

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

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*October 20, 2016*

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

OCTOBER 20, 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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E X H I B I T S

A-1: ARKANSAS RIVER VALLEY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

A Day in the Life of a Virtual Student

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: The October 20th meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is called to order. I'd like to welcome everyone to the Arkansas Department of Education and ask that you please silence all electronic devices. The Charter Authorizing Panel oversees the authorization, renewal, revision, and revocation of charters. It is our goal to 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 today is being live-streamed and recorded, so it's imperative that you adjust the microphone so that you are speaking directly into the microphone. This meeting is also being recorded. Our reporter, Ms. Sharon Hill, will be putting together a transcript of the meeting and it will also be posted on the ADE website.

So with that, good morning. And, Ms. Boyd, you're recognized.

A-1: HEARING OF DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION: ARKANSAS RIVER VALLEY VIRTUAL ACADEMY, VAN BUREN

1 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. This morning  
2 the first item you'll be hearing will be on a  
3 district conversion charter school application from  
4 the Van Buren School District with the name of  
5 Arkansas River Valley Virtual Academy. Before we get  
6 started I would like to ask Ms. Davis to come forward  
7 with the hearing procedures for today.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Good morning, Ms. Davis.

9 MS. DAVIS: Hi, good morning. Jennifer Davis,  
10 Staff Attorney for the Department. The procedures  
11 that you're going to follow today will be that all  
12 persons wishing to provide testimony to you will need  
13 to be sworn in with the exception of attorneys. The  
14 applicant will have 20 minutes to present its  
15 application to you, followed by 20 minutes of  
16 opposition. At that time the applicant will have 5  
17 additional minutes to close. You can ask any  
18 questions of the applicant, the Department, or anyone  
19 else that's here that you may have questions of  
20 before making your decision. You can either vote to  
21 approve or disapprove the application today or take  
22 it under advisement at a later date. You do have a  
23 Google doc that you can note your reasons for your  
24 vote in. And also -- excuse me -- also, because a  
25 charter is a contract, it is a negotiation; so

1 anything that is agreed to today by the applicant  
2 that differs that's in their written materials will  
3 become part of the charter today.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Boyd.

5 MS. BOYD: From Van Buren to start off their  
6 presentation we have their superintendent Dr. Harold  
7 Jeffcoat.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If everyone speaking on  
9 behalf of the Arkansas River Valley Virtual Academy  
10 will stand and anyone speaking in opposition; if  
11 you'll raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm  
12 that the testimony you're about to give shall be the  
13 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

14 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jeffcoat, you're  
16 recognized.

17 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Good morning. Dr. Harold  
18 Jeffcoat, superintendent of the Van Buren School  
19 District. I want to thank you for the opportunity  
20 that you've given us to present our proposal on our  
21 virtual academy. And we're going to start our  
22 presentation with a short video.

23 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: The video is available  
24 for viewing on the ADE website).

25 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Panel Members, I appreciate --

1 Gary Deffenbaugh, Representative Deffenbaugh has  
2 agreed to come and speak to you this morning. And  
3 he's here now and I'd like to turn it over to him, if  
4 that's okay. Is that okay?

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes, absolutely.

6 REP. DEFFENBAUGH: Morning.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Good morning.

8 REP. DEFFENBAUGH: I was a little late, so I  
9 won't make up for being late by talking very long.  
10 But I'll tell you a little bit about myself and then  
11 you lead into this. I coached and taught, you know,  
12 public schools for 39 years and taught math, coached  
13 several sports; kind of like back then in the day you  
14 were jack-of-all-trades. And so I've spent a lot of  
15 years in the public schools and, you know, when you  
16 get a little bit older -- I don't know if you get  
17 cynical, but whatever it is I, you know, began to  
18 watch different mandates and different bills and  
19 different laws come up from the legislature, and some  
20 of them began to irritate me a little bit; some of  
21 them were good, some of them weren't so good. And,  
22 you know, I guess probably in the back of my mind you  
23 just think, you know what, if I could get in the  
24 legislature I'd straighten them out -- and you know  
25 how that goes. But I kind of had that in the back of

1 my mind, so after I retired in 2010, sure enough,  
2 this position came open. I ran a primary, ran a  
3 general election, won both of them, and now this is  
4 my sixth year and haven't raced since. And I'm going  
5 into another term probably, God willing, and I -- you  
6 know -- it would be my seventh and eighth year and  
7 don't have an opponent there. But anyway, I got down  
8 here and, like most things that you've never  
9 experienced, you know, I came down here and I got an  
10 education, you know, and you realize, you know,  
11 people's -- you realize there's a different  
12 perspective from just the dumb coach. And so I got  
13 down here and got on the Education Committee and  
14 really -- have really enjoyed them; I'm still on  
15 them, as far as I know. And so anyway I, you know,  
16 would study some and would see the new opportunities  
17 coming along in education and it was -- a lot of it  
18 was intriguing. And so meantime, I had dealt with --  
19 now he's retired, Dr. Merle Dickerson, and I would  
20 talk to him and I'd say, you know, "If there's  
21 anything we, you know, can help you with or anything  
22 new we need to know, you know, I'll try to help you."  
23 But he didn't do it much. He was on his way out, he  
24 was getting ready to retire, and so he just didn't --  
25 we didn't communicate much. So when Dr. Jeffcoat was



1 hired, you know, I didn't know how he'd be because I  
2 never had met him. I was reading the paper, who the  
3 candidates were, what their qualifications were, and  
4 so he was elected -- or he was selected as the  
5 superintendent in Van Buren. It wasn't long I got to  
6 know him and really began to have a good relationship  
7 with him and really respected him because he came in  
8 -- Van Buren is a great school district, but he came  
9 into a situation where there was some things that  
10 were really messed up and he -- it took a lot of  
11 courage to do what he's done. And there's no use to  
12 get into that, but I'll just tell you he's -- he may  
13 be small in stature but he stands tall in Van Buren.

14 You don't mind me saying that?

15 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's okay.

16 REP. DEFFENBAUGH: But anyway, he's tackled some  
17 really tough problems. And I'm not saying those are  
18 all straightened out, but also he would look for new  
19 programs and, you know, innovative things that would  
20 help our district and so then -- so the virtual  
21 school came up. I began to hear about it in the  
22 legislature and it was, you know, very interesting to  
23 me. And so Dr. Jeffcoat was also really interested,  
24 as you can see, and so we began to talk. In fact, we  
25 talked lately and one thing that I found out about

1 him is he would call youngsters that weren't quite  
2 finished with their diploma. I mean, I'm talking  
3 about people -- and y'all, you know, have seen them  
4 or heard of them; you're talking about people that  
5 maybe have two -- they're two classes short and  
6 they'll say, "Ahhh, naw, I don't want to finish," you  
7 know. And, of course, we all know they're going to  
8 regret that, but Dr. Jeffcoat would -- he's calling  
9 those people and he's telling them, you know, we've  
10 got a new -- we've got -- we're going to -- we think  
11 we're going to have a new system in place where you  
12 can get that diploma and get your classes and get it  
13 over with at home. And so I really appreciated that  
14 and I think that's been effective for him. But I  
15 really -- I see some great possibilities at Van Buren  
16 because we're going to have some opportunities for  
17 people to get their diploma that wouldn't take the  
18 time. I mean, part of it is just we've got that  
19 opportunity to entice them to, like I say, just give  
20 them that opportunity.

21 So I just -- I didn't know what Dr. Jeffcoat  
22 wanted me to say, but I will tell you this: I really  
23 am high on him and I'm really high on this program,  
24 and so hopefully you'll see it our way and allow us  
25 to start a virtual academy. And thanks.

1 DR. GOTCHER: Madam Chair, may I say --

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

4 DR. GOTCHER: Representative, I just want to say  
5 thank you for your support and your comments. And I  
6 personally know Dr. Jeffcoat as well and I concur  
7 with your analysis of his innovation and the drive  
8 that he has for moving the needle for students in Van  
9 Buren. So I appreciate you being here, sir. Thank  
10 you.

11 REP. DEFFENBAUGH: Thank you.

12 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you, Representative.  
13 And, yes, it's true, I am small in stature -- and I  
14 thought you were going to agree with him on that  
15 point, but I appreciate -- in Van Buren we've got a  
16 lot of great things going on, and we're going to talk  
17 about some of those hopefully today as well. It's my  
18 privilege to introduce some of my colleagues that I  
19 have with me today. I have Brian Summerhill, who's  
20 our assistant superintendent; I have Karen Allen, who  
21 is the director of Human Resources, Personnel, GT --  
22 can I just keep going? There's a lot of things;  
23 federal programs -- I could go on. And then I have  
24 Nancy Robbins, who I also have a list of things that  
25 she takes care of, but Nancy is our curriculum and

1 instruction director. And they'll be joining me or  
2 will have the opportunity to join me during the Q-  
3 and-A session as we move to that portion.

4 This has certainly been -- it's been a team  
5 effort. We've had a lot of people involved, and I  
6 think our presentation had a list of all of those  
7 individuals. A lot of folks who have contributed,  
8 and these are really the major contributors. There  
9 are actually many, many more people who have had  
10 conversation about the application that we're  
11 presenting today. I mentioned all of my colleagues  
12 that are here with me. I also have Eddie Tipton, who  
13 is the high school principal at Van Buren; I have  
14 Lisa Miller, freshmen academy principal; Dr. Karen  
15 Endel, she's the principal at Butterfield Trail  
16 Middle School; and Stacie Wood, elementary school  
17 principal in Van Buren; Jennifer Feeny, an assistant  
18 principal at a middle school; Michele Shipman, an  
19 assistant principal -- she was a curriculum coach at  
20 the time that we were having these conversations;  
21 she's now an assistant principal at Tate Elementary  
22 School. Robert Rogers -- Robert is actually -- he  
23 was before a new tech teacher/facilitator/trainer;  
24 he's now serving as our facilitator/teacher for  
25 Virtual Arkansas classes at the high school, and we

1 have eight of those that we offer now and have  
2 several students enrolled in our virtual classes at  
3 the high school and Robert takes care of those kids.  
4 Ashleigh Gillespie, very innovative mind; she is a  
5 middle school teacher. Kristie Mendez, also very  
6 technologically advanced, and she is an elementary  
7 school teacher in our school district. Candice  
8 Bowen, a homeschool parent that you saw -- one of our  
9 homeschool parents on the screen; Nicole Schweizer,  
10 another homeschool parent; and then Bob Freeman,  
11 mayor of Van Buren. So many, many people have been  
12 part of these conversations and have asked a lot of  
13 questions and thought through different ideas.

14 It is an honor to be before you today presenting  
15 our proposal -- excuse me; that's the last time I'll  
16 move that. We'll have to move it again when other  
17 people come up. It's an honor to present our  
18 proposal for an innovative learning model for our  
19 students in our district. While we're not the first  
20 public school to pursue a virtual education platform,  
21 we're excited to join those who are pioneering this  
22 innovative educational opportunity. We admire the  
23 work of the Springdale School District and the  
24 Fayetteville School District and their trailblazing  
25 efforts to create the first conversion virtual

1 charter schools in Arkansas. We've been in touch  
2 with them as they have launched their programs and  
3 we're excited about the possibility of bringing this  
4 type of opportunity to our community. Tony Wagner  
5 said it best when he said, "Choice is the new  
6 American value."

7 We're here to ask permission to create a K-12  
8 virtual academy within our school district. The  
9 Arkansas River Valley Virtual Academy will provide  
10 personalized flexible learning opportunities. It  
11 will be another innovative education option or choice  
12 for our students. Through this model we will remove  
13 all time barriers and allow students to progress at a  
14 rate that corresponds with their interests and  
15 abilities. While we are looking to create a flexible  
16 education model, the concept of virtual learning is  
17 far from new. I would venture to guess that everyone  
18 in the room has at some point taken advantage of the  
19 power of online learning. Whether you went to the  
20 internet to learn how to play the piano for the first  
21 time or maybe you learned the correct way to install  
22 bathroom tile, or maybe you were like me and many  
23 other people in the room and you went online to learn  
24 the process to apply for a conversion charter school  
25 in Arkansas. The reality is that learning is at our

1           fingertips and in the years to come I believe that  
2           virtual learning will be a common element in all  
3           schools. Schools have changed a lot over the years,  
4           but in many ways we've stayed the same, but there's  
5           been no other vehicle more influential in changing  
6           how we educate our kids than technology. Whether  
7           we're comfortable with it or not, technology is here  
8           to stay and technology will continue to impact and  
9           shape the field of education.

10           Our virtual academy, if approved, will be  
11           operated as a new LEA within the Van Buren School  
12           District. Curriculum offered through the academy  
13           will be through an online platform with an  
14           educational enhancement of face-to-face interactions  
15           with Arkansas licensed teachers working for the Van  
16           Buren School District. There will also be service  
17           opportunities and real world experiences that are  
18           highly differentiated to meet the diverse needs of  
19           our learners.

20           Our virtual academy will provide a high-quality  
21           personalized curriculum to meet the needs of those  
22           varied student populations, including students who  
23           are homebound; students who are at risk of failure,  
24           as Representative Deffenbaugh spoke of earlier,  
25           specifically those who have left school without

1 completing their graduation requirements; students  
2 who are currently in homeschool learning  
3 environments; and students who are driven to  
4 accelerate their learning. The program will feature  
5 virtual learning opportunities but will be enhanced  
6 with -- by teachers who will offer parents and  
7 students an optional face-to-face weekly orientation  
8 regarding the upcoming week's work in order to  
9 support the students and the families with the  
10 curriculum. Students will also have an opportunity  
11 to meet once more weekly with teachers in order to  
12 get extra help with assignments in core curriculum  
13 concepts.

14 The virtual academy will work in partnership  
15 with parents, students and teachers to provide field  
16 experiences, community service projects, and  
17 integrated curriculum activities in order for  
18 students to experience real world activities and  
19 curriculum integration opportunities. These  
20 experiences may include guest speakers, trips in  
21 areas of career interests, trips to colleges and  
22 museums, theater performances, and much, much more.  
23 In addition, virtual academy students will have the  
24 option to participate in extracurricular activities,  
25 including athletics, band, choir, et cetera.



1 Curriculum will cover both core curriculum -- or core  
2 academic classes, as well as grade appropriate  
3 electives. Our virtual academy will provide  
4 individual learning plans for all students that will  
5 delineate personalized curriculum and field  
6 experiences tailored to students' interests and  
7 needs. These plans will be created in conjunction  
8 with teachers, students, and parents, and reviewed  
9 often to make sure that each student is making  
10 progress towards his or her learning goals.

11 As we have considered and discussed the  
12 possibility of a virtual academy, the largest  
13 population that has shown the greatest interest is  
14 our homeschool families. We currently have 234  
15 students living within our school zone who are being  
16 homeschooled. Parents choose homeschool for a  
17 variety of reasons and we respect, honor, and support  
18 their decision. Oftentimes, they find themselves  
19 using curriculum similar to what we will offer in our  
20 virtual academy, but they're missing a couple of  
21 elements that we believe are important to the success  
22 of students: the teacher support option that will be  
23 available at least two days per week and the social,  
24 emotional, and educational benefit of participating  
25 in school sponsored and coordinated field

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experiences.

Our research indicates that this is a need in our community. Our main innovations include personalized curriculum and individual learning plans. Each student enrolled in the virtual academy will work with a learning team to develop an individual learning plan. The virtual curriculum will allow students and their families choice -- and there's the word again -- choice and flexibility to align with their individual interests and needs. Enrichment opportunities -- our virtual academy will offer opportunities such as field experiences, community service projects and/or integrated units of study where students will interact and learn with other students and adults. The human element of the virtual program -- our virtual academy will offer students and parents the opportunity to enhance their virtual learning with face-to-face support. This is an element that's missing in nearly all virtual programs today. Interventions -- teachers will monitor individual student progress frequently, and as long as students are progressing at a reasonable rate the face-to-face sessions will be optional. A response to intervention plan will be in place for students falling behind. Interventions may require

1 attendance at one or both face-to-face sessions until  
2 satisfactory progress is made. Partnerships -- our  
3 virtual academy will rely on a number of partnerships  
4 within our community to provide students with  
5 meaningful field experiences and possible  
6 internships. As you can see in the video  
7 presentation, our city government is very supportive  
8 and I believe you have a letter from our Chamber of  
9 Commerce which also shows that they are excited about  
10 this possibility and they're willing to help in any  
11 way.

12 While the delivery method will differ, the  
13 content covered will be similar to that which is  
14 covered in the traditional setting. K-5 students  
15 will study core content areas in English, language  
16 arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social  
17 studies. They will also have access to music, art,  
18 and PE instruction. In grades 6-8, students will  
19 cover the same areas of focus but will also have  
20 access to some accelerated coursework such as courses  
21 for high school credit. In grades 9-12, students  
22 will study courses to meet the high school graduation  
23 requirements including advanced placement and  
24 concurrent credit courses. While a vendor has not  
25 yet been chosen, we will only consider those that are

1 approved by the State -- on the State provider list.  
2 Our goal is to choose a high-quality provider that  
3 allows us the flexibility to review the content and  
4 make adjustments when necessary so that we may better  
5 align the content to Arkansas state standards. We  
6 have narrowed our choice down to a couple of vendors  
7 and if we are approved to move forward, we'll want a  
8 teacher committee to do a thorough analysis of the  
9 content provided by each to insure that we're making  
10 the best decision for our district. The Van Buren  
11 School District will also work with the Department of  
12 Education to insure that courses taught are approved  
13 and aligned to Arkansas standards.

14 Panel Members, you should have a sample -- or do  
15 we have the samples? If it's okay, Ms. Robbins is  
16 going to bring you the sample days for students.  
17 It's just a sample of a day in the life for a student  
18 enrolled in the virtual academy. Now I'll just tell  
19 you these are just examples. As you know, a virtual  
20 program is very flexible and it will vary greatly.  
21 Some students may want to start their day -- students  
22 and parents may want to start their day earlier than  
23 others. We may have high school students who have  
24 jobs that will have to work at different times and  
25 then complete their program of study a little later.

1 But we want to just give you an idea of what it would  
2 look like for a student if they were enrolled to see  
3 the coursework and see how it would be implemented  
4 over the course of a week. So, again, these are just  
5 samples; these are examples, but it's not suggesting  
6 that it will be exactly as these samples suggest.

7 Each -- while we can't say exactly when students  
8 will engage in the curriculum, we will have access to  
9 each one of their accounts and we can monitor their  
10 progress and we can see if they're not progressing at  
11 a rate necessary to be successful. Each of the  
12 vendors that we've spoken with also have electronic  
13 planners that parents and students can use to insure  
14 that they're pacing themselves appropriately to stay  
15 the course.

16 Academic goals are as follows and the state-  
17 mandated assessments -- our goals for the Van Buren  
18 -- for Van Buren students in our virtual academy will  
19 be to meet or exceed the state average number of  
20 students scoring proficient in reading, English,  
21 math, writing, and science. Virtual academy students  
22 will also be at or above the state average number of  
23 students taking the ACT. These goals will be  
24 assessed annually to denote progress and attainment  
25 will be 2021-2022 at the end of the year when full

1 implementation of our K-12 program is in place.  
2 Nonacademic goals -- 99% of -- there you go -- 99% of  
3 virtual academy students will develop an individual  
4 learning plan to support their academic and career  
5 goals; 95% of virtual academy students will  
6 participate in enrichment activities to include field  
7 experiences, community service, integrated units, and  
8 they'll do that each nine weeks. These goals will be  
9 assessed annually to denote progress and attainment  
10 will be 2019-2020, which is year-three.

11 This school will be housed within one wing of  
12 the Van Buren Freshmen Academy. This building was  
13 originally designed to hold over 800 junior high  
14 students but after reconfiguration it currently holds  
15 425 9th graders. So space is available to easily  
16 house our virtual academy, especially in the early  
17 years. Initially, we will begin with an enrollment  
18 cap of 125 4th through 8th grade students. Each year  
19 after, we will expand the program to the next grade  
20 down and the next grade up. We will follow this  
21 pattern until the program is fully implemented, K-12.

22 Staffing for the program when fully implemented  
23 -- and this is a concept as well, which could be  
24 adjusted -- will consist of a virtual academy  
25 coordinator, an administrative assistant, five

1 Arkansas licensed teachers specializing in core  
2 content areas, and additional support personnel will  
3 be employed as well based on the needs of the  
4 program.

5 There will be a strong commitment on the part of  
6 all parties providing online curriculum. Without  
7 having an establish system of support there's no  
8 doubt that this would not be successful. We'll need  
9 to do a great job of advising parents and students of  
10 the opportunity this model provides, but also inform  
11 them of the challenges as well. While the degree of  
12 involvement will be based on student age, our parents  
13 will need to understand that their role will be that  
14 of an at-home learning coach for their children.  
15 They will need to provide guidance, assistance,  
16 encouragement, and follow a routine schedule to  
17 insure ongoing progress. While parents are a  
18 critical component in all education models, a virtual  
19 education will likely require more time, effort and  
20 attention due to the flexibility the model provides.  
21 As learning coaches, parents will also be the first  
22 -- will also likely be the first point of contact  
23 when a student needs help. Effective communication  
24 between the home and the school will be absolutely  
25 critical. However, parents will not be alone in this

1 model; our teachers will be readily available to  
2 assist parents and students. Teachers in our virtual  
3 academy will have a working schedule that is flexible  
4 to insure that they're able to meet the needs of our  
5 families. Teachers will also receive ongoing  
6 training in strategies for effective teaching inside  
7 a virtual environment.

8 Before moving to the Van Buren School District I  
9 was previously the superintendent -- the deputy  
10 superintendent -- sorry, Dr. Tony Thurman -- I was  
11 previously the deputy superintendent in the Cabot  
12 School District. And I've seen firsthand the  
13 benefits of creating a flexible model of learning  
14 through their charter school, the Academic Center of  
15 Excellence. Michelle Evans, the principal of ACE,  
16 has done an amazing job creating a very successful  
17 program. The number of students graduating for her  
18 -- from her program each year is clear evidence that  
19 flexibility is needed in today's schools. The  
20 support and interest that we have received regarding  
21 this concept in our community and throughout the  
22 district has really been overwhelming. When people  
23 realize the positive potential of a program such as  
24 this they -- the question that we get asked most is  
25 how quickly can we start.



1 Panel Members, we are very excited about this  
2 opportunity and we want to thank you again for giving  
3 us this chance to visit with you about our program  
4 and look forward to your feedback.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Are there any  
6 persons to speak in opposition or any public comment?

7 Dr. Jeffcoat, you have approximately three  
8 minutes left of your five minutes.

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you. Change is a result  
10 of progressive thinking and progress is a result of  
11 change. If we want to provide a K-12 education model  
12 that is most effective for the students of the  
13 future, we have to focus more on the world that  
14 they're being raised in and less on the world that we  
15 were raised in. The Van Buren School District is  
16 known for innovation and quality of education. Our  
17 motto is Our Children Our Success. Faculty and staff  
18 in the Van Buren School District take pride in their  
19 work and celebrate the success of our students. If  
20 you spend time in Van Buren, I believe you would  
21 agree that there is a tremendous amount of momentum  
22 right now for our school system. There are a number  
23 of outstanding programs being implemented throughout  
24 the district. In this year alone we began school  
25 with an expansion of science, technology,

1 engineering, and mathematic programs to reach kids in  
2 all grade levels using Project Lead the Way. We have  
3 also started this year with a partnership -- or with  
4 partnerships between our school district, the  
5 Arkansas Tech University, the University of Arkansas  
6 at Fort Smith, and Virtual Arkansas to expand  
7 concurrent credit offerings for our students. Thanks  
8 to those partnerships, students in the Van Buren  
9 School District will graduate with more than just a  
10 high school diploma. Based on their choice -- that  
11 word again "choice" -- students will now be able to  
12 graduate with industry level certification in the  
13 advanced technology fields of cyber systems,  
14 robotics, or students can follow an established  
15 learning track that will lead to a 60-hour associates  
16 degree to be issued at the same time that they  
17 complete their high school career. Also this year  
18 our community recently approved the bond restructure  
19 that will allow us to proceed with building new  
20 academic facilities, as well as make significant  
21 improvements to our existing schools. Additionally,  
22 our community voted to approve a three mill increase  
23 that will generate just over \$1,000,000 each year to  
24 be used for maintenance and operations. These funds  
25 will be used in a variety of ways, including

1 continuous investments in technology for our students  
2 and staff. This campaign was supported by nearly 70%  
3 of our taxpayers. One thing is for sure, Van Buren  
4 is on the rise.

5 We ask that you allow us this opportunity to  
6 create another innovative choice for our kids and our  
7 community. We would like to genuinely thank you  
8 again for your time and consideration and welcome any  
9 questions that you have.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Panel? Dr.  
11 Gotcher.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Dr.  
13 Jeffcoat, thank you. I appreciate the background; I  
14 appreciate -- even as a superintendent a couple of  
15 years ago I dealt with some of the very issues that  
16 you talked about and I believe you've certainly got  
17 an opportunity to really focus on what we believe at  
18 the Department, the student-focused education. We've  
19 got to look how does that focus look; what are the  
20 alternate ways; what are the innovative ways that we  
21 provide students --

22 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Absolutely.

23 DR. GOTCHER: -- that need a quality education.  
24 In my prep for this, looking at -- I had a couple of  
25 questions and I typically review a mission statement

1 first because that gives me an idea. I think you  
2 understand that. So primarily, question one, who is  
3 your target audience for this virtual academy? Who  
4 is your target audience?

5 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, we have several groups  
6 that would benefit from our virtual academy. Of  
7 course, our homeschool population is the biggest  
8 group that has asked for more input.

9 DR. GOTCHER: Sure.

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Actually, we have asked for  
11 more input in trying to develop this concept. But we  
12 also have our homeschool families that could benefit.  
13 The number of hours that we spend with homeschool  
14 families is minimal compared to what they would be  
15 able to do in a virtual environment; having that  
16 opportunity it's much greater. We also have our at-  
17 risk kids. You know, as Representative Deffenbaugh  
18 spoke earlier, I do spend time calling our kids that  
19 left us the year before. And it was funny, right  
20 before he and I sat down and had a conversation I was  
21 on the phone with a young lady who had 24-and-a-half  
22 credits -- she had 24-and-a-half credits; all she  
23 needed to graduate was senior English. That was all,  
24 second semester senior English. Well, she quit in  
25 March. And I spoke to her parents first and her

1 parents said, you know, "It broke our heart." She  
2 has a 3.5 grade point average, and they wanted her to  
3 go back but she was with other students who  
4 encouraged her to leave, and they left and she left  
5 with them. So I was on the phone with her before he  
6 and I spoke and I asked her if she would come back  
7 this next semester and her answer was no; she  
8 couldn't -- she just couldn't face -- it was too hard  
9 for her to come back to school and face those  
10 students that she had walked away from. So this  
11 option, having a virtual academy where they're at  
12 home -- they're going to have the opportunity to  
13 complete that coursework in their living room, and  
14 then we can support them. The rest of their life  
15 will change because of this option that we're  
16 providing. When I was in Cabot I did the same thing;  
17 I would call those kids who had dropped out the  
18 previous year. I'd call them all summer. And I had  
19 a few that would come back to the high school campus,  
20 but it's really a hard thing for a kid to do after  
21 they've quit to step back on a high school campus.  
22 So I was able to get a lot of them back but they  
23 would enroll in our ACE program, which provides great  
24 flexibility and online learning. So that's a big  
25 group for us as well. Did I cover all the groups?

1 MS. ROBBINS: My name is Nancy Robbins; I'm  
2 director of Curriculum. Oh, I'm sorry.

3 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you.

4 MS. ROBBINS: And -- Nancy Robbins. And one of  
5 the groups of students that we'd seen an increase is  
6 our number of students that have illnesses, rather  
7 serious illnesses that take them possibly to  
8 Children's Hospital here in Little Rock. And if they  
9 had the opportunity to stay current with their  
10 studies via the online curriculum, it would certainly  
11 help. We do serve them with homebound teachers but  
12 that's certainly minimal compared. Let's say that  
13 they are very ill and maybe their window of  
14 opportunity of doing some work is maybe two hours,  
15 from midnight to 2:00 because of their schedule with  
16 treatments and so-forth. So this gives them a lot of  
17 opportunity for flexibility. So we have seen an  
18 increase in our number of students who face some  
19 serious illnesses.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Good, and thank you. And you  
21 alluded to many of those target audiences in your  
22 presentation. So in your public comment meeting that  
23 you had did you -- in your participants, a lot of the  
24 folks that signed up indicated -- well, tell me a  
25 little bit about your public comment meeting.

1           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. So we had -- I think we  
2 had about 17 that signed in, but we had many more in  
3 the audience that came. And the parents -- the  
4 majority of people that came were our homeschool  
5 parents --

6           DR. GOTCHER: Good.

7           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: -- wanting more information.  
8 Because what they're doing is homeschool parents --  
9 you know -- and it's really a -- it's a real neat  
10 group. I mean, they do a really good job at  
11 providing a quality education for their kids. But a  
12 homeschool parent that came to the meeting, a lot of  
13 them, they're paying taxes to our school district but  
14 then, in addition, they're having to pay for  
15 curriculum for their student to receive an education.  
16 And so I don't know; for them -- I feel for them in  
17 that regard but a lot of homeschool parents came and  
18 those were the questions that generally came from the  
19 audience was from our homeschool parents.

20           DR. GOTCHER: Good. All right. And I'll just  
21 -- I have one other question/concern and I'll have  
22 some others later, but I always want to give  
23 opportunity for my panel members.

24           The name, I was concerned about the name. I  
25 know that you recognize there's ARVA, the Arkansas

1 Virtual Academy. So I think where I was going with  
2 the intended audience, if the intended audience is  
3 for your community I don't know that -- I'm just  
4 concerned about the conflict of the name. I know you  
5 guys have discussed this.

6 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We did.

7 DR. GOTCHER: But if your target audience is the  
8 Van Buren or that community, talk about the process  
9 and why you came to that name when it does look very  
10 close, with one letter, to Virtual Arkansas.

11 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. We did talk about that.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Or Virtual Academy.

13 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: And Ms. Boyd called me too and  
14 we discussed the name. And I don't know if we ever  
15 referred to our program as ARVVA until we put in the  
16 application as ARVVA, and then we thought of the  
17 Arkansas Virtual Academy as ARVA. So it does create  
18 a little bit of complication. So we were thinking  
19 about possibly dropping the Arkansas and just being  
20 the River Valley Virtual Academy, if that helps. But  
21 our reason for the name -- we had a large committee  
22 that you saw on the screen.

23 DR. GOTCHER: Right.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We just had a lot of  
25 conversation about who are the kids we're trying to



1 reach and it's people that are not connected to our  
2 school, and we wanted to give them just the freedom  
3 to fill like they're part of a public education. But  
4 if they left us because they didn't feel supported or  
5 they didn't feel like it was a safe or a great  
6 environment for them -- I don't know; it was -- there  
7 was a lot of conversation about it, but the committee  
8 just felt like "we love the River Valley." If you  
9 live in the River Valley, you just -- there's  
10 something about it and so we felt like it was  
11 powerful; it was a powerful name to have River Valley  
12 Virtual Academy.

13 DR. GOTCHER: Good. All right. Thank you.  
14 I'll let my colleagues ask some more questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

16 MS. SMITH: Okay. I've got all the hard ones  
17 for you now. No. Okay. So just listening to you,  
18 and you've talked about students that have dropped  
19 out and need that credit, and you talked about  
20 students who are sick and at home. So when I look at  
21 your plan about your grade levels that you're  
22 targeting first when you start with 4th through 8th  
23 grade it seems like you've kind of limited yourself  
24 not to actually serve those students, and especially  
25 those high school kids because you wouldn't have the

1 waiver then to have that high school kid take that  
2 second half of English by limiting yourself this way.  
3 So I need some explanation there.

4 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. So even this morning  
5 I've battled with that because I think of those kids,  
6 that population. And I don't know if it would be  
7 appropriate for me to ask in this setting to have  
8 that as an option for us, not for our current seniors  
9 that are in school -- well, maybe, if they leave in a  
10 semester. But if they disengage from school for a  
11 period of time it would really be easy for us --  
12 since we're going to have the classes available to us  
13 through the vendor, it would be very easy for us to  
14 make that happen. And I would love the opportunity;  
15 I just didn't know if it was -- if it would be  
16 acceptable to have this conversation and consider  
17 that as a possibility. We were implementing 4th  
18 through 8th to have a -- to take a smaller bite so  
19 that we could insure success. Our goal in this is to  
20 be a very successful program for our kids. We want  
21 to be the most successful. Just like any other  
22 school, we have that desire. We didn't want to go  
23 all in K-12 on the first step, so we modeled after  
24 our friends north of us who also went 4th through 8th  
25 and have implemented -- they've done a good job of

1 implementation and feel good. But I would sure love  
2 the opportunity to meet the needs of those kids who  
3 did drop out. So if that would be appropriate to  
4 request that you allow us to do 4th through 8th but  
5 then also provide this as an option for our high  
6 school dropouts that would be great.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis, the hearing  
8 today is a negotiation of the charter. So what are  
9 the ramifications of loosely allowing high school  
10 students?

11 MS. DAVIS: Well, I mean, if you're going to  
12 allow high school students then that would be an  
13 amendment to their application that they've stated  
14 that they want to start it now. And there was an  
15 issue on that with one of the waivers, and I was  
16 trying to find that real quick. On the waiver sheet  
17 they had requested some of the 38 units in order to  
18 grow. So if they're going to be offering the high  
19 school students from -- if one was granted today, as  
20 soon as that's granted, then we would need to see if  
21 they still need this waiver, so -- or if it would  
22 just be offering as-needed through the next two years  
23 until they get all 38 being offered.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So the plan is through  
25 2022?

1 MS. DAVIS: Right. Well, they have in their --  
2 they requested a waiver of the, like I say, the 38  
3 units, that they want to be able to grow. And so my  
4 question on that that was remaining was they need to  
5 confirm do they intend to just use the waiver until  
6 they have completed the growth in years two and three  
7 to include grades 9 through 12. But if they're going  
8 to include grades 9 through 12 now then they don't  
9 need this waiver.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You'll have to speak into  
11 the microphone for the reporter.

12 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. So that is correct. We  
13 did ask for that waiver for implementation, the  
14 implementation period because we knew the students  
15 that we would serve early on would not need those  
16 courses. But it would be fine for us to rescind that  
17 waiver because for the students that -- we're going  
18 to have the courses available to us. We just asked  
19 for the waiver basically because the students we  
20 serve were not those that would be provided -- yes.

21 MR. WALTER: Good morning. Tripp Walter, Staff  
22 Attorney, APSRC. I don't want to detract from what  
23 Dr. Jeffcoat is saying. I think we're okay with what  
24 Ms. Davis' comment was originally. If the  
25 flexibility could be there -- because I don't know if

1 he knows at this time exactly who would be served,  
2 that if it was a situation where 9 through 12  
3 students weren't being served all at once in the  
4 first year that the flexibility would be there to  
5 phase-in so-to-speak the courses. As he said,  
6 obviously there would be no attempt to circumvent the  
7 38, but just if it was a situation -- for example,  
8 only 9th or only 10th came in -- that they have the  
9 flexibility to just offer those pieces of 38 and then  
10 build out as necessary.

11 MS. BOYD: Also, one other concern I would have  
12 is that the initial contract is only for five years.  
13 And looking at the goals there is not a goal set for  
14 students in grades 11 and 12; there are only goals in  
15 there that are for 3 through 10. So I would like to  
16 see a goal set for that too.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jeffcoat, would you  
18 like to address that?

19 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. So, I'm sorry; I heard  
20 part of it, that there's not a goal for --

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: With the flexibility --  
22 Ms. Boyd is recommending that there be a goal set for  
23 grades 11 through 12 --

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- in case one of those

1 students that you described -- it was 11th through  
2 12th grade; is that correct?

3 MS. BOYD: I'm sorry; I'm wrong. There is --  
4 they have a goal for the college entrance exams and  
5 that's sufficient. Sorry.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. All right. All  
7 right, Ms. Smith; back to you.

8 MS. SMITH: Well, you got a lot of input on that  
9 one.

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: See, you did ask the hard  
11 question.

12 MS. SMITH: Okay. Now I forgot what my second  
13 question was. I had one. You'll have to come back  
14 to me because I forgot it.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Will do. Ms. Pfeffer.

16 MS. PFEFFER: Good morning.

17 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Good morning.

18 MS. PFEFFER: My question is really for  
19 clarification in terms of it seems like you were  
20 referencing a waiver from licensure but then it  
21 seemed like you were saying, "We're only going to  
22 hire licensed teachers." So just to make sure that  
23 the application is what you need it to be, can you  
24 clarify whether or not you are seeking a waiver from  
25 license and what that would look like?

1           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We are seeking a waiver for  
2 licensure but not to circumvent hiring licensed  
3 teachers. We are asking for the waiver because we  
4 may have teachers that are certified in certain grade  
5 levels, 4 through 8, for example, that may have to  
6 cover a 3rd grade -- work with a 3rd grade student.  
7 And we just want to have that flexibility to be able  
8 to get the best teachers for the job. And this is a  
9 different concept, as well. This is -- the  
10 teacher/facilitator role that they'll have is a  
11 little bit different and we just want to have that  
12 flexibility for teachers that may be certified in  
13 grade levels, be able to work with grade levels that  
14 they may not be certified for.

15           MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

16           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: But they will be Arkansas  
17 licensed teachers.

18           MS. PFEFFER: When possible, you'll have  
19 Arkansas licensed teachers; if not, then you have  
20 that flexibility. One thing I did notice is that you  
21 were referencing HQT. So if you do hire a non-  
22 licensed teacher in a core area they would need to  
23 meet the Arkansas Qualified Teacher (AQT)  
24 requirements --

25           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, ma'am.

1 MS. PFEFFER: -- since HQT is no longer in  
2 place.

3 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, that is correct.

4 MS. PFEFFER: And the situation you described  
5 where you might have a teacher licensed 4-8 but  
6 teaching in grade 3 very likely would meet AQT rules  
7 --

8 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

9 MS. PFEFFER: -- because of their work  
10 experience, so -- okay. I think that was the main  
11 clarification. Then my other question, on the  
12 schedule that you all shared with us this morning --  
13 and I just want to make sure I'm understanding this  
14 right -- this would be a proposed schedule for  
15 someone that -- it's not set up where the teachers  
16 are actually instructing at these times --

17 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's correct.

18 MS. PFEFFER: -- and the student -- but this  
19 would be -- this is for parents to help -- you know  
20 -- for example, as a 1st grader they would follow  
21 this, but it could be they might not start until noon  
22 that day and work. Is that correct?

23 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. That's really the beauty  
24 of this model. You know, the young lady that I spoke  
25 of earlier, she was at work when I called her and,



1           you know, the question I asked was, "Would you come  
2           back next semester," and she said, "I'm working now."  
3           When they would work -- and that's going to happen  
4           with a lot of kids that would take advantage of this  
5           opportunity are going to be those that have  
6           obligations at different times throughout the day.  
7           So, yeah, that is just -- as I said earlier, it's  
8           just an example; it's a possibility, but by no means  
9           is it exactly how it will look for all students.

10           MS. PFEFFER: But I can see where having  
11           something planned out could be very helpful.

12           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

13           MS. PFEFFER: Because, as you said, it's adults  
14           going through virtual learning and then putting that  
15           into a situation for students where, you know, there  
16           is so much flexibility sometimes it is good to have a  
17           plan. So those were the only questions I have right  
18           now. Thank you.

19           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you.

20           CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

21           DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I wanted to clarify on the  
22           38 units that we were talking about earlier. I was  
23           confused at the end of that. So is it my  
24           understanding that what you had agreed to was a  
25           waiver of the 38, even if kids 9 through 12 get

1 enrolled next year?

2 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: What we're asking for is the  
3 flexibility to provide what of the 38 that are needed  
4 for the kids that would be enrolled -- is that fair,  
5 is that correct? -- with the understanding that we'll  
6 have the full 38 after we have grade levels being  
7 served that would require that. Do you want to -- is  
8 that about --

9 MR. WALTER: And understand it's a little more  
10 -- it's a little unique in the virtual setting but I  
11 think we've had this -- or other applicants, I should  
12 say, have had these similar conversations with the  
13 Panel before about phasing it in. I think here --  
14 and Dr. Jeffcoat can correct me -- if we had a  
15 situation, for example, that the only students that  
16 were being served initially were 9th and 10th grade,  
17 as he said, Van Buren would like the flexibility to  
18 just offer those applicable parts of the 38. If it  
19 turns out that they have a student who's in 12th  
20 grade or 11th grade and need the more advanced, so-  
21 to-speak, courses within the 38, then they are not  
22 seeking to waive that, that they would offer those as  
23 well.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's correct.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. The model that I'm seeing

1 -- and I may not be understanding your model  
2 entirely, but there would be -- if you had a catalog  
3 of courses that could be implemented pretty much at  
4 any time, ready to go --

5 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, sir.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: -- as a student enrolled.

7 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: So would those 38 not be offered  
9 in that catalog initially from day-one?

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, of course, we'll be  
11 working with vendors that offer this. Virtual  
12 Arkansas offers all these courses as well. It would  
13 just depend on -- as for the catalog, how it would be  
14 catalogued and listed, you know, I think it would  
15 just depend on our vendor and who we're providing  
16 these courses through as to what would be in that  
17 exact catalog. But the thirty -- of the 38, as Tripp  
18 has shared, the students that are requiring those  
19 certain courses to graduate, which are the ones --  
20 what we're talking about right now is just those  
21 students who have dropped out of school and they need  
22 that one, two, three credits --

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Right.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: -- whatever it is, that's what  
25 would be offered.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: And maybe Counsel -- it may be a  
2 question for you. I think that my understanding is  
3 on the 38 just offered, not necessarily taught;  
4 correct?

5 MS. DAVIS: Right. If there's no students that  
6 are taking that course, then they don't have to  
7 actually teach it.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Right.

9 MS. DAVIS: It just has to be offered. So I  
10 think without having the waiver, if they have the  
11 courses available it would allow a student who did  
12 come in -- those courses would still be there and  
13 they could teach that course if somebody needed it.  
14 So I don't think that they would necessarily need the  
15 waiver to do what it is that he's saying he's doing,  
16 but I could be misunderstanding because I'm not an  
17 educator.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: That's what I'm trying to  
19 understand. I'm just not seeing why the waiver is  
20 necessary. It sounds to me like you're going to be  
21 offering those, I mean, as the students come in. And  
22 whether you actually teach those is dependent upon  
23 the student needs and requests, but that those would  
24 be offered through your catalog of courses.

25 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We would like to rescind the

1 waiver for 38 because, I agree, I think that -- yes,  
2 that's correct; they will be provided. They'll only  
3 be taken advantage of for the students that need it.  
4 So, yes, that's correct.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. All right.

6 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: So we will -- so we'll -- do  
7 you want to word it?

8 MR. WALTER: No. That's fine. We just wanted  
9 to make sure that that was -- there was that common  
10 understanding. And I suppose for the virtual setting  
11 that what, Dr. Saunders, you've described as the  
12 catalog of courses so-to-speak or whatever translates  
13 from the ADE's perspective -- pardon me -- into the  
14 master schedule concept if this were a traditional  
15 district.

16 DR. GOTCHER: Dr. Saunders, the way I heard it,  
17 by definition they are offered, so they meet that  
18 letter, so I would agree that the waiver is not  
19 necessary. Because potentially they're all offered  
20 --

21 MS. DAVIS: Right.

22 DR. GOTCHER: -- but the student is not  
23 necessarily participating. So, okay. I heard that  
24 too.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: That was your original

1 question?

2 MS. SMITH: Since I caused all this mess --  
3 okay. So I wanted to make sure too that -- I know  
4 you've talked about digital provider versus provider.  
5 But are there any plans for -- I mean, because you  
6 still have the large Van Buren School District --

7 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's correct.

8 MS. SMITH: -- behind this. So do you have  
9 plans for current programs and teachers in your Van  
10 Buren School District to offer digital courses that  
11 --

12 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. So that's one thing that  
13 we're looking for with a provider. We want to have  
14 that flexibility to -- if we feel like it's something  
15 that we can create or provide for our students that  
16 we have that flexibility. If we have a teacher  
17 that's certified in a specific content area that we  
18 feel like they could provide the curriculum and  
19 instruction virtually, we want to have that  
20 flexibility. So that's the type of vendor that we're  
21 pursuing is one that would allow us the opportunity  
22 to serve our kids. But, yes, we do have -- we have a  
23 wealth of resources in our school district that we  
24 will take advantage of.

25 MS. SMITH: Okay. And also throughout you talk

1 about these face-to-face meetings where they have the  
2 opportunity to come to the campus and have those  
3 face-to-face meetings. Just to push a little bit on  
4 the whole idea of a virtual school and the platform  
5 of using Skype or Zoom or having that personal  
6 contact, that's still face-to-face --

7 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

8 MS. SMITH: -- and not necessarily has to be on  
9 campus, so making sure that you guys have a plan for  
10 that. What about students who want to be a part of  
11 your charter who may not -- who don't have the  
12 technology? Is that still the parents'  
13 responsibility or --

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: No.

15 MS. SMITH: -- is that something y'all have  
16 plans for?

17 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. We're going to make  
18 available -- we have the resources. Especially with  
19 this last millage increase that we -- that our  
20 community so strongly supported, we have the  
21 resources to provide a device for students that are  
22 in need if they can show a hardship. We may not --  
23 it's not going to be a device that we give them, but  
24 it will be a lending process where they'll have a  
25 device available. But we feel like we can support

1           that for all of our students that would have that  
2           need.

3           MS. SMITH: Okay. And then just kind of going  
4           back on that very first question about how you were  
5           doing the grade levels and encouraging today to go  
6           after your at-risk students -- and I'm not sure how  
7           that needs to be worded to amend, but that's what you  
8           talked about. The whole time you stood up there you  
9           talked about those kids that you're missing and you  
10          won't get them for five years unless we add that part  
11          today. And so I think that is a specific part of  
12          your plan today.

13          SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, and I really appreciate  
14          you all giving us that opportunity. It'll take care  
15          of a lot of kids because there's a window of time  
16          that that young lady that I just gave the example of  
17          -- there's a window of time that she has to complete  
18          that senior -- that second semester of senior  
19          English. So, thank you.

20          MS. SMITH: Thank you.

21          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer. Dr.  
22          Saunders.

23          DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. Okay. In looking at the  
24          application, going down to the goals I understand  
25          that you have amended the goals and one of them in



1 particular I was looking at is the last one  
2 concerning taking the college entrance exams. And my  
3 question would be: do you feel that there needs to be  
4 a performance goal there or just the fact that the  
5 kids took the test?

6 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: I'm going to defer to Nancy  
7 Robbins. She worked with the committee that  
8 developed those goals. So I'll let you speak to  
9 that.

10 MS. ROBBINS: Well, we certainly want to look at  
11 how they're performing in relation to the other --  
12 our regular ed. students, to look at performance.  
13 So, yes, we did toy with some ideas in terms of  
14 looking at 19 because we would expect the students  
15 have an ACT of 19 before they leave so that they  
16 could qualify for higher education. So we didn't  
17 actually put a number in there; we were back and  
18 forth on that number, so we thought we would probably  
19 look at it in terms of are they scoring equal to our  
20 regular ed. students and looking at the state average  
21 on the ACT scores and kind of expecting them to be in  
22 line with the state average.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: So would you want to put that in  
24 the goal as the school's score --

25 MS. ROBBINS: That'll be fine. Yes, that'll be

1 fine.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: -- either state or compared to  
3 the local, either one, whichever?

4 MS. ROBBINS: I think that that would be a  
5 wonderful thing to go ahead and add. We were just  
6 really unsure of a particular number. But I think  
7 that the average of the state would probably be a  
8 really good one --

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

10 MS. ROBBINS: -- to add to it. So, yes.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

12 MS. ROBBINS: And local, could we change that to  
13 local instead of the state?

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: The reason we'd like to -- for  
15 this goal we're thinking of our community and our  
16 students and our scores right now, and our local is a  
17 little lower in a couple of areas. So to make it a  
18 realistic goal, an achievable goal, we would like to  
19 compare it to local. And while our whole -- if we're  
20 going to put a percentage local would be preferred.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

22 MR. ROGERS: I just had a question about the  
23 enrollment cap and the rollout. Is it based off data  
24 that had interested parties or was it capacity? I  
25 was just wondering --

1 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: It was capacity.

2 MR. ROGERS: -- where the 325 came from.

3 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: It was capacity. We were just  
4 thinking of the number of students that we feel like  
5 we can serve in the space that we have available to  
6 us right now. That number could change. We may come  
7 back at some point and ask for that number to change.  
8 We may not always be at the Van Buren Freshmen  
9 Academy. We may -- if we have a very successful  
10 program and have more students enroll in the program  
11 than anticipated, we may have to look at moving. And  
12 if we relocate, we'll come back and ask for that  
13 change.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. On the application it says  
16 there's no plan to offer pre-AP courses. I'm just  
17 curious why that is.

18 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Ms. Robbins. I'll let Ms.  
19 Robbins come up and answer that one, as well.

20 MS. ROBBINS: We have looked at providers and we  
21 haven't made an actual selection. But, yes, pre-AP  
22 is available in some providers and also GT services  
23 from 3rd grade and above. So, yes. But to say -- we  
24 think that most of the students in that middle level  
25 would be interested in probably accelerating

1 coursework as much as taking those pre-AP classes.  
2 But we are looking at providers that have the pre-AP.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: So are you removing that section  
4 from the application? So the plan is to offer pre-AP  
5 courses?

6 MS. ROBBINS: Well, we wanted the flexibility to  
7 be able to let them take the actual accelerated  
8 courses as opposed to just the pre-AP classes, so --  
9 I may not have understood the question; I'm sorry.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. It just -- it states in  
11 your statement currently there's no plan to offer  
12 pre-AP courses and I wonder why would those  
13 accelerated courses not be pre-AP courses if that's  
14 the route you're going?

15 MS. ROBBINS: Okay. So if a student in the 8th  
16 grade takes, you know, geometry, algebra courses  
17 ahead of time, those are not actually pre-AP courses,  
18 so those are accelerated. So they're taking  
19 curriculum, you know, that's more advanced than  
20 taking a pre-AP.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. So for another child  
22 though the pre-AP option would not be there?

23 MS. ROBBINS: That's why we were looking at  
24 vendors that have -- some vendors do not have them,  
25 some vendors do have them. So that's the reason why

1 we had asked for the waiver because we haven't  
2 actually contracted with a particular vendor, so --

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Looking on the next page  
4 of that application it says, "Requested a waiver for  
5 art, music, and physical education," and it says,  
6 "ARVVA will use an online provider which has fine  
7 art, music, and physical education courses students  
8 can take each year." And my question is: if that's  
9 going to be available, why is the waiver needed?

10 MS. ROBBINS: Okay. And that's -- in thinking  
11 about art and music we want some flexibility so that  
12 -- most of the providers their art and music courses  
13 run anywhere from three to five hours a week, which  
14 is much more than what we're traditionally used to in  
15 our classrooms, and so -- in our schools. So we  
16 would like the parents to have the option of -- let's  
17 say the first semester they wanted to take music, the  
18 second semester they wanted to take art; they're  
19 going to have it compacted three to five hours during  
20 a week of music and then the second semester art.  
21 And so you're talking about your elementary students,  
22 and we certainly are committed to them having both  
23 art and music. This just gives us some flexibility  
24 to be able to offer it in different types of ways or  
25 times. I think it's the time element, so --

1 DR. SAUNDERS: But on your waivers for the time  
2 -- I know you have waivers on the school day, all  
3 those things. Do those not address that?

4 MS. ROBBINS: Yes. Waivers on time --

5 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: I'm sorry?

6 MS. ROBBINS: And I thought we probably had to  
7 do both; you know, that's my understanding is that we  
8 would ask for the waivers in both ways, the time and  
9 -- and that could be my misunderstanding.

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: I see what you're saying, and I  
11 agree. If -- I mean, if it's appropriate for us to  
12 ask for the waiver of the time as opposed to the  
13 waiver of the offering -- because we will be offering  
14 and we're meeting the standards, the requirements --  
15 if that -- if it's understood here that students will  
16 have the flexibility to maybe take one course, maybe  
17 take music one semester, art the next semester, and  
18 us just waive the time requirement, then I think that  
19 would be appropriate. Tripp, what do you --

20 MR. WALTER: Yeah. I think, as you can tell  
21 from the discussion, what the district was interested  
22 in doing is making sure that it wasn't an attempt to  
23 avoid or diminish standards but just looking for the  
24 best way with a waiver to try and make sure that they  
25 could offer -- maybe not the best analogy but kind of

1           like teacher prep time, the 200 minutes, not that you  
2           necessarily have to give it all in blocks of at least  
3           40 minutes but they have some flexibility to do --  
4           some charters want the flexibility to give it in  
5           different ways. And it's the same thing here, is  
6           given the nature of the providers if it would be  
7           possible to do it in a different way and in different  
8           size blocks or whatever.

9           DR. SAUNDERS: And I guess that's the way I'm  
10          looking at it is I separate it as being -- I know  
11          there are multiple waivers on time, attendance,  
12          things of that nature. But with this particular one  
13          it's a waiver from those courses being offered.

14          MR. WALTER: Right. So I think the intent was  
15          not a waiver on the courses but trying to find a way  
16          to get flexibility from the time requirements since  
17          those are contained within those sections.

18          DR. SAUNDERS: So does there need to be a waiver  
19          then of those courses being offered?

20          MS. DAVIS: If they're going to offer the  
21          courses, then no. I understand that they may offer  
22          them not in the six-hour day, 30-hour week, that kind  
23          of stuff, and they already have requested waivers for  
24          that and 120 clock hours. So if they are going to  
25          offer them, then they do not need these waivers for

1 the specific sections of art and physical education.

2 MS. SMITH: Is it not legislated though that PE  
3 be 60 minutes per week or something like that -- I  
4 mean, in law? So they would need that waiver; I  
5 mean, I want to say that that one is together. I  
6 want to say art and music in elementary is not in the  
7 law. It says you have to offer it, but it doesn't  
8 give the minutes. And the minutes are reflected in  
9 Standards of Accreditation as far as time, 40 minutes  
10 per week. So we need to look at the PE one. That's  
11 the only one that I can think of that maybe has the  
12 time and the course in legislation and not in rules.  
13 I mean, am I right on that?

14 DR. GOTCHER: I believe so.

15 MS. SMITH: The other ones I'm not so sure.

16 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: So you understand, we'll  
17 provide the courses for the students, but the  
18 flexibility for time and when that would be provided  
19 would be what we request.

20 MS. DAVIS: The time is for PE for grades 5  
21 through 8; 9 through 12 just says a half unit of PE  
22 is required for graduation. For students in grades 5  
23 through 8 any combination of at least 40 minutes as  
24 determined by the superintendent, duh-duh-duh-duh-  
25 duh-duh-duh. So I don't know where their target is



1 for their grades at this point. So if it is 5 to 8,  
2 they do need a waiver of the specific subsection of  
3 that law, but I don't think that they need a waiver  
4 of the standards that accompany it because that would  
5 be a waiver of offering it. Yeah.

6 MS. SMITH: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jeffcoat, they've gone  
8 their separate ways, so I think that means you.

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Okay. I'm back.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So to recap what I think I  
11 heard there was that instead of waiver of the  
12 standards that you would need a waiver of the  
13 particular code -- Jennifer, the code number again  
14 was --

15 MS. DAVIS: I'm verifying whether they need an  
16 entire section or the whole code.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay.

18 MS. DAVIS: So give me one minute.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. I wish we had that  
20 tick-tock music.

21 MS. DAVIS: No, I'm glad we don't.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, while we're waiting  
23 I'll ask you a different question.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: In your process for

1 enrollment into the River Valley Virtual Academy, and  
2 with the cap of 125, do you foresee that you will  
3 save some spaces for those special cases -- for  
4 example, these at-risk children or a child that may  
5 develop an illness, as Ms. Robbins --

6 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- described?

8 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, we'll -- for students  
9 that are wanting to attend, you know, for our maximum  
10 number for 4th through 8th in this upcoming school  
11 year, that's something we probably need to talk about  
12 because we have 125 for 4th through 8th and that's  
13 what we have designated. But for our students that  
14 may have dropped out of school we don't have a number  
15 for that. And unless that's going to be part of our  
16 125, it's probably a conversation we need to have.  
17 I'd like for it not to be part of our 125, but I'm  
18 not sure what -- maybe Ms. Robbins knows what number  
19 we would -- for our students that --

20 MS. ROBBINS: We'd probably need to add about 20  
21 for students that are ill and then special  
22 circumstances. We might even need to look at another  
23 10, so that would be about 30 students. So that's  
24 about the numbers that we have currently in terms of  
25 our students who possibly have illnesses and then

1 probably another 10 if we were looking at -- I don't  
2 have a feel for exactly how many are in the category  
3 that Dr. Jeffcoat has talked about; I know that it's  
4 probably around 10 of those students, so --

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So repeating what I think  
6 was just said --

7 MS. ROBBINS: I said about 30 students --

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yeah.

9 MS. ROBBINS: -- probably would be that number  
10 that we would need to have as an extra.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So 125 for the grades 4  
12 through 8, with additional 30 --

13 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- flexible slots?

15 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. I think that would be  
16 fine. Actually, I had 34 that I called the other  
17 day, so 34 that left us last year. So that would --  
18 I think 30 would be reasonable for us.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And funding-wise that  
20 would not be an issue for the district?

21 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: No, ma'am, it would not.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so just to clarify  
23 then, Dr. Jeffcoat, would that be -- as we're looking  
24 at the yearly maximum enrollment, would you be  
25 raising each one of those years by 30?

1 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: If we could raise the first --  
2 well, I guess it would be four years before I finally  
3 got all K-12. The next year, fifth year, would be K-  
4 12. What formula would be used? I think if we could  
5 raise to 30 until the final year of implementation,  
6 which then we could be at our maximum that we're  
7 proposing for all K-12, if that would be appropriate.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So according to the  
9 maximum enrollment as listed in the application, plus  
10 30 floating slots, until 2021?

11 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. With full implementation  
12 and maximum enrollment.

13 MS. DAVIS: Are you ready for me?

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Shaking head from side to  
15 side.)

16 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Now we are.

18 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Okay. So for the visual arts  
19 -- I mean, the fine arts and the physical education  
20 they will need a waiver of 6-16-130. I am uncertain  
21 if in grades 7 and 8 -- it says that they shall --  
22 this is for visual art or music -- that students in  
23 grades 7 to 8 shall participate in visual arts  
24 instruction or performing arts. Are you going to  
25 require that for grades 7 to 8?

1 MS. ROBBINS: Yes.

2 MS. DAVIS: Okay. So if they need that, then  
3 they only need 6-16-130(a). They do not need (b).  
4 And then for PE it's 6-16-132; they only need  
5 subsection (b)(1)(a) and they do not need the  
6 standards because they will be requiring it.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jeffcoat, your  
8 response?

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That would be agreeable to us.  
10 That would be the minute restrictions and that would  
11 allow us to provide what we're proposing.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I want to come back to one  
13 further question on the enrollment. The young lady  
14 that you described that needs senior English would be  
15 -- while that would be one student, it's not a full  
16 -- what I would consider a full-time student. Then,  
17 Jennifer, in your mind if he had another student that  
18 needed a couple of courses would they still be -- in  
19 the seat capacity, is that one or two students?

20 MS. DAVIS: You know, I -- you know, I don't  
21 think that it really states that, you know, seat  
22 capacity is that you're in class seven, you know,  
23 periods a day. I would think that if you are a  
24 student and you are taking a slot then you are taking  
25 a full slot; that like there's no, like, co-sharing

1 of slots, you know. That's how I would view it. But  
2 I don't think that the law states nor does it -- I  
3 mean, because it looks at how many people are  
4 enrolled. If you have 125 and your cap is 125, it  
5 doesn't matter if they're full-time enrolled, half-  
6 time enrolled. It just looks at the number of  
7 students. But it is -- I mean, it's kind of a gray  
8 area but it does look like just the number of  
9 students. But I do have a question to follow-up on  
10 the number of spots he was discussing phasing in.  
11 But we talked earlier on the 38 units, but they want  
12 to be able to offer students now who may need upper  
13 grades. So they either have to phase it all in now  
14 or they don't phase it in, and those students still  
15 aren't targeted at this point. Even if they can  
16 offer those, say, the 12th grade class, if they are  
17 not approved at this point for four years later for  
18 12th grade, then there's no 12th grade. Does that  
19 make sense? I mean, they either have to go full K-12  
20 now or they go K through 8 and add on each year in  
21 their phase-in program. It doesn't mean that they  
22 have to go full enrollment but -- does that make  
23 sense? I mean, I'm kind of seeing you either get one  
24 or the other.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You're saying give them

1 the full maximum enrollment of 325 and then  
2 internally they're making their phase-in plan?

3 MS. DAVIS: That's how they could do it. I  
4 mean, they could choose to admit -- I mean, you know,  
5 they could choose to kind of handle that or how  
6 they're going to target those students and handle  
7 that internally on a basis like that. But either  
8 they're at full K-12 and they offer all the 38 units  
9 or they're at K-8 and the next year they add on 9th  
10 grade but there are still no seniors; the next year  
11 they add on 10th, there are still no seniors. It's  
12 not -- the senior that's in question that needs a  
13 senior English wouldn't get it for four more years.  
14 There's either all or no phase-in, if that makes  
15 sense.

16 DR. GOTCHER: I think maybe for Dr. Jeffcoat.  
17 Thinking of this systemically, what would you and  
18 your team think about in terms of a gradual  
19 implementation? I'm concerned about a full K-12  
20 implementation.

21 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. Well, but I think that  
22 what we're saying is we would have the flexibility to  
23 implement the program as we see it needs to be  
24 implemented. But our preference -- if we have this  
25 choice, if this is the only way that we can meet the

1 needs of my second semester English young lady, I  
2 would rather have us approved for all now and allow  
3 us to just implement as we see we are able and  
4 capable. And that will be 4 through 8 to start this  
5 next school year and then implementation going up and  
6 down one grade level each year, but then have that  
7 flexibility for the students that would benefit. So  
8 that would be my preference.

9 MS. DAVIS: Right.

10 DR. GOTCHER: So the window for K-12 would be  
11 there but you would still implement 4-8, and if the  
12 half-credit English student example occurred that  
13 would be available?

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: If that's how we need to do it  
15 to insure that we're giving these kids who have --  
16 who need a chance to graduate, then that's what we  
17 would like to request.

18 DR. GOTCHER: Ms. Davis?

19 MS. DAVIS: You know, much like we do have some  
20 charters that have an enrollment cap that's greater  
21 than their current building capacity and they just  
22 choose to only accept so many because that's all that  
23 they can handle, internally they can make policies  
24 that say we're going to accept full K-12 but we're  
25 only going to take, you know, 5, 10, whatever number



1 of, you know, seniors; we're going to take up to  
2 eight 11th grade for this first year; for the second  
3 year we'll had on, third year we'll add on, and  
4 things like that. They could do that internally,  
5 much like if it was, you know, brick-and-mortar or  
6 building capacity. But if not, then it still  
7 couldn't meet their need without that, if that makes  
8 sense.

9 DR. GOTCHER: Ms. Pfeffer, is that -- does that  
10 change anything from your perspective regarding  
11 licensing?

12 MS. PFEFFER: No.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: And I'll -- I would encourage  
14 that. I think just something to consider is if you  
15 do set something up like that, and say it's 8 in each  
16 grade level or whatever else -- I understand the need  
17 for that, to put that in writing, but also you may  
18 want to consider putting a clause in there that once  
19 that cap is reached these numbers may be revisited.

20 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, sir.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay?

22 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Okay.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: If there is a great need there.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Sure.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: You understand?

1 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: I agree. Yeah. Yeah, we can  
2 certainly do that.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Are we all in agreement?  
4 Okay. Ms. Boyd.

5 MS. BOYD: Could you just clarify what we're in  
6 agreement to?

7 MS. PFEFFER: I'm with Ms. Boyd.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I think what I heard is  
9 that Van Buren is now requesting a maximum enrollment  
10 of 325 and then they will set for a K-12 system. And  
11 then internally they will set their own procedures  
12 for how to grow that at the capacity that suits the  
13 needs of their educators and mostly their students.

14 MS. BOYD: Thank you.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: But just to make sure we're  
16 consistent and know what would be happening, I think  
17 it would be at a minimum of those projections on  
18 those grade levels that you had in the application.  
19 Correct?

20 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: And it will be.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah.

22 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, then I don't think  
24 we can -- I mean, if they fell at 124 we're not going  
25 to hold that against them.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: I guess what I'm saying is to  
2 make sure that the 4 through 8 is there and then the  
3 3 through 9, the expansion as the years go by, to  
4 insure that it's following that type of model.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I think that's why we're  
6 leaving it up to them.

7 DR. GOTCHER: Based upon --

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Their capacity.

9 DR. GOTCHER: On capacity and demand?

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Right.

11 MS. SMITH: And I'll be honest too, I think when  
12 you start looking at a model like this, I think this  
13 is where we are both kind of trapped in our world of  
14 traditional, what we think of traditional school  
15 grades, time, place, where you teach, and we're  
16 moving to a more flexible personalized model. And  
17 when we get into digital offerings and you're able to  
18 have kids quickly going through courses, I mean, I  
19 think that you're going to have a more fluid grade  
20 level chance. I mean, I still think that we're  
21 having trouble thinking outside the box on this. I  
22 have probably more concerns about providing digital  
23 offerings to younger students than I do older  
24 students. So I guess my concern -- yeah, I mean, I  
25 would probably have some concerns next year if all of

1 a sudden they had 50 kindergarteners and -- I mean, I  
2 think that's what you're saying is, you know, make  
3 sure that the district is adhering to a plan as far  
4 as growing and being flexible enough to respond as  
5 needed to areas of need. I mean, if you see -- I  
6 really think that you're going to be surprised at  
7 your high school kids that are going to come out to  
8 say, "I want to be a part of this." I think that 30  
9 -- you're going to exceed that number quickly.

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. And, Ms. Smith, we have  
11 the exact same concerns with the younger kids. We  
12 want to have -- that's why we want to practice. We  
13 want to have some time where we really build a great,  
14 strong, successful program for our kids before we  
15 move down; much more comfortable in moving up at a  
16 faster rate than moving down. So we will not have 50  
17 kindergartners in our virtual academy next year.  
18 That would not be our -- part of our plan as we phase  
19 in.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yeah. I think what -- as  
21 I was kind of thinking about that, like you said, you  
22 know, you don't really know what the needs of the  
23 kids are going to be until you get into this. But  
24 also that if you see that you need to slow down --

25 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- I think you need to  
2 have that flexibility that if you say, "Okay, we're  
3 not ready to go to 3rd grade; we're more capable of  
4 going up the grades than down the grades" --

5 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's right.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- then I think that's  
7 appropriate. Ms. Pfeffer.

8 MS. PFEFFER: Something I had jotted down from  
9 your presentation, Dr. Jeffcoat, is to accelerate  
10 learning by one-and-a-half years. I mean, the  
11 potential is there where a student in an elementary  
12 grade could move from 3rd grade to 5th grade in terms  
13 of when, what we would typically have a school year.  
14 And with what Ms. Smith just said it clicked to me  
15 that probably putting numbers for specific grade  
16 levels really is limiting what you could potentially  
17 do --

18 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Sure.

19 MS. PFEFFER: -- especially if we move into a  
20 time where -- in education where time is the  
21 variable.

22 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

23 MS. PFEFFER: And, therefore, you know, we  
24 wouldn't want to have students who actually  
25 accelerated their learning --

1 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

2 MS. PFEFFER: -- and moved up or -- you know --  
3 changed those grade levels. So I -- my thoughts are  
4 that it would be a -- you know -- if it's a K-12  
5 system with a maximum enrollment of 325, you have the  
6 flexibility to work in that in terms of what you add  
7 and the number of students there where you wouldn't  
8 have to be limited to 30 students in a grade level or  
9 40 students --

10 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

11 MS. PFEFFER: -- in another. I think that would  
12 serve the district and the students best in this  
13 model.

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: And I would very much  
15 appreciate that flexibility to meet the needs of our  
16 kids, as opposed to adhering to a schedule or plan  
17 that we said is a possibility. You know, this is --  
18 the thing that we've talked about many times is this  
19 is a new school but we're not new at school. And  
20 we're going to look at our kids and we're going to  
21 meet the needs of our kids. And, again, our goal is  
22 to have a very successful program, and if we see that  
23 we're struggling and we want to make some adjustments  
24 then we want to have that freedom to do so.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?

1 Dr. Saunders.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. As I was reading through  
3 your application, and then your presentation today, I  
4 kind of -- I was getting confused because as I read  
5 the application I perceived one thing, heard your  
6 demonstration perceived something else. So I want to  
7 clarify. The teachers of record, will they be  
8 employees of the district?

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. They'll be -- yes. We'll  
10 have teachers that -- yes, they will be the teachers  
11 of record. Their role will be that of a teacher/  
12 facilitator of delivering content and curriculum for  
13 students and support of students. So, yes, they will  
14 be licensed teachers.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: And employees of the district?

16 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: And employees of the district.  
17 That is correct.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And on the statement  
19 concerning AP courses, and it said -- and you may  
20 have answered my question there, but the teacher, it  
21 says they're AP certified but they will be trained --  
22 the students will be eligible under the 5.0?

23 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. Can I back-up to the  
24 teacher of record question?

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Uh-huh.

1           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Ms. Robbins brought this to my  
2 attention. When I say teacher of record, the  
3 teachers are going to be responsible for their kids.  
4 And the curriculum that's delivered though may be  
5 delivered by an online provider. Now the teachers  
6 will be there to support our kids, to be there when  
7 our kids are struggling; those are the opportunities  
8 that they come in and work with our teachers a couple  
9 of days a week. But we may have -- with a virtual  
10 academy the options for our kids for coursework and  
11 electives is very vast. We may not have a certified  
12 teacher in a specific content area that is very  
13 unique and different and interesting that aligns with  
14 the kids' interests. So in that situation the  
15 teacher that's providing the instruction is online.  
16 It's an online provider; it's an online model. But  
17 our teachers will be responsible for individual  
18 student progress and success in their program. Does  
19 that make sense?

20           DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. So the teacher of -- back  
21 to the teacher of record, it will be that teacher  
22 from the district -- I understand there will be an  
23 online instructor separate from this --

24           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

25           DR. SAUNDERS: -- could be separate from that



1 instructor.

2 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: And that employee of the district  
4 would at a minimum see those students or communicate  
5 with those students -- what was it -- the support at  
6 least two days a week. Is that correct?

7 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That is correct. They will be  
8 -- they'll be there to support the students. But the  
9 instruction will be delivered by an online provider.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

11 MS. ROBBINS: For instance, we might have an  
12 actual student who wanted -- I'm sorry -- a student  
13 who wanted to take marine biology. Okay. So the  
14 teacher of record would not be our teacher from our  
15 district; it would be the teacher through the  
16 provider. So I think that's where I'm wanting to  
17 make sure we're clear and we clarify because there  
18 are instances where our teachers will be monitoring  
19 but they may not be the teacher of record because  
20 they are not actually qualified to deliver that.  
21 Does that make sense or am I confusing it?

22 DR. SAUNDERS: So the -- I understand what  
23 you're saying. So the teachers of record may not be  
24 Arkansas licensed. Correct?

25 MS. ROBBINS: They would be through the

1 provider.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: They would simply be through the  
3 provider, not necessarily having an Arkansas license?

4 MS. ROBBINS: And they would be a provider  
5 that's on our state provider list.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. But they would not --

7 MS. ROBBINS: No.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: -- necessarily have --

9 MS. ROBBINS: Not necessarily.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

11 MS. ROBBINS: I don't think there's a licensure  
12 for marine biology, if I'm not mistaken. But, you  
13 know, I'm not sure that there's not many things that  
14 a personalized learning plan -- students may have  
15 real interests in that we possibly don't have that  
16 type of certification. I hope I clarified.

17 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah, that's great.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions  
19 from Panel?

20 DR. SAUNDERS: I still have a few.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Go ahead, Dr.  
22 Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: On your waiver of instructional  
24 days and the school year, how would you plan to  
25 calculate attendance rates?

1           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah. So we've talked about  
2 that too. You know, for our students in a virtual  
3 academy -- I mean, there's -- as for them being  
4 required to attend, it's only going to be if they're  
5 not progressing at an appropriate rate. So as for --  
6 and the waiver for request in calendar year really  
7 aligns with the flexibility of the model. If we have  
8 a student that is participating in some internship  
9 that takes place starting in middle of July, we want  
10 to be able to allow that to begin. And also if we  
11 have a student that has an opportunity that goes  
12 beyond the end of the school -- the traditional  
13 calendar, we want to be able to offer that as well.

14           DR. SAUNDERS: Counsel, I know on that section  
15 it's still noted as having some issues.

16           MS. DAVIS: Yes.

17           DR. SAUNDERS: Do you want to talk about the  
18 issues you have?

19           MS. DAVIS: On just that section or --

20           DR. SAUNDERS: Just I think that section. I had  
21 a few other questions on other sections, but yeah.

22           MS. DAVIS: Okay. I just -- the question I had  
23 is the applicant states that they are going to be  
24 following the Van Buren School District calendar, but  
25 they also request a waiver of school year dates which

1 is not needed if they're going to be following the  
2 school district calendar. So I just need  
3 clarification from them of whether or not they plan  
4 on following it or --

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I think he just described  
6 a situation where they would not follow it.

7 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That's correct.

8 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Well, they just had said that  
9 they did, so that's why I just needed a verbal --

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I think he means loosely  
11 but when you're providing a student focused  
12 education, he wants the flexibility to provide the  
13 variance needed for those students.

14 MS. DAVIS: For start and end dates?

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes.

16 MS. DAVIS: Okay. And that's fine. You can  
17 have that one.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Correct, Dr. Jeffcoat?

19 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, that is correct.

20 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Do you have other --

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. I know in the next section  
22 also you have issues.

23 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Yes. On the next section the  
24 applicant states that they wanted a waiver from the  
25 principal requirements under the licensure, but they

1           also state that the freshmen academy has a principal  
2           that they're going to be using. So I don't know if  
3           they're going to be utilizing an existing licensed  
4           principal. Do they need this waiver or do they not?

5           SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We are requesting that waiver.  
6           It's -- we're very fortunate to be able to place it  
7           at the Van Buren Freshmen Academy right now where we  
8           do have a principal that's at that school. But our  
9           coordinator that will be working with these students  
10          and families, we want to have the best person for the  
11          job. This is a different kind of school and the  
12          responsibilities of a principal per se in a  
13          traditional setting will be very different. So we  
14          want to have the best person for the job, as opposed  
15          to being bound by hiring someone that has  
16          administrative license and is certified to be a  
17          principal in a school.

18          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So you're saying the  
19          coordinator will act in lieu of the principal?

20          SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, that's correct. And if we  
21          do -- we're hoping that this is very successful and  
22          grows. If we do find ourselves in a situation where  
23          we need to relocate to another campus or another  
24          place in our community, the principal will not go  
25          with the school -- the principal of the Van Buren

1 Freshmen Academy will not go with the school; our  
2 coordinator will be with the school.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so is the coordinator  
4 working under the principal?

5 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: No. No. The coordinator is  
6 responsible and would be serving under Nancy Robbins  
7 and administration.

8 MS. DAVIS: Okay. And then on that other  
9 section, they had stated they wanted a waiver of 6-  
10 17-170 and I believe because in context of the rest  
11 of their requests that that was just a typo and that  
12 they were meaning to request 6-17-1701. I just want  
13 verbal confirmation that that is what was requested.

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: That is correct. That was a  
15 typo on our part. We apologize. We left the 1 off,  
16 so, yes, it is 1701.

17 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I had a question for them on  
19 that.

20 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: I know on that section, the  
22 teacher fair dismissal, all of those rules governing  
23 personnel policies, how would you intend to address  
24 those locally, those employees that are licensed and  
25 the teachers of record --

1 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: -- if it would not fall under  
3 these categories?

4 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, so our virtual academy,  
5 teachers will be similar to -- if you look at the  
6 personnel policies for Virtual Arkansas, they have  
7 very separate policies than what you would see in a  
8 typical traditional school setting. We will be  
9 developing policies for our virtual academy that will  
10 be separate from our licensed and classified  
11 personnel policies that we have in the district.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: Did you have more on that  
13 section, Counsel?

14 MS. DAVIS: Not on that section.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I know you had more on  
16 class size. Is that the next one?

17 MS. DAVIS: I do. I just need the applicant to  
18 confirm when they request class size waivers that it  
19 does not apply to special education.

20 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, we confirm.

21 MS. DAVIS: Okay. And then --

22 DR. SAUNDERS: On the class size, I wanted to  
23 ask on that one -- because I know that it's -- the  
24 standards for accreditation not to exceed the 40-to-  
25 1, and I was thinking about -- is there not -- and I

1 know a proposed teaching load not to exceed 200. Is  
2 there not some laws also that need to be addressed  
3 there?

4 MS. DAVIS: I think the -- for some reason I'm  
5 thinking it might've been in their application. I  
6 could be mistaken since there was a lot of them. But  
7 if they intend to pay their teachers for teaching  
8 over the 150 students a day then there's not  
9 additional waiver needed. But if they do not intend  
10 to pay their teachers for teaching more than 100  
11 students -- 150 students a day, then they need a  
12 waiver of -- I think it's 6-17-812.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

14 MS. PFEFFER: And I may be going to mess things  
15 up here, but in the back of my mind I was thinking  
16 that in a digital learning environment there were  
17 different rules for class size. And so in the way I  
18 would view this, if this is a virtual environment,  
19 then -- and they were receiving waivers, then they  
20 would fall under whatever that number is. I know in  
21 other charters that we've approved with online or  
22 digital -- with online environments, I thought, you  
23 know, we've approved even up to 300 in some cases.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: 350.

25 MS. PFEFFER: 350. So this 200 is below that.



1 But I was thinking 350 was a number that was -- and  
2 it may be in a different section of code under  
3 digital learning or -- anybody else? Anybody else  
4 thinking that same thing or am I confusing some --

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I think it's confusing in  
6 that they were not actually the teacher of record;  
7 they're monitoring the progress of students but not  
8 actual preparation of the course.

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: If we need to request that  
10 waiver, we do not intend to pay additional  
11 compensation if they are over that number. If we  
12 need to request that specific waiver, we'd like to do  
13 so.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We're waiting on guidance  
15 from Ms. Davis.

16 MS. DAVIS: Right. Yes. If they do not plan on  
17 paying -- and I'm looking for the digital -- I looked  
18 through the rules and there's nothing that addresses  
19 class size -- but keep in mind, I'm also scanning  
20 them on the fly. But if they do not intend to pay  
21 for students over 150, then they do need a waiver of  
22 6-17-812.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jeffcoat.

24 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We would like to request that  
25 waiver.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders, do you have  
2 more or are you ready to follow Ms. Davis' list?

3 DR. SAUNDERS: I did have on the waiver for --  
4 let's see. Wait, we forgot that one. Let me get --  
5 a waiver from bidding.

6 MS. DAVIS: Well, they were -- I was told this  
7 morning that they are amending that waiver to only  
8 ask to narrow it down to 6-21-304(a), which just  
9 deals with the bidding and procurement. But I will  
10 note that that waiver has also not been granted to  
11 any other schools, even at the more specific.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: 6-21-304 --

13 MS. DAVIS: (a). That's what I was told today,  
14 that they are modifying that to limit it to that  
15 section only.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: The only other part of that law  
17 is the school buses. So that's the entire bidding  
18 and assurance section of the law. Is that correct?

19 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

20 MR. WALTER: And may I, Madam Chair?

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Absolutely.

22 MR. WALTER: I just wanted to make sure. I  
23 think it's stated in the materials but we wanted to  
24 make sure and point out that the district is so-to-  
25 speak self-limiting that waiver to only the digital

1 providers. And they only -- they're only requesting  
2 it for that particular purpose and to have the  
3 maximum flexibility possible in trying to obtain the  
4 best fit.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: What are the specific  
6 restrictions within the law that does not allow you  
7 to do that?

8 MR. WALTER: I think perhaps the method of  
9 bidding and potential amount. The amount probably  
10 won't be a little bit, but we wanted to make sure  
11 that there was flexibility beyond what's given, I  
12 think, by 6-21-305, in the event it's looked at as  
13 the purchase of a commodity.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. So, but I'm still not  
15 clear on what specific section of 304 [sic] hinders  
16 that specifically.

17 MR. WALTER: I believe --

18 DR. SAUNDERS: -- in the application.

19 MR. WALTER: I believe subsection (a) with the  
20 dollar amounts and I believe the type and limiting it  
21 to a bid type situation.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: How does that limit it though?

23 MR. WALTER: That we're talking -- I believe it  
24 does if you're talking about it being a commodity and  
25 it being limited, as I see, to a bid type process,

1 unless it's a sole source issue, which 305 talks  
2 about.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I'm still having  
4 difficulty on how the law as it's currently written  
5 -- it's there to protect the taxpayers and to make  
6 sure we're stewards of the money. I'm not sure that  
7 the process that's in here would inhibit the district  
8 from doing what they need to do with a properly  
9 written RFP with a properly written review procedure  
10 and following these procedures.

11 MR. WALTER: Well, I understand the position.  
12 We just feel that there is still a flexibility,  
13 potentially, issue out there, and also perhaps  
14 potentially if it's viewed as a situation where it  
15 would have to be bid versus an RFP, a length of time  
16 issue. But obviously the district shares the same  
17 concerns you and the Panel does about making sure the  
18 district gets the best value and at the lowest  
19 possible cost for the taxpayers.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah, I do too. And I understand  
21 there is flexibility within the law; you do not  
22 always have to go with the lowest bidder.

23 MR. WALTER: Right.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: There are processes for that and  
25 there's procedures to address all that. So I am

1 extremely reserved about that waiver.

2 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Can I speak to that, too? Let  
3 me just say, first, when we wrote this application  
4 and we requested that waiver we had not spent as much  
5 time with our vendors, our possible vendors. Now  
6 that we've met with them and we know more about what  
7 we need, the different features that are offered  
8 within each vendor, I'm comfortable just rescinding  
9 this portion because we do have flexibility. We'll  
10 write our bid specs in a way that gives us what we  
11 need, and we do have the flexibility to choose what  
12 we believe to be the best vendor, the best option for  
13 our students within the law. So I'm comfortable with  
14 us rescinding that waiver, as well. So I would like  
15 to rescind that waiver.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Thank you. Dr.  
17 Saunders, any additional?

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I have one little one; I promise  
19 it's a little one. On the report cards, would you be  
20 agreeable to adding language that says -- it states,  
21 "Van Buren School District parents will have real-  
22 time access to report cards via online platform."  
23 Could you put in language that says "if requested, a  
24 printed copy will be available?"

25 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes, sir. We can certainly do

1 that.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you. There are  
3 situations, split families --

4 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. Our students may be  
5 digital but all of our parents may not. So, yes, we  
6 can certainly make that available.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: And I was really thinking of  
8 split families and other situations.

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes. Absolutely.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions  
12 from panel members?

13 Ms. Davis -- oh, you have another one?

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. I was just going to say, I  
15 think Ms. Davis still has some of those.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis, remaining  
17 issues?

18 MS. DAVIS: I do not.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: You don't?

20 MS. DAVIS: You seem surprised.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yea. Well, it was a long  
22 list. All right.

23 MS. SMITH: Well, I do want to go back to one.  
24 And I know that they've already withdrawn this, and  
25 that's fine; I don't expect them to come back and ask

1 for it. But the whole idea about the commodity thing  
2 -- I mean, this just kind of hit me. I mean, this is  
3 for hiring a teacher and their curriculum, and we  
4 don't do RFPs for teachers -- you know, who's going  
5 to come teach my class and which teacher is going to  
6 take the lowest bid to come in the classroom and do  
7 it. And so when they're looking at a list that is on  
8 ADE of these are the digital providers that we've  
9 approved and they're having to decide which teacher  
10 and which curriculum they're going to choose, we're  
11 making them put that out on an RFP to have people bid  
12 on it. I mean, that just seems kind of backwards to  
13 me and I didn't understand even why that was on there  
14 until y'all were talking about it. It just kind of  
15 seemed kind of odd to me that we would -- that a  
16 district would have to bid if it's going to be over  
17 \$10,000 for who to pick to teach their kids and what  
18 curriculum because it's their digital platform. Does  
19 that make -- am I -- do you see what I'm saying?  
20 Greg, you're looking at me like I'm -- I mean, am I  
21 --

22 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: This may be a question for  
23 legal counsel too, because I'm not familiar. But I  
24 know that there is -- there are rules that allow us  
25 to hire -- purchase service and we can develop a

1 district policy that says that we will not be bidding  
2 that specific purchase service.

3 MS. SMITH: I don't think that would --

4 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: I don't know if this would be  
5 something that would be allowable as a purchase  
6 service or if this would be something --

7 MS. SMITH: I don't know.

8 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: We're still comfortable with  
9 withdrawing though.

10 MS. SMITH: I mean, I say withdraw it, and  
11 that's fine. But I just thought that was just --

12 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yeah.

13 MS. SMITH: -- a conversation we probably need  
14 to have more in-house.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Well, there is that option with  
16 the purchase service, as he was discussing. But  
17 there's also -- I think one point to consider is it's  
18 not like a cooperative purchasing agreement with  
19 approved state contracts with the approved providers,  
20 that whole side of the issue, price negotiations,  
21 everything else not being addressed with an approved  
22 provider. So, you know, it's --

23 MR. ROGERS: That's already --

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah, it's a different side of  
25 the coin.



1 MS. SMITH: So one thing that maybe we need to  
2 consider when we are approving digital providers to  
3 put on our state list, maybe they need to submit  
4 their pricing to us and that's something that we need  
5 to look at to approve. I mean -- I mean, we're  
6 asking -- I don't know. This just seemed really  
7 backwards to me when we were talking about it, and  
8 that's something I think maybe we just need to look  
9 deeper into. And it has nothing to do with this  
10 charter and what they're asking for today, but just  
11 the conversation just seemed odd to me.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: I believe they would have that  
13 option. They'd need to go through a cooperative  
14 purchasing agreement and there's lots of procedures,  
15 such as stats and everything else. But they can get  
16 their contracts on there so that procedure --

17 MS. SMITH: So that's maybe something we need to  
18 look at for all of our digital providers we're  
19 putting on a list.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Moving us along, if  
21 there are no further questions I'll accept a motion.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: I'd make a motion to approve.

23 MS. PFEFFER: Second.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Motion has been made by  
25 Dr. Saunders and seconded by Ms. Pfeffer to approve

1 the River Valley --

2 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- Virtual Academy. Any  
4 discussion? All those in favor?

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed?

7 Congratulations. If you'll wait just a moment,  
8 we'll have written comment.

9 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Or, oral and written  
11 comment.

12 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

14 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. There's  
15 a need for the model -- this model in the district  
16 for the varied population, their education and a  
17 setting that is conducive to their individual needs.  
18 The strong points are the face-to-face interaction,  
19 the field experience, the teacher support, and the  
20 individual learning plans that this model provides  
21 for this varied population, with the knowledge that  
22 there will be continued internal discussions on  
23 capacity and demand. I have no concerns.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

25 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I think this will

1 provide a new and flexible option for traditional and  
2 nontraditional students.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

4 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for the motion. The  
5 district has presented a well-developed plan to meet  
6 the needs of their school community and to provide a  
7 quality education for students with varied needs.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

9 DR. GOTCHER: The opportunity for students --  
10 oh, excuse me -- I voted me the approval of the  
11 application. The opportunity for students with  
12 various educational needs will be accomplished in  
13 this digital platform. I'm impressed with their  
14 leadership and their willingness to support students  
15 and families in this process.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

17 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it. I thought it was a  
18 good model as they move forward to continue to meet  
19 the needs of the student population.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: I thought this model would  
22 provide opportunities for the students in the  
23 district their serving. That's why I voted in favor.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

25 MS. SMITH: I voted for it. This is a good

1 opportunity for serving students -- serving your  
2 community and all students, including high school  
3 students to the charter that will -- that are at  
4 risk. So, I voted for it.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So, Dr. Jeffcoat, I think  
6 this is just an example of our state moving more and  
7 more towards student-focused learning systems and  
8 really supporting that informed risk-taking. So we  
9 believe in you. We encourage you. We ask you to  
10 always reach out and ask for help if you need it.  
11 We're more than happy to serve you in any capacity.  
12 And your next step will be to go before the State  
13 Board in November.

14 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Well, thank you so much. I  
15 appreciate your time this morning. I know it took a  
16 lot of time, but I can tell you that it was time well  
17 spent. The lives of the students that will change  
18 because of the votes that took place today will be  
19 amazing. So, thank you so much for today.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

21 Panel, 10-minute break?

22 DR. GOTCHER: Maybe 15?

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: 10 to 15.

24 (BREAK: 10:25 - 10:38 A.M.)

25 A-2: HEARING OF DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

1 APPLICATION: HARRISBURG COLLEGE AND CAREER PREPARATORY SCHOOL

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. McLaughlin, you're  
3 recognized.

4 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. For  
5 Action Item 2, we will hear a district conversion  
6 public school charter application for Harrisburg  
7 College and Career Preparatory School. And to begin  
8 we will hear from the superintendent, Mr. Sample.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If all representatives  
10 from the Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory  
11 School and anyone speaking in opposition would please  
12 stand and raise your right hand. Do you swear or  
13 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall  
14 be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the  
15 truth?

16 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Sample, you're  
18 recognized.

19 SUPT. SAMPLE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank  
20 you, Esteemed Panel, for taking your time to hear us  
21 come to you today for hopefully approval of the  
22 Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory School. A  
23 little bit about Harrisburg High School, right now we  
24 are a high school that celebrates success on each  
25 students identification of success, whether it is as

1 minor as being able to draw a straight line across a  
2 blank page piece of paper or as major as maybe even a  
3 vision and a dream of identifying a new stellar  
4 constellation. We celebrate each individual success  
5 for all students and we gauge our high school on  
6 those individual successes. Others, as well as we,  
7 the state and the feds, gauge our high school on  
8 assessment scores, and we understand that. And we  
9 have to be gauged not only with our local peers but  
10 also on a national level through assessments. I was  
11 so proud in the Commissioner's tour across the state  
12 when he introduced an individual student and kind of  
13 identified this student's successes but never one  
14 time mentioned what his test scores were or his grade  
15 point average. And that was a joy for educators to  
16 hear because that's what we're all about is not just  
17 the school's success but each and every individual  
18 student, not only in our high school but in K-12  
19 across our state. So with that said, Madam Chair, we  
20 -- that's a little bit of our philosophy at  
21 Harrisburg High School.

22 With the Harrisburg College and Career  
23 Preparatory School we would like to expand on those  
24 successes. And to expand on those successes we're  
25 meaning to when a child leaves -- any child leaves

1 Harrisburg High School that they can contribute by  
2 already having a technical certificate or higher  
3 educational hours that will allow them to pursue  
4 their -- not only their field of study, but maybe  
5 their career for the rest of their lives; to be a  
6 product as well as an asset to not only our local  
7 society at Harrisburg, our local society in Arkansas,  
8 but also on a global society throughout the United  
9 States and the world. That is what we're asking this  
10 panel today to allow us to expand on those successes  
11 and to enhance and embed the core courses through  
12 enhancement, not only to keep them as a traditional  
13 core curriculum but also to expand upon those to  
14 where all students can achieve their individual  
15 successes and at the same time celebrate their  
16 successes of being successful in a global society  
17 today.

18 So thank you for your time. I at this time,  
19 Madam Chair, would like to introduce our State  
20 Representative Dwight Tosh. For some reason, those  
21 guys are already -- always in a hurry and he would  
22 like to say a few words. Thank you so much.  
23 Representative Tosh.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Representative Tosh,  
25 you're recognized.

1           REP. TOSH: Madam Chair; Dr. Gotcher, good to  
2 see you again; Distinguished Panel, I want you to  
3 know it is a great honor for me to stand before you  
4 today. And like Mr. Sample said, I want to make just  
5 a few brief comments. I don't have a prepared  
6 statement, but he reminded me a while ago I was a  
7 politician, I should always have something to say.  
8 So, hopefully, I will be brief.

9           And what I would like to say is this: I have  
10 visited with the staff there at the Harrisburg High  
11 School. I've listened to the concept of this  
12 program. I truly believe that this school is a  
13 perfect fit for this program. It is strategically  
14 located 20 miles south of Arkansas State University,  
15 and then to the west of it we have Arkansas State  
16 University at Newport, and then just to the east we  
17 have Arkansas State University at Marked Tree. It is  
18 strategically located and I think it's in the perfect  
19 position; it's a great school, and I think it fits  
20 what this program is looking for. And just recently,  
21 as I mentioned yesterday in a meeting, one of the  
22 elementary schools there at this school just was  
23 recognized for the distinguished Blue Ribbon Award.  
24 And, obviously, to this panel here that is not  
25 something that I need to explain to you, just the



1           significance of that program and what it means for a  
2           school in this state to be able to receive such an  
3           honor. So I would say this: any favorable  
4           consideration you could give to this school would be  
5           greatly appreciated. And I believe that you're about  
6           to hear testimony that will hopefully be as  
7           convincing to you as it was to me that this school  
8           should be approved for this program. Thank you for  
9           your time and it's been an honor for me to speak with  
10          you. Thank you.

11           DR. GOTCHER: Thank you, Representative. It was  
12          a pleasure meeting you yesterday, as well, and I  
13          appreciate the conversation and look forward to  
14          hearing the presentation today. Thank you again for  
15          attending.

16           REP. TOSH: Thank you.

17           CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Sample.

18           SUPT. SAMPLE: Yes, ma'am. Thank you again.  
19          Madam Chair and Esteemed Panel, at this time I would  
20          like to introduce, and I will introduce, our high  
21          school principal, Mr. Brandon Craig. He has with him  
22          his team that developed the application for this  
23          charter school, and I hope at the end of our  
24          presentation that this panel will be as excited as we  
25          are with the successes that this vision will bring.

1 Thank you. Mr. Craig.

2 MR. CRAIG: Madam Chair and Charter Authorizing  
3 Panel, I want to thank you so much for the  
4 opportunity to speak with all of you today and share  
5 our vision at Harrisburg High School to become the  
6 Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory School.

7 At this time I would like to introduce the  
8 members of my team that are here today. You have  
9 heard from Mr. Sample, our superintendent. Mr. Jim  
10 Montgomery, assistant principal at the high school;  
11 Ms. Amber Carville, instructional facilitator at the  
12 high school; Mr. Dennis Graham, our guidance  
13 counselor; Ms. Pam Hogue, who is actually the  
14 principal at the Weiner Elementary School of  
15 Innovation; and then you have heard from  
16 Representative Dwight Tosh; and we also have Allen  
17 Mooneyhan here from ASU-Newport.

18 Okay. With Harrisburg College and Career  
19 Preparatory School, this is a glimpse of our plan.  
20 We hope and plan to have advisory blocks implemented  
21 into our schedule. That schedule for those advisory  
22 blocks would take place on a day that we call Fast  
23 Track Fridays. On Fast Track Fridays, I'm going to  
24 give you just a little glimpse of that; that is to  
25 have every student have an advisor with them until

1 they graduate and also teach those students a life-  
2 skills curriculum. Also a plan is for all students  
3 to have a PLP, or personalized learning plan. And,  
4 again, we will talk about the local industry  
5 shadowing, certificates of proficiency, and the  
6 increase of technology throughout all coursework.

7 Here's a small glimpse of our community. Like  
8 Representative Tosh did say, we are a small  
9 community, a rural area just south of Jonesboro. We  
10 are known for our rice production and for our duck  
11 hunting. This is a very low socioeconomic area, as  
12 you can see by the stats there that are on the  
13 PowerPoint. And just to give you an idea about some  
14 of our students -- and I see that you can see the  
15 poverty line and the unemployment rate. Some of the  
16 things that excite our students are something as  
17 simple as taking a fieldtrip to Jonesboro. So if  
18 that can give you any indication of the type of  
19 students that we are servicing on a daily basis -- we  
20 have teachers who take those students maybe to the  
21 mall and they've never been. So this gives you an  
22 idea of where we stand and where we are  
23 demographically.

24 This next slide is a snapshot of our student  
25 population. Harrisburg High School serves grades 9

1 through 12. We have about 380 students. We are  
2 predominantly white. We are 100% provision two free-  
3 and-reduced lunch, and about 13% of our students do  
4 hold an IEP.

5 Some demographics also from our area of the high  
6 school: there are only 8.9% of citizens in Poinsett  
7 County who hold a bachelor's degree. Just north from  
8 us, in Craighead County, that percentage is 23.7%.  
9 So, most of our students who do go on to college are  
10 first generation college students. Our graduation  
11 rate over the last three years has been a 75% average  
12 and our hopes are we want to change the culture of  
13 our community and the mindset of our students by  
14 equipping them with the necessary tools to be  
15 productive members of society, whether that is to go  
16 on into the workforce or it is to go on to a post-  
17 secondary education.

18 This slide represents industry and opportunity  
19 that is in our backyard. We have contacted each and  
20 every one of these industries and began communication  
21 about needs that they have and which certifications  
22 would make our students the most marketable. So the  
23 areas that we are looking at for our students to  
24 pursue, we're hoping that they will stay close to  
25 home and help to turn over and change the culture of

1           our local community.

2                   This slide is just a chart of the fastest  
3           growing industries and I just wanted to state on this  
4           slide that some of these certificates of proficiency  
5           that our students can obtain include areas such as  
6           culinary, hospitality, and medical professions, which  
7           are some of the fastest growing industries in our  
8           area.

9                   Our mission is based on our students' needs and  
10          the needs of our community. Personalized Learning  
11          Plans for all students in grades 9 through 12 --  
12          these plans will be created collaboratively with the  
13          student, with the parents, with the teacher, with the  
14          advisory, and everyone else that we can get onboard  
15          to show any interest or help guide that student into  
16          the pathway that will make them most successful.  
17          These PLP's will show things such as personal  
18          interests; it will show academic and career  
19          objectives. It will also allow teachers to  
20          communicate amongst one another not to the point of  
21          an IEP but so that teachers can communicate and say,  
22          "This student works best in a block class standing  
23          up; they're able to get more work completed." And  
24          we're hoping that these PLP's and the communication  
25          between the teachers can better serve each and every

1 student.

2 Academic and technical instruction through  
3 concurrent credit, dual credit, and AP courses --  
4 again, we are not looking to change the current  
5 requirements at all; we are just wanting to enhance  
6 those opportunities.

7 And the main focus is is that we want our  
8 students prepared to go on to post-secondary or to  
9 enter the workforce.

10 This is just a slide that represents some of the  
11 meetings we've had, actually about three slides  
12 worth, and we tried to condense it down to one just  
13 to show you how much legwork that has been done  
14 within the community and meeting with local  
15 partnerships. But the most important statistic that  
16 I see is when we started talks about a conversion a  
17 year ago, when communicating in our faculty meetings  
18 our teachers were 100% behind this concept. We  
19 talked about it multiple times and all of our  
20 teachers are very, very excited about this plan.  
21 Also in these events, like I said before, we met with  
22 some of the local partnerships that include EACC and  
23 ASU-Newport. And we've also met with Career and  
24 Technical Ed. and various meetings with APSRC. We  
25 had a community support night where we had a cookout

1 and explained to them the various routes that their  
2 children may take if we are approved. And we also  
3 just did a Q&A night so that the parents could ask  
4 questions.

5 Some of our local supporters -- again, you heard  
6 from Representative Dwight Tosh. We have two mayors  
7 within our school district and both of our mayors are  
8 onboard with our plan. We have several local  
9 businesses and community members who are 100% behind  
10 this concept; again, Career and Technical Ed. and our  
11 local colleges.

12 Okay. This is probably my favorite slide of the  
13 entire presentation. This year we went to a modified  
14 block in hopes of approval. And in this modified  
15 block we changed from a traditional eight-period day  
16 to 1st and 5th period meet every day and the middle  
17 three classes are blocks, so they will meet every  
18 other day, which makes it more conducive for our  
19 students to be transported to the area colleges. But  
20 the most innovative portion of this schedule is  
21 something that we've experimented with thus far, is a  
22 plan that we have called Fast Track Fridays. And  
23 what we hope to implement is to finish off the week  
24 with 25-minute classes of every -- of all eight  
25 classes and incorporate a two-and-a-half hour

1 advisory time. In this advisory time, our students  
2 will range anywhere from 12 to 15 students per  
3 advisor and they will remain with that advisor until  
4 they graduate. So they will build that relationship  
5 with that one teacher; that will be their go-to  
6 teacher that can help them to make sure that they're  
7 on track to graduate, they can build a rapport with  
8 that teacher to ask for advice and for help in  
9 various areas. But also during this time we will  
10 have a life-skills curriculum and this is something  
11 that we at Harrisburg feel like students across the  
12 state, and especially in our community, are lacking  
13 when they graduate high school. Not every student  
14 has both parents at home; not every student is being  
15 raised by a family member; and not every student is  
16 being taught life-skills while they're at their  
17 house. So we want to incorporate this life-skills  
18 curriculum. And as you can see, there's just a  
19 snapshot of a plan of a particular Friday where maybe  
20 students in 9th grade will work on vehicle  
21 maintenance and safety, which could be that those  
22 students are learning how to check the oil of their  
23 vehicle that day; it may mean that they learn how to  
24 change a tire. Tenth grade may have a speaker that  
25 day who's talking about anxiety, stress management,



1 and different avenues to release those stresses.  
2 Eleventh grade could be taking a career fieldtrip;  
3 and then 12th grade our students will have an e-  
4 portfolio that they will update throughout the course  
5 of their entire high school career so that they will  
6 be better prepared when it's time to go on to post-  
7 secondary. Some of the other life-skills examples  
8 that I'd like to let you know about are financial  
9 literacy. Our students do not graduate knowing what  
10 credit scores are. Most of them have not opened a  
11 checking account and they don't have a savings  
12 account, and we have local banks who have said that  
13 they would love to come in and speak with our  
14 students about those concepts. We also have a  
15 fitness element that we would like to incorporate and  
16 have intramurals at the high school level. Our  
17 students are graduating unaware of etiquette. They  
18 don't know what it's like to sit down at a dinner  
19 table at a fancy restaurant and which fork to use.  
20 And we can teach those students how to be more  
21 productive and how to learn more about life every  
22 single Friday, and this goes way above and beyond  
23 what is required of us now. But we realize that it's  
24 something, in feedback from our parents, that our  
25 students are desperately lacking whenever they leave

1 high school and go on to college.

2 This is just a map of where our students go  
3 whenever they leave us, whether it be during the  
4 school day or after they graduate. There are a lot  
5 of great community colleges and universities right  
6 here in Arkansas.

7 The next few slides are of our students and our  
8 programs. This first slide shows a picture of our  
9 fine arts building. You see a picture there of our  
10 choir, our band, and then even the drum line and the  
11 flag line at football games. We have an award-  
12 winning band program; we have a fantastic drama  
13 program; an amazing choir.

14 The next slide is just more of our students. We  
15 have a community garden that our students work and  
16 members of the community also come in and work that  
17 same garden. We have an award-winning EAST program.  
18 Every year we have a college week and we try to make  
19 sure that every student applies for college during  
20 that one week. And then you also see pictures of our  
21 students utilizing technology.

22 This slide is of our FCCLA and FACS service  
23 projects. This is where they go out into the  
24 community and they look for projects to help benefit,  
25 whether it be family members or it be local

1 businesses throughout our community, and just how as  
2 a school we can connect with our local community.

3 Our JROTC program -- we have pictures of  
4 students attending classes at ASU-Newport. And one  
5 of those pictures there, the top left and the middle,  
6 top middle, is one of our local business leaders  
7 helping our agri students with a welding project.  
8 And I'll talk later a little bit about some of the  
9 shadowing that we would like to see happen from our  
10 local business leaders and how that will help our  
11 students.

12 I showed you all of these slides of our kids for  
13 one reason. In spite of the poverty level, in spite  
14 of what odds are stacked against us, our students are  
15 fighters. Every day they overcome major hurdles that  
16 maybe you and I know nothing about. They want to be  
17 successful and they work hard regardless of their  
18 circumstance. Our motivation, simply put, is the  
19 very reason that everyone in this room entered into  
20 the education profession, and that's because of our  
21 students. And we want to do everything possible for  
22 those 380 kids at Harrisburg High School to make sure  
23 that they are prepared for life after Harrisburg. We  
24 want to break the cycle of poverty. We want to  
25 increase student success, and we want to help them

1 develop goals in the safe environment of our school  
2 with teachers who care about them.

3 And, in closing, I'd like to say Harrisburg  
4 College and Career Preparatory School will change  
5 lives in our school and in our community. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis, is there anyone  
7 here to speak in opposition --

8 MS. DAVIS: No.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- or public comment?

10 MS. DAVIS: No, but I'll go double-check. No.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Sample, you have  
12 another five minutes for closing remarks.

13 SUPT. SAMPLE: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I  
14 really do appreciate the title. I will not be doing  
15 the closing. I would like to introduce one of our  
16 team members, which is our elementary principal at  
17 Weiner. I will say that we have some bragging rights  
18 in that school too, as a school of innovation and  
19 also as a National Blue Ribbon school. And Ms. Pam  
20 Hogue will do our closing. Thank you.

21 MS. HOGUE: Hi. I am Pam Hogue and I'm the  
22 principal at Weiner Elementary School, as Mr. Sample  
23 said. And I tell you, I speak with notes today  
24 because I have a tendency when I feel passionately  
25 about something to talk about it. And so I came with

1 notes so that I could stay within my five-minute  
2 limit here.

3 At Weiner Elementary we are a school of  
4 innovation. And it is our overarching focus at that  
5 school to make sure that our kids have the skills and  
6 attitudes that are going to enable them to live the  
7 life that they choose instead of the life that has  
8 been chosen for them by their circumstances -- a life  
9 where the choice includes college and career -- and  
10 that is not often the case in the circumstances where  
11 our kids live now in our entire district. But my  
12 kids still have to finish their K-12 education and  
13 I'm excited that they will get to do that at the  
14 Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory School, a  
15 school where I believe that the skills and attitudes  
16 that I am instilling in my kids in my building will  
17 also be fostered and will be allowed to grow.

18 Now I speak with the passion of this because I  
19 was Mr. Craig's mentor last year and so from the  
20 beginning of their talkings about the charter I have  
21 been listening to those conversations. And that has  
22 been a super-fun thing to do, both from Mr. Craig as  
23 the leader of that building but from their staff.  
24 And this plan that they have grew simply from a  
25 strong desire of a staff to better the lives of their

1 students. I am so proud that as a school they -- you  
2 know -- this vision is based on an honest love of the  
3 students at Harrisburg High School and they  
4 absolutely want what is going to be best for their  
5 students.

6 As a district, a large percentage of our  
7 students are what we call at-risk. Many of the  
8 students honestly come from homes where there is not  
9 a whole lot of appreciation placed on education,  
10 honestly. They come from homes where no one in the  
11 home has a job, let alone a career. Students that as  
12 teenagers are in need of guidance and support, and  
13 that is what this school is going to provide them.

14 The act of providing students at graduation with  
15 a technical certificate or other credentials that  
16 will give them a reliable job, a job where they can  
17 earn a wage that will allow them to be self-  
18 sufficient, that would be life-changing for many of  
19 them. Those that we know are not college-bound and  
20 would otherwise be either bouncing from job-to-job or  
21 simply choosing to not work at all, they can be  
22 contributing members to our community. There are  
23 students, like all schools have -- in fact, a lot of  
24 them that we know are ready for a two- or four-year  
25 college. Those are the students that often have all

1 the required credits except senior English -- we know  
2 that group -- and then they try to just fill their  
3 schedule with electives.

4 With this program they will be offered  
5 concurrent credit, just like they are now, except  
6 they've put a twist on it. Instead of being offered  
7 concurrent credit simply within the confines of the  
8 high school, they will actually be able to travel to  
9 the university or the local community college and get  
10 those credits in a classroom with college students.  
11 That changes the dynamic of that class. We all know  
12 that. We've all had those. I think that's exciting.  
13 Not only will they be able to get those college  
14 classes on the college campus, transportation will be  
15 provided for them, and it's going to be -- if there's  
16 a cost, it's going to be low-cost. I wish that that  
17 had been a program when I was in high school, I can  
18 tell you.

19 And then there's the Friday mornings with the  
20 life-skills. I love this part. Conversation in my  
21 building has been "we wish that we could go over  
22 there on Friday mornings and take these classes."  
23 Students in high school are going to be taught the  
24 life-skills that many adults either struggle with for  
25 a very long time or never learn, things like taxes,

1 insurance, balancing a checkbook, buying stock, how  
2 to write a resume, or what to wear to an interview.  
3 Those are things kids need to know, and a lot of them  
4 don't. They don't have that person to guide them.  
5 How to change a flat tire; a lesson about borrowing  
6 and interest and that student loans have to be paid  
7 back. That's an important one. No matter what path  
8 in life a student takes these skills will be  
9 beneficial. Now the part of the plan that I love  
10 most -- and it is the part that hits dead to the  
11 center of me -- and that is the mentoring piece.  
12 Whether a student is college-bound, whether they're  
13 trying to get a high school diploma just to get out,  
14 or if they are in school just to keep them out of  
15 trouble, they all need someone to provide them  
16 guidance. They need someone to provide  
17 encouragement; they need a listening ear; and every  
18 once in a while they need someone to provide a gentle  
19 nudge. Sometimes they need someone just simply to  
20 have their back. And I believe that the relationship  
21 formed when a staff member mentors a student through  
22 their high school career will be invaluable during  
23 those years that they're in school and I believe  
24 likely for a lifetime.

25 The administration and staff at Harrisburg High



1 School is eager to provide their students all of  
2 these opportunities that they have talked about  
3 today. They want their kids to be successful in  
4 life, and I am confident that that is 100% of that  
5 staff. I have talked to them and they have so much  
6 passion about it and they truly love those children.  
7 I am extremely proud to be a part of a district that  
8 is supportive and encourages the staff of Harrisburg  
9 High School to seek this charter. I am happy that  
10 these people that I have become very close to and  
11 their colleagues are going to have the opportunity to  
12 truly meet the needs of those kids that they love so  
13 much. And I am very happy for not only the kids at  
14 Harrisburg High School who'll see the effects of this  
15 school in the very near future, but I'm also happy  
16 for the students at Harrisburg Middle School and the  
17 students at Harrisburg Elementary, and, I guess  
18 greedily, I'm especially happy for my babies at  
19 Weiner Elementary.

20 So I appreciate you listening to me. I  
21 appreciate your consideration of this application,  
22 and I would love to see it approved. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, Ms. Hogue.

24 Panel Members, do you have questions? Ms.  
25 Pfeffer.

1 MS. PFEFFER: Mr. Craig, I was going to see if I  
2 could go ahead and sign up for the vehicle management  
3 Fast Track Friday --

4 MR. CRAIG: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. PFEFFER: -- and the stress -- my colleagues  
6 would tell you I need to come to the stress and  
7 anxiety management one probably too. And my husband  
8 probably could come to the etiquette class. So  
9 anyway, no, I'm just kidding.

10 DR. GOTCHER: You're on record.

11 MS. PFEFFER: I know. You all have answered a  
12 couple of my questions because one of my notes that  
13 I'd made when studying the application was how do we  
14 make sure that a Fast Track Friday and the advisory  
15 day -- how do we insure that it doesn't turn into a  
16 study hall or a -- you know -- just what are we going  
17 to do with these kids. Now, you know, it works great  
18 for a few weeks but -- so you've answered that. And  
19 also I appreciate, Ms. Hogue, one of my questions had  
20 been, you know, if this is approved for the high  
21 school what are we going to do in building kids up  
22 and creating a systemic plan so that all of a sudden  
23 kids go from a very traditional, more regimented type  
24 place into where there's a lot of flexibility. So it  
25 sounds like the conversations are happening

1 throughout the district. So those were two of my  
2 questions, so I only have a couple of others.

3 In looking at the flexibility for students to be  
4 able to attend ASU-Newport and take classes, will the  
5 students be responsible for the cost of any  
6 concurrent or technical class that they take or is  
7 there funding available for students to do that?

8 MR. CRAIG: There will be a combination of local  
9 funds, local supporters, sponsorships within our  
10 community to try to drive any of that cost down, if  
11 there is any at all.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. And have you been able to  
13 negotiate an agreement with ASU-Newport? I think  
14 there was -- you were waiting on a final agreement?

15 MR. CRAIG: We have an MOU with them. It's  
16 pretty much from a concurrent level. However, we are  
17 still working with them on a weekly basis in --  
18 they're developing their schedule right now for next  
19 fall and what would be aligned for our students and  
20 what would be available for them to take based upon  
21 the interest of our students.

22 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So any student that -- so  
23 within your model here you would carve out time for  
24 students to be able to take advantage of that and  
25 there would be transportation. Correct?

1 MR. CRAIG: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. PFEFFER: And hopefully ways to offset  
3 costs. So you're trying to minimize -- if I'm  
4 understanding, you would be minimizing the fact that  
5 there may be some who could not take advantage  
6 because, obviously, if that's a goal it's difficult  
7 if students can't afford to do that.

8 MR. CRAIG: And we understand that there are  
9 going to be students who would not be able to pay, as  
10 I stated in our PowerPoint early on. But there are  
11 local funds available and we have very -- a large  
12 amount of community supporters who are willing to  
13 chip in and help pay for those costs as well.

14 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. And then for students who  
15 wouldn't be leaving campus you would still maintain a  
16 rigorous curriculum?

17 MR. CRAIG: Absolutely.

18 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. For them. All right. And  
19 then my other question was related to the  
20 professional development, request for a waiver from  
21 professional development. And I understand that in  
22 moving to a model like this you are going to need  
23 some specialized training for faculty and ongoing  
24 work, depending on the interest and needs of  
25 students. But I'm wondering what is it that you're

1 really asking a waiver from because you said you  
2 don't want to change the number of hours that people  
3 receive. But I'm wondering why you don't have the  
4 flexibility now. What is the professional  
5 development that is getting in your way? And if you  
6 could talk to us a little bit about that because I  
7 don't think that's a waiver that we've not done  
8 before.

9 MR. CRAIG: That scenario that I had in mine was  
10 I showed you pictures of the local business welder  
11 who has come into our agri program and actually  
12 helped those students. We have talked with ASU-  
13 Newport about the welding classes that they have.  
14 And we would love for our local business welder to be  
15 able to teach our students because obviously he knows  
16 more about welding than our agri teacher does. Okay.  
17 So to turn those students loose with him, as long as  
18 there are background checks and ethics -- he's up on  
19 all of that -- we would like for some of our local  
20 partners to be able to do some of that. Now we are  
21 prepared to have our agri teacher to do that in a co-  
22 teaching environment so that there wouldn't be a PD  
23 issue.

24 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So I guess in the situation  
25 you described I would think you might need a waiver

1 from licensure for some of your technical classes.  
2 And, therefore, if you had -- that would allow you to  
3 bring in that welder --

4 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

5 MS. PFEFFER: -- in order to teach that course.  
6 The -- I'm not really sure how that would relate to  
7 the professional development, the need for  
8 flexibility there.

9 MR. CRAIG: Maybe I misunderstood as far as him  
10 being required to the PD if he's teaching a class.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: He --

12 MS. PFEFFER: Yeah, I'm sorry.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: He would not have a  
14 license.

15 MS. PFEFFER: Yeah. If the -- if we're talking  
16 about the required professional development for  
17 licensure, someone who does not have a license would  
18 not be required to do those hours. Then, depending  
19 on how that person would be hired and under what type  
20 of contract, that's when you would look at any  
21 requirements there. So I think -- I'm not sure, did  
22 you all have a waiver from -- a request for a waiver  
23 from licensure?

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

25 MS. PFEFFER: They do have that. Okay. So in

1           that respect I don't think a PD waiver would be  
2           necessary.

3           MR. CRAIG:   Okay.

4           MS. PFEFFER:   So I don't know where you are with  
5           other situations where you felt that waiver would be  
6           necessary.

7           MR. CRAIG:   Does a technical certification  
8           require professional development?

9           MS. PFEFFER:   Are you talking about a technical  
10          permit?

11          MR. CRAIG:   Yes, ma'am.

12          MS. PFEFFER:   Let me check to -- let me see if I  
13          can find that out for you.

14          MR. CRAIG:   Okay.

15          MS. PFEFFER:   Okay.

16          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN:   Okay.  We'll come back to  
17          that one.  Dr. Gotcher.

18          DR. GOTCHER:   Yes.  And thank you, Ms. Pfeffer,  
19          for bringing that up because I had some of those  
20          similar concerns and I think we're going to be able  
21          to resolve that.  Mr. Sample, I just want to thank  
22          you -- and, Mr. Craig, you can stay close.  I want to  
23          just thank you for the compliment you paid to our  
24          Commissioner because you recognize it, as a  
25          superintendent, that we at the Department truly

1 support a student-focused learning environment for  
2 our state and want to be the -- you know -- lead the  
3 nation, as our vision says. I appreciate that. And  
4 I also want to just return the compliment in letting  
5 you know that we recognize the innovation that's  
6 happening at Harrisburg. I had the chance to meet  
7 Ms. Hogue the other day. I was privileged to be a  
8 part of the presentation of Schools of Innovation and  
9 had a chance to meet her. And you're right, she's  
10 right, she can't talk less than five minutes because  
11 she loves her school. I'm just messing with you, Ms.  
12 Hogue. She loves her school and loves the kids and  
13 she's invited me to come and visit sometime, which  
14 I'm looking forward to making that opportunity  
15 happen. So I just want to return the compliment back  
16 to you. Thank you for being an innovative  
17 superintendent.

18 Mr. Craig, impressed with the Fast Track Friday;  
19 really intrigued by the community partnerships and  
20 recognizing in your schedule that flex-mod module or  
21 the flexible schedule to allow for flexibility as it  
22 may serve the kids or the opportunity for the  
23 partnerships. So when I look at your mission -- and  
24 as I've said before, I always look at a mission first  
25 and realize that you can learn a lot about a school



1 by their mission and how much time it's taken. So I  
2 do feel, based upon reading that -- as a student that  
3 desires a personalized education, I'm hearing that  
4 your vision or mission would be to craft any style of  
5 curriculum that meets community needs and student  
6 needs, develop those partnerships. And so a student  
7 can basically come to you with any kind of desire as  
8 long as the community is able to support that. Am I  
9 hearing that correctly?

10 MR. CRAIG: Yes, sir.

11 DR. GOTCHER: That's great. So if I was a  
12 student that really wanted to pursue an agricultural  
13 curriculum and wanted to really -- because I know  
14 there's a lot of discussion about the agriculture --  
15 I know the Scott Charter School has an agricultural  
16 model. So a student would have no barriers working  
17 with John Deere or any of your partnerships if they  
18 wanted to pursue an agricultural curriculum for that  
19 personalized education?

20 MR. CRAIG: Absolutely not. And this is our  
21 focus. We want all of our students to pursue their  
22 own dreams. We don't want to design a plan for them.  
23 We want them to have the autonomy to figure it out,  
24 what they want to do, and we at Harrisburg High  
25 School will allow them the opportunity and the

1 support that they need to pursue those dreams.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Excellent. Do you see any  
3 barriers in the community whatsoever for a student  
4 following an agricultural curriculum dream?

5 MR. CRAIG: No, sir, I don't.

6 DR. GOTCHER: Wonderful. All right. Thank you,  
7 Madam Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All you have to do is  
9 drive through Weiner and Harrisburg. That is Weiner  
10 and Harrisburg.

11 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Other questions? Dr.  
13 Saunders.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: On the licensure waivers, are you  
15 looking for those to apply to core classes in  
16 addition to the technical classes? Because in the  
17 explanation it says it's just for the technical  
18 courses.

19 MR. CRAIG: There were a couple of different  
20 requests, one of those being that we would like to  
21 blend or embed oral com into English to give us more  
22 flexibility for students to be able to leave at later  
23 years in high school. The other would be in a  
24 technical course, such as phlebotomy or maybe in an  
25 anatomy or physiology class at a career technical

1 center, to be able to provide them with their high  
2 school biology, for example, in that course.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: So the licensure waiver would be  
4 for all courses district-wide or school-wide?

5 MR. CRAIG: Yes.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: To add on to that, do they  
8 need embedded course approval with that?

9 MS. SMITH: We have an avenue already in place  
10 for embedded courses. You just submit it to  
11 Curriculum Instruction Unit and they take it to the  
12 State Board for approval.

13 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

14 MS. SMITH: So if you have a waiver for  
15 licensure for oral com, then your English teacher --  
16 you just have to show that you're teaching both sets  
17 of standards.

18 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders, let's come  
20 back to that question.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You're asking for a waiver  
23 because some of those teachers teaching those  
24 embedded courses may not be licensed in both areas?

25 MR. CRAIG: I guess what I'm really looking for

1 is if they go to a college campus to pursue a  
2 certificate of proficiency, is there an alignment  
3 that we can use for a student who is in a medical  
4 profession that can serve as a dual credit for a high  
5 school science course?

6 MS. SMITH: Okay. So, yeah, that's your  
7 concurrent credit. What you're doing is you're  
8 taking a current high school course that we have  
9 standards for --

10 MR. CRAIG: I'm sorry.

11 MS. SMITH: That's okay. Did you need to get  
12 that?

13 MR. CRAIG: No.

14 MS. SMITH: And you're aligning it to that  
15 college level course. Okay. And in between your MOU  
16 between the higher ed. institution and your school  
17 you're both verifying that standards that are set  
18 forth are being taught at the high school and the  
19 standards set forth by the higher ed. institution are  
20 being set. But you are aligning and you're verifying  
21 that the high school course is being taught through  
22 that course.

23 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

24 MS. SMITH: Okay. So just like if you wanted to  
25 teach geometry and construction and you wanted to

1 embed something, you have to verify that through that  
2 construction course the concepts in geometry were  
3 taught.

4 MR. CRAIG: Okay. Is that a case-by-case basis?

5 MS. SMITH: That is your district's --

6 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

7 MS. SMITH: -- decision. And that's between the  
8 MOU between you and the higher ed. institution. But  
9 when you sign off on the MOU you're saying, "We are  
10 saying that all of our standards that are set forth  
11 in this human anatomy and physiology course are being  
12 taught in this course at the college level."

13 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I'm going to come back  
15 to the question about the waiver.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: You're pointing at me; is this  
17 still on the licensure waiver?

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yeah. Between the two of  
19 you.

20 MS. PFEFFER: PD answer.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, let's -- before we  
22 get to that one, let's come back to the licensure  
23 waiver. So is a licensure waiver required?

24 DR. SAUNDERS: I think that would be a question  
25 for the district. I'm unclear if it's needed.

1 MS. SMITH: If -- okay. So if it's your teacher  
2 teaching at the high school, you have to meet the  
3 requirements for the college where -- it would be a  
4 teacher with 18-plus hours, and it would be your  
5 licensed teacher teaching a course. If it's the  
6 college teacher teaching the course, then, no, they  
7 don't have to have a high school teaching license in  
8 biology to teach the course; they have to meet the  
9 requirements to be offering that course at the  
10 college. That's with every concurrent class we have.  
11 I mean, am I saying that wrong? Ivy, is that --

12 MS. PFEFFER: You're correct in what you're  
13 saying. I'm going back and looking at what you  
14 requested in your waiver and trying to think what it  
15 is you're wanting and needing to do and then looking  
16 at what you had asked for in the professional  
17 development. So maybe we can just kind of talk  
18 through this. With the licensure waiver, are you  
19 wanting flexibility to be able to hire a teacher in  
20 pretty much any content area who -- or are you really  
21 only looking at it in those career technical places  
22 where you feel like you need the flexibility?

23 MR. CRAIG: Primarily what we are looking at is  
24 the career and technical aspect. Okay. But we would  
25 like the flexibility to choose the best teacher for a

1 certain area if they're not licensed.

2 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So, for example, if you  
3 have an opening in your 10th and 11th grade English,  
4 and if you were wanting to hire a teacher who teaches  
5 at ASU part-time but you're wanting to hire them --  
6 they teach at the college level but do not have a  
7 license -- is that a situation you could foresee  
8 where you would want the flexibility to hire that  
9 person to teach in your -- on your K-12 campus?

10 MR. CRAIG: Yes. Yes, I understand. Yes.

11 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So if you do that, then, to  
12 answer Dr. Saunder's question, you would be asking  
13 for the waiver of licensure generally and you would  
14 just insure that teachers meet AQT requirements.

15 MR. CRAIG: Correct.

16 MS. PFEFFER: So you wouldn't just hire anybody  
17 to go teach a math class --

18 MR. CRAIG: Right.

19 MS. PFEFFER: -- but it would be someone who had  
20 demonstrated the content knowledge --

21 MR. CRAIG: Right.

22 MS. PFEFFER: -- and a bachelor's degree.

23 MR. CRAIG: Yes.

24 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So that would be a little  
25 bit of a change from -- or just clarification on that

1 waiver. Okay.

2 So then on the PD answer, a teacher with a  
3 career-ed. technical permit does follow the same  
4 professional development requirements that a teacher  
5 with a standard license must follow. So on the PD --  
6 and it always helps when you read closely, and I  
7 didn't do that initially -- so your waiver is asking  
8 to apply to the technical areas only. So you would  
9 just be looking at waiving professional development  
10 for teachers with a technical permit?

11 MR. CRAIG: Correct.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Is that correct? Okay. My only  
13 other thought that kind of went through my head then  
14 is -- because what you're really wanting to do --  
15 that's different. Someone with a technical permit is  
16 different from a career professional who might be  
17 teaching, who might just be coming in to teach a  
18 couple of periods of welding. That person wouldn't  
19 have to do the PD anyway but someone hired with a  
20 technical permit, that's essentially the same as  
21 hiring someone with a standard license.

22 MR. CRAIG: We will be providing the necessary  
23 development, professional development for those  
24 teachers hired within the district anyway. So I --  
25 go ahead.



1 MS. PFEFFER: Well, and I guess I just want to  
2 -- no, I'm going to be quiet because I may make it  
3 worse. So, Tripp, do you --

4 MR. WALTER: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. PFEFFER: Is it all right for him --

6 MR. WALTER: Tripp Walter, Staff Attorney,  
7 APSRC. And I believe that the intent of the waiver  
8 language was to indicate in those situations if the  
9 district did get a waiver from PD because these were  
10 either unlicensed individuals who don't require it --  
11 or, more directly, technical permit -- to make sure  
12 that the Panel realized that there was going to be  
13 some kind of training and PD equivalent, if you will,  
14 that will be provided by Harrisburg. They just  
15 weren't going to bring these folks in, bring them in  
16 the classroom and say, "Here you go."

17 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. But if we're talking about  
18 people with a technical permit that, right now, are  
19 required to have the annual professional development  
20 in order to renew that, are you wanting to have a  
21 waiver from that or are you thinking that they're  
22 going to be doing professional development anyway  
23 because they're professionals hired by the district  
24 just like a person with a standard license? Because  
25 really it's more about the ability for them to renew

1           that license. So if we have a waiver from that I  
2           think the big question is going to come in always  
3           too, what does that like look down the road in terms  
4           of renewal.

5           MR. CRAIG: We just wanted the flexibility. If  
6           we have an industry professional who may be teaching  
7           one class at Harrisburg to not be required to do all  
8           the PD that everyone else does.

9           MS. PFEFFER: Okay. If that industry  
10          professional has a technical permit, they would be  
11          needing to do that in order to be able to maintain  
12          their license for the future. So if we waive that  
13          then we're doing them a disservice --

14          MR. CRAIG: Yeah.

15          MS. PFEFFER: -- I'm thinking. And maybe we're  
16          talking about something different than an  
17          individual's professional development; maybe it's  
18          more of a school -- like waiver from the planned PD  
19          at a school level rather than an individual.

20          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: That's an internal  
21          decision.

22          MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

23          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And so at the school, the  
24          school can set the professional development for those  
25          educators --

1 MS. PFEFFER: Right.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- people from the public  
3 that are teaching these technical classes. So you  
4 don't have to make them all come in and sit through a  
5 curriculum alignment course. That's totally --

6 MS. PFEFFER: Definitely not. And --

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- a local decision.

8 MS. PFEFFER: And so I'm thinking if we're  
9 talking about people who are not licensed under a  
10 technical permit or a standard license they don't  
11 have to do that professional development for their  
12 own licensing, and then that would be a local  
13 district determination as to whether or not they do  
14 participate.

15 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Jump in here, Dr. Gotcher.

17 DR. GOTCHER: Yeah. I'm tracking with you, Ms.  
18 Pfeffer. No welder with a technical permit wants to  
19 potentially jeopardize that by not getting the  
20 necessary -- whether it's -- he's going to get that  
21 or she's going to get that provided to them to  
22 maintain that. So I think asking a waiver for that  
23 is not necessary. However, knowing the spirit of  
24 this application, you actually are advocating for  
25 personalized learning for your teachers as well as

1 your students. So that would be an internal decision  
2 without jeopardizing a technical permit of an  
3 individual employee.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: That's correct.

5 DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

6 MR. CRAIG: I hate to even say anything else on  
7 this.

8 DR. GOTCHER: We can wear things out sometimes.

9 MR. CRAIG: Yes.

10 DR. GOTCHER: If you need -- I'm kidding. Go  
11 ahead.

12 MR. CRAIG: So if I'm understanding, that  
13 technical professional will receive those credits  
14 that he or she may need on their own and not be  
15 accountable to the Harrisburg School District  
16 professional development.

17 DR. GOTCHER: Is that what you're hearing, Ms.  
18 Pfeffer? It's not -- doesn't have to be provided --

19 MS. PFEFFER: A non-licensed person -- this  
20 waiver is not necessary for an unlicensed person.

21 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I think the question  
23 that you just posed is, is the district responsible  
24 for providing their professional development.

25 MR. CRAIG: Right.

1                   CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And the -- any educator  
2                   can get professional development outside of the  
3                   district. The district is only responsible for  
4                   insuring that that has been done. And if they have  
5                   to provide it, great, but people go to co-ops, they  
6                   go to conferences, they go many different places to  
7                   get that.

8                   MR. CRAIG: Okay.

9                   MS. PFEFFER: If it is an educator under a  
10                  technical permit or a standard license who's being  
11                  evaluated under TESS, then it is a collaboratively  
12                  developed professional growth plan where half of  
13                  their required hours are very targeted to their  
14                  individual needs. But, again, I think this goes to  
15                  the people that you were wanting that flexibility  
16                  for, I think are people who do not have a technical  
17                  permit from Career Ed. that is on a standard -- or  
18                  that is licensed by the State Board. So I think  
19                  we're talking about people that would not be required  
20                  to do the state professional development type things.  
21                  They're going to have to do their own -- a welder  
22                  would need to maintain credentials, but that's not  
23                  part of education, so --

24                  CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: No concerns? So what's  
25                  the final verdict on PD waiver?

1 MS. DAVIS: I mean, because I think there's  
2 confusion about whether it's a technical permit or a  
3 technical person. And I look at it as if I was going  
4 to come in and teach a business law class, which I'm  
5 not -- I'm just saying if I was, my license still  
6 requires, you know, continuing education outside of  
7 the PD that would be required by the district. And  
8 so that would be like what I assume that it is that  
9 you're looking for; you want people in the industry  
10 to come in. And in that case you would not need a PD  
11 waiver because it's handled under licensure and non-  
12 licensed folks do not need the PD for you. So I just  
13 need you to verbally say that you need to rescind  
14 that waiver.

15 MR. CRAIG: So we would not be responsible as a  
16 school to provide suicide prevention, child  
17 maltreatment to those individuals. Is that correct?

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Only if they are a  
19 licensed educator.

20 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

21 MS. DAVIS: But you can provide it, I'll just  
22 say that.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: But that's your  
24 discretion.

25 MR. CRAIG: Okay. So we would like to rescind

1 the PD waiver.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Do you have any  
3 more?

4 Ms. Smith, wade on in here.

5 MS. SMITH: Well, really kind of my questions  
6 have been answered because they were along the same  
7 lines with the PD, but I just wanted to make a  
8 comment about Mr. Craig, Mr. Sample, and Ms. Hogue.  
9 Whenever schools are successful in this it's because  
10 of leadership. And when Ms. Pfeffer earlier talked  
11 about the Fridays, and, you know, when I first saw  
12 that I thought, whoa, this could go -- this could be  
13 wasted if you didn't have a plan. And so it's  
14 obvious that this district has a plan. It's obvious  
15 in the fact of Weiner Elementary and their success as  
16 a School of Innovation and their recent award as a  
17 Blue Ribbon school. It's evident that there is  
18 leadership within this district at a district level;  
19 it's evident that there was a plan because Ms. Hogue  
20 talking about being a mentor and being a part of this  
21 conversation, that you guys have taken the job of  
22 leadership seriously within your district. And so I  
23 just wanted to commend you on that and say -- but  
24 this is not an easy task. And as you continue to  
25 dive into this to continue to look for areas of,

1 "Whoa, we're weak here; we need to, you know, shore  
2 that up," because flexibility a lot of times gives  
3 you the ability to knock the ball out of the park or  
4 to bunt and I say go for knocking it out of the park.  
5 Okay. Good luck.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions?

7 DR. SAUNDERS: I do.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other than Dr.  
9 Saunders? Dr. Saunders, you're recognized.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. Okay. So looking at the  
11 class size and teaching load, I wasn't clear with  
12 your response. Are you assuming that?

13 MR. CRAIG: Class size and teaching load?

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Right.

15 MR. CRAIG: No.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Because it says you do not  
17 need a waiver from 6-17-812.

18 MS. DAVIS: That's for the -- if they're not  
19 going to pay their teachers for more than 150  
20 students a day. They could still waive the class  
21 size and either -- if they teach more than 150 a day  
22 they can choose to pay or not pay. And I have it  
23 that they do not need that waiver because the  
24 teachers will be compensated, but they still need a  
25 waiver for class size that may increase it over the



1 150.

2 MR. CRAIG: For special education.

3 MS. DAVIS: Right.

4 DR. SAUNDERS: I'm not clear on that.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Try again?

6 MS. DAVIS: You can waive the class sizes --

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah.

8 MS. DAVIS: -- but there's a new law that says  
9 if you teach more than 150 a day you have to  
10 compensate your teachers. Some people will  
11 compensate their teachers for more than 150 a day, so  
12 they don't need a waiver of that section because they  
13 do plan on compensating them. Some have asked for a  
14 waiver of that because they will not be compensating  
15 their teachers for more than that.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. They will not be  
17 compensating. Is that what I'm hearing?

18 MS. DAVIS: No. They will be compensating --

19 DR. SAUNDERS: They will be.

20 MS. DAVIS: -- so they do not need a waiver of  
21 the extra pay for more than 150 students.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. But they do need a waiver  
23 --

24 MS. DAVIS: Of the class sizes.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: -- of the class size and

1 standards, even though 6-17-812 allows you to exceed  
2 the 150?

3 MS. DAVIS: Yes. It just says it's only for  
4 paying if you exceed the 150, is how we have  
5 interpreted those separately. It's if you go over  
6 the 150 a day --

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Right.

8 MS. DAVIS: -- it is -- you have to compensate  
9 them.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: And they're going to do that;  
11 right?

12 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: So they're going to be exercising  
14 6-17-812?

15 MS. DAVIS: Yes. So that's why they're not  
16 asking for that.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?

19 I have a question about -- on the Fridays, have  
20 you reached out to any other school districts that  
21 are attempting a similar model?

22 MR. CRAIG: There's been one school district  
23 that I have not been able to touch base with yet that  
24 I am aware of that actually Ms. Barbara told me  
25 about, White County Central. And we hope to actually

1 go and visit them this year and look at their model  
2 and see how that can benefit us.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I would encourage you  
4 to do that. I'd move it past "hope" to a plan. The  
5 Commissioner and I recently visited the school, spent  
6 the day there, and so it's quite impressive. It may  
7 or may not be exactly your model, but it's certainly  
8 close enough that I think they can give you some  
9 really good guidance. And I would plan to spend the  
10 day.

11 MR. CRAIG: Okay.

12 MS. SMITH: I just want to make one more  
13 comment. On your -- the fastest growing industries  
14 and looking at your certifications and things like  
15 that -- and I'm surprised that Ms. Pfeffer hasn't  
16 jumped on this yet -- you need to do one of those  
17 grow-your-own-teacher education programs where --  
18 when you talked earlier about the percentage of  
19 students that are first-time college graduates,  
20 there's a large portion of first-time college  
21 graduates that go into the field of education. And  
22 so you have a group of people right there that you  
23 can encourage to go into a field that will change  
24 lives. And you have enough passion going on in your  
25 district and innovation and change that people will

1 want to get into the field, so -- and you've got  
2 universities around you who are looking at that. So  
3 I would say -- I want to encourage you to get with  
4 Ms. Pfeffer because she's been working with some  
5 other institutions that are doing some very  
6 innovative things about growing-your-own teachers.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?

8 Ms. Davis, do you have any remaining issues?

9 MS. DAVIS: I do, I do. And I will say I do  
10 like the Fridays, although I thought it was kind of  
11 mean when you pointed out that student loans have to  
12 be repaid. I didn't need that meanness today.

13 Okay. On page 2 of the waivers, under the  
14 licensure section -- and this was my fault for -- I  
15 put it in there but I did not mark that there was a  
16 remaining issue. In order to effectuate the  
17 licensure waivers they will need a waiver of 6-17-  
18 902, which is what defines "teacher." So I just need  
19 them to verbally confirm they want to add that.

20 MR. WALTER: On behalf of the district, I'll  
21 confirm.

22 MS. DAVIS: And then also under the seat time,  
23 in order to effectuate that, they also need a waiver  
24 of 6-16-102, which, you know, has instructional days.  
25 If you're less than six hours it's only like a half-

1 day credit, and I know that they have some  
2 flexibility. So they'll need that waiver, as well.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And that's only for the  
4 high school?

5 MS. DAVIS: Yes.

6 MR. WALTER: And the district would additionally  
7 request at this time a waiver of 6-16-102, please.

8 MS. DAVIS: And then I think that might be it.  
9 Let me double-check. And we pulled PD, so we're  
10 good. That's all I have.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional questions?  
12 I'm ready for a motion.

13 DR. GOTCHER: I'd like to make a motion that we  
14 accept the application as negotiated to approve the  
15 Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory.

16 MS. PFEFFER: I second.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: A motion has been made by  
18 Dr. Gotcher, seconded by Ms. Pfeffer to approve the  
19 Harrisburg College and Career Preparatory School.  
20 Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor?

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed?

23 If you'll wait just a moment, we'll have written  
24 comment and oral comment.

25 And I will just say for the record, if you've

1 not been to Harrisburg you should drive through it;  
2 it's got the best hamburger I've ever had in my  
3 entire life.

4 DR. GOTCHER: It's close to lunchtime.

5 SUPT. SAMPLE: And it's in the school cafeteria.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I've been to the school  
7 numerous times, but we always go out for lunch.

8 SUPT. SAMPLE: Thank you very much. And we will  
9 anxiously await your report. Thank you.

10 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, Madam Chair. I voted for the  
13 approval of the application. I believe this fits  
14 wonderfully in our vision for Arkansas students. And  
15 I'm encouraged by the leadership of this school  
16 district and the opportunity for students.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

18 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. The  
19 model provides a unique opportunity for students to  
20 prepare themselves for post-secondary options or the  
21 workforce. Strong points are the personalized plans  
22 and the advisor block that this model provides. The  
23 district has made the needed partnerships with local  
24 colleges and universities to make the model a  
25 success.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

2 MS. LIWO: I voted for. I think that this is  
3 innovation that will give students new opportunities  
4 and benefit your community at large.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

6 MS. PFEFFER: The leadership, school and  
7 community support and the opportunity it will provide  
8 for the students is very exciting. And I do want to  
9 echo something Ms. Smith said about leadership, and  
10 it's obvious that there's very strong leadership and  
11 that is going to be so crucial to the initial stages  
12 and long-term success. So please reach out and let  
13 us know if you need assistance because we do want to  
14 support you while you all lead this work.

15 MR. CRAIG: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

17 MR. ROGERS: I voted for. I thought it was an  
18 innovative idea to partner with the community to  
19 better serve the students of their district.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted in favor. I thought this  
22 would provide students -- opportunities for students.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

24 MS. SMITH: I voted for. This will provide  
25 additional opportunities for the students of

1 Harrisburg. Strong leadership and innovation is  
2 needed for success with this model. I believe that  
3 the Harrisburg School District exemplified that  
4 today.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Congratulations. You're  
6 on the step forward to having the college and career  
7 preparatory school at Harrisburg. Your next step is  
8 to go before the State Board in November.

9 MR. CRAIG: Thank you very much. And I do want  
10 to invite you all to come out to Harrisburg on a  
11 Friday and take those classes.

12 MS. SMITH: We will. And y'all may have to give  
13 Ms. Hogue some tissues back there; she's got a little  
14 bit of passion going on.

15 MR. CRAIG: Thank you.

16 SUPT. SAMPLE: Thank you very much.

17 DR. GOTCHER: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It is 10-till 12:00. What  
19 time would you -- would you like to return at 12:30?

20 DR. GOTCHER: What time is Harrison expected to  
21 be here, Ms. Boyd?

22 MS. BOYD: They're already here.

23 DR. GOTCHER: They are.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: 12:30?

25 DR. SAUNDERS: 12:30 is fine.



1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. We'll  
2 reconvene at 12:30. Thank you.

3 (LUNCH BREAK: 11:50 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.)

4 A-3: HEARING OF DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
5 APPLICATION: HARRISON HIGH SCHOOL

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, you're  
7 recognized.

8 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Your next  
9 item will be the Harrison School District is seeking  
10 a conversion charter school for their high school.  
11 And presenting on behalf of this application is  
12 Superintendent Melinda Moss.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If everyone speaking on  
14 behalf of Harrison High School and anyone speaking in  
15 opposition will please stand and raise your right  
16 hand. Do you swear or affirm the testimony you're  
17 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth and  
18 nothing but the truth?

19 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Moss, you're  
21 recognized. You'll have 20 minutes.

22 SUPT. MOSS: Thank you. First of all, we  
23 appreciate the Authorizing Panel listening to our  
24 proposal today. And I do have an electronic  
25 presentation to go along -- do I just, Alexandra,

1 need to -- there it is.

2 We'd like to share with you our mission  
3 statement for our program; it is to maximize the  
4 learning of every scholar within a personalized  
5 learning environment that equips each student with  
6 career and college readiness.

7 We present this slide to you to show you a  
8 picture of a public high school when public high  
9 schools were developed in approximately 1892. The  
10 purpose of that was to have better trained foremen  
11 for the assembly line, and the groups that got  
12 together to design the first traditional public high  
13 schools had the idea in mind that the goal would be  
14 they would graduate 50% of the students that entered  
15 the high school program. It was about control; it  
16 was about compliance, regulations; and time was what  
17 was constant in this equation, and learning with a  
18 50% goal toward graduation was what would be variable  
19 in that.

20 Looking ahead to the next slide, what we are  
21 finding is employers are asking us for critical  
22 thinkers. They're asking us for problem-solvers,  
23 students that learn how to learn, and time management  
24 appears to be a big key in that component. There was  
25 a Harvard study that said that if students could

1 master time management you see automatically a 20%  
2 increase in academic performance. We learned at the  
3 Innovation Summit that the six-year graduation rate  
4 through U.S. four-year universities is now at 59%,  
5 and when we look at two-year colleges that drops to  
6 29%. How do you learn perseverance and the ability  
7 to start over if you're all on the same conveyor belt  
8 of learning? And we believe that the charter request  
9 we have today addresses some of these issues.

10 I'd like to introduce our high school principal,  
11 Mr. Bill Keaster. He's going to come up and talk to  
12 you about the journey that we have been on to bring  
13 us to this point today.

14 MR. KEASTER: Thank you, Dr. Moss. Thank you,  
15 Board, for your time this afternoon. My name is Bill  
16 Keaster and I am the principal at Harrison High  
17 School. I'm excited to tell you about our journey  
18 and how we have strengthened and built partnerships  
19 along this process, and during this process the goal  
20 was always about helping students. We have a good  
21 school, but we also see the need to increase the  
22 flexibility to better serve our students.

23 Our journey started 20 months ago, in March of  
24 2015. We started at the first CTE Regional  
25 partnership Council Summit where business and

1 industry came together to discuss challenges that  
2 each of us have. Around the same time the Chamber of  
3 Commerce formed a strategic planning committee and  
4 they began to look at the needs of the workforce. In  
5 the summer of 2015, we toured Siloam Springs  
6 Manufacturing Academy with some of the officials from  
7 Pace Industries. Mr. Stuckey is here with us today.  
8 In the fall of 2015, the district started having what  
9 we call Ed-Box meetings. These Ed-Box meetings were  
10 administrators from central office, from high school,  
11 from junior high, from middle school, even our  
12 elementary principals, and we started to think what  
13 should education look like for the students of  
14 Harrison in the 21st century. Late in the fall of  
15 that year, the Regional Workforce Planning Grant was  
16 awarded to North Arkansas College there in Harrison  
17 and this kind of cemented the foundation of the major  
18 stakeholders. You have the Chamber of Commerce,  
19 industry leaders, employers from Harrison, higher  
20 education, and the Harrison School District, along  
21 with parents and students.

22 From here we had many different site visits. We  
23 toured the Springdale School of Innovation; we went  
24 to Salt Lake City, Utah Early College High School;  
25 then we also went to high schools and technical

1 centers in Wisconsin. And on these different visits  
2 we had a mix of administrators; we had teachers,  
3 administrators, we had a school board member, we had  
4 business leaders, industry partners, as well as  
5 representatives from North Arkansas College, as well  
6 as representatives from the Office of Innovation.  
7 And we really started to come together and look at  
8 our school and our community to see how we could  
9 better serve the students and our stakeholders.

10 Early in 2016, APSRC started educating Harrison  
11 School District on Act 1240 waivers and the  
12 conversion charter process. In March of that year,  
13 our curriculum director met with our CTE teachers to  
14 discuss their different pathways, and she asked them  
15 to develop a five-year vision for each of their  
16 different programs. In April of 2016, our school  
17 board unanimously passed a resolution supporting our  
18 HALO pilot program, which is what we asked the State  
19 Board for our 1240 waivers, and they also approved  
20 for us to submit these Act 1240 waivers to the State  
21 Board. In May, the State Board granted the Act 1240  
22 waivers to Harrison, and we said at that time that we  
23 would roll these waivers into a conversion charter  
24 application which we know that allows for more  
25 oversight and accountability.

1           Since then, we have started training some of our  
2 teachers alongside of industry people on the MSSC  
3 certification standards. At our last CTE advisory  
4 council in May of this year, the MSSC certification,  
5 the HALO pilot program, the workforce implementation  
6 grant were all discussed with area businesses, with  
7 business advisors, and with all of the CTE teachers.

8           Back in the summer we had numerous public  
9 meetings for parents and students and we introduced  
10 our HALO program. We spoke at several civic clubs  
11 and organizations. We had articles in the newspaper  
12 and social media outlets, and we still continued to  
13 get phone calls about our program. We trained our  
14 teachers in personalized learning and we even took a  
15 team of teachers to the innovation conference in  
16 Farmington. Of course, in August, we implemented our  
17 HALO pilot program and it is going very successful.  
18 In September, Harrison brought a team of  
19 administrators and teachers to the Office of  
20 Innovation Summit where Harrison is in the first  
21 cohort group.

22           Meeting with all the different stakeholders,  
23 parents, students, industry, building a consensus has  
24 been a very long process -- like I said, 20 months --  
25 but it has been a very rewarding process and one that

1 will be beneficial to Harrison High School students  
2 when our charter conversion is approved, hopefully.

3 At this time I'm going to turn the presentation  
4 over to my assistant principal, Mr. Jay Parker, and  
5 he's going to talk a little more about the specifics.

6 MR. PARKER: Thank you for allowing us to come  
7 here today and speak. So, why change? Traditional  
8 education right now is a one-size-fits-all model and,  
9 as Dr. Moss had that picture of the 1892 school  
10 classroom, that's kind of where we're at. So we're  
11 looking to change and provide more flexibility to  
12 students so they can personalize their own  
13 educational needs. Basically, you can't fit a square  
14 peg into a round hole, so we're trying to make a way  
15 for students to personalize.

16 Our world is filled with more options now than  
17 ever before. Used to, you know, you graduate high  
18 school and you go straight to the workforce or you go  
19 straight to college. Now kids can start doing things  
20 more in high school and expedite their track. They  
21 can go through internships, industry technical  
22 certifications, workforce readiness, and also pursue  
23 a two- or four-year graduate course in college. We  
24 feel like given the choices to students for their  
25 individual educational paths will open more doors for

1 opportunity that will lead them to success.

2 HALO is an educational model we are living right  
3 now, currently, under the Act 1240 waivers. It  
4 stands for Harrison Advanced Learning Opportunities.  
5 It was made available to all the students in Harrison  
6 High School this year and we had 67 willing to commit  
7 to this new model. It's a personalized blended  
8 learning environment with a curriculum available  
9 online 24/7. Teachers still teach lessons within the  
10 classrooms and students can go to those lessons or  
11 they can locate areas that we have available for them  
12 to work on their curriculum online. They have the  
13 flexibility to control their time, place, pace, and  
14 path of education. This eliminates the boredom and  
15 stress that some students bear. Students now can  
16 attend classes they have difficulty in learning, they  
17 can attend them more often, and those classes that  
18 are easier for them, attend them less. So we're  
19 giving students the choice basically as time serving  
20 kids instead of kids serving time.

21 Mentoring -- the flexibility in this program has  
22 allowed us to mentor these students. Right now, at  
23 six weeks of the school year we'd mentored students  
24 for over 78 hours, the teachers within this model, as  
25 well as my self. Kids don't know how much you know



1           -- or don't care how much you know until they know  
2           how much you care, and these relationships that  
3           support students with their setting learning goals  
4           has assisted them with their flexibility and meeting  
5           these goals. Mentor documents are shared with the  
6           parents weekly and they can comment on those  
7           documents as well and give us feedback as the staff.  
8           The traditional model in the six weeks had only had  
9           one parent-teacher conference, so we are investing  
10          more time into our kids in this mentoring aspect to  
11          help them reach their goals.

12                 We are embedding soft skills within this model.  
13           We're having kids show up and they're prepared;  
14           they're at the right place, the right time; check in  
15           and out of classrooms. This is an image here of a  
16           card that basically all the kids wear on a lanyard  
17           with a QR code. And they will scan in on a Kindle  
18           device that's mounted in the classroom and it tracks  
19           how much time they spend in each classroom, as well  
20           as how much time they're spending in their study  
21           sessions. This information is also emailed to the  
22           parent as soon as the student checks into a classroom  
23           or checks out so the parent gets verification of how  
24           much times a student is actually spending within each  
25           individual subject area.

1           We have raised the bar in our HALO model this  
2           year. We have a 70% minimum passing requirement. No  
3           F's are given. If a student doesn't meet the 70%  
4           threshold, they're given an Incomplete until they do.  
5           That goes back to that giving students more time if  
6           they need it or they can accelerate their learning if  
7           they also choose to. At the six-week progress report  
8           time this year we had 30% in the traditional model  
9           that had F's; only 7% in the HALO program had F's, if  
10          we were to give them an F. So by changing that 1892  
11          model that Dr. Moss mentioned and giving the students  
12          choices, they're making better grades because they  
13          have ownership in their own educational goals.

14                 Some of the feedback I've received from parents  
15                 on this model are highlighted up there; you can read  
16                 those on your own. I'll also give you a quote from a  
17                 HALO student whose father is actually a plant manager  
18                 at Wabash, one of our local industries that we're  
19                 partnering with. He commented to me that he liked  
20                 the fact that their child was learning the  
21                 educational content and time management on the  
22                 school's time instead of his dime, referencing the  
23                 college tuition that he might have to -- that he'd be  
24                 facing soon. I thought that was pretty catchy and  
25                 what we're after.

1           So as you can see what we're trying to do here,  
2 HALO is just one gear or cog that would spin off the  
3 Harrison conversion charter, just one choice that  
4 students could have an option to do. You can see all  
5 the other choices that students can opt into. They  
6 can choose to stay right in the traditional  
7 coursework, as well as go into internships, HALO,  
8 industrial certifications, concurrent credit. So  
9 we're just looking to spin-off lots more options for  
10 kids and give them more choices.

11           The conversion charter would give us, the whole  
12 school, all the students access and we're just  
13 wanting to break down barriers to capitalize and  
14 support individual student strengths and to assist  
15 them to a path of success.

16           SUPT. MOSS: You might ask yourself why are we  
17 doing this and I would argue that we're doing this  
18 for this kid. This young man as a 7th grader under  
19 instruction from one of our IT professionals in our  
20 school -- and he was doing this through the EAST  
21 class, and that's part of the waivers that you see is  
22 licensure for certain industry certification areas --  
23 Austin Bright, one of our IT technicians, worked with  
24 him and a group of other kids. He's a 7th grader  
25 with A+ computer CompTIA certification. We were told

1           that he's the youngest in the world to ever get that  
2           certification. That's a professional certification.  
3           He's working on our computers for us as a helper when  
4           we need him. He's an 8th grader right now; he's  
5           still studying. What are we going to do with him  
6           next year as a 9th grader if we don't have these  
7           opportunities in place? Because we have way under-  
8           estimated what our kids are capable of doing if  
9           they're able to channel their interests and energies  
10          and spend time where they're successful and then also  
11          where they need that help. This gives us the  
12          flexibility in this model to be able to incorporate  
13          these things.

14                 I know that Mr. Keaster talked about our  
15          journey. We did have a workforce planning grant that  
16          North Arkansas College in our community was able to  
17          get, and then through that synergy of meeting  
18          together with industry people -- and we're going to  
19          hear from Ken Stuckey here in a moment with Pace  
20          Industries -- but Wabash Industries, our local  
21          hospital, our Chamber of Commerce -- we've worked so  
22          hard together to figure out what's a good fit for  
23          Harrison. And when we presented before the State  
24          Board I know that Commissioner Key came up to us  
25          afterwards; he said, "You're the first district that

1 has really tied your waiver requests to workforce  
2 development and how badly that is needed in our  
3 state." And I believe that that process actually was  
4 instrumental in helping our North Arkansas College  
5 get the workforce development grant, which has now  
6 pumped \$1,000,000 into our community to address some  
7 of the workforce needs and employment needs of our  
8 citizens.

9 I do have some slides that just highlight the  
10 waiver requests again. You have those in front of  
11 you but I do not want to take time away from Mr. Ken  
12 Stuckey. He is the director of talent acquisition  
13 and development at Pace Industries. He is one of our  
14 major employers in Harrison, and I believe he's going  
15 to talk to you about the successes we've already seen  
16 and things that are still to come. So, Mr. Stuckey,  
17 I'll ask you to come forward.

18 MR. STUCKEY: Thank you, Dr. Moss. And thank  
19 you, Board, for hearing us today. I come before you  
20 as someone who has enjoyed the leadership that we  
21 have seen from Harrison. Unlike some other companies  
22 that we have in different parts of the U.S. where we  
23 have not seen that kind of leadership yet, we're  
24 taking Harrison as a model to our locations and --  
25 Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and Minneapolis/St.

1 Paul area and Wisconsin, which actually has a pretty  
2 robust career tech ed. area.

3 Pace Industries is the nation's largest custom  
4 aluminum die-caster. That's what we do. We make a  
5 lot of automobile parts. We do a lot of different  
6 things for Pace, with Pace, or companies around the  
7 world. We have around 4,000 employees. My role is  
8 developing workforce pipelines for our companies. We  
9 have an aging workforce in industry, not just Pace,  
10 all over the country. And because of the talent  
11 that's leaving Pace Industries in Harrison we have to  
12 backfill with talented young people. We chose to  
13 reach out in that meeting that Bill was talking  
14 about, a couple of years ago, when we began this  
15 journey, this partnership, and with the school,  
16 Harrison schools. And the reason that Pace did that  
17 is because our base of employment of people available  
18 to go to work in north Arkansas is a little thin.  
19 It's not a metropolitan area, like a Kansas City or a  
20 St. Louis, so we have to reach out to a lot of rural  
21 school districts. Harrison is key to us because of  
22 their relationship, obviously in proximity but also  
23 to North Ark. College, the concurrent credit  
24 opportunities, the continued learning. Our interest  
25 at North Ark. would be more of an engineering track

1 and automation track. So Harrison schools is a  
2 fantastic place for us to begin to help kids  
3 understand the opportunities in manufacturing and the  
4 careers. So because of that we have -- still have a  
5 lot of competition in that area. Ranger Boats up  
6 there employs about 900 people in Flippin; Baxter  
7 Labs around 1100 in Mountain Home. So there's some  
8 big employers and we're vying for the same workforce;  
9 that has to be shared. So whatever we can do to help  
10 prepare students at the high school level -- and  
11 we're even reaching down into junior high. Dr. Moss,  
12 I need the resume of this young man that she just  
13 told you about. That is where it's getting in  
14 industry. It's like watching the SEC football  
15 coaches recruit now in the 8th and 9th grade level.  
16 I mean, you guys that follow football and the SEC  
17 know how competitive that is. It is not that much  
18 different in manufacturing for talented kids and  
19 we're seeking out those that want to just keep an  
20 open mind to manufacturing. So we have a lot of  
21 barriers to that. Harrison though has helped us  
22 tremendously in breaking those barriers down.

23 So because of this challenge, because of our  
24 partnership with Harrison now, we are introducing a  
25 course this spring called the MSSC CPT course. MSSC

1 stands for the Manufacturing Skills Standards  
2 Council. This is a national certification too. This  
3 is not just a local thing; this is a national  
4 certification. And what it does, it prepares kids  
5 with a great overview of manufacturing in general.  
6 This could be -- this person will be as valuable at  
7 Wabash in Harrison, Claridge in Harrison, Pace, a  
8 number of industries around that area. Obviously,  
9 that will be -- those kids can go outside of our area  
10 with this certification as well. So that's a big  
11 thing.

12 There's five success factors for educational  
13 partnerships, "success" as defined in the UCLA  
14 Community College Review. And I looked at those and  
15 I thought we need every one of those. Number one is  
16 to recognize a local regional economic development  
17 challenge that calls for collaborative attention. We  
18 definitely have that. So we have got the workforce,  
19 the new -- the younger kids coming into our workforce  
20 to replace our aging workforce. More technical jobs  
21 are beginning in manufacturing today than at any time  
22 in our history. Companies are having to produce  
23 lean; they have got to produce more with less. Our  
24 customers want the products priced for less. And so  
25 as a result, we are having to do everything we can do



1 to automate. These are great jobs, automation  
2 positions, technical maintenance, CMM programming,  
3 CNC work. This is a great opportunity for young  
4 people to step in to good salaries to start with but  
5 then they grow exponentially with some experience.

6 Number two is establish a shared mission and  
7 goals. We're giving graduates in Harrison a reason  
8 to stay in that area and start a good career, rather  
9 than moving off to another region to work.

10 Number three is to insure that value is achieved  
11 for all partners, including students. Obviously,  
12 Pace is going to benefit but these students are going  
13 to have opportunities that they never dreamed of by  
14 being prepared to go into the workforce.

15 Number four is to have strong executive  
16 leadership from both the high school, college, and  
17 industry participants. I'm here representing several  
18 employers today in Harrison that all understand the  
19 need for us to partner with the school system there  
20 in order to grow our workforce.

21 And number five is to develop a governance and  
22 accountability mechanism. You know, we can have all  
23 of the great programs in the world but unless we  
24 measure it to know what the outcome is then it could  
25 be a total waste of time. And our company is not

1 interested in wasting time or money. So for that  
2 reason we want to track these students wherever they  
3 go from Harrison, whether it's to us, to another  
4 company, but really look at what happens when a child  
5 goes into a career tech path and they go on to a two-  
6 year school or they go on to a university for an  
7 engineering degree, what happens to those kids. And  
8 we will be watching to see what happens when we go  
9 into the high school, which is -- by the way, the  
10 first pilot of MSSC in Arkansas will be in Harrison  
11 and we hope it becomes a statewide program. But  
12 we're going to track these positions and watch the  
13 difference in pay and the difference in positions  
14 that a kid who comes out of high school is prepared  
15 to do, whether that's going on into the workforce or  
16 going on to college, be it a two-year or a four-year.

17 So as a result of that, we're putting our money  
18 where our mouth is as well. We've introduced the  
19 Pace scholars program. We'll be giving 20 -- this  
20 past year we started it -- we are giving 20 \$1,000  
21 scholarships to children that are in our region.  
22 Many of those will come from Harrison High School.  
23 That \$1,000 is to be used towards an engineering  
24 technology degree at North Ark. As they complete and  
25 they get better and stay in school, they have an

1 opportunity to earn internships, to have a second  
2 year of school reimbursed as far as cost goes up to  
3 \$1,000. And so we think and hope other industries  
4 jump on the bandwagon with high schools around  
5 Arkansas. It will vastly increase the companies  
6 themselves workforce, but also give the kids a  
7 tremendous up-side to a good career. And, of course,  
8 our interest is manufacturing but we could be talking  
9 about healthcare, logistics, and all those other  
10 segments of our economy.

11 Thank you again for allowing us to speak to you  
12 today. We're really proud of our school system and  
13 hope that you'll give it great consideration.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you so much. I'll  
15 just ask a quick question of you while you're  
16 standing there.

17 MR. STUCKEY: Sure.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: What is your relationship  
19 with Flexsteel?

20 MR. STUCKEY: Well, we have no --

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I see all the trucks.

22 MR. STUCKEY: Yeah. Flexsteel is across the  
23 street from us, and I believe they -- I believe they  
24 make wire -- what is Flexsteel's product line, do  
25 y'all know?

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Furniture.

2 MR. STUCKEY: Furniture. Okay. So we don't --  
3 we're not in the furniture business. We used to be  
4 associated with Leggett and Platt. We do not have --  
5 we're not owned by Leggett anymore. That was a  
6 public company. We're a private company, so we don't  
7 have a business relationship. But I know they are  
8 excited about this program; I do know that.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I just wondered when I  
10 drive through town --

11 MR. STUCKEY: Yeah.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- I see your buildings  
13 and I didn't know --

14 MR. STUCKEY: Yeah. Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- if all of you were  
16 together or if they were two separate industries.

17 MR. STUCKEY: We are not. But we're glad  
18 Flexsteel is in town for sure.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Yes.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Mr. Stuckey, I just want to  
21 personally say thank you for being here and  
22 supporting the Harrison school and the students of  
23 that community. It just -- it says a lot about the  
24 partnership that's begun and hopefully will continue.  
25 I just appreciate you being here.

1 MR. STUCKEY: I appreciate that. We're thrilled  
2 to be part of it. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis, was there  
4 anyone to speak in opposition or do we have any  
5 public comment?

6 MS. DAVIS: No.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Moss, you have five  
8 additional minutes for closure.

9 SUPT. MOSS: I think what I'd like to say in  
10 closure is just that you saw some of our successes  
11 we're already experiencing through the HALO model.  
12 This charter application is not just about HALO, but  
13 that is a component of the things that we're asking  
14 for today. Frankly, I don't know how, if these are  
15 not granted today, we go backwards. Our students  
16 have had a taste of this, some of our teachers have  
17 had a taste of this, and so far it's successful and  
18 they're liking that. So I would just humbly request  
19 of this group that you allow us to continue this  
20 momentum and go on this journey with us and watch the  
21 outcomes. And hopefully we can learn and build  
22 education for all students through this flexible  
23 model. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Moss.  
25 Questions from the Panel? I was about to say hearing

1 one --

2 DR. GOTCHER: Almost.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

4 DR. GOTCHER: No. I just want to just speak to  
5 Dr. Moss for a moment. As I've said in the other  
6 applications, I always go straight to the mission,  
7 and I love the phrase "maximize the learning of every  
8 scholar with personalized learning." As a  
9 superintendent, you know very well the barriers that  
10 face our families and face our children in seeing  
11 that in your office and the community and so-forth.  
12 Thinking of the question you asked earlier, why  
13 change -- and I thought you did a brilliant job of  
14 explaining the rationale behind it -- just in your  
15 mind, in your gut, what are the barriers that you  
16 still see just for you and your community? Maybe  
17 that's not on the page here. I just want to hear  
18 from your heart. What is still the barriers that  
19 concern you in moving forward?

20 SUPT. MOSS: I'd have to ponder that for a  
21 moment because we've been so focused on trying to  
22 remove some of those barriers. I think that --

23 DR. GOTCHER: Well, maybe just talk about that.  
24 Talk about that.

25 SUPT. MOSS: Well, I think the benefit and the

1 passion that I see in this is that we still have  
2 these kids with us and we have got a segment that is  
3 growing within our community and I think across our  
4 state where we have students that do not have a model  
5 of maybe family members that work or haven't really  
6 had this vision presented to them maybe like our  
7 generation did. And I'm thinking while we still have  
8 them in high school and before they graduate from our  
9 walls this is the time to catch them. And I think  
10 that if we have these strong partnerships, not only  
11 with our community college but with our employers and  
12 through industry certifications, we can give them a  
13 vision of the world of work and a vision of self-  
14 actualizing into "you can do this and you do have  
15 opportunity." And when a student already has  
16 concurrent credit and industry certifications before  
17 they even graduate high school then they're going to  
18 be more inclined to want to continue that. I know  
19 that Pace has already said in a memorandum that  
20 they're going to guarantee these students that have  
21 MSSC certification an interview. If they're hired,  
22 they're going to start at a dollar more per hour than  
23 they would -- someone just off the street. And it's  
24 creating that workplace ready perseverance and time  
25 management that I think will continue to keep kids

1           successful once they leave the confines of the high  
2           school.

3           DR. GOTCHER: Great. Thank you. One follow-up,  
4           Madam?

5           CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and down.)

6           DR. GOTCHER: Talk about the partnerships, as  
7           far as the ongoing. Maybe you said it and forgive me  
8           if it's in the documents. Is there a set every  
9           month, every nine weeks, an opportunity where ongoing  
10          partnership with community and business folks is  
11          going forward to get that relevant in-time feedback  
12          as you consider this change?

13          SUPT. MOSS: Because of the workforce  
14          development grant that was given to our community  
15          through North Arkansas College, we meet regularly.

16          DR. GOTCHER: Okay.

17          SUPT. MOSS: Monthly we have planning meetings.  
18          We each kind of have a segment that we bring and  
19          report out to one another and look to the next thing.  
20          An example of that would be the planning that has  
21          gone into our career summit which is taking place  
22          October 26th, where we are bringing in business and  
23          industry from not just Boone County but some of our  
24          surrounding regional area, and then we have teachers  
25          and students going to that. We have externships that



1 our teachers have participated in this summer.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Great.

3 SUPT. MOSS: And we're also talking -- Boone  
4 County Economic Development is very interested in  
5 this. They're meeting with the Chamber of Commerce  
6 getting ready to go before the Department of Labor to  
7 look at internship -- maybe a softening of some of  
8 those rules so that our high school 16 year olds, 17  
9 year olds can have meaningful engagement in the  
10 manufacturing setting. That's been born out of this.  
11 So there's a lot of ongoing work.

12 DR. GOTCHER: That is great. Thank you, Dr.  
13 Moss.

14 SUPT. MOSS: Yes, sir.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

16 MS. PFEFFER: Good afternoon. I'm looking at  
17 the -- in the application at the different options  
18 students have to graduate with the traditional type  
19 diploma or a high school diploma that -- like a  
20 value-added diploma with some type of technical  
21 proficiency or technical certificate or then the  
22 concurrent credit with associates degrees. And so  
23 for students who desire to complete high school with  
24 more than just the diploma what are the possibilities  
25 of -- and I know within your concurrent you talked a

1 little bit about the concurrent credit rate at North  
2 Arkansas College but also a free option at Early  
3 College High School with Arkansas Tech. So what kind  
4 of financial constraints might there be for either  
5 option two or three, and how are you all going to  
6 work with students and what will that look like so we  
7 can be sure students aren't prevented from taking  
8 advantage of those?

9 SUPT. MOSS: Right. I think because of the free  
10 option through Arkansas Tech but also the North  
11 Arkansas reduction in cost, those are -- those can be  
12 addressed. We've also got Harrison School  
13 Foundation; we have what Mr. Stuckey mentioned with  
14 our industry partners. We're going to scrape and  
15 grab funds wherever we can to make sure that that's  
16 not a barrier. We also provide transportation to  
17 those opportunities.

18 MS. PFEFFER: So within your foundation funding  
19 you have some of that that can be specifically  
20 earmarked for the types of concurrent, not  
21 necessarily after they graduate high school. So is  
22 that a special endeavor that you all started or has  
23 that been in place for awhile?

24 SUPT. MOSS: We've had the Harrison School  
25 Foundation 501(c)(3) in place for years. And it's

1 just another pool within a long list of opportunities  
2 that we're hoping to be able to access. But we do  
3 not want finance to be a barrier.

4 MS. PFEFFER: Would there be -- would it be  
5 available for all students or would there be a  
6 process that they would apply if there was a  
7 financial need? Is that something you've encountered  
8 just with the pilot you've had?

9 SUPT. MOSS: Well, we've encountered that even  
10 before this came about through -- some of our  
11 students qualify under McKinney-Vento and we try to  
12 work with students that may be in the free and  
13 reduced lunch pool or whatever to try to help them  
14 pay for these courses.

15 Oh. And Mr. Keaster just reminded me, with the  
16 College-Bound Now program that I believe we  
17 referenced in our application, we signed a Memo of  
18 Understanding last year with North Arkansas College.  
19 They actually come on our campus and they have every  
20 high school student complete the FAFSA.

21 MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

22 SUPT. MOSS: And through PEL some of these  
23 students can pay for concurrent credit before they  
24 graduate high school as well.

25 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. And thank you for that.

1 And I know just from visiting with folks in that area  
2 there is a very strong partnership with the local  
3 college there. So I know it's going to provide  
4 opportunities for students. I just -- and I know  
5 that you all will do everything you can, but I know  
6 that that can -- that does just have to be something  
7 because as this grows there will be more cost  
8 associated with that, so just being mindful of having  
9 a plan to address it. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

11 MS. SMITH: Okay. You were referring to school  
12 of innovation cohort one. Are y'all trying to be a  
13 school of innovation too?

14 SUPT. MOSS: No, but they were so impressed  
15 with our program. And through the workforce planning  
16 grant we talked a lot with Denise Airola.

17 MS. SMITH: Okay.

18 SUPT. MOSS: And so we went with them to the  
19 Salt Lake City Early College High School to see that.  
20 And they just invited us to be part of that, even  
21 though we're not a school of innovation.

22 MS. SMITH: Okay. That will be a great process  
23 for you as you're going through.

24 SUPT. MOSS: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Stuckey talked about

1 tracking the students after they leave Harrison High  
2 School. Talk to us about your plan for following up  
3 with students.

4 SUPT. MOSS: We do a follow-up now through our  
5 counselor's office, but through this process what we  
6 have realized is that we have not done good enough.  
7 Because we usually look at right after they leave us  
8 and did they go to college, but what we have not  
9 tracked, I do not think, well enough is, okay,  
10 they've gone off to college and we've patted  
11 ourselves on the back that we've got all these kids  
12 going to post-secondary education, but how many of  
13 those are actually completing that. And that's what  
14 we need to do a better job of.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So what's your plan of  
16 action?

17 SUPT. MOSS: I don't know that I can speak to  
18 that. Do you guys know?

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It's goal four in our  
20 strategic plan, so I'm really interested.

21 SUPT. MOSS: The logistics of that, just to be  
22 more aggressive about it and I think trying to make  
23 sure that as those kids move and do other things that  
24 we're keeping touch with them. But at this point  
25 that is something that we need to develop.

1 MR. STUCKEY: Can I add real quick?

2 SUPT. MOSS: Please do.

3 MR. STUCKEY: I'm going to take you off the  
4 hook.

5 SUPT. MOSS: Okay.

6 MR. STUCKEY: From an industry perspective we  
7 want to know where students go after high school  
8 because we want to stay in touch with them,  
9 especially those that may go with the university and  
10 enter engineering and then drop out; what happens to  
11 engineering students at four-year colleges when they  
12 quit. Those are people that would be prime  
13 manufacturing engineers that we could help them  
14 continue their education. So industry needs to do a  
15 much better job of tracking graduates from high  
16 school and we're asking for that but because of the  
17 legal aspects of that, not being able to stay in  
18 touch with a minor, it gets a little tricky. So I  
19 can tell you that as talent acquisition people around  
20 the country we are looking for ways to track  
21 graduates and where they go and how can we stay in  
22 touch with them and keep them as what we call a warm  
23 market for our own people -- for our own companies,  
24 rather.

25 DR. GOTCHER: And if I can encourage you just a

1 little bit, Dr. Moss, Mr. Stuckey, I've heard from  
2 the Fountain Lake superintendent they use a program  
3 called LifeTrack. So we learned that at one of our  
4 listening tours. David Wooley at Alma -- I hate to  
5 use the word track -- engages in following their  
6 students' post-secondary engagement one, three and  
7 five years. And then I also talked to Rick Neal who  
8 has the wonderful conversion or school of innovation  
9 PRMBA and I think through either Perkins funds or  
10 something -- I think through Workforce Ed. there's a  
11 mechanism for engaging in these students and  
12 following them. So LifeTrack, David Wooley, which  
13 you know, and then, of course, Rick Neal at Pea  
14 Ridge. There are some mechanisms out there because  
15 that's something that we're asking, and there are  
16 some superintendents that are in school districts  
17 already doing that. So it's out there, so I just  
18 want to encourage you with that. So we can hook up  
19 with that later if you want.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I just want to bring to  
21 your attention too that in the Department's strategic  
22 plan goal four is that we're looking at data post-  
23 graduation --

24 DR. GOTCHER: College, career and --

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- because we want to

1 know. You know, are we really turning out the types  
2 of students that can complete college and can enter  
3 in careers and are engaging in their community. So  
4 we want to know too.

5 MR. STUCKEY: That's good.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And we're looking -- we're  
7 searching through those same hurdles that you  
8 described. Thank you.

9 Any other questions or comments?

10 Then I'll entertain a motion.

11 MS. DAVIS: Wait, wait.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Oh, sorry. Sorry.

13 DR. GOTCHER: Motion to bring Ms. Davis up.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes, a motion to bring Ms.  
15 Davis up. Thank you, Ms. Davis.

16 MS. DAVIS: Sorry. I do have --

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You've used all your issue  
18 cards earlier in the day.

19 MS. DAVIS: Sorry. Okay. And these hopefully  
20 should be fairly easy ones. On their waivers, under  
21 the licensure, in order to effectuate the waiver for  
22 licensure they also need a waiver of 6-17-902. So  
23 I'll need them to verbally confirm they'd like to add  
24 that.

25 SUPT. MOSS: Yes.



1 MS. DAVIS: And then on the waiver of the  
2 attendance that they have about -- you know -- during  
3 a snow day and how they can log in digitally, I'm not  
4 sure that they need a waiver of the entire section.  
5 I know that this was originally on it but after  
6 looking at it more I think they only need the (a)(2)  
7 on the physical presence. I'm not sure; y'all have  
8 to let me know if there's a reason they need the  
9 whole thing or if they just need that subsection for  
10 (a)(2) about the teacher monitoring the physical  
11 presence of the student.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I wondered about that  
13 one too. Is that the appropriate waiver or should  
14 that have been a calendar waiver?

15 MS. DAVIS: I don't think -- I mean, they have  
16 waivers as like -- they've already requested of like  
17 the 6-hour and 30-hour week kind of thing. But the  
18 way that some of the charter schools have done it is  
19 they have a waiver of this (a)(2) for when they can  
20 offer virtual. And this is something that's being  
21 done in some of the other schools as well. For, you  
22 know, rural schools or schools that have, you know,  
23 rough terrain that makes it even harder when there's  
24 a snow day.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: The reason I was asking

1 about the calendar waiver is because the students  
2 might now officially be following the exact same  
3 calendar as the rest of the students.

4 MS. DAVIS: Well --

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Previously we talked about  
6 that with the other school district because they may  
7 have a student that started early or something like  
8 this and potentially these students could complete  
9 early.

10 MS. DAVIS: Well, I don't think that the way  
11 that they put in here for the reason for their waiver  
12 -- that the digital learning opportunities are for  
13 those days to when it's an exceptional or emergency  
14 circumstance that the school has to be closed, rather  
15 than just alternating -- I mean, alter -- you know,  
16 altering the calendar. They just need it so that way  
17 they don't have to add on and go to school until mid-  
18 June. That's how I'm understanding it, but I could  
19 be misunderstanding it and the applicant can let us  
20 know that.

21 SUPT. MOSS: No. We're fine to limit it to the  
22 (a) (2).

23 MS. DAVIS: The physical --

24 SUPT. MOSS: Yes.

25 MS. DAVIS: Okay. And so it is just for those

1 days in which like the school is closed because it's  
2 snowing?

3 SUPT. MOSS: Yes. It's just inclement weather  
4 and -- or maybe even a flu epidemic, but whatever  
5 would cause us to traditionally close. And we have  
6 limited that to two per year.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Would that apply to all of  
8 the students in the high school?

9 SUPT. MOSS: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So potentially it could  
11 apply to your high school but would not apply to your  
12 elementary and junior high?

13 SUPT. MOSS: We effectuated that waiver through  
14 1240 for the entire district.

15 MS. DAVIS: Okay.

16 SUPT. MOSS: And then we're rolling it into the  
17 conversion charter as well.

18 MS. DAVIS: And so that -- so that one would  
19 just be limited to 6-18-213(a)(2). And --

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Moss, I was clarifying  
21 between the school and the district.

22 SUPT. MOSS: Yes. We've only referenced the  
23 high school in our conversion charter application.  
24 We do have it under 1240 for the district.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

1 MS. DAVIS: That was all. Don't look so  
2 surprised.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Now if there are no other  
4 comments or questions I'll accept a motion.

5 DR. GOTCHER: I don't always want to be first,  
6 but I would like to make a motion that we accept the  
7 applicant [sic] as negotiated for approval.

8 MS. SMITH: So moved.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Motion has been made by  
10 Dr. Gotcher, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the  
11 application for the Harrison High School. Any  
12 discussion?

13 Hearing none, all those in favor?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed?

16 SUPT. MOSS: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: IF you'll wait just a  
18 moment, we'll provide their remarks.

19 Dr. Moss, I don't -- I was looking through your  
20 application and I saw that Rance King is your high  
21 school counselor.

22 SUPT. MOSS: Yes, ma'am.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: He and I served on the  
24 English Language Arts Standards Framework Committee.  
25 I believe it was the year that we wrote standards per

1 grade level, so --

2 SUPT. MOSS: Well, he's an excellent, excellent  
3 asset to our district. And the only sad thing about  
4 him becoming a high school counselor was that he was  
5 no longer our English teacher, because he's just  
6 wonderful in both realms.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Well, it just -- it speaks  
8 to the partnership with the Department from many  
9 years ago.

10 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, Madam Chair. I voted for the  
13 approval of the application. I feel the applicant  
14 was well prepared and has already demonstrated the  
15 strong partnership with community and business.  
16 Further, I'm encouraged by the personalized learning  
17 approach for all scholars.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

19 MR. LESTER: I voted for the amendment. The  
20 model provides a unique opportunity for students to  
21 prepare themselves for post-secondary options or the  
22 workforce. The district has made strong  
23 partnerships, and I stress that because it was  
24 evident, with local business and local college and  
25 universities to make the model a success. I have no

1 concerns.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

3 MS. LIWO: I voted for. Again, this is -- this  
4 will benefit your students and your community, as  
5 well.

6 SUPT. MOSS: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

8 MS. PFEFFER: Harrison School District is  
9 building upon previously obtained waivers and has  
10 built a plan to promote personalized opportunities  
11 for its high school students. The district has  
12 partnered with the business community and local  
13 community college to support their goals.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

15 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it. It's a good plan  
16 and I have no concerns with it.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes, I voted for. I had no  
19 concerns. It demonstrated great examples of school  
20 and community partnerships.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.

22 MS. SMITH: Harrison School District has begun  
23 the process of innovation by using Act 1240 waivers  
24 branded to the additional planning specific to the  
25 high school charter as to innovative offerings for

1           these students. Also, the business partnership is  
2           impressive.

3           CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Congratulations to  
4           Harrison High School, Harrison students, and the  
5           Harrison community.

6           SUPT. MOSS: Thank you very much.

7           CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. And your next  
8           step will be to go before the State Board in  
9           November.

10          SUPT. MOSS: All right.

11          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you so much.

12          Ms. Boyd, do you have any additional work for us  
13          today?

14          MS. BOYD: Not today, Madam Chair.

15          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So we'll see you at 8:30  
16          again in the morning?

17          MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.

18          DR. GOTCHER: Your favorite time of day.

19          MS. BOYD: My favorite time of the day.

20          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Without objection, I'll  
21          take a motion for adjournment.

22          MS. PFEFFER: So moved.

23          DR. SAUNDERS: Second.

24          CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All those in favor?

25                            (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

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CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Meeting is adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at approx. 1:20 p.m.)



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A-1: RIVER VALLEY VIRTUAL ACADEMY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

1

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