in circumstances at this particular Lane
11 Hotel. Am I being clear or am I being unclear? I'm
12 sorry. There's a whole lot of room in that \$110,000
13 in the classroom equipment that would far offset the
14 \$150 discrepancy you point out, is what he's saying.

15 MR. ROGERS: Okay. For both -- and being on the
16 second year, also?

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I'm going to ask that you
18 please speak into the microphone. It doesn't pick up
19 if you're far away from it. Thank you.

20 MR. ROGERS: And then on the -- because on the
21 second year also I'm assuming that there's overages
22 built into the expenditures there too? Because you
23 still have the \$6800 times 350, and then I'm trying
24 to figure out where the 857 student growth is coming
25 from because -- how much is the cap for the

1 Fayetteville? Because if the Fayetteville is going
2 to be -- if this one is going to be the same as
3 Fayetteville, wouldn't the same cap apply?

4 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Yes.

5 MR. ROGERS: And so where's the 857 student
6 growth in this second year for this school going to
7 be? Because if it's -- if funding follows the
8 student, if you're trying to build a budget based off
9 857, it seems like you're trying to include ADM from
10 another campus onto this. So does that affect that
11 other budget?

12 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: That's the -- I broke it down
13 into Haas Hall Academy LEA for the entire
14 organization. So you've got a multitude of campuses
15 in this, just showing what it's going to look like on
16 my end at the end of the year. So I can say I've got
17 three budgets -- or I've got a Fayetteville budget, I
18 have a Bentonville budget, I have a Springdale
19 budget, I'll have a Rogers budget, but we'll also
20 have a budget that's all of it put together.

21 MR. ROGERS: Okay. Well, then I have -- but how
22 are you going to keep the funding separate for all
23 four of those? Because I know that with -- in the --
24 because I think the Bentonville one is a separate
25 charter?

1 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: It is.

2 MR. ROGERS: So it couldn't -- it needed to be
3 completely separate for all that.

4 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Right.

5 MR. ROGERS: So --

6 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Correct.

7 MR. ROGERS: But now with the 857 mixed into
8 this Rogers budget, how is that going to affect the
9 other two campuses? Because now I don't -- because
10 this one, again, in the second year shows that you're
11 planning on ending with only \$106,000, but that
12 \$857,000 ADM for student growth, which is overstated
13 but you said you had expenditures built in -- so I'm
14 just kind of wondering how -- it's not making sense
15 to me to have it all combined, all three campuses,
16 for that \$857,000 on student growth.

17 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: The way I looked at it is I
18 had three different budgets; right? I combined the
19 three budgets into one.

20 MR. HENRY: Is that what this is?

21 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Yes.

22 MR. ROGERS: Just for the student growth number
23 or for this whole -- that seems like it wouldn't be
24 very understated for if it's all three budgets.

25 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: That is your -- because I will

1 not receive money for the child until school starts.
2 It comes back in.

3 MR. HENRY: Right. So that contemplates -- 857
4 you're saying contemplates the expansion on
5 Springdale?

6 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Springdale, and the expansion
7 in Fayetteville.

8 MR. HENRY: And also Rogers?

9 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: And Rogers.

10 MR. HENRY: Because -- would you explain to them
11 some of the phase-in components that you're talking
12 about with Rogers, how you're --

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Gentlemen --

14 MR. ROGERS: They can't hear you.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- I'm so sorry.

16 MR. HENRY: No, no, my fault.

17 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Well, in Rogers --

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Feel free to remove the
19 microphone and hand it back and forth. But our
20 viewing audience cannot hear you whatsoever.

21 MR. HENRY: Okay. Thank you. So what I was
22 asking him to explain possibly is the expansion
23 growth in the Rogers. He's not going to start with
24 12th grade in Rogers. And I'm asking him to kind of
25 explore -- explain to you why these numbers are not

1 rounded at 1500 or 1400 or that kind of thing. So --
2 I think we're getting help.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Did I swear -- I'll need
4 to swear you in. Do you swear or affirm that -- if
5 you'll raise your right hand, please. Do you swear
6 or affirm that the testimony you're about to give
7 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
8 the truth?

9 MR. McRAE: I do.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. If you'll
11 state your name and title, please.

12 MR. McRAE: Scott McRae, Finance Specialist,
13 APSRC. I want to try to answer Mr. Rogers' question
14 here. On the student growth funding, with the
15 Fayetteville campus having the charter -- I mean,
16 having the license it's all going to be under one
17 district LEA, all the finances. So when you look at
18 the 857 you're taking into consideration the new
19 Springdale campus, which I think has a cap of 500 --

20 MR. ROGERS: Well, and I get that. I get where
21 that -- but if I'm supposed to be looking at this
22 budget for just what's going to happen at Rogers,
23 then having 857 student growth -- if it's been
24 included in what the budget for Rogers is, then
25 aren't you cutting Springdale -- I mean, Springdale

1 and Fayetteville? You're shortening what the
2 revenues would be for them too? Because if you're --
3 because if I take this total, looking at just this
4 budget right here, just this budget, and it shows
5 their total revenues they're projecting is \$8.4
6 million and their total expenditures is going to be
7 \$8.2, that only leaves \$106,000 in the good for just
8 Rogers. So then when you -- so what's happening to
9 Fayetteville and Springdale if you're using all the
10 student growth amount to run the Rogers facility?
11 That's -- and that's where I'm -- I understand -- but
12 then also I have a problem with including the whole
13 student growth for actually how much the growth is
14 growing in those other two campuses and putting it in
15 this budget here when that money should be going for
16 those kids at those campuses.

17 MR. McRAE: Okay. Now they've included two
18 budgets, one for the Rogers campus only and then one
19 for the entire license, Fayetteville.

20 MR. ROGERS: So that second one is for the
21 entire license, with everybody?

22 MR. McRAE: Yes. And then the other one --

23 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

24 MR. McRAE: -- is just for Rogers.

25 MR. ROGERS: Okay. So --

1 MR. McRAE: So for Rogers the only funding they
2 will receive is student growth funding at 380. So if
3 you go over to the other budget, which includes the
4 entire license, then that's going to include all
5 three campuses.

6 MR. ROGERS: Okay. And then on student growth
7 that first year revenue is a 380, if it is, that
8 student growth doesn't come till January; by law, we
9 pay it out 6% in January.

10 MR. McRAE: Correct.

11 MR. ROGERS: So that would mean that Haas Hall
12 would -- in Rogers would be operating on what for the
13 first six months of the year?

14 MR. McRAE: Well, they have carryover from
15 previous years. They have over a million dollars --
16 or a hundred -- I think the school --

17 MR. ROGERS: Yeah. But this campus doesn't
18 exist right now.

19 MR. McRAE: But it's all going to fall under one
20 finance umbrella per se.

21 MR. ROGERS: So you're going to take money away
22 from the other two existing campuses to start this
23 campus?

24 MR. McRAE: Well, with a license it's all one
25 district.

1 MR. ROGERS: But --

2 MR. McRAE: So it's all combined. It's like
3 having a district with separate schools. All the
4 funding comes in as one.

5 MR. ROGERS: But the kids aren't all combined.
6 Because I'm just trying to understand. I know it's
7 -- I'm just struggling here. But if you have a
8 school over here and a school over here, and you take
9 money from that school to start this school, what
10 happens to the kids at these two schools?

11 MR. McRAE: Well, they have -- they're going to
12 have increased funding because of the additional
13 students.

14 MR. ROGERS: But not till January.

15 MR. McRAE: But they have carryover revenue to
16 cover that.

17 MR. ROGERS: So they're over-funded right now
18 for what they need for those kids at those other two
19 campuses?

20 MR. McRAE: I wouldn't say they're over-funded;
21 they were just able to carryover from the previous
22 year through, you know, savings.

23 MR. ROGERS: Okay. And I understand. But do
24 you see my concern is that that money was supposed to
25 be for those two campuses and now you're telling me

1 that they're just going to take money from those two
2 campuses to start this third campus? And I'm saying
3 if they have carryover that's fine, but what happens
4 with the kids in those other schools that -- I mean,
5 why wasn't that funding used at the other campuses?

6 MR. McRAE: Well, I think they've been planning
7 this, so they've been able to, you know, accumulate
8 additional funds and set them aside for this purpose.
9 So, you know, in the end, it's all going to -- all
10 the funds are going to be in one pot. And so --

11 MR. ROGERS: And I under --

12 MR. McRAE: -- it's all going to work out in the
13 end. But how the funding structure works --

14 MR. ROGERS: I understand how the structure
15 works. I just --

16 MR. McRAE: So it is --

17 MR. ROGERS: I don't have to like it because the
18 kids --

19 MR. McRAE: Right.

20 MR. ROGERS: I want the money for that kid
21 that's at that school. So I get what you're saying
22 and I see what you're saying.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester --

24 MR. HENRY: Oh, I'm sorry. One quick response.
25 Our accuracy and detail relative to students for each

1 population and the admissions process should not
2 mislead you into thinking that at the end of the day
3 the accounting still stops with this license. You
4 know, we were very careful to say, "Okay, if you
5 apply to the Springdale campus" -- to minimize and
6 squarely address the concern that a lot of kids from
7 Fayetteville who couldn't get into Fayetteville would
8 simply apply and get into the Springdale Avenue.
9 We're trying to create the geographic specific
10 applicant pool that is tied to the concerns you have
11 of, you know, a lot of kids -- just using this as
12 another satellite office or satellite school. So for
13 that reason we listened to the State -- the
14 Authorizing representatives and they said, "Keep it
15 distinct and separate." So that's -- the application
16 is on the -- on one side, and then you have all the
17 accounting is on the other. And all the accounting
18 is, at the end of the day, at the bottom of the line,
19 does it -- do we have a positive or negative number.
20 And these reports -- there's one report, our budget
21 shows Rogers only to show you how that would work.
22 But at the end of the day the second one talks about
23 the overall license. Thank you.

24 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

25 DR. SCHOPMEYER: I think it's important

1 everybody know that no child would be shortchanged on
2 either campus. We do have the blessing of the
3 foundation who provides us with ancillary funds as
4 well. So I don't know what those numbers are going
5 to be, but I can assure you that they're quite high
6 and it does allow us to do other things.

7 MR. ROGERS: And I wasn't trying to -- I wasn't
8 trying to insinuate -- I was just trying to figure it
9 all out because taking the money from the other
10 schools -- I wasn't trying to insinuate that you
11 would cut the funding to open another one.

12 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Right.

13 MR. ROGERS: And I was just trying to get
14 clarification.

15 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Well, I appreciate your train
16 of thought, sir.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I ask a question right here,
18 Greg?

19 MR. ROGERS: Yes.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: I don't want to interrupt you,
21 but on that train of thought -- as I was looking at
22 the numbers -- and I wanted to clarify what was said
23 -- the numbers that I had closing out on 15-16 have
24 the legal balance of Haas Hall-Bentonville around
25 \$53,000. Does that sound correct?

1 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Sounds right.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And what on the academy?
3 Do you recall that? I'm trying to find it still.
4 \$144,000? So it's not the million dollar number that
5 we heard?

6 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: These are just your per-pupil
7 expenditures that we receive from the state.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I'm talking about the carryover
9 balance, because we were talking about operating on
10 existing funds that are already in the bank.

11 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Right.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: And so it's roughly -- it looks
13 like the combination of those two are around \$200,000
14 --

15 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: I hear you.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: -- for the first six months is
17 what would be needed to maintain that new campus.
18 Correct?

19 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Right. And we do have grant
20 money.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers, can we move
22 on? Do you have another question?

23 MR. ROGERS: Yeah. I was looking for something
24 on what he -- but I do have just a couple more
25 clarifications, one on the hotel. So is the hotel

1 ready? I understand that someone is renovating it
2 right now, but were they renovating it to start a
3 school there? Is there already desks in it? Is it
4 set up? I could you -- when would you be able to
5 start classes in it?

6 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: We could start classes in
7 August of '17. They had to completely gut the entire
8 -- all the floors, put new floors in, because they
9 didn't have the right weight-bearing floors. The
10 last time I was in there they had about two-thirds of
11 the floors done and they've got -- they have 238
12 windows that they're installing, and then there's
13 some windows that have to remain in the period and it
14 takes two gentlemen an entire day to take the window
15 out and put it back in. So it's a slow moving
16 process.

17 MR. ROGERS: But they are on schedule for y'all
18 to be able to --

19 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: They're on schedule. We had a
20 big meeting just Monday.

21 MR. ROGERS: Okay. And then the last question,
22 I promise. Just on the waivers, I know that you're
23 just replicating the waivers that you had at
24 Fayetteville. But when I was looking through them I
25 had a question on 6-18-503. It's the written student

1 discipline policies required. You have a waiver for
2 that one but then you also go more specific to 6-18-
3 503(a)(1)(c)(i), which is pertaining to alternative
4 learning environments. And so I get that one, why
5 you have that one, but I just -- I wasn't sure why --
6 and I probably -- I hope I -- I don't know if I was
7 here or not when you did the waiver for the whole
8 503, but I was just wondering why you need the waiver
9 for the whole 6-18-503?

10 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Is that the --

11 MR. ROGERS: It's the written student discipline
12 policies required.

13 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Yeah. We have them. They're
14 up on the website.

15 MR. ROGERS: So you don't really need that
16 waiver?

17 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Probably not.

18 MR. ROGERS: So we could just -- I mean, but I
19 get the one on the 503(1) for the alternative -- I
20 understand why you need that one.

21 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Sure.

22 MR. ROGERS: But I was just wondering.

23 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We post them; they sign
24 paperwork.

25 MR. WALTER: May I assist? Morning, Panel.

1 Tripp Walter, Staff Attorney, APSRC. Mr. Rogers,
2 here is my understanding of why that looks the way it
3 does, and that is it's not -- excuse me -- as Dr.
4 Schoppmeyer said, it's not an attempt to avoid having
5 a student discipline policy, but just not one that
6 necessarily -- excuse me -- meets all the
7 requirements in the statute. In other words, it has
8 full due process as required up and through hearings
9 to the board level and appropriate at every step of
10 the way. It just may not exactly look like the 501
11 et seq. requirements; just as a personnel policy
12 they're going to have, but it might not look exactly
13 like the statutory requirements. And the 5-0-1 -- 3
14 piece is -- pardon me -- is part, I believe, of the
15 standard set of waivers that an open-enrollment
16 requests when it proposes not to have an ALE.

17 So to answer your question, I would say for
18 flexibility purposes we would ask that that remain
19 the same, but that's the intent of it. And also I
20 think probably when it was originally requested they
21 were done in broader language than perhaps they are
22 today.

23 MR. ROGERS: And that's what I was thinking on
24 that; they came in and did the whole 503 just to get
25 the alternative learning part out.

1 MR. WALTER: Right, to emphasize that. Yes,
2 sir.

3 MR. ROGERS: But now that we have -- the
4 alternative learning has been out, I was just
5 wondering why we still need the blanket one on there.
6 And that's -- I was just kind of confused when I was
7 looking through them because I saw every one -- all
8 the rest of them -- and I get it; I just didn't know
9 why we needed a blanket one and then we went one step
10 down and we're more directly specific on what we're
11 trying to take out.

12 MR. WALTER: I would think it's just because of
13 the subject matter issue, just to make sure, again,
14 that that was a standard part; that's why that was
15 listed out. And then just the discipline policy
16 piece in general was the 501 et seq. piece. I know
17 they're covering the same area but, again, that was
18 -- it's, I guess, by the way the package of ALE
19 waivers has been done.

20 MR. ROGERS: Okay. I guess I'm still -- because
21 if we just kept the ALE one but had the 503 what
22 would change? If we took that -- if they didn't have
23 that waiver anymore but they kept the ALE waiver
24 requirements, what would change?

25 MR. WALTER: I don't think really anything would

1 change per se. They would still have the waiver, so
2 long as it was clear they had the flexibility on the
3 discipline policy. That would be my concern with any
4 proposed changes to what they have now.

5 MR. ROGERS: Okay. Jennifer, clarification.

6 MS. DAVIS: I think the statute gives them the
7 ability to develop their own policies anyways. I
8 mean, that's with any school district. So -- excuse
9 me -- so I think just the specific waiver that
10 handles the ALE, which is what most charters have,
11 covers the issues that they have. But they're still
12 free, much like any other school district, to develop
13 their own policies.

14 MR. ROGERS: Do you know how many other charters
15 have this blanket one?

16 MS. DAVIS: Two, including Haas. But everyone
17 else -- all the others have the specific subsection.

18 MR. ROGERS: Okay. So if they didn't have the
19 blanket one, nothing would really change?

20 MS. DAVIS: I don't believe so.

21 MR. ROGERS: Wow, we've got Mark coming up now.

22 MR. WALTER: Can I --

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and
24 down.)

25 MR. WALTER: I think I may have some

1 clarification. Two things I think going on here; one
2 is, as Mr. White reminded me, the applicable rules
3 that go with this that they have a waiver for talks
4 about the school board requiring all of that, the
5 discipline policies and the ALE and everything, so
6 that -- we would like to maintain that for
7 consistency. And also if you were to look at 503,
8 503 in my opinion is more expansive than just the
9 ALE. The specific piece is talking about you have to
10 have guidelines in your policies that reference an
11 ALE. But I think also there's more information in
12 there. If you look at 502 and 503 together, they
13 help spell out exactly what a school district is
14 required to have in its policy. And, again, it's the
15 only reason I think for asking for 501 et seq. is the
16 flexibility for Haas Hall to develop its own
17 comprehensive policy, which comports with all due
18 process requirements, just perhaps in a way more
19 tailored to its situation, as is common with I think
20 virtually all of the open-enrollment charters. So
21 that's why I would advocate for leaving it the way it
22 is, if that's the plan -- Panel's pleasure.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Do you want to think on
24 that one for a minute?

25 MR. ROGERS: Yeah. Because I don't read it the

1 same way. I mean, because I get why they want to
2 take the ALE part out, but I don't know why having it
3 that they are required to have written policies, and
4 it doesn't -- as far as school districts to have them
5 -- and they already said they do it anyway, so -- and
6 I'm not really -- much less for Haas Hall, I just
7 don't like the precedent setting of having waivers
8 out there, to have -- for someone that may not do it
9 right to come along. And that's the only thing I was
10 thinking; nothing against Haas Hall or how they're
11 doing it. Just -- I'm just kind of forward-thinking
12 a little bit on it. That's the only reason I was
13 looking at it.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis.

15 MS. DAVIS: I just wanted to point out that Haas
16 Hall-Fayetteville does have the blanket waiver, but
17 Haas Hall-Bentonville only has the specific waiver.
18 So they'll have to let you know whether or not it's
19 working in the Bentonville campus.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Does the blanket cover
21 Springdale as well?

22 MS. DAVIS: Springdale is a license of
23 Fayetteville?

24 DR. SCHOPPEYER: Yes.

25 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Then, so then they probably

1 have the blanket waiver as well.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: As Rogers will be as well?

3 MS. DAVIS: Right. But like I said, the
4 Bentonville campus has the specific waiver, so
5 they'll have to let you know if it works for them.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester?

7 MR. LESTER: I'm good.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo, questions?

9 MS. LIWO: Huh-uh.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith?

11 MS. SMITH: Okay. So one quick question. In
12 your handbook I noticed that there's a class for AP
13 exams. You do recognize that the state -- we have a
14 law that we pay for AP exams; you just have to turn
15 in your invoice?

16 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Right.

17 MS. SMITH: Okay. And so we're charging
18 students for AP exams? It says \$89 or a fee
19 reduction of \$63. Do y'all still charge for them?

20 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Do we still charge for them?

21 UNKNOWN LADY: No.

22 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: No.

23 MS. SMITH: So we don't charge for AP exams.
24 Okay. But I don't think y'all have turned in an
25 invoice to have reimbursement. Just know that that's

1 available to you.

2 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Okay.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay. And for the charter office,
4 Ms. Boyd, just following up on kind of what I was
5 stating earlier, I would like some information
6 pertaining to anyone who has left Haas Hall and gone
7 back to public school and what their GPA was. And
8 when you get that information to be sure and share
9 with Haas Hall. It won't impact how I vote today,
10 but if information in there is different than what
11 was said today -- because what was said today was,
12 "If they're struggling and they're not on track to
13 graduate we help them." And they look like they have
14 a comprehensive plan in their handbook, so I just
15 want to verify that the data reflects that.

16 MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions?

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I do --

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: -- on the waivers. You want me
21 to get into some of it?

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Now's as good a time as
23 any.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: All right. Okay. Just want to
25 get into the -- on some of the waivers, going for

1 some clarification. I noticed that the rules -- I'm
2 looking on the rules section. The rules governing
3 school district requirements for personnel policies,
4 salary schedules, minimum salaries, and documents
5 posted to district websites is waived -- is the
6 requested waiver. And -- okay. I guess my first
7 question would be: why is that? Or, are there just
8 specific parts of that?

9 DR. SCHOPMEYER: I'm sorry; would you give me
10 the question again?

11 DR. SAUNDERS: It's on the website requirements
12 waiver, on the rules. Why is that requested?

13 DR. GOTCHER: Dr. Saunders --

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah.

15 DR. GOTCHER: -- did I read in the notes that
16 they're replicating all the waivers that were in the
17 original charter? Is that correct, Mr. Walters
18 [sic]? There are no additional or fewer waivers?

19 MR. WALTER: That is correct.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

21 MR. WALTER: Yes, Dr. Gotcher.

22 DR. GOTCHER: So if they're just replicating an
23 amendment -- okay, just making sure before we dig
24 into them.

25 MR. WALTER: Madam Chair, may I address Dr.

1 Saunders' concern?

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and
3 down.)

4 MR. WALTER: I believe, Dr. Saunders, that this
5 -- again, it's kind of like the student discipline
6 thing; it goes back to the way when these waivers
7 were originally requested, that they were handled --
8 that is, generally as a group instead of picking out
9 pieces. I am not sure but I am almost positive that
10 I think what Haas Hall is doing is in compliance with
11 what you're thinking of. In other words, under their
12 state required information link on the website
13 they're going to have salary information, policy
14 information, those kind of things. I think, for
15 example, now the waiver, if it was asked, would be
16 like perhaps sections one through seven, I believe,
17 of that rule -- set of rules. And I believe it's
18 section nine where we have the 6-11-129 piece, the
19 things that the statute requires to be placed on the
20 website. So if that is a concern, they're going to
21 be in compliance with that and list all the things
22 that are required by statute on the website and they
23 are not using this waiver to avoid that.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: No. And I didn't want to come
25 that way. I get -- let me explain a little bit of my

1 thinking, and it's a little bit of our internal
2 process. And I want to be able to protect Haas Hall
3 in that at the same time in the sense of -- it asks
4 for a waiver for all of the rules. And so my first
5 question is: what part of the mandatory reporting
6 requirements are not needed, are not being met?
7 Okay. So with that frame of mind, then I go back and
8 look at the laws that are being required and those
9 laws that have specific requirements are not being
10 requested to be waived. So, therefore, it would be
11 my interpretation that they are still held to that
12 standard under the laws, because under those laws 6-
13 11-129, 6-17-201, and there's really a handful of
14 other ones that have website requirement -- posting
15 requirements and those laws are not being requested
16 to be waived. So I'm looking for clarification on
17 that.

18 MR. WALTER: Well, let me rephrase and make sure
19 -- I want to make sure I'm absolutely addressing your
20 concern. So you're saying that if they have waivers
21 from such things as the salary schedule requirements
22 and personnel policies and what-have-you, you want to
23 make sure that to the waiver of the posting
24 requirements that they are not using them to say
25 we're not posting any personnel policy information,

1 we're not posting any expenditure information, et
2 cetera?

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Partially. I think just to
4 clarify what's not being posted, so we see if that
5 waiver is needed. I mean, they may be needing almost
6 all of it. That's my first question is what's not
7 being posted that's required. But my other part of
8 that -- and I'll defer to our counsel to be able to
9 answer it -- if you have a waiver from the rules but
10 you don't have a waiver from the laws you're still
11 applicable to the laws, and those laws are not being
12 requested to be waived.

13 MR. WALTER: Well, I think the short answer --
14 two-part answer; the short answer would be I believe
15 they were waived or effectively waived under the way
16 the requests were handled at the time and what was
17 suggested be asked for. Secondly, on the policy --
18 on the pieces, as far as the state reporting goes, I
19 don't -- again, I don't believe that there would be
20 anything missing so-to-speak from the state required
21 info piece. In other words, again, as your -- with
22 policy, with the policy requirements and things of
23 that nature, again, it's just meant to have them --
24 have the flexibility to do policies, compensation
25 schedules, et cetera that are specific to Haas Hall,

1 not that they don't post the relevant required
2 information on the website.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: So I guess I might defer to our
4 counsel. So my question would be: if we are to
5 enforce say from a standards perspective, are they
6 required to have the postings in 6-11-129? When they
7 do not have a waiver from 6-11-129 are they required
8 to post those?

9 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

11 MS. DAVIS: And I'll go back and look at it, but
12 I know that there are a lot of districts that have
13 specific waivers of posting to the -- I'm not sure if
14 maybe it's something that either hasn't been looked
15 at in how it kind of connects to 6-11-129. And I'll
16 look at it to see if, you know, they have the waiver
17 of one, even though it requires it in 129, does that
18 still cover it. I will check on that and let you
19 know.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

21 MS. HOLAWAY: Just as an additional matter, we
22 do have a state required information page on our
23 website. It is up-to-date as of a week-and-a-half
24 ago, we went through and updated those links, and it
25 is accessible from every single page of our website,

1 not just the home page. It's right on the very top
2 bar if you go to HaasHall.org.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And I think more my line
4 of thinking is trying to get consistency within the
5 application of what is being waived because it's
6 unclear if the laws are not being waived. That's
7 what I was asking our counsel, is I think they're
8 still applicable, my interpretation, and that's why I
9 deferred to Legal to --

10 MS. DAVIS: Okay. So under 6-11-129, you know,
11 it does require the personnel policy -- it says, "As
12 required by 6-17-201 and 6-17-2301." So if you have
13 a waiver of that, as required, then I would view this
14 as probably not having to have this required because
15 you have a waiver from that entire section. But they
16 do not have a waiver of 6-17-201 anyways and they're
17 not requesting one in this amendment, so -- but I
18 would think in other charters -- there are some
19 charters that do have waivers of specific subsections
20 of 6-17-201; neither of Haas' campuses have that
21 though. So I would think that if they have a waiver
22 of the entire section, then this specific 6-11-129
23 subsection would not apply.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

25 MS. DAVIS: Clear as mud?

1 DR. SAUNDERS: I think so.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So to summarize what I
3 think I just heard, in the future there needs to be
4 some clean-up, either to protect Haas Hall that
5 either you know what you're actually being waived
6 from and you -- or not. And so right now it's
7 somewhat confusing in that you have a waiver from the
8 rule but you do not have a waiver from the law.

9 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer, any
11 additional questions?

12 MS. PFEFFER: Mine isn't a question for Haas
13 Hall, but I just wanted to -- I think it's addressing
14 one of Ms. Smith's concerns on students who drop out
15 of the charter and I know part of it was the grade
16 point. But -- and this is probably for Ms. Boyd and
17 may be something, you know, we would want to look at.
18 But in the law it talks about within 10 calendar days
19 from the close of the fourth quarter charter schools
20 shall submit a written report, and one of the
21 categories they would be reporting on are students
22 who drop out of a charter. So that may be something
23 that at some time we need, just as those reports come
24 in, for that to be aggregated for us, you know, in
25 terms of if there were some concerns noted in any

1 charter school that -- so -- or am I looking at that
2 incorrectly?

3 MS. BOYD: Ms. Pfeffer, that report, we collect
4 it from every school and we post it online.
5 Everything that's in that report right now is
6 generated directly from the way the statute reads
7 that requires that report. And I think you're right,
8 it could be a great starting place.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions
10 from the Panel?

11 MR. ROGERS: I just --

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

13 MR. ROGERS: Okay. We're going to start a
14 Springdale campus, a Rogers campus, we're going to
15 run the Fayetteville, all by August of next year.

16 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Right.

17 MR. ROGERS: No concerns, no problems, think
18 you're going to have teachers, kids, everything is
19 rocking and rolling?

20 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: Yes.

21 MR. ROGERS: Wow. Okay.

22 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: I mean, thousands of scholars
23 apply and --

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Microphone, please.

25 DR. SCHOPPEMEYER: -- 350-plus faculty members --

1 thousands of scholars apply; we have 300-plus faculty
2 members who have applied and continue to apply every
3 day from all over the nation. So it's going to be
4 great. And the nice thing about the Lane Hotel,
5 unlike other schools that have opened up, when you
6 walk in the front door everything is there for you.
7 So we don't have to worry about purchasing furniture,
8 don't have to worry about purchasing computers; it's
9 all right there.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, I have a
11 question for you, please. On July 14, 2016, the
12 State Board required Haas Hall to provide a written
13 quarterly report of collaboration with districts and
14 a diversity outreach plan. Has that been submitted
15 to you for the November State Board meeting?

16 MS. BOYD: No, ma'am.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. So, Dr. Schoppmeyer
18 --

19 DR. SCHOPPEYER: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- we like to get our
21 reports in timely, so --

22 DR. SCHOPPEYER: Just tell me when you want it.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We need -- we would love
24 to have it this week, but by early next week at
25 least.

1 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We can get it for you; no
2 problem.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. If you'll send that
4 directly to Ms. Boyd, we'd appreciate that.

5 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Yes, ma'am. Certainly.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I wanted to commend you on
7 your PowerPoint. So I'm thinking -- Ms. Holaway is
8 smiling back there -- it was really very well
9 organized, very visually appealing, very informative,
10 and it did mention that outreach plan. And so I
11 would ask that a copy of that be sent to Ms. Boyd's
12 office because I know that the State Board has asked
13 for that, and we just want to make sure that we --

14 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We just wanted to know when to
15 turn it in.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I'm sorry?

17 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We just wanted to know when to
18 turn it in.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If you'll send it to Ms.
20 Boyd.

21 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Yes, ma'am.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And then I had one final
23 question, was -- you are approved for 500 students at
24 both the Bentonville and Fayetteville campus. Is
25 that correct?

1 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: That is correct.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And are both of those
3 campuses filled to capacity?

4 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We're doing controlled growth
5 because what we found is that when you open up a new
6 school -- Bentonville, not as many older kids want to
7 attend, so I would say in the next two years they'll
8 be at capacity. Fayetteville is at capacity.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Because I knew you
10 had a rather large waiting list. I just wondered --

11 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: We have a large waiting list.
12 Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- if there were empty
14 seats there for a reason.

15 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Well, it's all about being
16 able to hire a quality faculty that want to teach
17 courses where you have a need.

18 MR. HENRY: It's by class.

19 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: It's by class, right. I mean,
20 everything is done by academic ability, so if
21 scholars want to have engineering --

22 MR. HENRY: Against the waiting list.

23 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: Yeah.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I think what I'm
25 hearing you say is then once you have a high quality

1 teacher then you're filling up that class; there are
2 no empty seats in those classes?

3 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: That is correct.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And then -- but you're not
5 starting new classes until you have high quality
6 staff for those classes?

7 DR. SCHOPPMEYER: I want to do controlled
8 growth. I hope to add an additional 60 scholars in
9 Bentonville next year and just grow it and have it
10 function with 500 kids, the same as it did with 300,
11 if that makes sense.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It does. It does. Thank
13 you. Any additional questions?

14 DR. GOTCHER: Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

16 DR. GOTCHER: Madam Chair, just to your point,
17 did we -- in our past meeting did we set an end-date
18 on those quarterly reports or was that --

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: No. It just -- I've got
20 the minutes pulled up.

21 DR. GOTCHER: Sure. I figured you did. Go
22 ahead.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We just said that they
24 would be required to provide written quarterly
25 reports of collaboration with districts and diversity

1 outreach. There was no end-date. That's something
2 the State Board would have to set.

3 DR. GOTCHER: The State Board would have to set
4 the end-date on that?

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Uh-huh.

6 DR. GOTCHER: Okay. I didn't know if that was
7 something that we'd consider at another time?

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: No. State Board -- that's
9 a State Board motion.

10 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If there's no additional
12 questions, then I'll entertain a motion. Oh, well,
13 let me ask Ms. Davis. Ms. Davis, are there any
14 remaining issues regarding Haas Hall?

15 MS. DAVIS: I don't have any.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Now I'll accept a
17 motion.

18 MS. SMITH: I guess I just need clarification on
19 what we're asking for on the letter for amendment
20 request. So we're asking for -- to replicate the
21 Fayetteville campus, and then to the sibling
22 admission preference for Rogers, and to replicate the
23 current waivers. Are those the three?

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

25 MS. SMITH: And so the motion would need to be

1 made on all three of those?

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Or you can just make a
3 motion to approve the request.

4 MS. DAVIS: You could make a motion to approve
5 the request as a whole or if you think that there may
6 be concerns or you have questions about one of the
7 parts of it, you can do them individually.

8 MS. SMITH: Okay. I make a motion to approve
9 the request as a whole.

10 DR. GOTCHER: Second.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any conversation? We have
12 a motion by Ms. Smith and a second by Dr. Gotcher.

13 MR. ROGERS: I'm still messed up about the 503,
14 just the waiver. I know that's -- but I would still
15 like to start having us look closer at the waivers
16 and where they are, just specific parts of it -- only
17 have those parts of it rather than blanket waivers of
18 law just to protect the charter schools and us for
19 future down the road. So I would just like to have
20 that included, that we don't approve -- yeah, I don't
21 want -- right -- because I don't want -- I would like
22 to not do the waiver for the 503 because I haven't
23 heard anyone say it's really needed to have the
24 blanket waiver when they do have -- and I'm not
25 asking to change the one about the ALE part.

1 MS. BOYD: May I make a suggestion?

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes.

3 MS. BOYD: Perhaps you want to approve the
4 request with the requirement that we conduct an audit
5 with the school on their waivers and give a date for
6 that to be done?

7 MR. HENRY: And we'd be happy with that, as
8 well. Instead of interjecting my promise to work
9 with them, we'd be happy to work with the legal team
10 or to walk through each line and respond squarely to
11 your request. I think we have a track record of
12 listening and trying to implement recommendations,
13 and we'd be happy to do that as well.

14 MR. ROGERS: And I appreciate that. I don't
15 know what that does though because if we approve it
16 like that and then we do the audit and we see, "Oh,
17 they really didn't need it after all," we've already
18 approved it. So does that mean we'd have to call
19 them back up here, go through it again, have a
20 hearing, and then request the waivers be revoked? I
21 guess that's what I'm trying to avoid.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Sure.

23 MS. DAVIS: And I understand that concern. But
24 I think it's something that -- you know -- like Dr.
25 Saunders point had brought up in that we've talked

1 about it on several occasions, some of the earlier
2 charters that were first granted, their waivers were
3 different or how they looked. And so it probably --
4 we need an audit, not just of Haas Hall, of course,
5 but, you know, kind of an audit of all the charters
6 to insure that, you know, they're not participating
7 in doing something that they might not have a rule
8 that was later brought up; that they're not -- I
9 mean, that kind of brings us all into compliance.
10 Because I think that, you know, the charter process
11 has grown and become more mature, and just to kind of
12 bring it -- to make sure that everyone is compliant,
13 both on our side and their side. And at that point
14 we would have to do amendments for those charters to
15 add what they would need to add or give up what they
16 didn't need. So I don't know if that necessarily
17 affects your decision today or how you feel today,
18 but it's something that we have been discussing.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

20 DR. GOTCHER: And I think, Ms. Davis, what might
21 be wise, to have an ongoing process of this audit
22 after legislative session ends in 2017, anything that
23 would impact current waivers based upon previous
24 approvals.

25 MS. DAVIS: Uh-huh.

1 DR. GOTCHER: It may be cumbersome at the
2 beginning but an ongoing audit process to see how the
3 law impacts current waivers might be wise. Would you
4 --

5 MS. DAVIS: Right. And we did that --

6 DR. GOTCHER: -- comment?

7 MS. DAVIS: We did some of that during last
8 session. I think just what we're finding is now,
9 especially with licenses more and more, are more and
10 more charters are expanding. Some of the older ones
11 -- you know -- one of the examples is the six-hour
12 day, and we found that during the 1240 waivers that
13 districts can get -- how certain charters have gotten
14 to the six-hour waiver versus other ones -- you know
15 -- newer ones versus older ones, it has changed. And
16 it's just kind of got us thinking that we want to
17 make sure that we -- I know Alexandra and I are
18 advising both the Board or advising the schools to,
19 you know, go about their intended purpose correctly.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

21 MS. SMITH: That answered my question.

22 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

23 DR. GOTCHER: So motion is on the floor.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I'm going to ask Ms. Davis
25 a question.

1 DR. GOTCHER: I'm sorry.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: In that vein of looking at
3 the waivers as a group, you would then be looking at
4 the Fayetteville/Springdale/Rogers as a package
5 because those are licensed under Fayetteville?

6 MS. DAVIS: That's correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so I think that's also
8 important for us to kind of keep in mind that that is
9 a package.

10 MS. DAVIS: Right. Right. And I think that,
11 you know, we had talked about just -- you know --
12 we've got some upcoming renewals, trying to start
13 addressing those during a renewal time as well, just
14 so that way it's not -- you know -- we hit these
15 schools all at once and things like that. But, yes,
16 for those that have a license it would be handled all
17 as one package.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so is that the case in
19 other charters where there is a licensed -- another
20 licensed school off of that original charter? Are
21 they handled as a package of waivers?

22 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Any further
24 conversation?

25 We have a motion by Ms. Smith and a second by

1 Dr. Gotcher for approval of the request for Haas
2 Hall. All those in favor?

3 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed?

5 DR. SAUNDERS: No.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Let the record show Dr.
7 Saunders is opposed.

8 If you'll give us just a moment to fill in our
9 explanations.

10 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Madam Chair, I voted for the
13 amendment request. I was encouraged by their efforts
14 to improve the lottery transparency, shadow a scholar
15 idea -- I think that was brilliant and just will
16 certainly improve students that maybe are concerned
17 about the rigor and concerned about -- I just think a
18 student will be a better recruit and a faculty
19 member. I know it could be both. But I'm encouraged
20 by the shadow-a-scholar and ongoing partnerships with
21 stakeholders. I think that's a great model. I think
22 Haas Hall is a great model for our state and a great
23 opportunity for the Rogers community.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

25 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. The

1 concerns that I had about the lottery process were
2 answered in the presentation. There is a demand I
3 the area and I believe the new campus has the support
4 of the community. I do recommend continued
5 collaboration with the neighboring school districts.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

7 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I'm concerned -- I'm
8 always a little concerned with your student
9 population but I think here where your new campus is
10 going to be, from your -- from the letter from the
11 mayor, it indicates it's a multicultural, multiethnic
12 area with lower socioeconomic status residence. So,
13 basically, I think that this will be a good move
14 towards addressing the concerns that I have with your
15 diversity and that's basically why I voted for it.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

17 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for the amendment. And
18 Haas Hall has addressed previous concerns from the
19 Charter Panel and has a proven record of success with
20 the scholars in their school.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

22 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it because there's not
23 any academic or financial issues with Haas Hall at
24 this time, although there was questions about the
25 budget and the operation of the lottery and student

1 tutoring. I didn't oppose the motion because, as Ms.
2 Smith pointed out earlier, they are good at what
3 they're set up to do at this time.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I voted opposed to it. I
6 had concerns over the lottery process not producing
7 the diverse population, as we mentioned I think at a
8 previous hearing. However, I hope that this
9 opportunity with this new location and everything
10 else will be able to produce one of those populations
11 that would be I think more in line.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

13 MS. SMITH: I voted for. Haas Hall to date has
14 not had any accountability or financial issues. I do
15 have personal concerns regarding the mission of Haas
16 Hall attracting students with a higher academic
17 ability as an open-enrollment charter for all
18 students. I had requested data to support that
19 students who enroll in Haas Hall remain and thrive
20 academically, graduating on time, with a GPA of 2.75
21 or higher.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Schoppmeyer, I am
23 encouraged by your responsiveness. I am -- I
24 appreciate that we didn't have to go back over all
25 those old issues again.

1 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: I am too. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You very much listened and
3 we certainly appreciate that and hope that other
4 charters are listening, that that goes in charters'
5 favor when they do listen to our concerns so that we
6 don't have to repeat those. And we would say
7 congratulations and we'll see you at the November
8 State Board meeting.

9 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Well, thank you for your help
10 today and all the positive and a little negative
11 concerns that we're going to take care of. Thank you
12 very much.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. We appreciate
14 it.

15 A 10-minute break and then we'll move on to
16 Action Item 2. Thank you.

17 (BREAK: 10:08 - 10:22 A.M.)

18 A-2: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENTS:
19 KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, HELENA-WEST HELENA

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. McLaughlin, you're
21 recognized for Action Item 2.

22 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. This
23 morning you will hear a proposal from open-enrollment
24 charter school -- from KIPP Delta Public Schools.
25 And today we have executive director and founder

1 Scott Shirey to present.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. If all the
3 people that are speaking on behalf of KIPP Delta
4 Public Schools and anyone speaking in opposition
5 would please stand and raise your right hand. Do you
6 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
7 give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
8 but the truth?

9 MR. SHIREY: I do.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Shirey,
11 you're recognized.

12 MR. SHIREY: Thank you. Good morning, Members
13 of the Panel. I appreciate you taking the time to
14 listen to me. You just have me today; I'm sorry to
15 disappoint.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: No disappointment.

17 MR. SHIREY: But that's all you get. So this is
18 what I hope to be a culmination of a multi-year
19 journey. About four years ago, the elementary campus
20 in Helena-West Helena, Beech Crest Elementary, was
21 vacated by the local school district. And I guess a
22 little more than 18 months ago then we were able to
23 purchase that for \$50,000, with the Commissioner's
24 approval. We have been working diligently to come up
25 with a renovation and financing plan. So, great news

1 on all those funds that -- first of all, we have a
2 great financing package from United States Department
3 of Agriculture which will give us a 2.75% rate over
4 the next 30 years, which is outstanding. We'll also
5 be able to through this refinance some of our
6 existing debt at that same low rate. So basically
7 we'll have \$10 million of capital, some of it for new
8 construction, some refinance at a 2.75 rate for a 30-
9 year time period. We've done an exhaustive study,
10 which I believe you've received by an independent
11 company, BKD, who has produced evidence that our plan
12 is financially viable. And this move will allow us
13 to move -- actually move our elementary school from
14 Cherry Street into Beech Crest Elementary and then
15 allow us to take our existing high school out of
16 those -- out of our modulars and reconfigure our
17 downtown campus. And so basically this is a nice
18 upgrade for our schools, for our students, and for
19 our communities.

20 I do have a full set of architectural plans.
21 Like I said, we have board approval, Commissioner
22 approval; we have our financing in place. We just
23 got our GMP back from our contractors and, strange
24 but true, it was that we were actually under-budget
25 on this, so that's nice. And we're hopeful that with

1 your permission and blessing we can execute in time
2 for the 2017-18 school year.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Is there
4 anyone to speak in opposition? Anyone to provide
5 public comment?

6 Okay. Any final words, Dr. Shirey?

7 MR. SHIREY: No.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. We'll move to
9 questions. Dr. Saunders.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. Can you just briefly
11 describe, what do you expect any kind of impact to
12 have on just the location with your student
13 population with the new address?

14 MR. SHIREY: I don't think there will be an
15 immediate change. I mean, we're -- it's five miles
16 apart from each other. And so we run 1400 miles of
17 bus routes every day, so it's the same proximity. We
18 have a lot of students who currently reside in that
19 area. And like I said, most of our students -- we
20 run extensive bus routes, so --

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Request a motion at the proper
22 time.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions?
24 Then I'll accept a motion.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: I'd like to make a motion to

1 approve.

2 MS. PFEFFER: I'll second.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any discussion?

4 A motion has been made by Dr. Saunders, seconded
5 by Ms. Pfeffer to approve the request. All those in
6 favor?

7 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion
9 carried.

10 If you will give us just a moment.

11 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

13 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, Madam Chair. I voted for the
14 motion to approve the amendment request. I see no
15 issues with this amendment request. Change of
16 location will be positive for all involved.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

18 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment request.
19 I saw no financial or logistic concerns with the move
20 to a new facility.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

22 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I didn't have any
23 concerns with the request.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

25 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for. No concerns.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

2 MR. ROGERS: I voted for. No concerns with the
3 address change.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted for. No concerns.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

7 MS. SMITH: No concerns with the amendment
8 request. Well put together request with appropriate
9 information provided.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Shirey, and
11 we appreciate you reusing a building that would've
12 been vacant in the community.

13 MR. SHIREY: We're very excited for the
14 community and for the students. Thank you, all. We
15 appreciate it.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

17 A-3: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENTS:
18 ARKANSAS ARTS ACADEMY, ROGERS

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, you are
20 recognized for Action Item 3.

21 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. For Action
22 Item 3 we have a request from Arkansas Arts Academy.
23 And to begin their presentation we have Mary Ley, who
24 is the CEO.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If you -- anyone speaking

1 for Arkansas Arts Academy and anyone speaking in
2 opposition will please stand and raise your right
3 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
4 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole
5 truth, and nothing but the truth?

6 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Ley,
8 you're recognized.

9 MS. LEY: I was waiting for the PowerPoint to go
10 up. Thank you. Okay. So we really --

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If you'll speak -- I'm
12 sorry; if you'll speak clearly into the microphone --

13 MS. LEY: Sorry.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- for our viewing
15 audience.

16 MS. LEY: Okay. We're real excited because we
17 really worked hard the last two years, put together a
18 new team. And our main goal is to be a national
19 level -- or, actually, we're even more selfish than
20 that; we want to be the best art school in the
21 nation, and we're way on our way for that and I'll
22 prove that here in a minute. And we have four major
23 goals under that goal: high academics, mastering of
24 the arts, arts integration at a high level, and a
25 deeper level than you've probably ever seen before,

1 and a museum initiative that's unique and reaching
2 all children in the northwest Arkansas area. So
3 we're very excited.

4 This year -- in fact, we get this award at the
5 end of the month -- we have now become an exemplary
6 design -- exemplary school of designation for the --
7 I'm sorry, I'm so bad right now -- from Art School
8 Network. That's the governing body of art schools,
9 and they see us as an exemplary school. What's cool
10 about that is if you look on this slide there are
11 only 14 states in the United States that are
12 considered exemplary art schools and there are two
13 regions or two providences in Canada. Some of the
14 states have more than one school, like Louisiana and
15 Florida. But for Arkansas to be in the top 14
16 schools in the nation, that makes me feel really good
17 because every time I see an Arkansas statistic where
18 we're not at the top it really makes me feel bad. So
19 we're going to make up for that and we're going to be
20 the top arts school.

21 We need an additional 400 students because in
22 order to be the nationally best school we're not
23 offering all the programming that it would take in
24 order to do that. And like we have a great ballet
25 instructor right; she's just a superstar, used to be

1 in the Chicago ballet and is trained from the Chicago
2 Arts Institute, and she's doing a great job in
3 ballet. But we also need to offer hip-hop and we
4 also need to offer tap and we want to have a full
5 range of the dance spectrum. And our visual arts has
6 really climbed. We had the Governor's Award for the
7 best drawing last year and we also won the award for
8 the Nature of the Habitat Award. So, but we're not
9 offering jewelry making and we're not offering
10 everything you can. And our goal is always to have
11 our students get accepted at the best art schools in
12 the nation and we need to deepen their portfolio by
13 having more experiences that we can't offer in our
14 current space.

15 And we also did a lot of research on what makes
16 up an ideal school size and over and over again the
17 number 600 popped up, and that would give us the 600.
18 Two weeks ago I had the luxury of going to visit New
19 York City high schools and they had changed their
20 scope toward a 600 school. In fact, they took the
21 schools that had like 3,000 students and put three
22 schools into one building just to get that 600 number
23 because they feel like kids are more successful. So
24 that's another reason. Our cap is actually 825 but
25 right now we can't even put more students in our high

1 school because of the way the layout of the school
2 is. And so you will see that we want the 400 because
3 we are getting ready to rebuild the high school and
4 that will also -- when we rebuild the high school
5 we'll need to have the 400 additional students to
6 help sustain it as years come.

7 This is our school now. It's the old Baptist
8 Church in town and we have turned the sanctuary into
9 a performing arts center. And the building on the
10 right hosts many academic courses, and you can see
11 there's like an old crummy ally in between them.
12 What we want to do and propose to do and have the
13 funding already to go on this -- the only thing that
14 keeps us from the green light is your permission to
15 have 400 more students -- is that the building on the
16 right that you saw -- the building with the -- on the
17 bottom left here is -- will be torn down. We had it
18 structurally checked and it's not structurally sound
19 and can't be remodeled. And we do have some money
20 from the foundation to help us with this project and
21 they don't like to have anything torn down, so they
22 themselves had it structurally engineered. And it
23 cannot be remodeled or the class sizes can't change,
24 so that building will be torn down and will be
25 replaced with that academic building at the bottom

1 left, and the -- where the light is coming in, that
2 would be our library. And the building -- the room
3 on the top left, that building is -- that old yucky
4 road I showed you would turn into where they connect
5 all of these buildings with the glass and that will
6 be our commons area where we have a cafeteria at
7 lunch and then we take our tables and we push in to
8 the garage door that doesn't look like a garage door,
9 and then we could have arts shows and talent shows
10 and every kind of thing that has to do with the arts
11 and that commons area, and then even be opened up
12 into that courtyard. So we're very excited about
13 this building. This is also downtown Rogers; it's a
14 third-mile from where Haas Hall just got approved,
15 and we're excited to be neighbors. Mr. Schoppmeyer
16 and I did talk quite a bit and we thought like if you
17 have to have an AP physics teacher and he only needs
18 them two hours, then maybe I could take them for
19 three hours. We discussed how we could use lunch
20 programs together; we discussed how if his students
21 wanted high-end arts they could come and take our
22 arts, and if we have a student that wants to take
23 robotics they could go to his school and take
24 robotics. So we're very excited about having them
25 next door so that we can partner and add the arts to

1 help their children and the academics to -- for our
2 children.

3 Our current facility is 52,000 square feet for
4 the high school -- and you think that's a lot of
5 square feet, but a lot of that is that performing
6 arts center. So we'd be asking for another 27,462
7 feet, which is all state-of-the-art labs that will go
8 into this parking lot that we have in the back. So
9 we don't want to ask for 400 students this fall; we
10 want it to be gradual to all the way up to 2021. So
11 it's like a 7% increase next year and then another 4%
12 the next year and another -- the biggest growth would
13 be the 19% in 2019 and 2020. So we're not asking for
14 it all at once because they would build the art labs
15 and then we could add a few more kids, and they'll
16 build another lab for the academics. And so it will
17 take awhile before all the space is even available
18 for these students. But, again, we do not want to
19 fund a project without your permission to add the
20 extra students.

21 We plan on increasing the student applications
22 to attend our school through having a better
23 strategic plan. We have never recruited before; we
24 have never put an advertisement before; we've only
25 been -- we always survived by word-of-mouth. But as

1 the program grows we want to reach more students that
2 need our services. And we've also added busing
3 ourselves for the first time. We have a pilot bus
4 program that brings 65 students in from the
5 Bentonville area that wanted to take arts that
6 couldn't because of single parents and different
7 ideals, parents that just can't drive. And it's been
8 so successful that we plan on adding another two or
9 three buses surrounding our area so that all kids can
10 attend our school.

11 We plan on using -- actually, I just finished a
12 grant where we will actually get a person to market
13 the school and market the new programming and be an
14 admissions/communications/marketing specialist.
15 We've never had that position before, but they can
16 reach out to all the arts that are around.

17 And another thing I want to point out that's
18 real exciting is we created an advisory with all
19 nonprofit art centers in northwest Arkansas,
20 Community Creative Center, Trike Theater, Ozark --
21 Opera of the Ozarks, you-name-it, anybody that has a
22 nonprofit; they always are struggling for facilities,
23 so we want -- we have worked with them and have them
24 committed to each giving us a portion of funding.
25 And when our school doors close they will come in and

1 use our same facilities to offer kids art and music
2 and programming in the evening, and so we're real
3 excited. In fact, what we have found this year our
4 parents are really delighted when they can drop off
5 their child -- and they can't afford the expense of
6 ballet lessons and expense of arts lessons, but when
7 they pick them up -- we have new piano labs too that
8 are really exciting; but mom can drop their kid off
9 at our school and get great academics, have private
10 piano lessons, and learn to be a ballerina, and be
11 picked up at the end of the day and then go home and
12 breath and enjoy life. So we're real excited about
13 what our school offers for kids.

14 To show how good we're cooperating with Haas
15 Hall, I actually loaned him that slide. I didn't
16 know he was going to use it. But anyway, it shows
17 that -- but it is an American theme, so you can see
18 it was our slide. But anyway, these are statistics
19 that we have planned -- or got from Chamber of
20 Commerce -- I have a board member on the Chamber of
21 Commerce; he got this data for me -- to show that the
22 growth can support it. I too sat down with the
23 Rogers superintendent; super guy. We partnered with
24 Rogers this year. We have a NICA collegiate bicycle
25 team in our school and we race and train with the

1 Rogers mountain bike team. And we had a parent that
2 works at a bank and we even had -- at the last race
3 we fed all the parents and kids from Rogers. So it's
4 kind of -- we've got a real good kumbaya thing going
5 and I hope we can keep it.

6 When you see all the red dots on this map that
7 is where all of our kids come from. Isn't that
8 crazy? I don't know if I'd be that good of a mom.
9 But, you know, they have -- we had kids coming as far
10 as Eureka Springs, as far as -- what's that -- West
11 Fork, yeah. So, I mean, that's a lot of driving. So
12 I'm really proud that we really do reach all kids in
13 northwest Arkansas.

14 Our high school principal could not be here
15 today because she is such a dedicated principal that
16 she's home administrating the PSAT, so that's real
17 important to her. So I'm going to bring up Matt
18 Young who we stole from Bentonville, and I'm proud of
19 it, last year, who is a superstar principal and he
20 knows -- he's only been there a few months and knows
21 all 580 kids' names. Isn't that crazy? He knows all
22 of the kids, and that's what we're all about is
23 reaching every kid and making them feel at home.

24 MR. YOUNG: Board, thank you for your time today
25 and thank you for letting us take the drive down to

1 Little Rock, close to my hometown, so it's good to be
2 back home. I'm very excited to be here and talk to
3 you about what our school is doing. I think the most
4 important thing really is relationships. In thinking
5 of a high school principal that instead of coming
6 down here she's like, "You know what? I want to be
7 there with those kids to make them feel comfortable
8 so they can become national merit semifinalists."
9 That's amazing. Because sometimes as principals you
10 get caught up in other stuff, and to get caught up in
11 how the kids' ballgame went last night, how the kids'
12 art projects went, that's what's important. Those
13 relationships are what build those things, and which
14 is amazing.

15 There we go.

16 The high school, Ms. Padgett has done an amazing
17 job with the high school. It is one of the highest
18 achieving high schools in the state of Arkansas.
19 They continue to do amazing things. They're about to
20 put on a production of Godspell, which I was like,
21 what, high schoolers putting on that production? And
22 to see the kids excited about it, not dreading it,
23 not saying, "Oh, I've got to practice," but being
24 excited to do those things is very exciting. They
25 have some of the highest test scores in the state,

1 when we talk about test scores. When we talk about
2 diversity they have a special ed. population; 29% of
3 the high school is free-and-reduced lunch. So we're
4 really a nice mirror of Benton County, when you look
5 at Benton County as a whole. We have some exemplary
6 programs at the high school with our dance program
7 that Ms. Ley mentioned. We also have an amazing
8 animation program. My own daughter loves to sing Let
9 It Go all the time and all the time and all the time.
10 Well, at our high school we have one of the animators
11 from Frozen -- and let me tell you, she's only in
12 kindergarten but she's pumped. She's like, "I'm
13 ready, dad." You know, I'm like, "You did great on
14 your report card, honey, but we're not ready for 9th
15 grade and I'm for sure not ready for you to be in 9th
16 grade." But there are some amazing things that I
17 would've never thought were possible in Arkansas, and
18 in a small school, to be able to be in a play, to be
19 in choir, to have a small class size. When I was
20 able to come tour the high school and I saw an AP
21 class with 15 kids, I was like this is amazing. The
22 teacher knows everybody's name. Because I was used
23 to a large setting where everybody was in a lecture
24 hall and the kids didn't even know each other's name.
25 But it's an amazing place that that principal has

1 built.

2 The universities the students have went to from
3 the high school -- this is an amazing list. I'm
4 partial, since I'm an Arkansan, to that Arkansas
5 list; University of the Ozarks, which is where I went
6 to; Hendrix; Lyon; Arkansas Tech; U of A; UCA. To
7 see all those kids -- because we want to keep our
8 best kids in the state; right? We want to kind of
9 build that fence around Arkansas and keep our best
10 here. But we also know that we've got some strengths
11 outside the state of Arkansas. We had a young lady
12 go to Hillsong College in Australia because of her
13 singing talent, and I was like, Are you kidding?
14 Like, I had to go meet that young lady because I was
15 so excited. But to see that list of colleges -- and
16 some of those colleges, I must admit, I never knew
17 were even on a radar. And I know as a kid growing up
18 in Arkansas they weren't on my radar, but for these
19 kids they can be on their radar. It doesn't matter
20 where they're from, where they live, where they get
21 rezoned to, this can be on their radar, which is
22 exciting.

23 Our district is based on four pillars and I'm
24 just going to talk about one of those -- Mr. Jones
25 will address the rest -- but it's the academic

1 excellence piece. When we talk about academic
2 excellence we want kids to be pushed academically but
3 every kid is different. Kids need some
4 personalization, you know, and every kid needs to be
5 ready to either go to college or be ready to go to
6 career. I know very successful people that after
7 high school they developed an app and they're making
8 a lot more money than I am and they're very
9 successful. And now they're working at Tyson and
10 working at WalMart and working at all these places.
11 Now some of them decided I want to go back, I want to
12 get my college degree to be a model for others, or I
13 want to go get my masters to be a model for my kids.
14 But what we have to do at our school is provide that
15 excellence, that rigor, and so those kids have that
16 hard work and determination which gets us farther in
17 life, and our school thrives on that.

18 In our school we are a K-8 school, which is a
19 different configuration than I'm used to, but it's
20 exciting because the always thing that hurt me was
21 when my kids left me; I'm like, will the next
22 principal ask; will the next principal know when the
23 cat dies; will the next principal know that we're
24 divorced? You know, those are important things for
25 kids, and building those relationships is vital. So

1 keeping those kids for nine years is an amazing
2 opportunity for me so that I can get to see those
3 kids develop. And sometimes you've got to remind
4 kids, you know, when you get big -- "Oh, I'm in 5th
5 grade now, Mr. Young; you don't understand" -- but to
6 say, "Hey, I remember when you were in kindergarten,
7 you know, and we've been together, you and your
8 family, walking hand-in-hand."

9 Another thing we've added is -- I'll be honest,
10 when I first got there our kindergarten through 5th
11 grade arts program was like any other elementary
12 school; you had art, you had library and music. I'm
13 sorry; that's not arts academy. I couldn't get
14 excited about that. I couldn't pull my kids from the
15 school they were at and say, "Hey, let's go here,
16 guys." But now these kids get to have guitar; they
17 get to have ballet; they get to have drama; and they
18 get exposed to all of these things so then they know
19 what they like. I'll admit, my own son, he didn't
20 want to do dance, you know, and he's in a dance class
21 and he likes it and it's okay. And I've got girls
22 that didn't think they could play the guitar because
23 -- oh, no -- someone said guitar is a boy. I've got
24 a girl that can jam and I would put her in front of
25 anyone to play today.

1 The other thing we added was having PE every
2 day. I'm a big proponent of the whole child. And I
3 hate to say when we think about kids sometimes we're
4 too busy doing this. We've got some kids with some
5 strong thumbs, but the rest of their body has gone,
6 "Hey," you know. And to have that PE every day
7 energizes that brain, primes it for 24 hours. For 24
8 hours that brain is primed for learning, which is
9 great for creativity. We've worked on remodeling the
10 gym. We've got that remodeled. We've got a piano
11 lab. Kids can learn piano at school, and it doesn't
12 matter if you have \$50 to pay that afterschool
13 teacher, because I didn't have it, but my kids at my
14 school have got it.

15 So we've done some exciting things and we're
16 excited about all the things that we can do. And the
17 last thing I do want to put up is that bus route
18 because I can't tell you how many parents said, "Oh,
19 I can't go to that school, it's too far; you know,
20 I've got to be at work at this time and my husband
21 works at this time," or "Grandma can't take them" or
22 whatever the situation. For those kids to know,
23 guess what, that situation is gone now, that barrier
24 is eliminated and we want you at our school.

25 Mr. Aaron Jones, our art integration specialist

1 for the district, now will come up and tell you more
2 about our pillars.

3 MR. JONES: Good morning. My name is Aaron
4 Jones; I am the arts integration specialist at
5 Arkansas Arts Academy. We have a very enthusiastic
6 team, as you see. Our pillars have been addressed
7 and the others that I'm going to kind of cover kind
8 of show the distinction of our school. So in
9 addition to academics, you've heard a lot about
10 mastering an arts form. It's in our name, it's what
11 we do; it goes beyond just the visual arts, as well
12 as the performing arts. We're adding to it; we're
13 doing a lot of wonderful, wonderful things that I
14 think sets us apart from just northwest Arkansas, but
15 in the regional area as well as competitive with the
16 rest of the nation.

17 Now in addition to mastering an arts form, we
18 offer a new approach method to teaching, which is
19 arts integration. That does not necessarily mean
20 that that has to do with the teachers that are the
21 arts instructors; this in fact incorporates all of
22 our instructors to take both of those disciplines,
23 the academic core, as well as the fine arts; find
24 those objectives and put them together so that the
25 student has an understanding of the art form and

1 successfully displays that knowledge through those
2 learning objectives. It's been extremely successful.
3 We have a lot of wonderful opportunities that you can
4 kind of see here. I wanted to highlight just a
5 couple.

6 So I was not a very strong math student but had
7 my math teacher had the opportunity to explain the
8 formulas of what a dodecahedron is and why it's
9 useful, they then created one, which you see there
10 with those students, and proudly kind of display was
11 a mathematician who wanted to come up with housing
12 for homeless that could be very economical. So now
13 we cover social issues as well as sculpture, as well
14 as mathematics every day. This is what is something
15 that just makes extreme improvement for our students
16 to understand what they're doing, not in their art
17 form but how they're going to be involved in a career
18 and community. All the way down to the bottom right,
19 you see our elementary kids who are learning to close
20 a circuit. You close a circuit and then add some
21 found objects and you have a scribble bot. So here
22 we're now able to kind of see this function that goes
23 into engineering, robotics, animation, what-have-you.
24 It's become extremely, extremely successful.

25 In addition, the last of the pillars that I'll

1 kind of mention is the museum initiative. This is
2 probably very new to many in education. But we have
3 a neighborhood, we have partnerships, and, in
4 addition to what Ms. Ley had mentioned, we decided to
5 kind of look to the community of museums themselves
6 by taking the collections -- because every community
7 is pretty rich in heritage and culture, even natural
8 features. We looked around and took those
9 disciplines, those academic disciplines, as well as
10 arts, and sought out to make partnerships with each
11 one in this area. We started with Crystal Brides and
12 it proved to be extremely successful. You'll hear
13 from Mr. Zev Slurzberg in a moment. So to be able to
14 kind of work with those directors, those museum
15 educators and teachers to get together -- now I'm not
16 talking about just going and taking the canned tour
17 that they typically have; this is an opportunity
18 where that museum educator then works with our
19 teacher, they offer a professional development, and
20 then they have programs. The upper right slide that
21 you see there is Compton Gardens that's showing a
22 rain garden and how now this can be brought back to
23 the school because our K-8 is on a floodplain and
24 what can you do with that space. Off to the left is
25 two students that are at the Peel Mansion. This is a

1 historic home and they allowed our theater students
2 to come in and actually become the Peel family
3 themselves. And so 4th grade programs from across
4 northwest Arkansas were able to kind of come and see
5 history alive through our theater students. So they
6 not only learned theatrical, but how to incorporate
7 history as well. And these are just kind of a few
8 other examples; I won't go into each one of them, but
9 I do want to point out the top right. You see two
10 students with a professional at a table. This is the
11 -- one of the curators at Crystal Bridges. Crystal
12 Bridges has also opened up an opportunity for our
13 students to go there and learn about every career
14 that takes place at the museum and then those
15 students follow that academic career and then they
16 learn quite a bit of what their day looks like. You
17 also can see with the Museum of American History,
18 that's our English learning -- I'm sorry -- our
19 language arts department that's learning American
20 literature but now they're not at school reading
21 First Nations; true Americans that were here before,
22 they have a story as well, and combining Mark Twain
23 with the way a winter comp would be read.

24 It's very, very exciting and we're just very,
25 very excited about what we offer and how distinct

1 that we are. And so what I want to kind of introduce
2 to you is one of our board members, Mr. Anthony
3 Porchia, to kind of talk a little bit.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Before you begin, is there
5 anyone to speak in opposition?

6 MS. BOYD: I'll check.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay.

8 MS. BOYD: No, ma'am.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. I'm going to --
10 you're out of time, but if you'll go ahead and
11 continue -- and we'll go right ahead and continue,
12 and then we'll wrap up.

13 MR. PORCHIA: Okay. Thank you. I'm Anthony
14 Porchia, Arkansas Arts Academy school board, and I'm
15 talking to you about diversity. You know, as the
16 United States becomes a more culturally diverse
17 nation our schools should be becoming more diverse
18 also. Attending a school with a diverse student body
19 can help prepare our children for the future. You
20 know, as you all know, the Census Bureau projects
21 that by the year 2100 the U.S. minority population
22 will become the majority. So, of course, it is very
23 important for students to learn how to interact in a
24 diverse environment. Schools must take a proactive
25 approach to knowledge diversity. So as we look to

1 expand our school we are supporting both the art
2 community, and through this we are helping a creative
3 positive environment where students and teachers are
4 respectful and of different backgrounds. That is why
5 I am in support of our CEO and her staff to drive the
6 growth of Arkansas Arts Academy, because they are
7 focusing on diversity for our school, and I
8 appreciate that they are being proactive in this area
9 by targeting all students in the community. But they
10 do a quality education and where arts can be a focus
11 in our community as well. We have an action plan.
12 Our faculty, students and staff has been -- is doing
13 an amazing job on implementing diversity. So as Bell
14 Hooks said, "The classroom remains the most radical
15 space of possibility in the academy." Thank you.

16 MR. SLURZBERG: Thank you for your time. My
17 name is Zev Slurzberg; I'm here speaking on behalf of
18 the partners from Crystal Bridges Museum of American
19 Art. We are a proud partner to work with Arkansas
20 Arts Academy, to help work with the students and the
21 community for increasing the critical thinking
22 skills, the visual literacy, and the historical
23 empathy that these students can have. We do this on
24 a variety of means from a school tour, working with
25 the teacher professional development, and working

1 with the teachers as they need to say -- when they
2 come with a question and say, "I'm teaching physics
3 and I want to figure out how to do that." We want to
4 help train these students to think creatively like an
5 artist. And Mr. Jones mentioned our career day.
6 This is a pilot program that was a wonderful way to
7 show students the creativity in all professions in
8 the arts and what creativity means in every aspect
9 from your traditional curator that you expect to the
10 director of IT to the culinary staff and how they all
11 use creativity and problem-solving skills in their
12 everyday job. So this is a proud partnership as we
13 look forward and deepen those skills and also then
14 engage the community to be a part of it. We have our
15 Night at the Museum evenings where we not just get --
16 we get the whole -- the community, the parents, the
17 families, and we've extended it to have the students
18 present. So it isn't an educator or curator talking;
19 the students take ownership of the work and decide
20 how to talk and gain the public speaking skills that
21 is an important part of being a 21st century student.
22 Thank you very much.

23 MS. BOYD: Madam Chair, before you begin your
24 question and answer period I just wanted to remind
25 the Panel that one of the waiver requests has been

1 withdrawn. So the request today is for the
2 enrollment cap increase and then also for the school
3 -- a waiver of the school year dates.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Questions?
5 Who's ready? Mr. Rogers.

6 MR. ROGERS: Uh --

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Microphone.

8 MR. ROGERS: Just similar to what I went over
9 with Haas Hall earlier, looking over the budget, the
10 projected budget on there, you're using a number for
11 the per-pupil funding above what the current ADM
12 amount for foundation funding is. You have it
13 projected correctly for '17, but then you're going up
14 to a pretty good amount for four years out for your
15 funding on that, which I know is just a projection
16 but that's way reaching for what the General Assembly
17 may do. So just looking at the 17-18 and 18-19 ones
18 it was \$66 over what it is right now, which could --
19 they could but they could not; I mean, we won't know
20 till November 1st. So I guess my concern is similar
21 to what -- with the last one; if they don't raise it
22 up that much, then you're looking at a \$53,000
23 difference in 17-18 from what you have currently
24 budgeted right now, which would eat up any net cash
25 increase or decrease. So how would you adjust if

1 that doesn't happen that way?

2 MS. BRUNELL: My name is Nathalie Brunell; I'm
3 the CFO. And how would we adjust, we would continue
4 to monitor our expenditures and just insure that we
5 stay in line. So as we -- we'll add programs as the
6 funding is there. So if for some reason they do not
7 increase our student funding for that particular
8 year, we may hold off on certain things until we
9 receive that funding, and so -- and then we may, you
10 know, look at our other expenditures. We'll make
11 sure our operating expenditures stay very
12 conservative in those lights and make sure we have a
13 good legal balance to provide us that funding if we
14 don't receive additional student funding in the
15 future.

16 MR. ROGERS: And this isn't tied -- I think you
17 said that you already do have the money for the
18 remodeling of the school that you're at right now.
19 So this wouldn't affect that?

20 MS. BRUNELL: The remodel of the school, we
21 would fund that. We currently do have a bond issue,
22 so what we would do is we would do an advance
23 refunding of that bond issue and we would have quite
24 a bit of savings doing that. In addition to that, we
25 are getting a non-interest bearing loan from a

1 private donor that also has a deferred repayment that
2 we would only repay if our cash-flow is sufficient
3 enough for that. And then we would also have to have
4 another bond issue. We have been working with our
5 bond underwriters to see what that would look like.
6 With that, we just right now just have projected
7 costs of what the remodel is. You know, until we
8 know about the student base and can actually hire
9 construction managers we just have a -- it's a pretty
10 high estimate of what we think it would cost. So we
11 would have an additional bond issue with additional
12 debt payments in the future.

13 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

15 MS. PFEFFER: Yes. In your proposed enrollment
16 cap, would you be looking at that growth all within
17 one year and/or are you looking at incremental
18 growth?

19 MS. BRUNELL: No, ma'am. We are looking at
20 incremental growth, so we would phase our remodel of
21 the building with that incremental growth. And we
22 had anticipated probably about 100, 125 student
23 growth per year while we do that remodeling phase and
24 hope to have the total enrollment by 2021.

25 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any questions about the
2 school year?

3 DR. SAUNDERS: I do.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I have questions on the
6 waiver of the school year and I was trying to get
7 down and specify which part of that law was needed.

8 MS. LEY: I think that we want to give our
9 parents the option -- some of them are interested in
10 year-round school and that's the flexibility we want.
11 We haven't surveyed our parents yet, but we want to
12 know from you if we had that waiver if we could then
13 move towards -- we'd have to survey them first. But,
14 you know, there were a couple of schools in our area
15 that closed that were year-round schools and parents
16 are really wanting some -- one of the schools to be
17 year-round because it fit their work schedule better.
18 So we're only contemplating it. I don't know how
19 serious we are about it because it looks -- we have a
20 lot on our plate right now and we want to do what
21 we're doing now really well before we take on
22 anything else. But we want to have that option in
23 the future.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Because that law also
25 specifies that you'll take Labor Day off, Memorial

1 Day --

2 MS. LEY: Sure. Absolutely.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: -- common spring break --

4 MS. LEY: Right.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: -- many others, but as I can tell
6 -- and this may be -- I think (a) (1) (a) would be the
7 only reference -- or that section, the 1, 2 and 3,
8 that would allow you to do that.

9 MS. LEY: Okay.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: And I would defer to Legal to see
11 if that's the only part of that law that needs waived
12 for her to be able to do that.

13 MS. DAVIS: Yes. If it's just extending the
14 start and the end dates --

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah.

16 MS. DAVIS: -- then that section is the only
17 one. And, again, this is one of those waivers that I
18 think all of the charter schools have the entire code
19 section. There is one that only has the specific
20 subsection and I think there's a district conversion
21 that has an even more specific subsection.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: So just to clarify, you only need
23 the (a) (1) (a), 1, 2 and 3?

24 MS. LEY: Yes.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that all? Okay.

1 MS. LEY: That's correct.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?

3 Mr. Rogers.

4 MR. ROGERS: What's the current debt service
5 payment right now that you have?

6 MS. BRUNELL: Our current debt service payment
7 is about \$600,000.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Did you want to follow-up on
10 finances or -- I had an academic question I wanted to
11 address. When I look at someone expanding the first
12 thing that I look at is how well academically are
13 they doing. And I pulled up -- and I'm really I
14 think just somewhat perplexed and so I'm just looking
15 for your thoughts on this. As I pulled up your
16 information and I looked at how you compared with
17 other districts -- let me pull it up just for a
18 second -- I'm going to pull up 14-15. Then I looked
19 at -- to let you know, looked at compared to the
20 state, compared to Bentonville, Pea Ridge, Rogers,
21 and Springdale. And all throughout, the test scores
22 for the most part you were the lowest of all of those
23 categories.

24 MS. LEY: That's the K-8. That's not the high
25 school.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. I'm getting there.

2 MS. LEY: Okay.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: And then I got to the bottom and
4 the ACT scores and you are higher than everybody
5 else.

6 MS. LEY: Right.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: And I was -- you know -- I went
8 back, I looked at the number of students that you
9 tested, and it does seem that you test a high number
10 of your students in ACT at the high school. And so I
11 was perplexed, I think is a good way to say it --

12 MS. LEY: Sure.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: -- just throwing that out, hoping
14 --

15 MS. LEY: I can answer that.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Oh, okay.

17 MS. LEY: I'm going to try to answer that. Give
18 me a chance. No, I mean, probably the roughest day
19 of my educational 39-year career was the last time I
20 was before you; I had just started being the CEO, and
21 those test scores were something I inherited and you
22 guys were brutally honest and I had to take it
23 because it is what it was. And so we -- one thing
24 healthy about a charter is -- it's not something to
25 celebrate, but we did use that little contract and

1 any teacher at the K-8 that wasn't there to help kids
2 was not renewed in their contracts. And there is
3 something about a highly qualified teacher
4 requirement and even though in a charter you can kind
5 of skirt that a little bit. We chose not to skirt
6 that and we've replaced every teacher with a highly
7 qualified teacher. And I did go beg on my hands and
8 knees for Matt to come to that school and already our
9 ACT scores were higher in lots of areas at the K-8
10 than our surrounding area. And when you see what
11 Matt will bring to the table now, I've never seen
12 teachers working harder or better, and it's about
13 leadership and they just didn't have good leadership.
14 And Matt has unselfishly come to a school that was --
15 had success easy and he's come back and is helping a
16 school that has great ideas and great vision. And
17 also you have to remember the history of this school;
18 it used to be Benton County School of the Arts; it
19 used to be -- K-8 was its own charter and the high
20 school was its own charter, and then they came
21 together and became one charter. And when I
22 inherited this situation -- and I'm proud of
23 inheriting this situation -- the two leaders did not
24 get along and they didn't work together, and it was
25 like inheriting two separate entities. And now I'm

1 proud to say is our PD days the K-8 are with the high
2 school. We have high school kids mentoring younger
3 kids; we have younger kids participating in older
4 kids' plays, and we've actually become a unit with
5 good leadership. So I don't think you'll be
6 perplexed when you see the test scores at the end of
7 the year. So we're real proud of what we've done.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd.

10 MS. BOYD: I apologize. I have a clarification.
11 Arkansas Arts Academy already has the waiver for 6-
12 10-106. It was part of their original application.
13 I apologize for not catching that before we got here.

14 DR. GOTCHER: I make a motion that we forgive
15 her.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Motion to forgive Ms.
17 Boyd.

18 MS. LEY: She's been a big help. We love her.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We do too. Any additional
20 questions? Then I'll entertain a motion.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I clarify something?

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You can.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: And it's on that 6-10-206. So
24 where we stand right now, we're still just looking at
25 the waiver on the (a)(1)(a) 1, 2 and 3 or are we

1 looking at -- as an amendment, I guess, you would say
2 to just restrict it to that or to keep it as it is?

3 MS. DAVIS: Well, I mean, they already have the
4 waiver. So if you're requesting them to amend it to
5 only have the specific subsection and they're willing
6 to do that, you can do that. But they already have
7 the waiver.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I would request I think as part
9 of our cleanup process, as we discussed earlier and
10 today, as we mature and time evolves that we relook
11 at some of those things. I think that would be
12 productive.

13 MS. LEY: Sure.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Unless there's any other section
15 of that that is needed for what you do, I think.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Ley, if you'll speak
17 into the microphone so our transcript will reflect
18 your response.

19 MS. LEY: Okay. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Are you agreeing --

21 MS. LEY: Oh. I'm okay with that. Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Any additional
23 discussion?

24 MS. BOYD: I'm sorry. So to clarify, we're okay
25 with the audit of the waivers after today's

1 discussion or we're okay with changing the waiver to
2 restricted sections?

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that for me? Everyone is
4 looking at me.

5 DR. GOTCHER: Since the waiver already exists,
6 what's new?

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So let me see if I can
8 summarize. The waiver exists but Dr. Saunders had
9 asked in the -- in our efforts to cleanup these
10 waivers to make them more accurate that this one be
11 specific to what Ms. Davis had itemized. Is that
12 correct?

13 DR. SAUNDERS: Correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And then Ms. Ley had
15 agreed to that specificity.

16 MS. BOYD: So --

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Is that correct?

18 MS. DAVIS: Yeah.

19 MS. BOYD: Is 6-10-106 --

20 MS. DAVIS: (a) --

21 MS. BOYD: -- (a) --

22 MS. DAVIS: -- is what we're limiting it to.

23 MS. BOYD: Okay.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes, we're all in
25 agreement.

1 MS. DAVIS: Right. And you're in agreement?

2 MS. LEY: I'm agreeing.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And Ms. Ley agrees, as
4 well.

5 MS. LEY: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Anyone else? Then I'll
7 entertain a motion.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I make a motion to approve.

9 MS. SMITH: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: A motion has been made by
11 Dr. Saunders and seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the
12 request for Arkansas Arts Academy. Any discussion?
13 All those in favor?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion
16 carries unanimously.

17 If you'll give us just a moment to write the
18 responses.

19 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

21 DR. GOTCHER: Madam Chair, I voted to approve
22 the amendment request. I see no issues with the
23 amendment request, especially with the gradual
24 increase, to potentially be realized in 2021.

25 And, Ms. Ley, I don't see you; I just want to on

1 a side note -- I didn't add this in my comments, but
2 I felt like I needed to say it after the vote -- with
3 Every Student Succeeds Act and this state looking at
4 multiple measures of accountability, I go back to the
5 legislative intent of charter schools and seeing
6 measurable student achievement. That brings a whole
7 new realization of how an arts academy such as this
8 can really see a new set of accountability of
9 measurable student achievement. Because, as a fine
10 arts guy myself, this is an incredible opportunity
11 and we realize that kids are more than just a
12 summative test score. And so I just want to tell you
13 how much I appreciate the opportunity that you're
14 creating for kids. And, furthermore, the
15 partnerships, as I said earlier -- and I just believe
16 in partnerships -- it's evident in your emails to the
17 area superintendents that you embrace a partnership
18 heart and I just want you to know I appreciate that.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. LEY: I don't know -- can I comment to that?

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Sure.

22 MS. LEY: Okay. I just want to say that when we
23 dreamed this school, this team -- you know -- I was
24 able to put a great team together. And when we
25 dreamed it, what I wanted more than anything was kids

1 to have separate time talks, you know, like we used
2 to when we were kids.

3 DR. GOTCHER: Right.

4 MS. LEY: And the greatest compliment I got the
5 other day was when a parent -- her name was Dawn --
6 stopped by my office the other day and she said, "I
7 just want you to know" -- and her son is in 4th grade
8 -- "he never came home" -- "we could never get
9 anything out of him, how his day was, and now we
10 can't get him to quit talking." And he had gone to
11 the -- we had an event called -- that Aaron put
12 together called Shear to Shawl and they went to the
13 Ozark Museum and watched how a sheep was sheered and
14 how it was made into the wool and then how it was --
15 the kids actually got to string the fabric. And he
16 said, "I think we need to get two sheep, mom; they're
17 very useful." So, you know, I thought, you know,
18 that's what we wanted was kids to be so excited about
19 their life that -- and through all this team's great
20 work -- and Crystal Bridges has been amazing, but,
21 you know, there's this one project -- I'll go real
22 quick, but it'll make you feel good -- it's like
23 there's this great painting at Crystal Bridges done
24 by Samuel Morse, and I didn't even know that, and he
25 didn't finish it because this horse came with a guy

1 on it telling him, "You've got to get home; your wife
2 is sick." So he hurried home but his wife already
3 was died and buried by the time he got home, so he
4 quit and invented Morse code. And that's in
5 Arkansas; that painting is in Arkansas, and the Pea
6 Ridge is on Tele -- Pea Ridge Military Park is on
7 Telegraph Road. And so that painting was of
8 Lafayette, which Fayetteville is named after. So our
9 kids will never forget because they're going to go to
10 Pea Ridge and they're going to go to Rogers
11 Historical and they're going to do Morse code, and
12 they're fortunate to have those things. And it's
13 going to be about that artist and then they're going
14 to see the art. So our kids will know and feel pride
15 about Arkansas, that such a painting exists and it
16 was the guy that invented Morse code, they get to do
17 Morse code. I mean, that's what we're doing and
18 we're really thankful for your support today.

19 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

21 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. There
22 is a demand in the area and this gradual increase in
23 enrollment will allow Arkansas Arts Academy to offer
24 more courses. The charter has done a good job of
25 collaborating with local schools to share resources.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

2 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I was just simply
3 swayed by the energy displayed. I voted for; I have
4 no concerns. I think the amendments will help
5 further your charter's goals and will definitely
6 benefit students.

7 MS. LEY: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

9 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for the amendment. And I
10 too am excited that there'll be an opportunity for
11 more students to have access to this type of
12 personalized learning. And I didn't write all this
13 in here, but it really is a pleasure hearing from you
14 and you make me excited about the opportunities. And
15 I really appreciated even hearing the career aspect
16 in the presentation because, you know, that really
17 does help us to focus on the whole picture of
18 education. So, thank you.

19 MS. LEY: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: I had no concerns and I look
22 forward to the progress with consolidation of the K-8
23 system.

24 MS. LEY: Thank you.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

2 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it. I don't have any
3 concerns about allowing this charter to move forward.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

5 MS. SMITH: The charter has been approved since
6 2000 and been renewed several times. There's evident
7 community support for the Arkansas Arts Academy;
8 therefore, I have no concerns at this time for the
9 amendment request to increase enrollment for the
10 purpose of expansion of the campus by 2021.

11 MS. LEY: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Ley, congratulations
13 and you'll move on to the State Board. I don't know
14 if you post any of your student performances --

15 MS. LEY: Yeah, we do.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- on your social media,
17 but I look forward to going to your website and
18 checking those out.

19 MS. LEY: Okay. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

21 What's your -- Board, it is 11:20. Would you
22 like to move on to 4 or take a break?

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Let's get 4.

24 DR. GOTCHER: I'm okay with moving forward.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right.

1 A-4: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOL

2 AMENDMENTS: CROSS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. McLaughlin, is Cross
4 County here? I see friends.

5 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair.
6 Today for action item 4 we have Cross County High
7 School with an amendment request and Mr. Stephen
8 Prince will be presenting this morning.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. If everyone
10 speaking on behalf of Cross County High School and
11 anyone speaking in opposition will please stand and
12 raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that
13 the testimony you're about to give shall be the
14 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

15 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You're recognized. If
17 you'll state your name and title for the record?

18 MR. PRINCE: Stephen Prince with Cross County
19 High School. We're coming today with a waiver for
20 one of our -- not a waiver, a request for a waiver.
21 But when we renewed our application this year we
22 rescinded one of our waivers; we rescinded waiver
23 9.03-312, which was to give credit for 7th and 8th
24 grade students. We rescinded that thinking that we
25 didn't necessarily need that. We do have 7th and 8th

1 -- 7th graders taking CBA and we do give them credit
2 for that course. And the reason we rescinded that is
3 our understanding was we do have -- we work with CTE
4 and they give us a letter granting us to do that, so
5 we were thinking that they grant us to do that so we
6 didn't need the waiver -- but they grant us to do
7 that because we do have the waiver. So we're asking
8 for us to reinstate that one waiver so we can
9 continue to give those 7th graders credit for CBA so
10 they can get those -- that course done earlier so
11 they can begin taking more advanced classes, like AV
12 tech and digital communications, mobile apps, and
13 those things earlier. And that's all I have.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Is there
15 anyone to speak in opposition?

16 MS. BOYD: (Shaking head from side to side.)

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Any questions from
18 the Panel? Dr. Saunders.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: So if I understand correctly,
20 it's to make that course available for 7th grade
21 students so they can see it sooner; it doesn't
22 replace another course --

23 MR. PRINCE: No.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: -- in that sense?

25 MR. PRINCE: Right. No, it does not replace

1 another course. It's just an additional course and
2 they do get credit and they get all the CBA
3 instruction sooner.

4 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

5 DR. GOTCHER: And I believe --

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

7 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you. Mr. Prince, according
8 to the rationale, reinstating it, since it was
9 mistakenly removed, is it new that you're going to
10 make this mandatory for 7th grade or is that --

11 MR. PRINCE: No, it's not. We've always made it
12 mandatory since our initial charter application in
13 2011.

14 DR. GOTCHER: Understood.

15 MR. PRINCE: So it's always been mandatory for
16 all 7th graders.

17 DR. GOTCHER: So really no change, other than
18 just correcting the oversight?

19 MR. PRINCE: Exactly.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Yeah. Very good.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?
22 Then I'll entertain a motion.

23 DR. GOTCHER: Motion to approve amendment
24 request.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Second.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: A motion has been made by
2 Dr. Gotcher and a second by Dr. Saunders to approve
3 the request for Cross County High School. Any
4 discussion? All those in favor?

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion
7 carries.

8 If you'll give us just a moment.

9 While they're typing, I'll just say I had a
10 lovely visit at Cross County and so enjoyed it.

11 MR. PRINCE: Thank you.

12 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

14 DR. GOTCHER: I voted for the amendment. No
15 concerns. This just simply resolves an oversight
16 that was originally intended.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

18 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. I have
19 no concerns.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

21 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I don't have any
22 concerns.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

24 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for the amendment. No
25 concerns.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

2 MR. ROGERS: I voted for. No concerns.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

4 DR. SAUNDERS: Voted for it. I thought it
5 allows students to progress through higher level
6 courses.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

8 MS. SMITH: I voted for it. No concerns
9 regarding the amendment request.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Congratulations, and
11 you'll move forward to the State Board in November.

12 MR. PRINCE: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

14 Are we ready for number 5?

15 MS. BOYD: We need to wait --

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Wait?

17 MS. BOYD: -- till after lunch.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: What time do you want to
19 come back? You have a phone call at --

20 MR. LESTER: (inaudible)

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: How long will it last?

22 MR. LESTER: (inaudible)

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Ms. Boyd, what time
24 do you expect Excel to be here?

25 MS. BOYD: I told them -- you guys were super

1 efficient today. I told them that they would
2 probably be heard after lunch. So as soon as you
3 guys establish what time you're going to come back,
4 I'm going to let them know exactly when to be here.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: 12:30 or 1:00? Pardon me?

6 DR. SAUNDERS: I'd say 1:00 to allow them the
7 opportunity to be here.

8 MS. SMITH: I need to leave by 2:00.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Can we do 12:30?

10 MS. SMITH: Yeah. Because, I mean, it may take
11 us an hour-and-a-half (inaudible), but this is
12 something that we've never --

13 DR. SAUNDERS: It's going to take awhile.

14 DR. GOTCHER: I'd say 12:30, if they can.

15 MS. BOYD: Yeah. They're here in Little Rock,
16 so it shouldn't be a problem.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. We'll begin at
18 12:30.

19 MS. BOYD: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

21 MS. BOYD: Thank you.

22 (LUNCH BREAK: 11:25 A.M. - 12:40 P.M.)

23 A-5: HEARING OF ADULT EDUCATION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

24 APPLICATION: THE EXCEL CENTER, LITTLE ROCK

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, you're

1 recognized.

2 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Your next
3 item is the Excel Center application for open-
4 enrollment adult education charter school. Since
5 this item is a little different from the others, Ms.
6 Davis will come before you and provide you with the
7 hearing procedures.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis.

9 MS. DAVIS: Good afternoon. Jennifer Davis,
10 Staff Attorney for the Department. The procedures at
11 least are going to be somewhat familiar to you. All
12 persons wishing to provide testimony outside of the
13 attorneys will need to be sworn in. The applicant
14 will have 20 minutes to present its request for an
15 open-enrollment charter school. There will be 20
16 minutes for opposition, followed by an additional 5
17 minutes rebuttal time by the applicant. At that
18 point in time you may ask any questions you have of
19 the applicant, the Department, or anyone else that
20 you have questions of before making your decision.
21 You can either choose to vote to allow or not allow,
22 approve this request today, or you may take it under
23 advisement and vote at a later meeting.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. If everyone
25 speaking on -- sorry, Ms. Boyd.

1 MS. BOYD: No. To start the presentation off we
2 have Dr. Stacey Hunter-Schwartz.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If everyone speaking on
4 behalf of the Excel Center will stand and raise your
5 right hand and anyone speaking in opposition. Do you
6 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
7 give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
8 but the truth?

9 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. And if you'll
11 be sure to state your name and your title when you
12 come to the microphone. And the microphone is, one,
13 for our benefit but it's also for the benefit of the
14 viewing audience. So if you get away from that
15 microphone the people that are watching it via
16 livestreaming cannot hear a word you're saying. So
17 get a-hold of it, take it off the stand, whatever you
18 need to do. All right? Okay. You're recognized.

19 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: Good afternoon, everybody.
20 Is the presentation going to pop up now?

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It will. If you'll state
22 your name and title please.

23 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: I am Stacey Hunter-
24 Schwartz. I am the director of Education and
25 Certification Programs for Goodwill Industries of

1 Arkansas.

2 Thank you.

3 We have been working with a team from the
4 Goodwill in Indianapolis and we have members of them
5 here I'd like to introduce who will be part of this
6 presentation as well. We have Marcus Jewett, who is
7 the school development director for the Goodwill
8 Education Initiatives, Incorporated, and we also have
9 Kim Reier, who is the director of Network Development
10 and Advancement, and she's going to start us off with
11 the presentation today.

12 MS. REIER: Hello. Great. So, again, my name
13 is Kim Reier, director of Network Development and
14 Advancement with Goodwill Education Initiatives,
15 which is based out of Indianapolis, Indiana, and
16 affiliated with Goodwill Industries of Central
17 Indiana. We'll probably talk about that relationship
18 here just in a little bit.

19 First of all, I want to talk a little bit about
20 the purpose and the mission of the Excel Center. The
21 mission of the Excel Center is to provide adults the
22 opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma
23 and post-secondary education while developing career
24 paths that offer greater employment and career growth
25 opportunities. The overall goal of the Excel Center

1 is to meet students where they are. They'll come to
2 us with -- or come to everyone with varying levels of
3 their skill-set, background, ability. So the idea is
4 to insure that we're meeting them exactly where they
5 are so that it can move forward to navigate all of
6 the academic and nonacademic barriers that they have
7 to success.

8 Just a little bit of a history of the Excel
9 Center is that it started in Indiana in the fall of
10 2010, and we originally planned on opening one site
11 with 200 students. We had a lot of people say, "Hey,
12 I need a high school diploma. This GED that I have
13 isn't working out for me. I can't find employment."
14 So we ended up expanding that enrollment to 300
15 students, opened the doors with 300 students by
16 January of 2011. So a short five months later we had
17 2,000 students on a waiting list, there had been such
18 a demand.

19 I clicked forward.

20 With the support of the local authorizers in
21 Indiana, we had a rapid expansion beginning in the
22 fall of 2011. At that time we also did a lot of
23 improvement of the school model itself, looking at
24 meeting the real needs of our students. We had an
25 idea of what the student needs would be when they

1 would come to us. We thought that it would be a very
2 online-based program and students would want to move
3 at their own pace. We found that the needs of the
4 students that came to us needed something much more
5 intense, much more rigorous, something that they
6 could see as much more relevant to their everyday
7 lives. So there's been a lot of improvement to see
8 the model that we see today, which we will talk about
9 here in a little bit. During this time we've seen
10 the growth of the Excel Center in Indiana. Again, we
11 are affiliated, Goodwill Education Initiatives, with
12 Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana. There has
13 been a lot of interest from Goodwill organizations
14 all across the United States. We are all affiliate
15 members that are an affiliate of Goodwill
16 International; we operate in our own territories.
17 And there's been interest, and so as that interest
18 has grown here in Arkansas as well Goodwill Education
19 Initiatives developed a licensing agreement in order
20 to expand that outside of our territory.

21 I won't go into too much detail about the
22 history here but this is just to demonstrate the
23 rapid expansion that we've had with one school, in
24 2010, adding two schools the following year, two
25 schools the following year, four schools the

1 following year, and then eventually moving outside of
2 Indiana into where we are now in Texas, other places
3 in Indiana outside of our territory, Tennessee,
4 Washington DC, and hopefully soon in Arkansas as
5 well.

6 Okay. Now I will pass this over to Stacey to
7 talk about the impact here.

8 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: As many of you are
9 probably aware, for -- since the beginning of time
10 there hasn't been an ability for there to be a
11 charter high school that was directed at adults. And
12 so Goodwill Industries of Arkansas worked together
13 with the legislature to have new legislation passed
14 in 2015 to allow this whole thing to take place. And
15 Goodwill Industries of Arkansas sees the Excel Center
16 as very integral to our mission, which is Changing
17 Lives Through Education, Training and Employment. We
18 know that if people don't have a basic high school
19 education then they will not be able to succeed in
20 the world of work and they won't be successful in
21 being able to be independent and take care of their
22 families.

23 In Arkansas currently 18% of the residents
24 between 18 and 64 do not have a high school diploma.
25 Just within the Pulaski County area 24,000 adults in

1 that age group do not have a high school diploma and
2 that makes them unprepared to participate in the 21st
3 century workplace. It's a bigger problem than that
4 because the children of a dropout are 50% more likely
5 to drop out themselves. And so far, the GED has been
6 the only educational option for adults without a high
7 school diploma in our area.

8 Research on educational attainment shows that
9 having a GED isn't exactly the same as having a
10 diploma, and so various factors are connected. As
11 poverty increases, educational -- excuse me --
12 educational attainment decreases; also, crime
13 increases and health decreases. And we do find that
14 the kind of educational experience that someone gets
15 while preparing for a GED is not the same as what
16 they can get at the Excel Center.

17 So our proposal is to provide these adults with
18 an opportunity to get an actual high school diploma
19 through this model which the Indianapolis folks have
20 worked on for sometime and has a track record of
21 effectiveness, which you'll hear a little bit more
22 about soon.

23 In addition, we feel that Goodwill is an
24 organization that is up to the task. We serve
25 actually more than those numbers; it went higher

1 since I submitted that to you, so we're talking about
2 over 28,000 people who are able to get jobs and over
3 40 -- excuse me -- that we served in our last fiscal
4 year and we were able to place over 4700 people in
5 jobs. So we can handle this. We already have the
6 Academy of Goodwill, which provides training and
7 certifications in things like forklift, and we
8 definitely know how to work with this population and
9 see the need. We're planning to open initially with
10 125 students and we're going to house this at our
11 resource center.

12 Now I'm going to turn it back to Kim to give you
13 some more details.

14 MS. REIER: Thank you. After having talked a
15 little bit about the history and this big proposal
16 here, I want to talk to you a little bit about why
17 this model works or has been working. We'll talk
18 about the results that we've seen in other places.
19 We mentioned before about really listening to the
20 student voice and what students, adult students need
21 that come to school with a different set of needs
22 than a traditional set of students. Or, sometimes
23 they come to school again with the same needs that
24 they had the first time but ended up having to drop
25 out of school. So the Excel Center is a model to

1 really proactively think about how to address those
2 needs.

3 The Excel Center is modeled around providing
4 students with a year-round schedule, insuring that
5 they're able to focus a lot of time on education and
6 get through it more quickly. Classes are flexible.
7 They're scheduled in a way that if you're working to
8 support your family you can still attend school in
9 the morning, if that works best for you, morning and
10 afternoon, evening, any combination that works.
11 There's free child care. Many of the students that
12 will come to the Excel Center will be parents,
13 pregnant or parenting. They'll need that flexibility
14 in order to find out in order for me to go back to
15 school and get my education I need to insure that my
16 child is well taken care of, so there will be free
17 on-site child care. And transportation assistance so
18 that those students who do not have reliable
19 transportation have that barrier removed from them
20 and they're able to make it to school. Life coaching
21 is a very important part of the Excel Center model
22 where students work one-on-one with someone who I
23 would make it -- I would describe it akin to a cross
24 between a social worker and a guidance counselor that
25 you would see, someone who can work with the student

1 to identify what the academic barriers to their
2 success is, as well as any nonacademic barriers such
3 as tran -- we talked about transportation, excuse me;
4 housing assistance, food pantry assistance; maybe
5 it's a self-efficacy issue; maybe it's a student who
6 doesn't know how to de-accelerate some anger that
7 they're having. There's a life coach paired with
8 that person to help them navigate through that.

9 Because we are talking about high school and
10 insuring that they receive a high school diploma it's
11 a rigorous high school with a focus on a high school
12 diploma. Also, insuring that students not only get
13 that piece of paper, that high school diploma that
14 they completed it, but also something that helps them
15 prepare for what's next, an industry certification
16 and something that's a high growth, high demand
17 career in the local economy. And, again, with that
18 focus being on qualifying them as work ready so that
19 they can leave the Excel Center with a focus on what
20 can get them in life ahead, hopefully towards a self-
21 sustaining economic wage.

22 We are often faced with the question of why this
23 model, why not a GED, and Stacey talked a little bit
24 earlier about the difference between a GED and the
25 results that we see there. We know that an

1 equivalency is generally less expensive to run and
2 operate; students can move faster along it; it's
3 commonly allowed across a lot of states. But what we
4 do see is that the high school diploma is something
5 that employers really do want and the research is
6 ubiquitous across all 50 states that employers really
7 see a high school diploma as more valuable than a
8 GED. Oftentimes, employers go, especially with the
9 partnerships that Goodwill has, to them saying, "I
10 can't hire somebody with a GED. We need to have that
11 high school diploma." So this is why the Excel
12 Center model focusing on a high school diploma is so
13 important.

14 The results that we've seen across the network
15 that has developed rather young so far, since 2010,
16 is these numbers -- and I also apologize. As Stacey
17 mentioned earlier, she had some updated numbers
18 regarding Goodwill's success metrics; the Excel
19 Center also has some updated numbers since this was
20 submitted. We know that we have over 2,300 graduates
21 at this time, so people who had dropped out of high
22 school had no opportunity other than this to earn a
23 high school diploma; they only had a GED. So there
24 are 23 -- over 2300 people with a high school diploma
25 now; also, over 2500 post-secondary credentials. So

1 people are leaving with, again, that certificate that
2 makes them work ready. You can see that we've
3 increased that number over time, that going from 44%
4 to 92% in recent years of people that are either
5 earning college credit or an industry certification
6 at the time of graduation. We also have a little
7 graph just letting you see the number of graduates
8 that have grown throughout since we've opened.

9 This is, to talk about the outcomes that we've
10 seen, it doesn't really matter what those pieces of
11 paper say, what those diplomas say, what the industry
12 certifications say. What really is important here
13 and what the focus is is insuring that people have
14 the ability to become economically self-sufficient
15 after this, and we are seeing those results. At
16 entry -- and, again, this is just for 2013, 2014
17 graduates of the Excel Center because of the lag in
18 data that we often see -- 73% enrolled in the Excel
19 Center that were unemployed at entry, compared to
20 exiting the school with 88% who are being employed or
21 in college or some sort of post-high school
22 graduation work. We also had an independent study
23 done by Dr. Michael Hicks out of the Ball State
24 University, and he looked at a cohort of graduates
25 from just a couple of years of our students. And we

1 see that the total benefit per capita of students,
2 they're earning over \$9,000 more annual income, so
3 this has really increased that tangible opportunity
4 to become economically self-sufficient. What it also
5 did show, this economic study, was that there was
6 absolute benefit across the entire economy for the
7 state of Indiana. We looked at what's the total
8 benefit of people no longer needing to access social
9 services and all the other alphabet soup of social
10 services that are available to them, as well as
11 increasing the tax base. Because people are making
12 more money they're able to give back, they're buying
13 more goods, they have taxable income. It was 4.3
14 million dollars per year as an economic benefit
15 investment of students graduating from the Excel
16 Center.

17 The reasons why it works today is really a focus
18 on what we have -- what we call the three R's of the
19 model: relationships, rigor, and relevance. Students
20 come to us -- they're not sitting down at a computer
21 and they're not just having that interaction; they're
22 having face-to-face instruction; they're having a
23 life coach, somebody that they can talk to at any
24 point in time and feel like they care about them. We
25 have extended class periods, morning, afternoon,

1 evening. Most classes are 180 minutes, unless it's
2 remedial and it's 90 minutes. So students are with
3 their instructors for a longer period of time
4 creating relationships, which is a key part of this
5 culture, making students feel like people care about
6 them when maybe they didn't feel like that in school
7 the first or the second time around. It's rigorous.
8 There's a really strong focus on the academic rigor
9 in the classroom that we don't want to focus on
10 students, you know, just passing them forward. They
11 may come with something on their transcript that says
12 they have credits in geometry but some diagnostic
13 assessment at the very beginning says they're at a
14 7th grade math level. Instead of putting that
15 student in that next course or that geometry course,
16 we're going to make sure that they're getting the
17 remediation to get that skill level up so that they
18 can become successful, truly successful throughout
19 the school. Accelerated pace, we offer it in five
20 eight-week terms throughout the school year. So if
21 you think about a traditional semester model that is
22 all being condensed into an eight-week term. We're
23 accelerating an adult's ability; they don't have four
24 years to waste -- to spend getting a high school
25 diploma -- I shouldn't say waste -- to spend getting

1 a high school diploma. They want to get that quickly
2 so they can graduate -- if they come to the school
3 with zero credits, graduate in about two years as
4 long as they're focused and staying on track. And
5 relevance: it's that focus on insuring that students
6 are continuously working with that life coach,
7 working with people in the building, and
8 understanding when I leave, step foot out of this
9 building, where am I going to go next; what do I need
10 in order to get there -- is that an industry
11 certification, is that college credit; how do I fill
12 out my FAFSA. It's all of that life skills and work
13 readiness skills to really make them successful
14 beyond the Excel Center.

15 I think that concludes the presentation portion.
16 I'll step out of the way.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Is there anyone to speak
18 in opposition? Any public comment?

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

20 MS. BOYD: Madam Chair, I'd just like to inform
21 the Panel there is a little bit of confusion in the
22 documents regarding whether or not the applicant was
23 seeking a waiver of TESS. And I just wanted you to
24 know that they decided to not seek a waiver of TESS,
25 which means they will be using TESS.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so they have a plan
2 for professional development?

3 MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Dr. Schwartz, you
5 have 5 additional minutes.

6 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: I don't need the extra 5
7 additional minutes. I'm ready for questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Dr. Saunders,
9 you may begin.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: I don't even have any specific
11 questions over it. I'm very lenient over -- I mean,
12 I understand what you're trying to do and why you're
13 trying to do it, and I commend you for that. I guess
14 my question is: how would -- I understand what you're
15 saying as far as people seeking employment and other
16 things in life comparing a GED to a high school
17 diploma and I understand your desire to be overseen
18 by the State to be able to issue a public school high
19 school diploma. And as I look at the model and I go
20 through the waivers and everything else, I understand
21 that you're also not being funded by the State as
22 well. How do we assure that the diploma that they
23 would get there would be a quality diploma, would be
24 meaningful, is my question. I don't know how to
25 specifically ask anything more specific, but --

1 MS. REIER: Insurance is coming in insuring it's
2 a quality diploma; by that, all of the standards that
3 a student would have to meet in a traditional high
4 school are all of the same standards that a student
5 at the Excel Center would be expected to meet. If
6 there's state testing requirements, the student would
7 be expected to, you know, meet all of those same
8 requirements. So any requirement that there is for a
9 high school diploma to earn a traditional -- at a
10 traditional high school is the exact same at the
11 Excel Center. The difference is really taking away
12 some of the distractions that exist in a local high
13 school, not necessarily a prom or clubs or things
14 like that; really just focusing on the specific
15 skills, standards, and everything, and focusing
16 heavily on that.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: And I can't recall through the
18 reading. Is there a minimum age?

19 MS. REIER: Nineteen.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: Nineteen?

21 MS. REIER: Uh-huh.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

23 MS. REIER: Just based, I believe, on the pilot
24 legislation -- or the legislation that was passed.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

2 MS. PFEFFER: And I think my question is maybe
3 even more for our legal team. In just reviewing the
4 measures of success for the charter, they've
5 mentioned goals for a student, performance on the ACT
6 Aspire, goals in terms of the percent of students who
7 enroll that graduate, those that earn a credential or
8 some advanced degree early, so all of those are
9 within the goals. Are there any -- how is
10 accountability going to work for this school? Can we
11 -- are they still held to the same accountability
12 provisions that other public schools in Arkansas are?
13 So how is that going to really work, because they
14 could be meeting the goals of their charter and being
15 successful but not actually looking successful when
16 looked at in light of other -- of their
17 accountability performance.

18 MS. DAVIS: Right. And I know that we have that
19 with some of our other charter schools that don't
20 necessarily look successful but they are with their
21 specific students. And at this time the way the law
22 was written, they do not have any alternate ways of
23 accountability. That may change in the spring; who
24 knows what's going to happen there. But at this
25 point in time they will be held to all the

1 accountability standards, no different than any other
2 school, public, open-enrollment charter, or anything
3 like that. And those would be some things that we
4 would have to work out. And hopefully, you know,
5 with their success there may be some opportunities
6 that they will have the opportunity to change the law
7 to give some kind of alternative accountability.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions? Ms.
9 Smith.

10 MS. SMITH: Okay. So when a student comes in
11 and they already have partial high school credits, so
12 they already maybe have a few math and a few English
13 credits, are they still required to take all the
14 courses or are y'all -- I mean, how are we doing that
15 for --

16 MR. JEWETT: Sorry, I'm a little tall. Marcus
17 Jewett; I'm the school development director for
18 Goodwill Education Initiatives. So that's a very
19 good question and that's a conversation that a lot of
20 times -- it's a difficult conversation with our
21 students because "just because at some point in your
22 academic career you passed an algebra class that
23 doesn't mean that right now you're algebra ready."
24 Right? And so when we look at the transcripts and we
25 look at the placement scores that the student has

1 earned -- and we started to have those crucial
2 conversations and we talk about, "yes, you have that
3 on your transcript, I understand that, but you don't
4 have the skills to succeed in the next class, which
5 would be geometry or algebra II."

6 MS. SMITH: Right.

7 MR. JEWETT: And so it's a very -- it's kind of
8 a dance we do, but we talk to them about the
9 importance of having the skill and not just the
10 credit. And, again, it kind of goes back to what was
11 mentioned several times earlier; it's that work
12 readiness piece. Right? "So, yes, we understand
13 that at some point you earned that, but for you to be
14 successful here and in a career we need you to make
15 sure that you can show us the mastery of those
16 skills." So we do -- we would make them go back and
17 kind of retake those classes and that's the beauty of
18 the eight-week term. They're not spending an entire
19 school year taking a class they've already earned
20 credit in; it's a much more expedited pace. They can
21 pick it up and then move on.

22 MS. SMITH: So within that -- so within eight
23 weeks, like math lab A, they would take -- they would
24 go through that fall --

25 MR. JEWETT: Yes.

1 MS. SMITH: -- within that eight weeks. But if
2 they showed on their assessment ahead of time that
3 you did that they were passed those skills, would
4 they still be required to do the remedial courses?

5 MR. JEWETT: No. Very good question. So we'll
6 have students test in throughout the whole range of
7 courses. So some will test in, you know, at a 1st or
8 2nd grade math level and others will test in at a
9 10th grade level. Right? And so we look at -- for
10 students that don't test into remediation we really
11 do a deep dive on the transcript and their test score
12 and say, "Okay, you're at this skill level and you
13 need this course. So we'll start scheduling you into
14 -- you may be scheduled into algebra I, algebra II,
15 geometry, depending on what your transcript says."

16 MS. SMITH: Okay. And then just I guess a
17 second comment. In reading through some of the
18 comments that were put forth, Alexandra, by the
19 internal charter review group, you know, it looked
20 like they were trying to hold you to all the 38
21 courses to be offered that a typical high school
22 would offer, which I don't see the need in this type
23 of setting. To me, what would -- I think what we
24 would need to be looking for is that they have an
25 alignment to the minimum 22 requirements to get a

1 graduation diploma, which is our core. Okay? So
2 when I'm looking at our core classes -- because like
3 it was saying on here at one point, they needed you
4 to offer journalism and they don't -- you don't --
5 journalism is not a requirement for graduation, so
6 they shouldn't be asked to offer journalism for kids
7 -- I mean, this is an adult -- this is 19 years and
8 older. I'm looking for those kids to get their 22
9 for -- go ahead.

10 MS. BOYD: Yeah, I think I can help. I think
11 we're on the same page with that.

12 MS. SMITH: Okay. Good.

13 MS. BOYD: However, according to the laws they
14 can't waive the 38. They can't waive having to offer
15 the 38 as it stands now. Is it law or rule? Yeah,
16 so they have to offer it. If no one signs up for it,
17 they don't have to teach it. So that's something
18 that we're required -- I'm not sure if it's a rule or
19 a law, or both.

20 MS. SMITH: Okay. So the way the legislation
21 was written for the adult charter, so it was written
22 that they have to follow all --

23 MS. BOYD: Yeah. They're considered --

24 MS. SMITH: Could that be a revision in this
25 next legislation that they could -- an adult charter

1 must offer the minimum 22 requirements or something
2 -- I mean, if you're looking at this really being
3 successful, we've got to get down to what is it --
4 what is the minimum requirements for a student to
5 walk away with an Arkansas high school diploma, and
6 what are they -- and what they are is core.

7 MS. SMITH: I know that there was some
8 discussions in looking at legislation for this spring
9 that if an adult charter school is opened that, you
10 know, it does present some challenges with the way
11 that the law is currently written for how they're
12 structured and the students that they're targeting,
13 and what would be some things that would be able to
14 assist them in being successful but still fit with
15 what it is that they do. And one of them was an
16 alternate plan --

17 MS. SMITH: Okay.

18 MS. SMITH: -- for accountability and also
19 requiring -- may require different graduation
20 requirements. And that kind of goes to what I think
21 Dr. Saunders had asked earlier about insuring that,
22 you know, it's not just granting diplomas without
23 some kind of sufficiency of education behind it. So
24 that was something -- what happens with it, you know,
25 I don't know. But that was some of the things that

1 were discussed which, you know, if they are granted a
2 charter today then that may be something that there
3 might be more push for it in the spring.

4 MS. SMITH: Okay. When would you guys be ready
5 to open? I mean, what are your thoughts? Are you
6 looking at -- what was the date? Did they have the
7 opening date in here?

8 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: We're looking to open next
9 July.

10 MS. SMITH: Okay. I'm excited about this, but
11 there's a lot of work to be done between your group
12 and our organization in the alignment of the courses.
13 And I think that we still have some legislative
14 things that you're going to have to look at. Do you
15 already have some legislative proposals that y'all
16 are putting up that you already know you're doing?

17 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: We don't, but I'm taking
18 notes right now on every word you say.

19 MS. SMITH: All right. Okay, someone else.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

21 MS. PFEFFER: So if you would open in July --
22 and I remember reading in there the students' school
23 day would be determined based on the needs of the
24 students. So maximum face-to-face time encouraged
25 but work can also be done by technology, coursework

1 done. So what would a typical day or what would you
2 expect a typical day to look like and is that -- how
3 do you decide how much face-to-face time a student is
4 there? And what does that process look like?

5 MR. JEWETT: Sure. So it really is -- when we
6 talk about meeting the students where they are, it's
7 hard to say that right now without having any
8 prospective students. Because you're going to --
9 there will be a group of students that work from 9:00
10 to 5:00 every single day and the only classes they
11 can have access to are in the evening, and there will
12 be vice-versa; you know, I can only take morning
13 classes. One thing that we stress from the very
14 first orientation that we have with our students is
15 the need for as much face-to-face instruction as you
16 can possibly have, for all those reasons that online
17 credit recovery things aren't successful. That's why
18 we have the model built the way it is. So I can't
19 say on average it's eight hours per day, but the goal
20 would be you're there for at least 9:00 to 4:00. We
21 would push that one possibly. Some students are
22 obviously not going to be able to do that; that's
23 when we supplement with some online instruction so
24 those dangling credits they may have had, they may
25 not have had -- I'm sorry -- and so they'll

1 supplement their face-to-face direct instruction with
2 maybe an online course for 90 minutes a day.

3 MS. PFEFFER: I just want to echo what Ms. Smith
4 said in that, you know, this really is I think very
5 exciting. And I think it really does truly speak to
6 the vision of excellence in education in terms of
7 meeting students where they are and taking them to
8 where they need to be to be successful. So it is
9 challenging for us to think through everything
10 because we want to make sure that decisions that are
11 made here won't have a negative impact on students,
12 and I think that you want the very best. But I think
13 as far as my decision-making goes I just -- I think
14 that sometimes you -- we're not going to be able to
15 figure this all out until we get it started, so
16 that's just my thought.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

18 DR. GOTCHER: And I just want to be reminded of
19 something I've heard our Commissioner say that we
20 don't want to tell folks no, we want to help them
21 find a way. And I think considering the uniqueness
22 of this and the novel opportunity for students in a
23 nontraditional setting I want to see this successful.
24 And so I think, Ms. Smith, to -- I saw in one
25 document -- and maybe someone can help me -- because

1 I even wrote in my prep questions how are they not
2 offering one full credit of science, social studies
3 and fine arts. But then I see in the application
4 that it's not listed there, so -- and I also remember
5 reading where when a face-to-face option is not
6 available the digital option could be available. Am
7 I correct in that, as well?

8 MR. JEWETT: (Nodding head up and down.)

9 DR. GOTCHER: So at least under the current
10 framework there is a desire to offer the 38 units
11 required by the standards. And I pulled the law and
12 so I think we have to offer the 38. Even though we
13 want to say yes, we still have to honor the law as
14 well. So, your thoughts? I threw several things
15 out; I'm sorry. Number one: is there -- were there
16 two lists that demonstrated science in one and not
17 science in the other? Because I asked the question
18 how are they not offering science. I see it in one
19 of the course offerings. Maybe Ms. Boyd. How are
20 you?

21 MS. BOYD: Good. So I think I can help with
22 that. It's that they are offering science courses
23 but not enough. So the list -- I think they're
24 supposed to offer four and there's only three on the
25 list, so it's that kind of thing. So I think it

1 would be sufficient, like you asked in your follow-up
2 question, for them to confirm that they do plan to
3 offer the 38 required courses. And I think if
4 they're agreeable to that at this point then that
5 will be sufficient for us.

6 DR. GOTCHER: Okay. Go ahead.

7 MS. REIER: I can tell you that we do plan on
8 offering the 38 courses, as needed. If there is
9 future flexibility to offer only those required that
10 would need to be something that would need to be
11 taken into consideration for the needs of the
12 students. But until that time, 38, you got it.

13 DR. GOTCHER: And you have the digital option
14 available. Correct? That's what I read, as well.

15 MS. REIER: Yes.

16 DR. GOTCHER: So that's just like any other
17 public school that needs -- I did it in my school
18 when I was superintendent; if we couldn't offer it,
19 we offered it digitally. So, good. Okay.

20 May I ask a follow-up?

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and
22 down.)

23 DR. GOTCHER: I'm reviewing my notes; forgive
24 me. Tell me more -- because I know that access is
25 important to many of us on this panel. I really

1 appreciate those students that do qualify for a free-
2 and-reduced status will be offered bus passes. But
3 what if transportation is a challenge for someone
4 that wouldn't necessarily qualify? Is there an
5 option? Because I really believe in this kind of
6 program you've got to have access for all kids. So
7 maybe that could be addressed.

8 MS. REIER: Yes.

9 DR. GOTCHER: Not all kids; all adults. Excuse
10 me.

11 MS. REIER: Yes. And, you know, I think in
12 regards to automatic qualification that free-and-
13 reduced lunch qualification is what says absolutely
14 you receive a free bus pass. However, the model
15 itself is designed to insure removal of any barrier
16 to a student's continued education. So that means if
17 they don't necessarily qualify but we know that they
18 don't have a way to get to school that would mean
19 that they would -- that would need to be available to
20 them.

21 DR. GOTCHER: Sure. That's all for me, Madam
22 Chair, for the moment.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Do you have more?

24 DR. SAUNDERS: I do. I wanted to clarify. I
25 know we've been talking back and forth just a little

1 bit on APSCN, that we will be utilizing APSCN on SMS
2 and FMS, finance and the student and all
3 requirements. Right?

4 MS. BOYD: That's correct. We had a discussion
5 earlier in the week and they will be using APSCN,
6 eFinance, and eSchool.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Jennifer, I had a question
8 I think for you. As I was reading through the
9 packet, I noticed that -- let me try to find an
10 example here, and this may help with my
11 understanding. Which document is this? This is the
12 application scoring rubric I believe is what I'm
13 looking at.

14 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: But it had in here -- you know --
16 some of them is being fully responsive, fully
17 responsive, but I get to some and it says See Legal.
18 Let me find the phrase that I was trying to --

19 MS. DAVIS: I think that would be for the
20 waivers and the desegregation analysis.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: It might have been. And then I
22 --

23 MS. DAVIS: Oh, the building.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Do what?

25 MS. DAVIS: The building.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: It might have -- it was in
2 multiple areas. And I tried to go over to the
3 document that I believed was the legal review
4 document.

5 MS. DAVIS: Right.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: And I just can't get it to match
7 up. And so I guess my question is what type of legal
8 concerns and questions do you still have at this
9 point?

10 MS. DAVIS: The only questions that I have
11 remaining at this point -- because APSCN has been
12 taken care of, the TESS has been taken care of. They
13 had requested a waiver of the lottery system in their
14 application. They didn't actually request a waiver
15 in their waiver sheet but they did say that they
16 wanted a waiver from the lottery, that they want to
17 do like an initial lottery but then after that
18 everyone goes on a wait list. And we were kind of --
19 you know -- and again this is a different kind of
20 applicant than, you know, we've seen in the past. So
21 we don't necessarily see that legally -- I mean, it's
22 kind of the whole point of the charters. But because
23 they're not getting money we don't necessarily see
24 that legally they can't waive the lottery. But we
25 had concerns, I know, the charter office and myself,

1 that -- you know -- I mean, what if they had 500
2 people apply because everybody wants this and it's
3 that successful, and -- which, you know, we hope --
4 and, you know, there's only 100 slots. Well, if
5 you're number 499 on the list it could be years
6 before you get in. And so instead of it being that,
7 you know, they have four people graduate, so they may
8 only have four slots on their lottery and it
9 reshuffles, we had some concerns about that. So
10 that's a remaining concern. But other than that, the
11 other questions that they did -- we had questions
12 about the building and ADA compliance, which they did
13 address, so we're okay there. That was the only
14 outstanding issue I had was the lottery.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: I think they're eager to address
16 the lottery concern.

17 MS. DAVIS: Y'all keep trying to sit down; I
18 told y'all to stand up.

19 MS. REIER: I apologize, this little bobbing
20 head over there trying to stand up. Regarding the
21 lottery, I think what we've experienced I think in
22 all of the Excel Centers that have opened up is that
23 even when there is a very large demand -- I mentioned
24 2,000 students on a waiting list in our first year of
25 operation -- that's an extreme case, obviously. But

1 because we have five eight-week terms, students are
2 continually exiting out, which means each eight-week
3 term -- it's not a traditional school where you get
4 to only enroll at the school one time, maybe two
5 times per year, at the beginning of a semester. It's
6 five times throughout the school year there's a new
7 enrollment period. So any time a student leaves due
8 to some sort of attrition that we would encourage
9 them not, you know, do, or graduation, that fills up
10 -- opens up a spot for a student to come off the
11 waiting list. And our concern is that if we restart
12 that process every year there may be a student on the
13 waiting list who feels like all they have to do is
14 wait 16 more weeks, two more terms to come to school.
15 All of a sudden, we reset that process and it could
16 be three terms instead of two terms. And so a
17 student population who's already struggling to be
18 motivated to come back to school or to be re-engaged
19 in their education, all we're doing is pushing them
20 farther back after we've already said two terms. Now
21 we're saying -- you know -- they're getting cut down
22 again saying that's three terms. So we haven't seen
23 an issue regarding long waiting lists and enrollment
24 taking forever because of the five eight-week terms;
25 the biggest concern we have is restarting that

1 process and pushing someone farther back on the list
2 than they would've otherwise been.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Talk to us about the 125
4 enrollment cap. What is your -- what was your
5 thinking on that?

6 MR. ITZKOWITZ: Good afternoon. Brian
7 Itzkowitz; I'm president and CEO. Purely budget.
8 You know, we're looking at an estimated million
9 dollar spend out of operations to do this, so it's
10 purely a budgetary reason.

11 DR. GOTCHER: Ms. Boyd, may I ask a question?
12 Maybe this is something that we can do later. But if
13 there's any barriers in the law -- we kind of alluded
14 to this earlier -- that could assist this type of
15 student-focused education, maybe we can address that
16 with Legal and see if that -- to what Ms. Davis said,
17 if that could be part of our legislative packet that
18 we could present to the Governor, because we want to
19 be able to say yes to unique opportunities for
20 students. So maybe we could just internally review
21 any barriers in the law to a successful program like
22 this and take a look at that. I'd love to have
23 comments from my fellow panel members, as well,
24 because I think we -- at least from what's been
25 testified here, we've got a great opportunity for

1 success for students and I don't want the law to be
2 in the way if it's something that's an antiquated
3 piece that needs to be reviewed. Does that make
4 sense?

5 MS. BOYD: Yes. And I agree with you, and I
6 think we have a few things that we can start with
7 right now. But I also agree with what Ms. Pfeffer
8 said earlier that a lot of it we're not going to know
9 --

10 DR. GOTCHER: Right.

11 MS. BOYD: -- until we get it going. So, yeah,
12 definitely, we'll definitely work on that.

13 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: My question is: what is
15 your outreach plan? Particularly, I was thinking
16 about our area schools. How do you -- what's your
17 plan to reach out to the school counselors? They're
18 going to know some people that we need to let them
19 know about this opportunity. And, most importantly,
20 SIA Tech, if you've reached out to any of those
21 schools or if you have a plan to, or you'd like to
22 create a plan on the fly?

23 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: I would not like to
24 create a plan on the fly. That is something I have
25 on my quarterly to-do list, so that's something I'm

1 going to be working on in the next 90 days.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Great.

3 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: They could talk about
4 things they've done with their other schools, because
5 I'll be relying on them heavily.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I just wanted to make sure
7 it was on your list.

8 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: Oh, yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I love a to-do list.

10 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: It's literally written on
11 my list. It's a rock I'm pushing uphill; that's our
12 terminology.

13 MR. ITZKOWITZ: We also have really good
14 partnerships with Little Rock School District; we're
15 engaged with Baseline Elementary. So we actually
16 have career specialists on site, so we engage the
17 parents where they are; so I think we've got lots of
18 opportunity there. We also run a youth program, so
19 we can engage the parents through the kids through
20 that too. That's part of Stacey's rock.

21 MS. SMITH: So if we approve today, can we put
22 some things in place where we say, you know, we
23 approve the work to get started but we're going to
24 need a follow-up as far as the courses and the
25 alignment and -- I mean, I'm with what Dr. Saunders

1 said earlier; these people are earning a high school
2 diploma and with that it needs to mean something or
3 why do we have minimum requirements for it. So I
4 want to make sure that what the minimum requirements
5 are for the diploma is what we're offering. And, you
6 know, I think we can work through some of those other
7 things and maybe even make some proposes to
8 legislation about the 38 or -- I mean, I just -- my
9 mind is I would rather make sure someone had the
10 content that we require for science and social
11 studies and ELA versus the adult out taking a PE
12 class, although PE is on our list. You know what I
13 mean? I just want to make sure that we are focusing
14 on the right stuff for the people who are in the
15 charter. And so if we approve this where we have
16 regular meetings either monthly with the different --
17 and the Charter Unit would probably need to organize
18 this, but where they can sit down with the specialist
19 they need to sit down with in Learning Services, as
20 far as content, or they sit down with -- I mean,
21 Eric, what are you thinking?

22 DR. SAUNDERS: I had a question for y'all along
23 her train of thought. In your other systems, how
24 many -- do you have any kind of numbers or ideas on
25 how many people that receive a high school diploma

1 from your system go on to higher ed.?

2 MS. REIER: We can get those numbers. Off the
3 top of --

4 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

5 MS. REIER: Off the top of my head I don't
6 recall. But we have them fairly readily available.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: And I guess, Ms. Smith, as you
8 were saying that, I guess what was going through my
9 mid is I wanted to make sure that some of the
10 requirements on the 38 may be good preparation for
11 higher ed. and trying to address a lot of those areas
12 and I would not want to have somebody who possibly
13 may not be exposed to some of those areas.

14 MS. SMITH: Is there a cap on the age of
15 students you take? I know your minimum age was 19.
16 So if we have an adult who's 30 who comes to this
17 school, they're coming to get their diploma -- I
18 mean, I don't think we're trying to create another
19 high school. We're trying to create a charter school
20 who has the minimum requirements where an adult can
21 go get the minimum requirements that they need to
22 have a high school degree. We're not trying to
23 create another high school. I mean, that's how I
24 look at this. This is not -- I'm not -- it's not
25 Haas Hall or Arkansas Arts Academy. I mean, they're

1 not trying -- we're not trying to create that
2 environment for -- we're looking at people who are 19
3 or older who want to get their diploma.

4 DR. GOTCHER: And to your point, Ms. Smith, if
5 there could be some flexibility in the 38; let's say
6 that we required 32 and the remaining 6 had a
7 specific career focus.

8 MS. SMITH: Right. They are -- and we're not --
9 these people, they're not receiving any funds, state
10 funds. We're not creating another high school.
11 There's not state funds going to this. We're trying
12 to set up a school in which here are the requirements
13 that you have to have to earn a degree. They offer
14 those. So whether -- I mean, why have to offer the
15 38? Offer the 22 that someone has to have and you're
16 in, you're out. See what I'm saying? We're not
17 trying to open a high school. We're trying to give
18 them the authority to offer a diploma.

19 DR. GOTCHER: Well said.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, I think your
21 partnership with Pulaski Tech is already established
22 -- is that correct -- to kind of take care of any
23 additional pathways that one of the clients may want
24 to take on? Is that correct?

25 MS. REIER: Yes. I'll let you speak to it.

1 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: Yes, that is correct; we
2 do have a formal Memorandum of Understanding and the
3 president of Pulaski Tech is a member of the board of
4 the nonprofit that would be running this charter
5 school. And in addition I want to say we're very
6 well connected with Pulaski Tech. We have a career
7 center of ours right on their campus and we do career
8 counseling for their -- we do placement, resumes, all
9 that kind of preparation for their students. So
10 we're very intertwined. We talk with them regularly.

11 MS. SMITH: Great concurrent credit
12 opportunities right there for them. I mean --

13 DR. GOTCHER: Yeah. Madam Chair, short of
14 making a motion, Ms. Boyd, if we proceeded and you
15 offered the technical assistance needed -- and just
16 help me with maybe a bit of protocol -- if you met
17 with some barrier that required Charter Authorizing
18 Panel discussion, could we be called back for a
19 special -- I just want to make sure that we are not
20 putting our own barrier in place. If we proceeded
21 and you offered the technical assistance, continue
22 the process which has been laid out, and if your
23 office was met with something that you felt needed
24 Charter's review, is that something that we could
25 look at or is that -- am I complicating things?

1 MS. BOYD: Yeah. No. So, I think it -- I think
2 it's fair to let everyone know, first of all, if
3 they're approved you guys can call them before you at
4 any time for anything.

5 DR. GOTCHER: Any time. That's right.

6 MS. BOYD: Then also they can ask for an
7 amendment request. Those are done in February and
8 October, but if there's an emergency, like they need
9 to get something done to better serve their students,
10 then the Commissioner can waive those rule
11 requirements and they can be seen at the next hearing
12 that you have and you could also schedule a special
13 hearing, if needed.

14 DR. GOTCHER: Understood. Thank you, Ma'am.

15 MS. PFEFFER: So can I summarize what I think I
16 know about this application?

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Absolutely.

18 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So to me it seems that we
19 have a law that is permitting this type of a charter
20 to be done. Correct? Legal, is that correct?

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

22 MS. PFEFFER: We have a law that would allow
23 this to happen. We have an application that has --
24 it's clear that required graduation credits will be
25 offered and they have affirmed today that they will

1 offer the 38 units of credit that are required.
2 They're doing it in a way that's going to meet the
3 needs of the students whom they will serve. They're
4 not taking any funding from the State. They will
5 assess using our state assessments, and they have set
6 goals not only on the state assessments but they've
7 set graduation goals and they've set outcome goals in
8 terms of what students will do beyond graduation. Is
9 that everybody's understanding?

10 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. PFEFFER: So I just -- I am ready with a
12 motion to approve this amendment because I cannot
13 imagine -- I know there are going to be challenges
14 and I know there are things to consider, but in terms
15 of what this school wants to do I would like to make
16 a motion that we approve this request, if that is --
17 I probably should have asked you if it was okay to
18 make a motion at this time.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Absolutely.

20 MS. DAVIS: I have one thing before we go into a
21 motion.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Oh.

23 MS. DAVIS: If -- and I'm not sure about what
24 you guys feel on the lottery. But if they are going
25 to request a waiver of the lottery, then they also

1 need to add a waiver of 6-23-306, subsection (14)(b),
2 which that's the part that deals with if there's more
3 applicants than slots available and holding a
4 lottery. So, you know, I don't know if y'all want to
5 entertain that, if you guys want to verbally -- you
6 have to verbally say yes, you want to add that waiver
7 to your -- if not, then you have to --

8 DR. GOTCHER: 6-23-306?

9 MS. DAVIS: Yes. Subsection (14)(b).

10 MS. PFEFFER: May I ask --

11 MS. DAVIS: And it's on page 758 of the code
12 book.

13 MS. PFEFFER: So on the related lottery
14 question, what is the average wait time that students
15 in your -- in the other schools where you have the
16 current lottery system, where you hold the initial
17 lottery? And just the wait time, it's always just a
18 waiting list after that. Do you have any details on
19 an average wait time?

20 MS. REIER: It varies throughout the school year
21 as more students try to come. I'd say that the
22 longest in recent years that any student has had to
23 wait has been two terms, which is 16 weeks. But it
24 truly does vary. And we've found that once a school
25 becomes established and they have kind of a more kind

1 of steady flux of students that can be shortened a
2 little bit as well.

3 MS. DAVIS: So then I do need somebody to
4 verbally agree that you want to add this waiver to
5 your application.

6 DR. HUNTER-SCHWARTZ: We would like to formally
7 add this waiver to our application, please.

8 MS. DAVIS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer, does your
10 motion include that waiver?

11 MS. PFEFFER: I would like to go ahead and
12 continue with the motion to allow them to have a
13 waiver based on the difference in their school year,
14 their terms. So that would be my motion.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay.

16 MS. SMITH: I second.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So Ms. Pfeffer has made a
18 motion, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the
19 application for the Excel Center with all waivers.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Maybe we should qualify that
21 particular statute 6-23-306, a waiver, just to make

22 --

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: From the lottery.

24 MS. DAVIS: No, it's subsection (14)(b).

25 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

1 MS. DAVIS: Just that part that deals with the
2 random anonymous student lottery on a yearly basis.
3 Everything else would still be in place.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Instead of a random
5 lottery they'll have a waiting list.

6 DR. GOTCHER: Waiting list because of the terms
7 of their calendar. Okay.

8 MS. DAVIS: Right. But everything else in that
9 section would still be in place.

10 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any discussion or
12 additional discussion? Dr. Saunders?

13 DR. SAUNDERS: No. I'm still thinking, thank
14 you, right now.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Would you like for me to
16 pause for your thinking or go on?

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Sometimes my thinking takes a
18 long time, so you might not want to do that.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We may come back for --
20 there's a -- a motion has been made and seconded to
21 approve the application for the Excel Center. All
22 those in favor?

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Hearing
25 none, if you'll give me -- give us just a moment to

1 complete our document.

2 MS. REIER: We do have an answer to your
3 question, if you would like it --

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yeah, go ahead.

5 MS. REIER: -- unless it's too late. So if we
6 look at our 2013-14 graduates and we look one year
7 out after graduation, 88% of those graduates were
8 either employed or in college; 25% attended only
9 college; 19% were attending college and were
10 employed.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: So you had a 44% college
12 attendance rate among those graduates?

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: 25.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Am I seeing that right? Is it 25
15 plus the 19?

16 MS. REIER: Yes.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: No? Yes?

18 MS. REIER: 25 attended college only, but an
19 additional 19 were attending college and were also
20 employed. So the 25/19.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: That's impressive. That's very
22 impressive.

23 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

25 DR. GOTCHER: Madam Chair, I voted for the

1 approval of the application. I am pleased with the
2 mission and the opportunity for adult students in
3 this application. I strongly encourage the applicant
4 to work closely with the Arkansas Department of Ed.
5 Charter Office for technical assistance in this
6 process.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

8 MR. LESTER: I voted for the application, to
9 approve. The data shows that this model is working,
10 some strong performance with the face-to-face
11 instruction, flexible coursework, and the work
12 experiences that this program provides for the
13 particular population. It does need to continue to
14 overcome the barriers to the program.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

16 MS. LIWO: I voted for. There's just so much
17 good with what you guys are proposing that I can't
18 list it all. But I think this is going to benefit a
19 lot of people and I just wish you guys success.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

21 MS. PFEFFER: I just think this is an awesome
22 opportunity.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

24 MR. ROGERS: I voted for because this charter
25 will focus on allowing adults to receive their high

1 school education. Although there are still some
2 challenges ahead, this is a unique opportunity to
3 adults in Arkansas.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted in favor of it. I
6 thought it would give opportunities for adults to
7 earn a high school diploma.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

9 MS. SMITH: I put -- I voted for. This could be
10 life-changing for individuals to have the opportunity
11 to get their high school diploma through this
12 charter. Internal work with the Excel team and ADE
13 staff will need to occur to insure success for an
14 adult charter. And I just also wanted to add on a
15 side note: at lunch we were asked by one of our
16 attorneys -- I won't mention her name, Jennifer Davis
17 -- about what makes us passionate about the work that
18 we do and, you know, were we passionate when we were
19 in schools. This would be the kind of thing that
20 makes me passionate about the work that we do here at
21 the Department. And this is what I think really a
22 charter is supposed to be about is identifying a
23 need, thinking innovatively, and then us as a Charter
24 Authorizing Panel not getting in the way but finding
25 ways to make it happen. And so I am honored to just

1 get to vote and be a part of this today, and I just
2 want to make sure that you guys know that we here at
3 the Department want to be -- want this to be
4 successful and we want you guys to use us and call us
5 and pick up the phone and "Hey, I'm not sure about
6 this, what do we need to do," because we want to be a
7 part of it. So, congratulations to you today.

8 DR. GOTCHER: And you approved this message.

9 MS. SMITH: And I'm Stacy Smith and I approved
10 this message.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, congratulations. We
12 think this is a game-changer for the state of
13 Arkansas.

14 Any last words?

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah, I do. I do. I'd like --
16 if you get the chance, while it's fresh on your mind
17 with the application process -- and I know that
18 you've worked with other states and gone through
19 other processes, probably some easier, probably some
20 more demanding -- if you could communicate to our --
21 probably our Charter Office what you saw as being
22 some of the toughest hurdles that you had, whether it
23 be in law or in procedure, anything else; just to
24 communicate to them so we could look at, you know,
25 what barriers are in place that we may not realize

1 that -- because this is something that helps the
2 state of Arkansas. It educates our population and
3 provides opportunity. And these are things that we
4 need to make sure, just like Dr. Gotcher said, that
5 we do not have restrictions in place to stop things
6 from happened, but we want to find a way to say yes.
7 So if while it's fresh on your mind, if you could
8 just make a list of some of the things that you've
9 noticed specific to our state, even high points that
10 say, "Well, it was definitely a lot easier here in
11 this area as what we've experienced in other places
12 or more difficult than others." So --

13 MS. REIER: I'll just let you know that we'd be
14 happy to do that. We have experience with at least
15 six other states and their chartering laws and staff
16 members who have worked for chartering authorizers
17 that are highly rated throughout the nation. So we'd
18 be happy to provide that.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, do you have any
21 additional items before this panel today?

22 MS. BOYD: No, ma'am, not today.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I'm sure you'd like to
24 start at 8:30 in the morning?

25 MS. BOYD: Yes, my favorite time in the morning

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time. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Panel.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Is there a motion to adjourn?

DR. GOTCHER: So moved.

DR. SAUNDERS: Second.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All those in favor?

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: See you at 8:00 -- 8:30 in the morning. Thank you, everyone.

(The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.)

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A-1: HAAS HALL ACADEMY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

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A-1: HAAS HALL ACADEMY

EXHIBIT TWO (2)

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A-1: HAAS HALL ACADEMY

EXHIBIT THREE (3)

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