

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

November 18, 2015

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

#4 CAPITOL MALL
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201

November 18, 2015

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

Ms. Deborah Coffman	Chairman/Chief of Staff
Dr. Debbie Jones	Vice Chair/Asst. Commissioner of Learning Services
Ms. Ivy Pfeffer	Asst. Commissioner - HR/Educator Effectiveness & Licensure
Dr. Eric Saunders	Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal & Administrative Services
Ms. Annette Barnes	Asst. Commission - Public School Accountability
Mr. Greg Rogers	Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal & Admin. Services
Dr. Mark Gotcher	Deputy Commissioner
Ms. Jennifer Liwo	PLSB Attorney
Mr. Bobby Lester	Director of Federal Programs

ALSO APPEARING:

Ms. Mary Perry	Coordinator - Learning Services
Ms. Alexandra Boyd	Public School Program Coordinator

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

Ms. Kendra Clay	ADE General Counsel
Ms. Jennifer Davis	ADE Deputy General Counsel

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. The November 18, 2015 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. The Arkansas Quality Charter Schools Act of 2013 requires the Commissioner to appoint ADE staff to the Panel. On July 1, 2015, Commissioner Key named nine members to the Charter Authorizing Panel and those members sit before you today. As chair it is my goal to facilitate a fair and responsible hearing. I will request that each person speaking please state your name and title for the record. I will ask that you continue to speak clearly into the microphone for the benefit of the Panel, the audience and the viewing audience. The entire meeting is being live-streamed and recorded. Ms. Hill, our court reporter will be providing a transcript of the meeting and it will be posted on the ADE website.

So with no further ado, let's get started; Ms. Clay, if you'll give us the process for the meeting.

1 MS. CLAY: Good morning. Kendra Clay, General
2 Counsel for the Department of Education. I'm going
3 to go over your procedures with you today. They're
4 going to be the same procedures that we followed
5 yesterday, but since we have a new group here and
6 some people tuning in online that may not already
7 know them -- all persons with the exception of
8 attorneys will need to be sworn in. The applicant or
9 the charter school holder will have 20 minutes to
10 present its case for approval of its application or
11 for its amendment request. Any parties opposed to
12 the application or the amendment request will have 20
13 minutes after that presentation and then the charter
14 school or applicant will have 5 minutes of rebuttal.
15 You'll follow that with discussion and questions.
16 You may vote on the matter today or take the matter
17 under advisement and vote at a later meeting. If you
18 do that, you can ask the applicant to provide
19 additional information to you or get technical
20 assistance from the Department. After you vote --
21 you all have access to a Google doc; after the vote
22 is taken we'll ask you to go into your Google doc and
23 put how you voted and the reason for your vote. This
24 document will then be provided to the State Board to
25 help facilitate whether they want to review your

1 decision or not and that will be before the State
2 Board at their next meeting. Also, as a reminder,
3 anything that is said today the parties are held to.
4 So if there's something said that is different than
5 what is in the written materials that you have that
6 will become part of any charter or any amendment that
7 you all grant today. Do you have any questions?
8 Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: As customary, when we have
10 state legislators in the room we invite them to the
11 microphone. And I see Senator Lindsey, if you would
12 like to address the Panel.

13 SENATOR LINDSEY: Thank you, Madam Chair,
14 Members of the Committee. I'm Uvalde Lindsey; I'm
15 State Senator representing Fayetteville, Farmington
16 and Greenland, parts of Washington County. Thank
17 y'all for the good work you are doing, Madam Chair.
18 You have a full agenda and you take your job
19 seriously, I know, as I take my job seriously
20 representing Fayetteville. Fayetteville is a grand
21 community. I have always said leadership,
22 innovation, those things that are part of our culture
23 -- it seems like y'all have seen the bumper stickers,
24 you know, Keep Fayetteville Funky. It seems like at
25 times that we are leaders among lots of different

1 things, in education particularly; we value education
2 highly. And I'm proud of the Fayetteville School
3 District and what it's doing with its application for
4 this virtual academy. It's more than an opportunity
5 to take online classes; it's an opportunity to blend
6 a new and innovative way of teaching with the rich
7 culture that is Fayetteville. It gives grand
8 opportunity for all of our very diverse students to
9 achieve, I think, a better opportunity to expand
10 their ambitions in education and their life
11 qualities. As you know, the arts, the cultures, the
12 things in our diverse culture that we hold dear can
13 be implemented through an innovative educational
14 opportunity that provides mentorships that provides
15 opportunity for events, that provides opportunity for
16 all of our students, whether they're K to 12, to
17 enjoy and enhance their ability to do well and have a
18 great life. Thank you, Madam Chair, Members of the
19 Committee for the opportunity to visit with y'all
20 today. I would encourage your affirmation of this
21 application and I think you will find it will be a
22 great model for the rest of this state. Because we
23 need more online education and we need the
24 opportunity to blend the rich culture of all of our
25 regions in this state together and make education a

1 quality issue. Thank you very much.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. And I see that
3 Representative Sturch is in the room.

4 REPRESENTATIVE STURCH: Thank you, Madam Chair.
5 Thank you, Committee. I came to just say a few words
6 on behalf of Cave City's charter application.

7 Representative Michelle Gray and I split Cave City;
8 it's in two different counties. But I did want to
9 come in and put in my two cents worth. I've been
10 before this committee before with Southside High
11 School's charter application and I have no doubt that
12 Cave City's charter will be in the same caliber as
13 that one. In our little corner of the world, we're
14 facing some difficulty in retaining good students to
15 come back to live their life and to find jobs there.
16 We have some opportunities though in northeast
17 Arkansas, especially with our higher ed. institutions
18 and some manufacturers that are there in Independence
19 County, such as Bad Boy, Intimidator or LaCroix
20 Optical. And several of them are really getting
21 involved in our school system, both at the high
22 school level and the collegiate level, which I'm
23 really excited about because we need community
24 partners in order to make education for everybody
25 successful. And I just ask that you give Cave City

1 due diligence in reviewing their application. And
2 like I said, I have no doubt that it will be another
3 great step for Independence County and Sharp County
4 in moving our little neck of the woods forward.
5 Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Any other
7 legislators?

8 A-2: HEARING OF REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER
9 SCHOOL AMENDMENTS: QUEST MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PINE BLUFF

10 MS. BOYD: Ms. Boyd, you are recognized. And I
11 understand that action item one has been withdrawn,
12 so we'll move to action item two.

13 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's
14 correct, action item one has been withdrawn prior to
15 the panel hearing. Action item two is a Hearing of
16 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School
17 Amendments from the Quest Middle School of Pine
18 Bluff. The State Board of Education approved the
19 application for Quest Middle School of Pine Bluff on
20 November 11, 2012 -- excuse me -- November 1, 2012.
21 The charter is approved to serve students in grades
22 5-12 with a maximum enrollment of 460.

23 Representatives of Quest Middle School of Pine Bluff
24 are appearing before the Charter Authorizing Panel to
25 request amendments to the current charter. And the

1 first person up to introduce their team is Curtis
2 Shack; he is the Program Manager. And just so --
3 they're asking for -- they want to change the grades
4 served; that's part of -- the main part of their
5 amendment request.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If all representatives
7 from Quest Middle School of Pine Bluff and anyone
8 speaking in opposition will please stand and raise
9 your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the
10 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,
11 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

12 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Mr. Shack,
14 you're recognized.

15 MR. SHACK: Good morning, everyone, and thank
16 you for having us here. My name is Curtis Shack and
17 I'm the Arkansas Program Manager for Responsive
18 Education Solutions/Arkansas, and I manage the day-
19 to-day operations of the campuses that we have in
20 Arkansas. And we're here today to be responsive to
21 the needs of Quest-Pine Bluff and the community of
22 Pine Bluff by increasing the educational
23 opportunities for our students in that area.

24 The mission of Quest is to develop knowledge and
25 wisdom through an unyielding commitment to excellence

1 in academics, recognizing the unique potential of
2 each student while integrating students' gifts
3 intellectually, socially, culturally and fiscally
4 into all aspects of learning and leadership. Quest
5 staff will strive to produce highly motivated and
6 capable learners who will excel in high school and
7 college. Our administrators and teachers care about
8 students and have a passion to see them reach their
9 full potential. To realize this, we combine modern
10 educational technologies and advanced learning
11 methods with a high level of personal attention and
12 individual instruction. At Quest-Pine Bluff we
13 endeavor to create an environment of learning that
14 stimulates intellectual curiosity and rewards
15 achievement.

16 Education is the most important asset that we
17 can provide our students. That knowledge is the type
18 of wealth that no one can take away from our
19 students. The basic knowledge starts with elementary
20 education. Elementary education can be compared to
21 that first step you took as a toddler; you had to
22 take that first step before you could walk or even
23 run. And research shows that students develop 90% of
24 their adult brain by age 8; that also by age 8 that's
25 when students start to fall behind academically and

1 emotionally and socially. And that's why we're here
2 today in front of you; we want to prevent that gap
3 from even happening, to be that stop-gap to keep
4 these kids learning at the rate that they should
5 learn. We want to be the foundation of creating an
6 environment of learning that stimulates intellectual
7 curiosity and rewards achievement. I want to
8 introduce the campus director, Mr. Arnold Robertson,
9 Pine Bluff High School graduate, UAPB graduate, UALR
10 graduate. He's been in the trenches in Pine Bluff.
11 He has been outside of the district, so he has seen
12 how things happen from a different perspective and
13 he's going to come and address the Panel.

14 MR. ROBERTSON: Good morning to you all, as
15 well. I'm excited to be here in this capacity to
16 help not only our school at Quest but to help our
17 community as well. I want to talk to you about the
18 current status that we see at Quest, currently
19 serving grades 5-9. Those students who come in in
20 the 5th grade are on average 2.5 grade levels below
21 where they should be. And it's a difficult task for
22 us to be able to get them to that -- as a matter of
23 fact, research shows us that on the average you'll be
24 able to help those students to gain by one grade
25 level by the end of that school -- in one school

1 year. And so we're doing all that we can
2 academically, as well as trying to build character in
3 those students in order to get that one year
4 increase. And I'm trying to get an advancement here;
5 you'll be able to see what we are -- what we're doing
6 by a show of our data. Okay. Right there is what I
7 want to -- where I want to be.

8 You can see during the year of 2014-15 through
9 our MAP scores we're able to make that one grade
10 level gain with our students in the area of language
11 arts, as well as in math, and in reading as well.
12 And so we would -- but we're understanding -- as Mr.
13 Shack said, we're understanding that in order for us
14 to make a greater gain we need to begin earlier. We
15 need to catch our kids earlier, early on in their
16 academic lives, which would mean that we would need
17 to add that elementary level. And that would mean
18 changing their academic foundation to where they have
19 what they need and by the time they're reaching 5th
20 grade they're where they should be and then we can
21 see greater gains. And by way of that, we're not
22 only helping our students there at Quest but we're
23 helping our community in that we're seeing where our
24 students who are graduating from our high schools are
25 not prepared to go to college, nor are they ready for

1 careers. As a matter of fact, our research is
2 showing us that students who are entering college are
3 having to enter into remedial courses before they can
4 actually get to their major courses. And that's
5 because they are so far below where they should be
6 when they graduate such that they're not able to go
7 into their majors. So we would like to impact not
8 only our school but our community as well. And that
9 being said, it also leads us to the fact that when
10 those students are not able to perform in college
11 you're talking about those students who are
12 discouraged, not able to complete, they're dropping
13 out, and thereby our crime rate in our city has
14 increased as well. So we want to impact that number.
15 We want to improve not only our school but our
16 community as well. Dr. Martin Luther King said, as I
17 close, "The function of education is to teach one to
18 think intensively and to think critically.
19 Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true
20 education." And that is our goal at Quest. We're
21 trying -- we want to teach kids to think critically
22 at an earlier age and thereby doing that we will see
23 an increase in our success, not only in our school
24 but our community. I would like to also introduce
25 who's going to come now, one of our teachers, Ms.

1 Harris, and I also have brought with me one of our
2 parents, Ms. Henderson, and I have two students that
3 I would love for you to hear from. One is a 9th
4 grader who is our student council president; that's
5 Sandie Kindle. And the other is an 8th grader who is
6 a student who has been there for the last couple of
7 years, and he is Mr. Frank Brown. So at this time
8 I'm going to bring Ms. Harris forward.

9 MS. HARRIS: Good morning. I just want to speak
10 on behalf -- from the perspective of a teacher. I've
11 been teaching in Arkansas for at least eight years.
12 This is my first year in Quest or in a charter
13 school. I have noticed that there is a difficulty
14 with us having Common Core and trying to teach rigor
15 as an educator when you have students that are so far
16 behind. I teach grades 5-9. I have students that
17 are in the 5th grade that are reading on the pre-k
18 level and students that are in the 9th grade that are
19 reading on the 3rd grade level. I have students that
20 are in the 8th grade that are reading on the 2nd
21 grade level. So I think that is very essential that
22 we start with placing an academic foundation. With
23 there being gains being made within one year of time
24 or grade level of one year it's very difficult
25 because what you're going to continue to do is play

1 catch-up, play catch-up. So if we start with this
2 academic foundation of starting with kindergartners
3 and teaching them on a rigor, as they excel and grow
4 there will be no issues because we can catch it
5 early. That's the aim; that's the gain; that's the
6 goal. And so it will make a very, very, very
7 positive impact on our community. I too -- I am a
8 product of Pine Bluff. I graduated from Pine Bluff
9 High; I graduated from UAPB and I have two masters.
10 So I know that there is good that can come out of
11 Pine Bluff and that's what we're trying to create
12 here in Pine Bluff. Thank you.

13 MS. HENDERSON: Hello. My name is Doresia
14 Henderson. I'm a parent at Quest of one of the
15 students at Quest. My son's name is Trevanda [ps] C.
16 Henderson. What I would like to say is that I took
17 my son over to Quest from a public school. He is now
18 a freshman at Quest. One thing I want to say is that
19 my son is 16 years old; he is in the 9th grade. The
20 reasoning for that is that when he was in
21 kindergarten there was a teacher -- his teacher grew
22 ill and during that process they had -- they brought
23 in a lot of substitutes, so many to the point that
24 when school was over they pretty much held back that
25 whole entire kindergarten class. So that put him

1 behind. Again, I feel like they failed him because
2 when he was in the 2nd grade he was held back again
3 for poor reading scores. And as I mentioned, a lot
4 of times when I went to parent-teacher conferences,
5 "Is there anything that I could do? Is there
6 anything, you know, you could give me? Is there a
7 tutoring program that, you know, that could help my
8 son?" I wasn't really getting any information from
9 them. I didn't really get much help, so my son is
10 behind. And I believe that, you know, if there
11 had've been Quest Elementary in place at that time I
12 believe that my son would have excelled further than
13 what he is now. And I believe that it would help a
14 lot of other students who are in the same predicament
15 as my son right now that can be, you know, caught up
16 and can benefit from Quest having an elementary
17 school. Thank you.

18 MS. KINDLE: Good morning, everyone. My name is
19 Sandie Kindle and I am here to tell you how Quest has
20 changed me and how it could've changed me when I was
21 younger. When I first came to Quest I was in 7th
22 grade. I came to Quest because I was getting bullied
23 in my other school. I thought -- and I thought that
24 a smaller school setting would change that, and it
25 did. My first year was okay but there seemed to be

1 no rules. Everyone was unorganized and the teachers
2 focused more on behavior than education. When I got
3 to 8th grade that all changed; there was order; I
4 participated in more things and I learned more. Now
5 that I'm a freshman I can truly say that my life has
6 changed for the better. My behavior, my attitude and
7 my grades have all changed. And now that I am the
8 student council president of Quest I can say that I
9 have gained much respect from my teachers, staff and
10 fellow peers. Quest has changed these things and
11 much more, but the best thing that Quest has changed
12 about me is my personality. I do believe that if
13 there was a Quest Elementary I would have been on
14 reading level. My reading level is an 8.9 and I am
15 in 9th grade. I might not be that far from grade
16 level but my teachers consider me one of the smarter
17 kids. So even two points off is not so good. This
18 is how Quest has changed me and I could've -- it
19 could have changed me when I was younger.

20 MR. BROWN: Good morning. My name is Frank
21 Brown. I go to Quest. Well, when I was younger I
22 didn't have much. So when I came straight out of
23 foster care -- my mom put me -- well, my auntie put
24 me in Dollarway Elementary and I was really one of
25 the kids that -- I was the new kid that they'd bully

1 around, punch around, so I used to stay in the back
2 of the class not really knowing much. So when the
3 teacher used to get me my work I used to try to
4 finish it and try to go home. So that went on for a
5 few years. As I got in middle school it got even
6 worse, the bullying got even worse. I used to get in
7 fights all the time. So my mom -- well, my auntie
8 told me that she'd seen a new school called Quest.
9 She said, "It's much smaller. You shouldn't get in
10 much trouble." So as I was getting there, my grading
11 scores was kind of behind; my math scores low. As I
12 was doing this, my teachers tried to show me how I
13 could and what I should do, how my education could
14 get better. They showed me -- they brought out the
15 true potential in me. So as I was doing this, I
16 figured out what I wanted to be in life, which was a
17 scientist. My grades have improved much more. My
18 reading score is coming up 'cause I was like a 3.
19 reading level last year, now they brought me up three
20 grades. Other than that, Quest has done much for me
21 and I have done much to help out. Thank you.

22 MR. SHACK: Thanks, everyone, for coming to
23 speak. It's a difficult thing to hear kids say
24 they're behind and for parents to realize that their
25 kids are behind. That's one of the harder things

1 that you have to do as a parent, and the first thing
2 is realizing that there is an issue. And we realize
3 that we're in an issue and we realize that it is not
4 just a Quest Pine Bluff thing; it's coming from Pine
5 Bluff before and it's happening before we get our
6 kids. And we need to do justice in getting their
7 educational foundation built at an earlier age and
8 that will be the only way to stop this problem that's
9 persisting. That's our presentation and we are open
10 for questions from the Panel.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Shack. Is
12 there anyone in the room to speak in opposition to
13 Quest Middle School of Pine Bluff?

14 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Shack, you have five
16 more minutes. Is there any additional comments?

17 MR. SHACK: Yes. Dr. Alan Wimberley, the
18 superintendent of our Arkansas schools, will address
19 the Panel.

20 DR. WIMBERLEY: Madam Chair, thank you for
21 allowing me to speak just for a second. I absolutely
22 know that when -- anytime I'm in a room with
23 educators I am definitely not the smartest one in the
24 room. I think you've heard from the people who are
25 most affected and certainly most -- they are

1 definitely wanting to see this amendment passed.
2 There is one thing that I would ask you though. This
3 is something that Pine -- Responsive Education
4 Solutions, we have around 75 campuses, most in Texas.
5 We have four in Arkansas. And my work as Chief
6 Educational Architect, I work with the CEO and have
7 been there since 2002. Thousands and thousands and
8 thousands of students and communities all over Texas,
9 and now in Arkansas, and I chose -- decided two years
10 ago to move to Arkansas to oversee some of the work.
11 However, I am from Texas and I will go home to my
12 grandchildren soon. Arkansas educators need to be
13 running our Arkansas schools. We don't want to run
14 them from Texas; we want Arkansas to do that. I
15 think that my primary work has been to build a team
16 that we can see tremendous things happen in Pine
17 Bluff. There is nothing that keeps me awake except
18 Pine Bluff. We have to do something. And I know
19 that you hear all the time people that stand and say,
20 "Well, we're doing the best that we can do." And I'm
21 telling you that I've been in education my entire
22 life and I'm just -- I confess to you, we're not
23 doing the best that we can do. We are making
24 progress but we started in middle school and our kids
25 are coming to us in 5th grade. We spend so much time

1 in the two or three years that they're with us trying
2 to just catch them up that it's in many ways spinning
3 our wheels. We got an "F." If you look at every
4 school in the Pine Bluff area, stack ours up with
5 theirs, it looks pretty much the same. We have to do
6 something much earlier. My role -- a year-and-a-half
7 ago, I said, "We have to have this. We have to start
8 earlier." And so I put all of my work into finding
9 the right team and Arnold Robertson was born and
10 raised and came to Pine Bluff because he wanted to
11 see what had happened in his own life happen there.
12 But there is one mistake that I've made and I want to
13 correct it now. I apologize, because it looks
14 terrible. In the amendment it says that what I'm
15 asking you to do is to allow us to open up a
16 kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade in conjunction with
17 our charter, which is currently 5th through 9th. And
18 then each successive year -- next year we would go --
19 well, the following year we would go K-3, 6th through
20 9th and then the next year K-4, 7th through 9th. And
21 I'm embarrassed because I hear from students who are
22 in the 9th grade or going to be in the 9th grade and
23 I did not make allowance for those kids at the top.
24 I didn't do that on purpose, and I am sorry. So what
25 we're going to ask you to do is to consider this:

1 please let us start earlier with these kids. We're
2 ready to leverage every single corporate -- we have
3 such an organization and all of our educators -- I've
4 got those ready -- them ready to help our people
5 there. But we want to open up kindergarten through
6 2nd grade next year and it would also be 6th grade
7 through 10th. So the current 9th graders would go to
8 6th -- would go to 10th grade and then the following
9 year it would go K-4, 7th through 11. In other
10 words, what I'm asking you to do is -- the kids that
11 are there now in middle school, we don't want to
12 penalize them by some amendment that -- you know --
13 let's do this. That's not fair. So we're not going
14 to ask to send -- we're not going to tell any
15 students that are currently there, "You have no place
16 to go here next year." We want to keep that stable
17 for them. But we don't want to add grades at the
18 lower level until we have an opportunity in the 5th
19 grade and 6th and all that -- until we have the
20 opportunity to try to intervene earlier. So what
21 we're asking is let us start this early education
22 model and let us take the current kids that are there
23 and they will still be able to be there next year.
24 Probably because of the numbers of the charter we --
25 because we can decide, you know, how many we take in

1 each grade level we would ask that we be allowed to
2 just have the students that we have and keep doing
3 what we're doing with those kids. But we really want
4 to start loading up on the elementary side and start
5 doing the things that we know -- we're going to do
6 some things that we've tested -- I've tested down in
7 Texas and it was incredible. We want to put those
8 people to work to help in Pine Bluff. So that change
9 is being brought before you and I apologize that it
10 wasn't in there in writing from the beginning. All
11 right. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Wimberley.
13 All right. That brings us to the question-and-answer
14 session by the Panel. And who would like to kick us
15 off?

16 DR. SAUNDERS: I can.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: So if I'm correct, you were
19 approved originally in 2012, November 2012. Correct?

20 MR. SHACK: Correct.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: So your first year of operation
22 was 13-14?

23 MR. SHACK: Yes.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Do you believe that you receive a
25 different student population than that of Pine Bluff

1 School District?

2 MR. SHACK: We're receiving the similar kids.
3 They are pretty much the same kids; just the
4 environment that we're providing for these kids are
5 different. It's a smaller individualized learning
6 setting where kids can be successful and not get lost
7 in the bigger shuffle of having bigger classroom
8 sizes and bigger districts.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Because as I look at the results
10 -- and the results that we have from 13-14 comparing
11 -- well, first, individually, just within your school
12 on performance results, looking at literacy,
13 percentage passing was 26.47%, 25%. It goes on and
14 on in math, 16.18% all students. And I do a
15 comparison with the Pine Bluff School District and it
16 appears that you're below the Pine Bluff School
17 District in essentially every category. Can you
18 respond to that?

19 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes. I'd like to respond to
20 that. The students that we receive at Quest are most
21 oftentimes those students who are failing at the
22 surrounding school districts, for one reason or the
23 other, be it discipline, be it academically or what-
24 have-you. But those are mainly the students that we
25 receive there and we -- through RTI and those types

1 of models, we try to build them through those
2 programs to try to get them up to par. But as -- you
3 know -- as we stated before, it takes a lot of time,
4 a lot of effort for us to do that. And so we may see
5 some gains but it's not what we would like to see by
6 the end of one school year. Those that have stayed,
7 as you heard an example of like Frank, you know, you
8 could see a greater gain. The longer they stay, the
9 more they become acclimated to what Quest is and how
10 we operate they begin to perform better because it's
11 a different environment than what they would see at a
12 larger school.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: So with that I understand you to
14 say that you do feel you have a different student
15 population?

16 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes, we do.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: I know that you presented the
18 results on grade levels of your incoming students.
19 Do you have any results on grade levels of those
20 students as they progress throughout your system?

21 MR. ARMSTRONG: Well, those -- the data that you
22 looked at is a combination of those students that
23 have been there. And even the ones that have
24 actually been there, they came in on -- as I stated
25 before, 2.5 grade levels below --

1 DR. SAUNDERS: Right.

2 MR. SHACK: -- where they should have been. And
3 so those are the gains that you've seen from all the
4 combined population.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: I'm a little confused. Can I
6 follow-up on that?

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: (Nodding head up and
8 down.)

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Can we bring up that slide with
10 the 2.5 number on it? Not the graph; I think it was
11 a narrative. I just want to make sure we're
12 understanding and talking about the same thing. So,
13 for example, the top one, those that have enrolled --
14 and I think each one of those cases addresses those
15 that have enrolled. What about those that have been
16 there, for example, that first group, that cohort;
17 they come in at 2.5 grade levels behind. Where are
18 they at after a year or after two years?

19 MR. SHACK: That data, we can -- we will have to
20 get to you. Neither one of us was here during that
21 time; we both just started during the 2014-2015
22 school year. So our data is based off of what we are
23 seeing and what's going on since we have been there.
24 So we can get that data to you if you want it.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: I think it's real important

1 because what I'm trying to look at is what are the
2 students' gains while they are there. And what I'm
3 seeing is disturbing to me and it just --

4 DR. WIMBERLEY: You're right, it is disturbing.
5 We are -- when we went in there the first year we
6 started in middle school because we were asked to.
7 So we started and we hired administration and staff
8 that -- and teachers and I was not working with it
9 then; I was still in Texas doing things, but I was
10 paying a little bit of attention to it. And when I
11 came in toward late spring we were being told -- we
12 were looking and watching but when those first
13 results came out it became very evident to me that we
14 needed a wholesale change in everything. So we did;
15 we had that wholesale change and we brought in a
16 turnaround director from Texas, someone that I had
17 worked with for years and trained, and she turned it
18 around. And then I said, "Now we're ready to start."
19 But as explained earlier, charter schools get accused
20 all the time of we cream the crop; we go and we find
21 the best kids and we somehow talk them into coming to
22 our schools from the district. That's not what's
23 going on in Pine Bluff. We've heard from students
24 who -- and we do have these students who are -- most
25 of them are coming to us, they're not special ed. but

1 they are failing in a system that -- I think if you
2 look at all the results it's probably a failing
3 system as well. And so these kids are coming in and
4 they're not doing well. We're willing to take the
5 risk, especially this past year. We take the risk of
6 you giving a piece of paper with charts and numbers
7 on it -- and I apologize; we can get you the data
8 about this year's results. We received an "F." We
9 looked at all of the schools in the area. But what
10 I've seen this year with the staff that we have and
11 what I've seen this year with the teachers that we
12 have, we now have the team. It's all new teachers
13 and it's people from that area but we feel like those
14 teachers -- yeah, I would never say, "Oh, these are
15 the cream of the crop of anyone in this area," but I
16 definitely can tell you that I think we have the best
17 educational team now. It's taken a couple of years
18 for us to get to a point where I feel like -- when I
19 tell people we have these schools and we have this
20 school and we have that school, in Bentonville, in
21 West Little, and different places like that, they
22 love the conversation. Then I say, "And then we have
23 one in Pine Bluff." And it's different than any
24 other place that I have ever seen. So we now have
25 the team that I think can make this happen and we are

1 seeing growth. We still got an "F" but we are seeing
2 growth on our MAP data -- and we'll have that data
3 and I can get it to you; our teams will put that
4 together and show you that. But one of the things
5 that's become very clear for us is we've got to start
6 earlier. Because as they're coming to us in 5th
7 grade we're just having to do so much of trying to
8 get them back where they need to be that we're just
9 saying, "Let us start with kindergarten, 1st and
10 2nd." Now, I agree, when you look at the chart,
11 yeah, it's probably disturbing and I may end up after
12 five years and someone here say, "You know what, you
13 are not good for Pine Bluff kids." That may be true.
14 Okay. We're doing everything that we can do there,
15 but we're not doing the best that we can do -- and we
16 think we can with this amendment. We think we can
17 start earlier. We think we can get to where we don't
18 have kids who by the time they're in 5th grade have
19 already developed learned helplessness. They don't
20 think they can do anything about their situation by
21 that time. That's all we're asking is allow us to
22 start this a little earlier, keep the population we
23 have. And, yeah, the numbers don't look good right
24 now but it's certainly not because we don't know what
25 we're doing and it's certainly not because -- this is

1 different than anything we have. All of these -- I
2 mean, our schools do well but we've got to do
3 something different in Pine Bluff. We have to do
4 something different in Pine Bluff. Sorry.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Wimberley, I want to
6 ask a question that I need clarification on.

7 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: What are the number of
9 days that your school was in session each year?

10 MR. SHACK: 178.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And what is your -- the
12 time of day? What is the length of day?

13 MR. SHACK: The day, school day starts from 7:30
14 to 3:30.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Barnes.

16 MS. BARNES: 7:30 to 3:30. Do you have -- how
17 long do you have for lunch?

18 MR. SHACK: 30 minutes.

19 MR. ROBERTSON: We actually have two lunches of
20 30 minutes because there are a number of kids.

21 MS. BARNES: Okay. I want to come back to that.
22 But I would like to ask a couple of questions, I
23 think, with respect to -- I understand -- and, first
24 of all, thank you all for coming and thank you for
25 your presentation. I understand that you have taken

1 on a task of trying to accelerate learning for
2 students, and I appreciate the young people that
3 spoke to us. I have a couple of concerns that --
4 your first year was last year?

5 MR. SHACK: No. That was the second year.

6 MS. BARNES: Second year. And so because of
7 that I'm concerned with respect to -- when I was
8 looking at the report card and some preliminary data
9 I didn't see where any of the measurements that I'm
10 looking for have been met. First of all, how many
11 students do you have currently?

12 MR. SHACK: We have 98 students currently.

13 MS. BARNES: And so when I look at the fact that
14 you're assessing them but you're not bringing any of
15 them to proficiency -- many of them; I shouldn't say
16 "any" -- if you test let's say those 98, how many of
17 those students were proficient?

18 MR. SHACK: We just finished up on doing the
19 math assessment, so we're currently assessing that
20 data for how many kids are proficient. We haven't
21 received our test scores for last year.

22 MS. BARNES: You haven't?

23 MR. SHACK: Because the only ones released is
24 the high school test scores. So we don't know
25 exactly how many from the 98 are actually there,

1 other than what we're trying to do in the schools.

2 MS. BARNES: Okay. Have you or anyone at the
3 school taken a look at your preliminary information
4 in the database through your triand account?

5 MR. SHACK: We printed that information out
6 Monday, but we haven't really dove into it because
7 our focus was coming --

8 MS. BARNES: Yes. Yes, I understand. I
9 understand. Okay. So I think what -- I'm trying to
10 be thoughtful in how I'm wording my question. My
11 question is: what have you done that makes you feel,
12 if you continue to do exactly the way you're doing
13 it, the students will perform better? Because you --
14 you know -- it's already been stated the school did
15 receive an "F" on the school rating, and it was a low
16 score. And I would think that you would want to get
17 some things moving and sustain that to demonstrate
18 that this is what's working, and I don't see that
19 when I look at your preliminary data. So maybe you
20 can help me; maybe I'm not looking at the right
21 information.

22 MR. SHACK: Okay.

23 MR. ROBERTSON: One of the things that I
24 discovered when I came aboard at Quest was that the
25 students nor the parents had knowledge of, you know,

1 what a grade level looked like, what test scores
2 looked like, what the data really said, what it
3 meant, that type of thing. So one of the things that
4 I began doing was sharing with the students, as you
5 could hear from our students that came up, they knew
6 what grade levels they were reading on and where they
7 were as far as the data -- what the data said. We've
8 also shared that information with parents and parents
9 are being -- becoming more involved with our school.
10 And we feel that if we can sustain that at the level
11 where we are, as well as share that in the elementary
12 levels as well, we will begin to see -- with the
13 cooperation of parent and school working together
14 we'll be able to see those successes and those gains.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones.

16 DR. JONES: Good morning. Thank you for being
17 here. Mr. Saunders -- Dr. Saunders referred to the
18 2014 test scores, which aren't just below Pine Bluff;
19 they're significantly below both middle schools in
20 Pine Bluff. Also, you're not aware of your PARCC
21 data yet, although you can view that information
22 currently. You don't have students meeting the
23 measure of proficiency there. Give me another
24 measurable piece of data I can look at that shows
25 you've been successful with these kids, any other

1 measure.

2 MR. SHACK: And I agree with you, the data is
3 not very pleasing to the eye. And what's going on is
4 we're receiving the kids that are getting left behind
5 in the districts.

6 DR. JONES: Can I ask you a question? Do y'all
7 provide transportation?

8 MR. SHACK: Yes, ma'am.

9 DR. JONES: Okay. How many kids do you
10 transport to school?

11 MR. SHACK: We currently transport 80% of our
12 student body to school.

13 DR. JONES: I would contend that your population
14 can be matched with the Pine Bluff School's
15 population; for every student that you have, they
16 have that many and more failing in their school. And
17 so to say that you don't have a similar population I
18 don't believe that piece of data, because we know
19 what we have in the Pine Bluff School District, as
20 well.

21 DR. WIMBERLEY: Well, and our reference to that
22 would be more in line with probably percentages. You
23 have students at different levels. We seem to be
24 getting a very large percentage, whereas, yeah, we --
25 we're certainly not sitting here saying, "Whoa is us,

1 we're so different." No. It's a community issue.
2 But the kids that are coming to our school, the
3 percentage of those kids who are way behind tend --
4 it looks like it's much more. We did buy a bus this
5 year. It's the only school in our entire system that
6 we bought a brand-new bus for to help because we felt
7 like they needed that.

8 DR. JONES: Is this the first year that you
9 transport?

10 DR. WIMBERLEY: It is.

11 DR. JONES: So when I look at 2014 scores, in
12 that population --

13 DR. WIMBERLEY: I'm sorry; last year was the
14 first year, this past -- this last school year was
15 the first year we had the bus.

16 DR. JONES: In 2014 scores?

17 DR. WIMBERLEY: '14 and '15. Yes.

18 DR. JONES: Not 13-14?

19 MR. SHACK: No.

20 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

21 DR. JONES: Okay. You didn't have the neediest
22 kids whose parents could not or would not transport
23 them to your school. So there's a more needy
24 population out there.

25 DR. WIMBERLEY: You're right.

1 DR. JONES: Okay. Here's my problem. You say
2 you're doing everything you can, yet you have
3 students at school the minimum number of minutes,
4 that more could be done.

5 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

6 DR. JONES: You don't know what your PARCC data
7 is like right now, although that's available to you.

8 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

9 DR. JONES: Tell me why -- give me one
10 measurable reason we would entrust more kids, younger
11 kids to a failing school that can give me no measure
12 of success?

13 DR. WIMBERLEY: You're right. We do have the
14 data and I can get the data for you.

15 DR. JONES: That's all I have.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

17 MS. PFEFFER: First of all, I want to -- I just
18 want to take a minute to commend -- I think it's
19 Sandie and Frank, who are students who spoke, and
20 just tell you I'm very impressed with you. Every
21 time I have to stand up there and talk to the State
22 Board I get so nervous I can't even hardly talk. And
23 you were so articulate and I really appreciate you
24 being here because I know how hard it is. And thank
25 you for having them here. It does help to see a

1 bigger picture of what's going on. I think -- as I
2 listened to your application and you explaining it to
3 me, I do understand why you're asking to start
4 earlier; I understand that concept. The challenge we
5 have is looking at the data.

6 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

7 MS. PFEFFER: And just as Dr. Jones said, taking
8 that leap to, you know, would it be wise, would it be
9 good for kids for us to bring more in with the data
10 that we have to look at.

11 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

12 MS. PFEFFER: I think if we had additional data
13 that would help us. Something though that also would
14 concern me -- and I understand again why you would
15 want to extend those grades up beyond 9th grade.

16 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

17 MS. PFEFFER: But just trying to do that based
18 on your application today without seeing what are
19 your plans for offering those very courses -- as a
20 former high school principal, I know how difficult it
21 is to make sure that all of those classes can be
22 taught and meeting the minimum required numbers. So
23 we don't have all of that information today and so my
24 concerns moving forward would be you're asking us to
25 make decisions and we don't have all of the

1 information that we would need.

2 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right. Okay.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

4 DR. GOTCHER: Dr. Wimberley, Mr. Shack, Mr.
5 Robertson, I recognize that student achievement is
6 much more than just math and literacy scores, and I
7 also want to commend Mr. Brown and Ms. Kindle for
8 doing such a great job in presenting to us this
9 morning. I agree with Ms. Pfeffer; it's a very
10 challenging thing to stand before a group, and I
11 commend you for your leadership. However, since
12 student achievement is more than math and literacy it
13 also needs to be measurable. And so I do see, as
14 evidenced with the students that spoke this morning,
15 that you are making a difference, but the challenge
16 for this panel is we must have measurable data.

17 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

18 DR. GOTCHER: So I want to commend you, but I
19 also share some of the concerns of my colleagues that
20 in order to take this leap of faith we've got to use
21 data. So, thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or
23 comments? Dr. Saunders.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: I just had one more on some of
25 the data presented. And in particular it was with --

1 what I'm looking at here concerns your attendance
2 rate, roughly around 50%. Does that seem accurate?

3 MR. SHACK: That's not accurate for this year.
4 This year our attendance rate has been 93% of our
5 students being at school.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Last year, it was around 50%?

7 MR. SHACK: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: What do you attribute to
9 that change?

10 MR. SHACK: Being able to work with parents,
11 getting parents more involved, letting them know that
12 you can make a change and showing them how to make a
13 change, showing them how to help kids with homework
14 and with assignments, and doing more community
15 outreach to our parents. We've been meeting monthly
16 with the parents just to address where their kids are
17 and what can we do, what can you all do to help close
18 the gaps.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Are you one-to-one with
20 devices for your students?

21 MR. SHACK: We're not one-to-one yet. We're
22 two-to-one currently, right now. If you add in
23 desktop, then we would be one-to-one.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or
25 comments? Ms. Liwo.

1 MS. LIWO: I don't think you would be here if
2 you didn't think that you can do something different
3 for the elementary students you're trying to pull in.
4 I'll point you to your proposal. In your proposal,
5 you stated that "student gaps are created because of
6 a lack of teacher accountability prior to the
7 students' arrival to our campus." You then go on to
8 say, "In the elementary component, the teacher is
9 held accountable for each student's personalized
10 academic growth and will discuss that growth on a
11 weekly basis with campus administration." I was
12 wanting a little bit more detail on that. Could you
13 explain how a teacher would be held accountable for
14 personalized academic growth?

15 MR. SHACK: Okay. I'm going to let Arnold --
16 he's -- he does the day-to-day with the teachers on
17 the growth.

18 MR. ROBERTSON: To give you an example on that,
19 as I stated earlier, with our RTI program what we do
20 is we're meeting weekly with -- as a team, as a group
21 with teachers and we're looking at individual
22 students' scores, what we can do differently with
23 those students to help them to reach the goals that
24 have been established for those students. And the
25 teacher accountability comes in in that we're all

1 talking about it; we're all making sure that the data
2 -- you know -- what the data shows. There's an
3 individual sheet on each student, RTI sheet on each
4 student, where we can kind of track what's going on
5 with those students individually. So that's how
6 we're kind of able to keep up with where our students
7 are, what we need to do differently, those types of
8 things.

9 MS. LIWO: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. ROBERTSON: You're welcome.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Robertson --

12 MR. ROBERTSON: Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- how much time is
14 permitted -- allowed each day for Tier 2
15 intervention?

16 MR. ROBERTSON: Tier 2 intervention, we have for
17 our math block I think it's 40 minutes and then for
18 our reading block it's 40 minutes.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: In addition to the Tier 1
20 instruction?

21 MR. ROBERTSON: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And then what offerings do
23 you have for Tier 3 intervention?

24 MR. ROBERTSON: Tier 3 is our enrichment for
25 those kids that have -- are already where they should

1 be. We also have it through Study Island. There are
2 some other enrichments like the 4H that we have come
3 in and we do other things that tie into the reading
4 and the math that we challenge our students with.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Wimberley,
6 I don't pretend to speak for the Panel but I'll speak
7 for myself.

8 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I'm excited about anyone
10 who wants to get in there and work to provide quality
11 education for these students because they deserve it.

12 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: But I too, like Dr. Jones,
14 need to know that the students that are in 5-9 are
15 getting the services they need before we talk about
16 more expansion.

17 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: But like Ms. Pfeffer said,
19 I certainly see the value of early intervention and,
20 you know, getting it right from the beginning, but
21 not to lessen that we have a crisis right now for
22 grades 5-9.

23 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: So I ask you are there any
25 last words that you would like to give us before I

1 ask the Panel for a motion?

2 DR. WIMBERLEY: It's funny because I had
3 actually told our team I don't want to be introduced,
4 I don't want to speak, I don't need to be seen; I
5 hope I can just show up and -- but I did tell them
6 that it falls back on me. And so, now, I think you
7 do need data. My life is research and serving as the
8 chief educator over our system and our 1,600
9 educators. You'll see me again because I'm going to
10 come back and ask next time, if you say no today, and
11 you will see much more data. You will have
12 opportunity to see measurements. We have all of that
13 data; we just don't have it right here, right now. I
14 just texted our director of Research and Evaluation
15 and Testing and I said, "I need Pine Bluff's current
16 MAP data now." They're going to get it to me and
17 it'll be too late, this afternoon, I'm sure. That's
18 okay. It's my failure. So I understand that you go
19 one of two ways: you go yes or you go no. In light
20 of how this has gone, if I were sitting where you're
21 sitting I'd say no. We'll come back because we are
22 -- and you may eventually say, "They don't even need
23 to be in Pine Bluff." Okay. We'll keep doing what
24 we need to do because we're doing great things for
25 kids, our 22,000 students. We see tremendous

1 results, but not in Pine Bluff. I just want a chance
2 to do it with elementary kids and see if we can't
3 start earlier and do the T-square, which we tested
4 two years -- three years ago in south Dallas and had
5 tremendous results from that. That's all I was
6 asking to do. But you need data, so I'll come back
7 and we'll bring the data.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Thank you.

9 DR. WIMBERLEY: All right.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Barnes?

11 MS. BARNES: (Shaking head from side to side.)

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Anyone else have any
13 questions or comments?

14 Ms. Clay, are there any remaining issues?

15 MS. CLAY: No.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. All right. Then
17 I'll accept a motion.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I want to make a motion, but
19 before I do I just want to say something. I do
20 appreciate y'all being here today and I do want to
21 say for data in the future, for myself, data that I
22 would like to see is -- I know internal data is good
23 and helpful, such as math results and everything
24 else. But I want to see achievement on the statewide
25 results; that's ultimately what I would like to see.

1 I commend you. I know that you're not in perhaps the
2 easiest situation to teach.

3 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

4 DR. SAUNDERS: And I commend you taking on that
5 challenge. I do not feel comfortable with expanding
6 a system that I believe shows the data right now as
7 being successful. With that in mind, I would make a
8 motion to deny the amendment.

9 MS. BARNES: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Motion has been made by
11 Dr. Saunders and a second by Ms. Barnes to deny the
12 request. Are there any questions, comments? All
13 those in favor of the motion?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed?

16 DR. JONES: I have a follow-up motion.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay.

18 DR. JONES: Given the concerns for the 98
19 students that are there, I think that as a board our
20 responsibility is to have educational concern for
21 those, and I have grave concerns right now. And I
22 would make a motion that they need placed on
23 probation and return next November, at this time, and
24 provide data from which we can decide where we go
25 from there. Kendra, did you have -- was -- can I do

1 that?

2 MS. CLAY: (shaking head from side to side.)

3 DR. JONES: Okay.

4 MS. CLAY: You can do that, but you cannot do
5 that today. What we would need to do is set them for
6 a hearing on that particular issue. It would be
7 action on their charter, which the typical language
8 is probation, revocation or modification. That would
9 have to be done at a separate hearing at a separate
10 meeting because they weren't notified of that for
11 today's hearing.

12 DR. JONES: Okay. Then I will request that you
13 be placed on a future meeting agenda and be notified.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Board Members,
15 if you will complete your form.

16 DR. WIMBERLEY: Is that it?

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: No, sir. We're going to
18 read their responses for the record.

19 DR. WIMBERLEY: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: While they're completing
21 those, Dr. Wimberley, we're not asking you to give
22 up; we're saying we believe in you, but you've got to
23 really think outside the box --

24 DR. WIMBERLEY: No, I understand.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- to resolve these

1 issues.

2 DR. WIMBERLEY: We're trying and we'll get there
3 or you may say we need to go home.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Our Charter Panel office
5 is available. I'm sure, APSRC.

6 DR. WIMBERLEY: They are.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: There are a lot of people
8 that are pulling in your favor.

9 DR. WIMBERLEY: You know, we have four schools;
10 we get A's in two of them and F's in two of them. So
11 we're working -- trying to work across the board with
12 them.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Ms. Barnes.

14 MS. BARNES: I voted to deny because I feel
15 there's insufficient evidence presented to validate
16 academic successes. I am uncomfortable with the
17 inability to respond to the Panel's multiple
18 requests. And sustainable success should be
19 established at the current level prior to expansion.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

21 DR. GOTCHER: I voted for, to deny the request.
22 The reasons are -- reason is: evidence of academic
23 growth is insufficient and raises much concern with
24 considering expansion of grade levels.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones.

1 DR. JONES: I voted to deny the request. The
2 school has no measure of success. All data indicates
3 they perform significantly below the middle schools
4 in their area.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

6 MR. LESTER: I voted to deny the request. I
7 need to see evidence of growth in the current grade
8 levels in order to agree with the amendment to add
9 new grade levels.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

11 MS. LIWO: I voted to deny based on the current
12 statistics concerning academic achievement.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

14 MS. PFEFFER: I voted to deny the request for
15 the same reasons my colleagues have listed. Plus,
16 the request to go into the high school level I think
17 is going to have to be very well thought out and
18 planned.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

20 MR. ROGERS: I voted for the motion to deny for
21 the same reasons everyone has already stated about
22 the lack of data showing improvement of their current
23 students.

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Did not show evidence of success,

1 is my reason for denial.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Wimberley, as I said
3 -- stated earlier, a lot of people pulling in your
4 direction. Reach out, reach out.

5 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Reach out; they are happy
7 to help.

8 DR. WIMBERLEY: Right.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: They just need you to make
10 the initial point of contact.

11 DR. WIMBERLEY: Okay. Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

13 DR. WIMBERLEY: Appreciate your time.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We will take a seven-
15 minute break and come back for the next action item.

16 (BREAK: 9:37-9:50 a.m.)

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We're ready to begin. If
18 Representative Gray is in the room -- good morning.

19 REPRESENTATIVE GRAY: Good morning. Thank you
20 for allowing me time to speak this morning. I'm here
21 on behalf of Cave City Schools. And I actually just
22 found out about this a couple of weeks ago and Mr.
23 Green asked for my help. And anyone that knows me
24 knows that I always say "I love to help you, but I
25 need to know more about it to make sure I can support

1 it and it's good for our community and my
2 constituents." And so he and Vickie both explained
3 to me what they were trying to do, and I'm amazed by
4 it. I think it's a great idea and I'd actually love
5 to see some of the other schools in my district start
6 moving in this direction. I know when I ran for
7 office -- I'm a first term legislator -- and one of
8 the things when I ran for office, I also ran -- was
9 running at the same time Governor Hutchinson was
10 running. And one of the things as we would wind up
11 in locations together that we both completely agreed
12 on was college degrees are great; it's something that
13 we need to continue towards in the future. But
14 there's a gap in there with students who don't
15 necessarily want to go to school; they don't have the
16 opportunity to attend a four-year or maybe they
17 attend a two-year and something happens in their
18 life. So there's a gap in there. And one of my
19 children actually -- I have five children -- one of
20 my children has some disabilities, bilateral hearing
21 loss; he had a brain bleed when he was born. And we
22 do know that more than likely he will never attend a
23 four-year institution, but we're working with him and
24 he's currently in an agri program and a business
25 program so that we can help him do something

1 productive once he graduates high school. So this is
2 a little personal to me because I do see that gap,
3 those students who are being left behind. One of the
4 other things that I see in my district -- I have four
5 counties; I have one entire county and parts of three
6 others -- is we're a very poor district overall. We
7 have some areas that are better than others, but
8 overall we're very poor. And so one of the things
9 that we see too is students will leave to go to
10 college or to do something else; they never come
11 back. And so one of the things that we struggle with
12 as a district is losing some of our best students to
13 never come back. You know, we need those -- we need
14 to retain some of those students and the skilled
15 workers, whether its welding, CNA, nursing, LPN. I
16 know one of our -- Ozarka College has actually
17 applied to be the first two-year college to have a
18 bachelor's in nursing, because we lose all of our
19 nurses out of my district to other towns. And so
20 that's one of the biggest things that I want to work
21 on as a legislator is keeping our students, keeping
22 our -- my constituents in my county, in my district
23 to help us prosper, better future, try to bring up
24 that -- I know they will speak about the number of
25 students we have on free and reduced lunches and that

1 will tell you a lot about our district -- but
2 economic development -- and just making it a better
3 place for our children. So I fully support what they
4 are doing. I think it's very innovative. I'd love
5 to see other schools in my district do it. And I'm
6 also very grateful to both of the colleges that are
7 represented here today; UACCB and Ozarka College has
8 been very innovative in their way of thinking and
9 trying to bring the technical aspect to the high
10 school, doing it, you know, in a concurrent setting.
11 Once those children -- a lot of the poor children,
12 once they leave that high school they may never have
13 the opportunity for any type of higher education.
14 And so in my mind this is a huge life-changing career
15 option for them to be able to get their welding
16 certificate or CNA or a business certificate or
17 something that they can actually help their family
18 with and live a better life. So, legislators can
19 talk, you know, for hours at a time, so -- but I
20 appreciate all of your time to this matter. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

23 A-3: HEARING OF DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
24 APPLICATION: CAVE CITY HIGH SCHOOL CAREER AND COLLEGIATE
25 PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd, you're recognized for Action Item 3.

MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Action Item 3 is a Hearing of the District Conversion Public Charter School Application from Cave City High School Career and Collegiate Preparatory School. Cave City High School Career and Collegiate Preparatory School is a proposed district conversion public charter school. The applicant is requesting to serve students in grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment of 1,200. ADE staff reviewed the applications, and concerns were shared with the applicant for response. The application, the ADE evaluation, and the applicant's response are included for your review today.

First up for Cave City, we have their superintendent, Steven Green, to speak on their behalf.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If all representatives from the Cave City High School Career and Collegiate Preparatory School will stand, and anyone speaking in opposition. Please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

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(ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Green.

SUPT. GREEN: Good morning. I'm Steven Green, superintendent of the Cave City School District. First of all, I want to thank you for your time, for allowing us to present our application. We believe this is a tremendous opportunity for not only our students but for our community, as well. Speaking on our behalf today will be Mr. Marc Walling, high school principal; Mrs. Cheryl Bell, who will be our charter director; Mrs. Vickie Green, our high school counselor. And we're also proud to have representatives of two our community partners here today, Dr. Richard Dawe, president of Ozarka College in Melbourne, and Dr. Brian Shonk and Chancellor Debbie Frazier of UACCB in Batesville. We're also very pleased to have State Representatives Michelle Gray and Mr. James Sturch, who was here previously, here today showing their support, as well. Thank you all for coming.

I'd like to share with you a little bit of information about our district and our community. Cave City School District serves about 1,270 students in grades K-12. We're located primarily in Sharp County in north central Arkansas. Sharp County is a

1 tier four county, which is recognized as one of four
2 counties in the state. The number of students
3 qualifying for free and reduced lunches has steadily
4 increased over the past years to its highest point
5 ever. Right now, we're at 77.2% of our students that
6 qualify for free and reduced lunch. Cave City
7 annexed into Evening Shade School District in 2004,
8 increasing our boundaries to 285 square miles. We
9 use 20 bus routes to transport kids on primarily dirt
10 roads. We're actually the largest employer in the
11 entire district, having 177 employees. The next
12 largest would be Cave City Nursing Home which
13 typically has between 80 and 85, and we have a small
14 manufacturing plant called UniFirst which has about
15 50 employees. We are a very proud blue collar
16 community, very face-based, and very supportive of
17 education. There's no greater example of this than
18 the passage of a millage in 2004 to build a brand-new
19 high school. The lack of financial resources -- our
20 patrons passed a 9.6 millage, which only generated a
21 little over \$6,000,000 towards the cost of a new
22 school, but it was all that they could do. We love
23 our community and appreciate them in every way. And
24 now to share information on our students is our high
25 school principal, Mr. Marc Walling. Thank you.

1 MR. WALLING: Good morning. Despite these
2 obstacles that Mr. Green mentioned, we do feel like
3 we've been a progressive and successful high school
4 throughout the years. We're coming to you, we feel
5 like, from a very strong proactive position. Our ACT
6 scores -- Mr. Green agreed several years ago that we
7 would test all our 11th graders. I know that's a
8 statewide initiative this year. We've tested all our
9 11th graders for several years so that all our kids
10 would have an opportunity to take that test. Mr.
11 Green has paid for that for several years. Our ACT
12 average has been very comparable to the state
13 average. We've never quite met the state average,
14 but it's always been a goal of ours, testing all our
15 kids, to meet the state average. We've always --
16 we've got close, but we've never quite made that, but
17 that's certainly been a goal of my staff through the
18 years. Our last several graduating classes, about
19 60% of our kids have actually been attending college.
20 That's an outstanding number for our area. We're
21 proud of that number. We attribute most of that
22 success to an agreement we reached with UACCB and Ms.
23 Frazier several years ago called Project College
24 Bound. Any high school kid that we graduate is
25 automatically enrolled at UACCB. UACCB takes them

1 through all the application process; they take them
2 through the financial aid process; they take them
3 through the scheduling process while they're seniors
4 at Cave City High School. All our kids have a ticket
5 to attend UACCB once they get a Cave City High School
6 diploma. All they have to do is show up the first
7 day. It's an outstanding partnership we have with
8 them. We're certainly proud of our partnership with
9 Ozarka, as well. Ozarka has what they call the
10 College Now scholarship. If a high school senior at
11 Cave City High School takes 12 concurrent hours with
12 Ozarka -- and we're going to offer that to them at no
13 cost, little or no cost -- Ozarka has a College Now
14 scholarship where the first 12 hours on Ozarka's
15 campus is free. It's very possible that a Cave City
16 High School student could get their first 24 hours of
17 college completely for free. We're proud of those.

18 But we did some research in preparing for the
19 charter school. The class of 2011, only 8% of those
20 kids that graduated on time with a four-year degree.
21 Even though those kids have been out of our system
22 for four years, we found that number unacceptable.
23 It's just too low. So we got to asking questions
24 about what we could do and how we could manage that
25 situation. Twenty-five percent of that class have

1 gone on the workforce or military and 15% we felt
2 were not gainfully employed. We felt like we'd
3 underserved those students. We felt like the
4 borderline college and technical students had been
5 underserved. So we started -- that's why the
6 charter, that's why the charter application.

7 Talk about some of the other things we've done
8 through the years meeting all our students needs, we
9 were a literacy design curriculum and a math design
10 curriculum pilot school several years ago. I'm proud
11 of the fact that we partnered with Southern Regional
12 Education Board there. We were the only school in
13 the north central co-op and the northeast co-op that
14 went through that process. My teachers appreciated
15 it; that carried out to the kids. I would like to
16 show you our PARCC scores. In every category we are
17 above the state average and that -- I think it's
18 directly attributed to the fact that we had done MDC
19 and LDC with our staff. I'm very proud of our PARCC
20 scores. I'd particularly like to focus your
21 attention upon the 10th grade scores there that are
22 22 points above the state average. Ms. Green hand-
23 counted the 10th graders yesterday and 60% of my 10th
24 graders had scored a four or five on the PARCC
25 literacy exam. That's attributed mainly to my staff,

1 but we're certainly proud of those numbers. I also
2 -- in the high school performance score that come out
3 in the spring, our high school scored 262. That was
4 the highest score of any neighboring district --
5 Batesville, Highland, Melbourne, in IZARD County.
6 And it was also the highest score on the school
7 performance of the high schools in the four 3A
8 conference, which includes some outstanding northeast
9 Arkansas high schools -- Highland, Pocahontas,
10 Brookland, Jonesboro, Westside; some very good
11 schools. We're very proud of what we've
12 accomplished. We also have a fulltime career coach
13 at Cave City High School to take our kids through
14 that process, enrolling in school or careers, and
15 that's -- we were able to get a career coach because
16 we are a Tier 4 county. We've had a career coach now
17 for five or six years, and that has also led to the
18 success rate of our students attending college and
19 being gainfully employed in the workplace. The 8% of
20 the class of 2011 is just not acceptable to us.

21 Ms. Bell will talk to you here about what the
22 charter will specifically do for our children.

23 MS. BELL: We have these wonderful resources in
24 place but we know that we can always improve and we
25 can always do more. Even though we will continue to

1 be a traditional high school environment, we are
2 looking to add opportunities for our students to earn
3 value-added diplomas. Our first step in this
4 direction will be our personalized success plans, and
5 that's just what those are. It's individualized
6 goals and a plan to get students to those goals.
7 We're trying to meet the needs of all of our
8 students, our college bound students, non-college
9 bound students, GT students, and special needs
10 students. We're doing this to create purposeful
11 educational experiences for all of our students. We
12 know that these plans are adaptable and changeable,
13 and we're willing to do that for our students.

14 Another component is the addition of the
15 technical certification programs. We're looking to
16 add certification programs for our students so that
17 they can earn the skills that they need to enter the
18 workforce after high school. We're testing the
19 waters with this this year with our welding program.
20 We have 10 students that we bus to our local
21 community college. They receive two hours of welding
22 instruction and they're bused back to our campus.
23 Once they return to our campus, they seamlessly
24 transition into our traditional classroom courses.
25 The problem and challenge with this for us this

1 semester has been that these students have to be on
2 campus by 7:30 to catch the bus to our local
3 community college. And, unfortunately, that excludes
4 some of our students that don't drive or have
5 transportation to school besides our bus routes. We
6 just feel that's unfair. We're also going to test
7 the waters in the spring with our certified nursing
8 program. We have a community sponsor for that
9 program who has agreed to donate implementation
10 money, startup money, and even cover the tuition
11 costs for those students. The challenge with that
12 program will be that those students have to stay
13 after school. They have to commit to an hour after
14 school four days a week. This means that those
15 students have to choose between afterschool programs,
16 afterschool sports, and our resources that we have
17 available after school. And we also feel that's
18 unfair to those students. We would like to offer
19 those certification programs during our traditional
20 day.

21 For our college bound students, we currently
22 have six AP courses that we offer. That's two above
23 regulation that we're required to have. We offer up
24 to 60 hours of college credit through concurrent and
25 online courses for our students. Our really

1 ambitious students could even earn an associate's
2 degree at the time that they graduate high school and
3 that is stackable with our local community colleges.

4 I don't know what I just did.

5 For our non-college bound students -- I'll just
6 continue on -- this means that we have certification
7 programs in place for them where -- going to fix it?
8 -- they can gain skills to make themselves employable
9 after high school. We have our welding in place, the
10 CNA program in place. In the fall of 2016, we're
11 looking to add our first responder and even an EMT
12 program of study for those students. We know that
13 college is not for every student after high school.
14 Some will choose to wait and some may choose to never
15 go to college at all. We also want to give those
16 people and students skills to be successful in our
17 community after high school.

18 The most exciting piece of this is the hybrid
19 nature of our programs, the overlap between the two
20 programs; our college bound students will also want
21 to go through the certification programs. For
22 example, if we have a student that wants to go to
23 nursing school that student might want to complete
24 their Certified Nursing Assistant -- the program on
25 our campus so that while they're in nursing school

1 they can have meaningful employment. They can work
2 for above minimum wage and support themselves through
3 college. That 8% retention rate that you saw
4 earlier, we think that these certification programs
5 will help with that number. It's going to help our
6 college retention rate; it's going to help our
7 college completion rate. For our non-college bound
8 students, as I said before, we're giving them skills
9 that they need to enter the workforce, gain
10 employment above minimum wage. For these students it
11 may be an ending point. It may be that they enter
12 the workforce and they have a career in the area that
13 they're certified. We want them to gain employment
14 in our community above minimum wage so that they can
15 sustain and be independent.

16 I also want to talk to you about some of the
17 technology that we have in place on our campus.
18 There's a slide for this. We -- our facility is
19 conducive for 21st century learning skills. We have
20 high-density wireless access points in every
21 classroom in our entire district. We have a one-to-
22 one student ratio on our devices. Our students are
23 learning on multiple platforms, PC's, Apple's, iPads,
24 Chromebooks, Microsoft Office softwares, Google
25 softwares. We feel that this shows our commitment to

1 our students. We feel like these are skills that
2 they need after high school to gain employment in our
3 community. We are currently doing what we can. We
4 are committed to our students, as you can see,
5 through LDC, MDC. We do MAP testing and that data
6 drives our instruction in the classrooms, and we feel
7 like that that shows through our PARCC scores. We're
8 creating new and relevant experiences for all of our
9 students.

10 We're requesting that Cave City High School
11 become a charter high school. We understand that all
12 students will benefit from some of the programs in
13 the charter. We also realize that not all students
14 will participate in the charter programs. Students
15 will be able to move seamlessly between the charter
16 programs and traditional education courses. We need
17 some barriers removed so that we can continue to
18 improve and meet the standards of our students and
19 raise the standard of living for all of our students
20 after graduation. In the words of Mia Angelou, "When
21 we do better -- when you know better, you do better."
22 And that's what we're trying to do; we're trying to
23 do better. Our families and community, as you heard
24 before, they're poor; they're kind of in a rut;
25 they're very proud. They don't want someone to pull

1 them out of that rut; they want someone to build
2 stairs so that they can pull themselves out and climb
3 out themselves, and that's what we're trying to do is
4 build the stairs for them.

5 I would now like to introduce Ms. Vickie Green
6 to tell you more about what this will mean for our
7 students.

8 MS. GREEN: Good morning. My name is Vickie
9 Green and I'm the counselor for Cave City High
10 School. I graduated -- lower the mic; I'm so tall,
11 especially after Ms. Bell -- but I graduated from
12 Cave City High School, as did all of our presenters
13 today, as did most of our parents. We have all
14 worked in other districts or in other industries, and
15 we have all returned to the home we love. We are
16 fully invested in this school and in this community.
17 The passage of Act 994 was an answered prayer for my
18 students; it's a game changer. We are now able to
19 fund some concurrent coursework for my students.
20 It's a way to level the playing field, regardless of
21 socioeconomic status. Our concurrent enrollment has
22 almost tripled for this academic school year. We do
23 have other supports and other sponsors for our
24 concurrent enrollment, and the slide that was up
25 while ago -- there -- these are some of our partners.

1 Cave City Nursing Home has been very generous in
2 letting us borrow some equipment and some items to
3 help start our CNA program, hopefully this spring.
4 UACCB and Ozarka both offer discounted college
5 courses to our students. College classes for my kids
6 are about half of what a typical student would pay if
7 they were out of school. The Bank of Cave City has
8 donated over \$12,000 the past few years to help fund
9 concurrent coursework. In addition, we have a new
10 sponsor this year, First Community Bank of Sharp
11 County; they have donated \$6,000 this academic year
12 to start our CNA program. That will fund the
13 students, their textbooks, and also help provide some
14 equipment to get started. They have also agreed to
15 fund future students for future years in the amount
16 of 10 students a year annually from this point
17 forward.

18 In light of this though, we're not going to lose
19 focus of our college students or our AP coursework.
20 We're a big believer in those programs. Last year,
21 we graduated two Distinguished Governor's Scholarship
22 recipients. That's an ACT of 32 or higher from our
23 small district. Previous year, we had two Governor's
24 recipients as well. This year, I have a young man
25 with a 33; he's going to be a Distinguished

1 Governor's, as well. We had a freshman last year
2 score 31, so hopefully he'll get that extra point
3 over the next few years. However, what we're finding
4 is academic preparation is not enough for these
5 students and that's the reason we stand before you
6 today. Our percentage of students on free or reduced
7 lunches is increasing every year. Our SNAP
8 eligibility is increasing; our direct certifications,
9 as well. Interesting enough, I thought our SNAP
10 count was pretty high whenever I started at 40% for
11 the district. Doing the research, I think we're
12 actually under-funded for that. Keep in mind, I do
13 many FAFSA's every school year for a lot of our
14 students. I mean, if you look at the guidelines to
15 be able to be eligible for free and reduced lunches
16 and if you look at the guidelines for SNAP
17 eligibility, we have a lot more patrons who would
18 qualify for that. One, I think they're not because
19 it is a pride issue; they want to do it themselves.
20 Two, I think there's some logistical issues in place;
21 the office is in the north end of the county. Many
22 of our folks don't have the transportation or the
23 funding to get there. There's an online application.
24 Our parents don't necessarily have the skill-set, the
25 technology skills, or the internet access to be able

1 to complete the application. I think those two
2 issues are also present with our students when they
3 leave us. I think a lot of times they don't have the
4 funding to be able to travel because we do not have a
5 college within our immediate city limits. You know,
6 you're looking at 20 to 30 minutes for most of our
7 students to be able to get either to Ozarka or to
8 UACCB. These barriers stay with these students. In
9 addition, our kids need these skill-sets; they need
10 the technology skills; they need to be able to
11 function in the world of higher education, to be able
12 to achieve their God-given potential. Attending
13 college, especially a four-year institution, is very
14 overwhelming for many of my students. Mr. Walling
15 mentioned earlier that only 8% of the class of 2011
16 finished a degree -- 8% in four years -- which I know
17 the research that most kids take five or six years.
18 The problem with that, my students don't have five or
19 six years. Their funding is going to end. They do
20 not have college funds set up for them. Their
21 scholarships run out after four years, so I do think
22 that's a hindrance to a lot of my students. I think
23 we can try to get them on that path a little earlier
24 so hopefully they can finish their degree. But the
25 socioeconomic status of our students does not change

1 upon graduation. The Wall Street Journal did a study
2 to where one in five students from the lowest tax
3 income bracket finished their degrees; 99% of those
4 from the upper income bracket were able to complete
5 their college degrees. We have to be able to remove
6 some of these barriers and we need to start removing
7 these while they're in our care, while they are with
8 us. I had one young lady, she lived in a portable
9 building by a chicken house. She scored a 24 on her
10 ACT. Now keep in mind, this was 15 minutes down a
11 dirt road. That was the only ACT she ever took; it
12 was state testing, school day. We register them;
13 she's there. And we see students like this not
14 achieving their potential. With this charter in
15 place she could maybe graduate with her CNA. She
16 could even graduate with all her LPN pre-requisites
17 and start an LPN program at either of those two
18 colleges. College Now, she would receive funding for
19 the first semester. Now this young lady with the 24
20 would've had tuition. But I have many students --
21 what about those with a 16, 17 or 18 on their ACT;
22 more than capable of doing these programs. That
23 would be a way to fund those students. But we need
24 to provide these opportunities now. We want the
25 charter status to be able -- because, number one, the

1 opportunities may not be for them later -- may not be
2 there for them later; number two, to provide the
3 scaffolding to insure their success. We want to
4 teach them the skills necessary to navigate in the
5 world of higher ed. Our students want an education.
6 Help us be that instrument of change in our community
7 to be able to provide it. And now we have a video of
8 a few student voices today.

9 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: A video was shown,
10 which may seen on the ADE's website.)

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Green, that concludes
12 our 20 minutes.

13 SUPT. GREEN: Thank you. Thank you, Ms.
14 Coffman.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Is there anyone that will
16 speak in opposition?

17 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Green, you have 5
19 additional minutes.

20 SUPT. GREEN: Thank you, Ms. Coffman. This
21 charter is a tremendous opportunity for our kids and
22 also could provide excellent economic development for
23 our community. As you've heard, the flexibility it
24 provides will reduce barriers and level the playing
25 field for our students. I'd like to defer the rest

1 of my time to our community partners. I have
2 Chancellor Frazier and Dr. Dawe that would like to
3 make some remarks. Dr. Dawe.

4 DR. DAWE: Thank you very much, Mr. Green, and I
5 appreciate your senior team and your entrepreneurial
6 spirit. I'm Dr. Richard Dawe; I'm the president at
7 Ozarka College, and it's a pleasure to be here.
8 We're very excited at the college, as is our sister
9 institution down the road, at UACCB. We're very
10 excited to support Cave City in this. We both --
11 both colleges are very innovative. We're in a
12 position to offer some very exciting programs, and
13 the College Now scholarship was mentioned and that is
14 an opportunity for many students who otherwise
15 wouldn't have such an opportunity to have the first
16 year of college credit for \$600 -- it's \$600 plus
17 books -- compared to \$5,000 or \$6,000 or more at
18 other state four-year institutions. So it's a very
19 exciting opportunity. So both colleges offer some
20 things that are very interesting and unique. We did
21 in about a two- or three-week period develop an early
22 childhood education certificate program with Cave
23 City and that's very exciting. So we are fairly new
24 in partnering with Cave City, but we're very
25 enthusiastic about the opportunity in their

1 innovative culture. We do have plans to offer -- in
2 the works that we might explore in the future, we
3 offer an aviation professional pilot program. So
4 there's some exciting things that -- and also the BSN
5 in Nursing, as Representative Gray mentioned, we hope
6 to be the first two-year in Arkansas to offer that in
7 the region. I'm a product of the region. I was away
8 as a Navy pilot for a long time but came back, so I
9 understand these students, as they do, as was
10 mentioned by several speakers. You know, it's an
11 impoverished area but an area with an awful lot of
12 potential. Eighty percent of our students at Ozarka
13 College are a very high level of PEL eligible and
14 we're trying to limit the amount of loans and
15 indebtedness that our students incur through
16 partnerships like this. As all our legislators and
17 the Board of Higher Education and the Education Board
18 of the state will tell you, concurrent -- final
19 comments -- concurrent education -- not concurrent,
20 rather, but the remedial education, developmental
21 education is very, very expensive, something we can
22 no longer accept. And this is an opportunity -- as
23 we have proven with our partnership with Cave City
24 and our eight other high schools that we serve in
25 northern Arkansas, and four or five in southern

1 Missouri, actually, this is an opportunity to reduce
2 the amount of remedial education needed for our
3 students that we share in partnering so that they can
4 get right into college-bearing classes when they come
5 to either UACCB or Ozarka College or one of the four-
6 years. So it's really a powerful opportunity. We're
7 very excited to share this with them, and this is our
8 most enthusiastic partnership and best partnership,
9 frankly, at this point that we have in the state. So
10 I fully endorse their application as a charter
11 school. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.

13 MS. FRAZIER: I want to say a few words on
14 behalf of the Cave City charter application. My name
15 is Deborah Frazier; I'm the University of Arkansas
16 Community College at Batesville chancellor, and I've
17 had the opportunity and my staff has had the
18 opportunity to work with Cave City's innovative
19 leadership for over 10 years. We have partnered with
20 them on several occasions, as Mr. Green alluded to
21 just a few moments ago. They were one of the first
22 high schools that participated in our college project
23 bound. It's been very successful. That occurred in
24 '07. In 2010, we successfully partnered with Cave
25 City again with the initiative, the career coach

1 initiative. I will tell you that these people were
2 very, very adamant that the very right person be
3 selected. They were on our search committee; they're
4 very collaborative; they're very innovative. They
5 have -- if I could describe the Cave City School
6 District in just a few words it would be that they
7 are very student centered. What they do every day,
8 Principal Walling and his staff, Superintendent
9 Green, is that they insure opportunities are going to
10 be had for their students. They promote their high
11 school students and the future for those students.
12 And I appreciate the opportunity to say they're
13 remarkable to work with and we fully support this
14 charter.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Any closing
16 words, Mr. Green?

17 SUPT. GREEN: No. Thank you. Thank y'all for
18 your time, very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Panel? Dr. Gotcher, if
20 you'll start our Q&A.

21 DR. GOTCHER: Good morning. I first of all want
22 to commend you all for an excellent presentation.
23 It's awesome to see the community partnerships
24 demonstrated by your attendance here with your
25 legislative support, as well as your community

1 support.

2 Keeping in mind your free and reduced numbers as
3 evidenced in your application and the reference two
4 or three times by the Charter Internal Review Board
5 or Committee, talking about a transportation plan and
6 specific reference to the extended day, knowing that
7 it's also been referenced the amount of kids and the
8 length of miles that they reside on dirt roads as
9 well -- so, talk more about that. I know that that
10 could be a barrier for many of the kids, especially
11 those that are wanting to achieve in this area. So,
12 please.

13 MR. WALLING: We appreciate the opportunity to
14 answer the question, also. For several years, we've
15 offered CPEP in the summer and also summer school;
16 we've provided transportation there. We have had an
17 extended day -- it's not formal, but we have had an
18 extended day to 4:05, 4:10 for a lot of programs
19 outside of this charter, in particular, including
20 tutoring, CPEP again, ACT preparation there, and also
21 interventions that we would've offered throughout the
22 years. This, in particular, the reason we brought it
23 into the charter was because we wanted to have our
24 students who do not have technology access at home,
25 if they are taking an online course or possibly two

1 online courses, to have the opportunity in the
2 extended day -- again, it's not formal -- to be able
3 to access our library or computer labs. We've done
4 -- for several years Mr. Green has committed a bus
5 route in the afternoon to take some of those extra
6 kids home, if they need it. But for the most part,
7 again, in the CPEP in the summer we have pickup
8 points and we get those kids to school. Mr. Green is
9 committed to taking those kids home, if that's what
10 it needs to be. The exciting part about the
11 personalized success plans is if that's a barrier for
12 that kid and we didn't know it, maybe it'll be
13 written in those personalized success plans and we
14 can approach the family, the kid, "Hey, come stay
15 after school, do your couple of online classes, if
16 that's what it is, and we'll have the bus through and
17 pick you up and take you home." Thank you for the
18 question.

19 DR. GOTCHER: You'll find a way to get them
20 home, is what I'm hearing.

21 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir. Absolutely.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

23 MS. PFEFFER: My question is on the licensure
24 waiver --

25 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

1 MS. PFEFFER: -- and I'm trying to think through
2 it; I may need to do it out-loud. But not all of
3 your kids will be part of the charter. Correct?

4 MR. WALLING: All the kids will have the
5 opportunity to be in the charter.

6 MS. PFEFFER: Right. But you still will have
7 like your district and then you'll have -- as part of
8 the district there will be a charter within the
9 district. Is that correct?

10 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. We would like for the
11 whole high school to be in the charter.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Because I'm just trying to
13 think through with the learning here. And I
14 understand you're talking about the waiver from
15 licensure; you say it will be used mostly, if not
16 totally, for instruction in non-core courses. And
17 this may even be a question for Legal because I don't
18 want to trip anybody up.

19 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

20 MS. PFEFFER: But I guess my question is if you
21 have some students who are participating in the
22 charter, some who are not, does that make a
23 difference on the licensure requirement for teachers
24 if you -- if we were to do that? Does that make
25 sense, Ms. Clay, what I'm asking?

1 MS. CLAY: Yes.

2 MR. WALLING: Oh, I'm sorry; Ms. Clay.

3 MS. CLAY: It does make sense. If students are
4 not participating in the charter, they will not --
5 the teachers of those classes will have to be
6 licensed in accordance with the licensure statutes
7 and rules. The only exception would be if the school
8 district itself pursued a waiver through another
9 mechanism by the State Board authorizing waiver
10 because it had been granted to an open-enrollment
11 charter school. But the waivers only apply to the
12 charter school and the students that the charter
13 school serves.

14 MS. PFEFFER: So how might this -- how might
15 that need to be worded within that, or how would we
16 -- how do we need to articulate that? Because I
17 don't think they're asking for a licensure waiver for
18 their math, English, science teachers necessarily,
19 but if the waiver is granted for the charter it could
20 be that they would employ a teacher not licensed.
21 Therefore, I'm trying to figure it out. How would
22 they balance that for students? Because I think I
23 understood somebody to say those students may
24 actually go back and forth between being part of the
25 charter and not.

1 MS. CLAY: Okay. If -- the way that the -- I'm
2 trying to -- if you want to make a waiver that you
3 grant specific to non-core courses, then you can do
4 that. If it's just a general licensure waiver, then
5 they would have the freedom to use that in their core
6 courses as well but only on their charter students.
7 Now the issue of students going in the charter and
8 out of the charter, I'm not following exactly what
9 the question is there.

10 MS. PFEFFER: Well, my point was just you could
11 have -- if the waiver were granted, you could have
12 students -- you know, one minute the teacher may not
13 be required; but then if there were students who were
14 not part of the charter it could.

15 MS. CLAY: So you're saying if there were
16 students -- charter students and non-charter students
17 in the same --

18 MS. PFEFFER: In the same class.

19 MS. CLAY: -- in the same class? That teacher
20 would be required to be licensed in accordance with
21 --

22 MS. PFEFFER: Yes.

23 MS. CLAY: -- our statutes and rules.

24 MS. PFEFFER: Yes.

25 MS. CLAY: Yes.

1 MS. PFEFFER: So that's my concern. And then I
2 would want to clarify for them what non-core -- what
3 the core includes with regards to licensure and
4 highly qualified status. So I guess I'm just -- I
5 know that complicates things but that would -- that's
6 a concern that I have with the way that the waiver is
7 worded.

8 MS. CLAY: Right. We may need some additional
9 discussion from them and then if it becomes an issue
10 that we need to make more specific on any waiver
11 that's granted we can deal with that at that point.

12 MS. PFEFFER: So, Mr. Green and Mr. Walling, can
13 you -- what is your goal here?

14 MR. WALLING: Our goal here is the good folks at
15 UACCB and Ozarka do not have an Arkansas state
16 teaching license and our kids going down there,
17 taking that welding program, those kids have to get
18 concurrent credit for us. We need a waiver for their
19 people to be able to give our kids concurrent credit
20 for that. And if those people come to our campus we
21 would like to use that, as well. We currently don't
22 have but one staff member on an alternative licensure
23 plan on our staff, but we would like to draw a
24 distinction between our staff and UACCB except in
25 this regard. If I had an engineer that had retired

1 and moved to southern Sharp County, and they did not
2 want to go through that process, I would -- you know
3 -- I would like to employ that period. If I didn't
4 have anybody else, I might like to employ that person
5 to teach chemistry for us. But that would be the
6 only exception; otherwise, it's going to be used in
7 the technical programs. If my team has anything to
8 add to that --

9 MS. PFEFFER: And I think I understand what
10 you're saying there. I just didn't -- as far as the
11 concurrent opportunities, that's really governed by
12 the concurrent agreement. If they're going to be on
13 campus though teaching classes for required
14 graduation credit, that waiver would be needed for a
15 non-core class. But then the chemistry situation
16 would bring it back to the core, so --

17 MR. WALLING: And if --

18 MS. PFEFFER: And I'm not trying to be difficult
19 again.

20 MR. WALLING: No.

21 MS. PFEFFER: I'm just -- I need to make sure
22 that we establish this the way it needs to be and --

23 MS. GREEN: One other issue is we do hope to
24 imbed some courses. We've been through that process
25 before; we have two imbedded courses now. We're

1 thrilled to be able to work with Mr. Coy in
2 accomplishing that goal. But to be able to imbed the
3 health, like within the LPN pre-req's, the Ozarka or
4 UACCB staff are not going to have an Arkansas license
5 to teach health. So to go through the ADE process
6 it's my understanding that the teacher needs to have
7 those -- both of those certifications. So that would
8 be another reason why we would need the licensure
9 waiver.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: So for me to clarify, would it --
11 I'm not real comfortable with the waiver for core
12 classes --

13 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: -- with licensure. But I can
15 understand the possibility of a waiver for courses
16 where they are receiving concurrent credit.

17 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that what you're looking for?

19 MR. WALLING: Well, yes, sir. The goal was the
20 concurrent credit, of course. We just -- especially
21 using UACCB and Ozarka people, most of those people
22 are not going to be employed by us; they're employed
23 by them. But if I did get that waiver -- but if it's
24 a deal-breaker, we understand that, to leave the
25 course alone. If a math teacher left me in June and

1 I had this -- you know -- had that opportunity to
2 hire that person and they didn't want to go through
3 the process, that would be the only thing I can
4 imagine that we would use it for a core. But, again,
5 if it's a deal-breaker, it's much more important that
6 I get the concurrent credit at the colleges for those
7 students. That's really why we need -- if you look
8 at it from the standpoint of the students, it works
9 this way right now: we have to go out here and drum
10 up support for a program, get the kids excited, get
11 the parents excited, find 10 kids, and then we have
12 to jump through all of the hoops; otherwise, we have
13 to put those kids on hold. Where if we have the
14 waiver we can -- what are our kids interested in
15 taking? What do they want to do? How do they --
16 what programs do they want? And I don't have to
17 worry about on the backside whether or not I'm going
18 to be able to get the waiver or not for those kids
19 and those families. That's why the licensure waiver
20 request.

21 DR. JONES: Just for clarification, you don't
22 have any of the core taught for concurrent credit on
23 their campus. Is that correct?

24 MR. WALLING: No. College algebra is taught on
25 our campus by their instructor and --

1 DR. JONES: Or by their instructor?

2 MR. WALLING: Yes.

3 DR. JONES: Okay.

4 MR. WALLING: I'm sorry; did I say that
5 correctly?

6 MS. GREEN: You did.

7 MR. WALLING: Okay.

8 DR. JONES: So you do have some core areas that
9 are concurrent credit?

10 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. PFEFFER: And this is to the Panel, just my
12 thinking here. You know, normally I would have more
13 reservations as far as those core areas, but I can
14 see -- I think what makes me more comfortable is the
15 level of community partnerships that they've
16 established. They've been very proactive with the --

17 DR. GOTCHER: I agree.

18 MS. PFEFFER: -- partnership with UACCB. I
19 think I could be comfortable with the waiver as it's
20 written and this would be something I would like to
21 monitor over the next few years to see the
22 utilization of teachers. I think it may be an
23 opportunity for us to learn something because of the
24 plan that they've put in place, and look at staffing
25 needs. So I guess I would be comfortable going on

1 record saying, you know, that my office -- I would
2 like to look and see how this plays out. Because
3 there's more and more need for concurrent and I know
4 that that's not necessarily an issue with licensure
5 if there's a concurrent agreement between the school.
6 But there are questions when those instructors come
7 onto campus and they're -- and if the welding course
8 is replacing the career tech welding course. It's a
9 difference in if it's above the minimum graduation
10 requirements and if it's replacing those. But now I
11 think that really, Ms. Barnes, from Standards, I
12 guess I need to know if -- how you feel about that,
13 as well. Is that -- are we creating, I guess, an
14 unforeseen consequence?

15 MS. BARNES: Let's see. Are we creating an
16 unforeseen consequence? No. I think I'm in
17 agreement -- well, I know I'm in agreement with the
18 concept and with everything that we're doing. Since
19 we do have permits that are allowable anyway, I don't
20 see an issue here down the road. And I do agree that
21 it's an opportunity for us to utilize this district's
22 request, should it be granted, as a way to look at
23 additional avenues for other schools and districts to
24 take. So I don't -- I mean, I can't say anything
25 about unforeseen; anything can happen. But I can say

1 that I'm very comfortable with the concept as it has
2 been presented.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer, what
4 monitoring would you feel comfortable with?

5 MS. PFEFFER: Well, we monitor on a regular
6 basis if there were any ALP's that come through or
7 needs for a long-term sub -- and as they said,
8 they've only got one teacher right now who is
9 teaching out of area. I think that what might be
10 good -- because this is kind of a new program -- is
11 if my office can just work with them and we get
12 maybe, you know, a yearly update on your teacher
13 qualifications and what they're doing -- because,
14 like I said, I think it's going to help us learn some
15 things -- and look at how teachers are being
16 utilized, depending on their areas of certifications
17 and their backgrounds. So -- and so maybe we could
18 just work into a yearly timeline between the
19 licensure office and Mr. Green's office.

20 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. If I offered to write
21 a report every year stating who we were -- what we
22 were doing, who we're using -- if we offered a
23 written report every year, that would be fantastic.

24 MS. PFEFFER: And this would be your high school
25 only?

1 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. PFEFFER: Is that correct?

3 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

4 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So there would be no
5 changes, just 9-12?

6 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Is that --

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones.

9 DR. JONES: Can I add to this? We as a state
10 feel if teachers teach their standards they will be
11 okay on the assessment, the new ACT Aspire
12 assessment. And so when you enter into contact with
13 the higher ed. institution and reach that agreement
14 on concurrent you're the one at the wheel saying,
15 "Okay, we're going to teach 12th grade concurrent
16 credit." There are standards and you need -- you're
17 the one that has to answer in the end. And the way
18 that you follow data -- and I can tell from your
19 goals and the data you understand your data. You're
20 in constant communication as they change over
21 professors, that you communicate that to them.
22 Because we don't follow behind and say, "Make sure
23 you're teaching your standards." Because you have so
24 many good listed measures of success, the job
25 shadowing, the three hours of college credit, the

1 internships, the industrial certification; you have
2 very specified goals, and that's wonderful. I want
3 you to grow those but I also want you to keep in mind
4 that end-of-the-year summative assessment test. And
5 I do believe by getting these kids into careers you
6 can get them more motivated to do better in their
7 core classes. So, do you understand what I'm saying?
8 It's okay if they feel okay that they're not a
9 certified teacher, but they have to be very aware of
10 the expectations of the standards.

11 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

12 DR. JONES: Thank you.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: I wanted to clarify, if I may.
14 Ms. Pfeffer, regarding the way that the waiver is
15 currently written, the way that I understand the
16 waiver as it's written, it would allow for a waiver
17 from all licensure 9th through 12th grade on any
18 course. So, therefore, there would not be any ALP's
19 or long-term sub requests. Correct?

20 MS. PFEFFER: No. We would not -- I don't think
21 there would be any of those. I think it would be a
22 matter of a yearly report at the beginning of the
23 year as to what teachers -- how teachers are being
24 placed. And we would look at that at the beginning
25 of each year and then follow-up with them for that,

1 because they would be getting the waiver for the 9-
2 12. Without having that waiver, it's going to be
3 very difficult for them because they're going to have
4 some students that are participating in the charter
5 and some that are not. And if they're in the same
6 class, then you're going back and forth between
7 having to have a licensed teacher or not.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Would you have all students
9 enrolled in your high school in the charter?

10 MR. WALLING: Would we have all our students
11 enrolled in the charter?

12 MS. GREEN: No.

13 SUPT. GREEN: We do appreciate it and we will
14 make every endeavor not to take advantage of your
15 graciousness today.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Other questions?

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah, I want to follow-up on a
18 similar thing. I know you have a request for a
19 waiver from principal licensure and responsibilities.

20 MR. WALLING: Pardon? Principal licensure?

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. A waiver from 6-17-302,
22 Qualifications and Responsibilities of a Principal?

23 MR. WALLING: No, sir. We did ask for a waiver
24 for a library media specialist for those
25 qualifications.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: I'm looking at page, I guess, 111
2 on our agenda, at the bottom underneath Licensure,
3 item 2. Am I in the wrong place? Page 111 on our
4 agenda.

5 MR. WALTER: Pardon me. Ms. Coffman, may I
6 clarify?

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes. State your name for
8 the record.

9 MR. WALTER: Tripp Walter, staff attorney,
10 Arkansas Public School Resource Center. In visiting
11 with the Cave City team, they have advised me that
12 that was unintentional to put in the 6-17-302 waiver.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: So go ahead and strike that one?

14 MR. WALTER: It was for teachers only. Yes,
15 sir.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Will you come back and
18 clarify -- you were asking for a waiver for library
19 media specialist?

20 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. That's the one we had
21 written in there. It's unique to us in that my high
22 school librarian is also a certified English teacher.
23 She also teaches concurrent English through UACCB for
24 us right now, 12th grade concurrent college English.
25 There are years -- there's been a few -- given our

1 number of students on campus and given our class
2 sizes where her numbers have been above 30 every two
3 or three or four years. It's not something that
4 happens every year for us. But we do not like -- we
5 don't want to ask for a numbers waiver where she
6 would have 32 in a class. We don't think that's
7 good. So what I do ask -- what I ask for there is
8 that the years I have to split her class, say 16 in
9 two classes, that the period that she's out of
10 library extra that I be allowed to put an aid in the
11 library for that period so that we can split that
12 class. It doesn't happen very often, but it has
13 happened to us in the past. And rather than asking
14 for us to put 32 in the class, I ask for us to be
15 able to split that class and an aid take care of the
16 library that period for us.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Other
18 questions?

19 MR. WALTER: May I just add a point? As with
20 most of the waivers that I'd call service-based
21 waivers, I just wanted to provide reassurance on
22 behalf of the district, if it hasn't already been
23 made clear, that they will provide the services
24 required. There will be -- library media services
25 will be provided. They just ask for this flexibility

1 given the unique situation with their current library
2 media specialist.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Other
4 questions? Dr. Jones.

5 DR. JONES: I appreciate the fact that you work
6 with Thomas Coy on your imbedded classes. Let me
7 encourage you, as soon as this is approved, if it's
8 approved, to meet with him again and make sure all
9 those are in order. The health concurrent credit
10 will be a first for us and in order for them to be
11 able to do that, they would have to receive the
12 waiver of the license to be able to do that. But
13 that really is more to protect students than just be
14 a compliance issue. Okay? So as soon as this is
15 over, when you can meet with him.

16 MS. GREEN: Absolutely.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I ask --

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: -- a question back on the
20 licensure? It may be for Legal. I'm trying to
21 understand. So if you have a mixed course -- say
22 some students are in the charter, some of the
23 students are not in the charter -- let me just give
24 an example; let's say it's English 1 and the teacher
25 is not licensed. The teacher would have to be

1 licensed because it's a mixed course. Is that
2 correct?

3 MS. CLAY: Yes. If there are students in that
4 course that are not a part of the charter, that
5 teacher would have to be licensed.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And the district does have
7 the ability to come back and file for a waiver from
8 licensure, open-enrollment charter schools -- for
9 example, licensure for that particular class for
10 those students that are not in the charter; however,
11 it would not apply in that case because of highly
12 qualified with it being a core class. Correct?

13 MS. CLAY: That's correct.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I just wanted to clarify
15 that.

16 MS. PFEFFER: And as is the case with all of
17 these, the instructor would have to be highly
18 qualified. So they would have to have at least a
19 bachelor's degree and either a certain number of
20 college credit hours in that content or have passed
21 the appropriate Praxis assessment. So that would be
22 for all of those. And I think I would reiterate it
23 is not the intent of this school district to put non-
24 licensed educators in English 9, 10, 11 or 12.

25 MR. WALLING: Absolutely not.

1 MS. PFEFFER: It would be in situations,
2 especially like the health class, where you've got
3 the students and -- so I just would advocate, because
4 of the level of involvement from the colleges and the
5 careful planning that has been done, that it would be
6 an opportunity to look at this and see how the waiver
7 is utilized and what works best for students. But
8 that if we did start noticing there was an issue then
9 the charter could be brought back in and, if
10 necessary, that waiver could be adjusted.

11 DR. JONES: Just curious why -- don't you have
12 400 students?

13 MS. GREEN: Yes.

14 DR. JONES: Okay. Why are all students not
15 going into the charter? Is it a political issue?

16 MS. GREEN: Honestly, most of our freshmen are
17 in regular courses. We want them to have some pre-
18 req's. If they're going to do the welding, we want
19 them to do agri science and technology and our
20 welding before they do the concurrent welding. So at
21 the freshman level we may see the occasional really
22 bright student who wants to take advantage of that,
23 but that's probably very limited. As they get older
24 and they're seniors, I could see probably close to
25 100%, I'm hoping, participating in the charter by

1 that point in time. So I think it's going to
2 increase as the students get older and become ready
3 for the courses.

4 DR. JONES: So you have an example of a really
5 good personalized learning plan.

6 MS. GREEN: Yes.

7 DR. JONES: And people talk about this all the
8 time, but they can't do that because they don't
9 provide choice. Could that not be a choice of
10 students in the charter and they just choose a
11 traditional pathway --

12 MS. GREEN: Yes.

13 DR. JONES: -- as 9th graders?

14 MS. GREEN: Yes. It certainly could.

15 DR. JONES: That's what I was -- I was trying to
16 figure that out.

17 MS. GREEN: Absolutely.

18 DR. JONES: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Would you also address the
20 reason for the 1,200?

21 MS. BELL: Yes. That number 1,200, we've had a
22 lot of questions on that. That number is the number
23 of students that we have in our district. That's why
24 I used the number 1,200, mainly because I did not
25 want to limit us in any way. And I know that sounds

1 like a large number, especially when we say we have
2 400 in our high school. But the truth is we just
3 didn't want to limit ourselves and that number can be
4 adjusted, if needed.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions? I
6 have one question. As I was reading through, I
7 noticed one reference to electrician and I didn't see
8 that reference again. So could you talk about -- do
9 you have a program for an electrician certificate?

10 MS. GREEN: Currently, what we have, in the agri
11 department we do have this electricity course, small
12 engines and things like that. But the NATF, the
13 National Apprentice Training Foundation, we have
14 several of our graduates who are actually four-year
15 master electricians who come and teach those classes.
16 That's a great job opportunity for a lot of my
17 students. It's one night a week; it's four hours.
18 Right now, I don't believe there's a course code. I
19 probably couldn't even give students credit for this.
20 But if we could have a waiver of the school day -- if
21 I have a young man, I may can help him get a job; he
22 would work about 20 hours in that field, attend class
23 one night a week. Now, obviously, he would need to
24 have his graduation credits already achieved to be
25 able to do that. But that would waive his school

1 day; it would enable him to be able to do that. We
2 have visited with them briefly, Ms. Bell and I are
3 going to make a trip down there as soon as we get --
4 a little of this dust kind of settles. But that's
5 our goal with that, so they could start on that four-
6 year path to a very gainful employment job.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I hope you'll include the
8 females, as well.

9 MS. GREEN: Absolutely. Absolutely.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We're always looking for a
11 good electrician at our house, and they do -- it does
12 pay quite well.

13 MS. GREEN: It does.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: I would also encourage you
15 to consider data of the job availability in your area
16 and I would assume that there's a need for plumbers -
17 -

18 MS. GREEN: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- and heating and air.
20 And I'm thinking of all the people we've had in our
21 home recently that we need qualified people for that
22 make pretty good salaries.

23 MS. GREEN: Yes. We have --

24 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And the better qualified
25 they are, the better for the homeowners.

1 MS. GREEN: Yes.

2 MR. LESTER: I need a chef.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You need a chef.

4 MR. LESTER: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions?

6 DR. SAUNDERS: I do.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I'd like to kind of go through
9 some of the waivers and just clarify --

10 MR. WALLING: Sure.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: -- what we're looking at, if
12 that's all right. And if you're on the agenda, I'm
13 just going to begin on page 110, starting with number
14 one. The Professional Development was withdrawn.
15 Correct?

16 MR. WALLING: Yes.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And, let's see, number
18 two, Physical Education as an imbedded course, are
19 you still requesting that or would you like --

20 MR. WALLING: No, sir. We withdrew that one.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Withdrew. Okay. And on the
22 licensure, as we discussed through many angles, you
23 did strike the principal licensure?

24 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. The Planned Instructional

1 Day, if you could, could you just tell me a little
2 bit about that? I know that you're looking at four
3 days a week to allow kids coming in at 10:00 --

4 MR. WALLING: Yes.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: -- four days a week?

6 MR. WALLING: What we would do there is if the
7 college schedule requires those kids to be there from
8 8:00 to 10:00 on Monday through Thursday, but does
9 not require them to go on Fridays, we would not allow
10 -- we would not have that student report to us then
11 till 10:00 on Friday morning with that waiver.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: So, okay. So what you're looking
13 at, I think, is decreasing the amount of time, not
14 the time that they're in the -- at the -- while
15 they're taking college courses --

16 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: -- and/or travel time as well?

18 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

20 MR. WALLING: And the travel time is also
21 necessary there because it's a 30-minute trip either
22 way, to Ozarka or UACCB.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that already accommodated for
24 in law? Do we need a waiver from that? Would that
25 waiver be needed?

1 MS. CLAY: Can you repeat what -- the scenario
2 that you're talking about?

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. I think the waiver was for
4 the time that they're enrolled in the concurrent
5 classes and the travel time. And if I'm not correct,
6 I think that's already accommodated for in the law,
7 is it not?

8 MS. CLAY: As being instructional time?

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes.

10 MS. CLAY: You're correct.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: That can already be counted. So
12 would this waiver be needed?

13 MS. CLAY: If that's all they're using it for,
14 then no.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Would that be all?

16 MR. WALLING: No. There is a lot of --

17 MS. GREEN: Well, the apprenticeship program I
18 mentioned, if I had a senior, we're not talking about
19 many students. That's the only other I can think of.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: So you wouldn't need it on the
21 apprenticeship program?

22 MS. GREEN: Yes.

23 MR. WALLING: Yes, we would need it on the
24 apprenticeship.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: And the Required Clock Time for

1 Unit of Credit, can you just hit on that a little
2 bit?

3 MR. WALLING: Yeah. Again, it's a travel
4 situation for us. Those kids, getting those credits,
5 we just need that seat time waiver or clock time
6 waiver there also for really the same purposes, those
7 kids that are traveling. As it is now, the entire
8 burden of what we're doing is on our students. They
9 have to come at 7:30 if they're going to participate
10 because we don't have those two waivers. They have
11 to stay an extra hour after school. The whole burden
12 is on them. Of course, that's getting them home, but
13 that's an hour out of their day and they have to make
14 choices. With those two waivers, we see us being
15 able to offer those within our school day without the
16 burden being on them.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Can you just give me an example
18 of that, application?

19 MR. WALLING: CNA would be an example of that in
20 the spring. Those students in the CNA program --
21 which, by the way, we had 26 kids apply for the CNA
22 program; they could only accept 16. So we're proud
23 of the students that come forward on that. But as
24 it's set up in the spring, they're going to stay
25 seventh hour and then they're going to stay after

1 school till 4:15. That program will be over with
2 about the first of April. With the seat time waiver
3 I could let those students go on after sixth hour,
4 seventh hour, when they're done with that coursework.
5 Again, about the first of April they could go on,
6 they could start -- they might even be able to get a
7 job their senior year there, the last couple of
8 months.

9 MS. WALTER: Ms. Coffman, if I may, I believe
10 these are -- the attempt is to do the same thing, I
11 think, as other conversion charters that have come
12 before you have tried to do, again to try to deal
13 with the specific issues relating to internships,
14 concurrent credit, and making sure that we don't --
15 that the district doesn't inadvertently perhaps run
16 afoul of the standards or the statutes in trying to
17 meet the instructional time and seat time
18 requirements.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: Number six you have withdrawn,
20 Health and Safety?

21 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: And Licensed Library Media
23 Specialist, I had some questions on this one. It
24 seems to me the Library Media Specialist would be
25 pulled out. Would she be the one that you'd be

1 referencing later on as the career coach?

2 MR. WALLING: No, sir. My Library Media
3 Specialist is my lady that teaches -- she teaches --
4 she's an employee of ours but she teaches concurrent
5 credit college English through UACCB. And in the
6 years that I'm above 30 in her class that I have to
7 split it I need somebody to cover the library for
8 her. And I'm asking for an aid for that period so
9 that she can teach the 16 kids that would go to the
10 other section of college English.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: And that would be for one period
12 a day?

13 MR. WALLING: Yes, sir. It would be for two, if
14 we have to split it, but the aid would only be
15 necessary in there. Yes, sir.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

17 MR. WALLING: I apologize; I understand what
18 you're asking now.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: All right. That was the end of
20 them, I believe.

21 MR. WALLING: We did want to state though that,
22 you know, charter school, we're only going to be one
23 LEA; we're only going to be Cave City High School
24 with a charter school. It's not going to be two
25 LEA's. And we were -- we want to make sure that the

1 committee understands that's not our goal to be two
2 LEA's.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Kendra, do you want to
5 speak to that topic?

6 MS. CLAY: I do. They will have separate LEA's.
7 Our staff requires that the conversion charter
8 school, even if it's a school within a school, have a
9 separate LEA than the regular high school.

10 DR. JONES: That's why I wanted you to think
11 about that very carefully. Because as you go back
12 and you show measures of success you have to think
13 about the kids you're pulling off. So the real
14 question is do you want all of your high school kids
15 in a charter or do you still want them separated?

16 MS. GREEN: So we need to say --

17 MR. WALLING: The answer is yes. Yes to that
18 question.

19 DR. JONES: You want all your high school kids
20 -- it's a charter?

21 MS. GREEN: Yes.

22 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. We want all our high
23 school kids in the charter.

24 MS. GREEN: Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You can still offer the

1 personalized learning and the college routes and it
2 just opens up -- it expands your opportunities. Any
3 other -- Ms. Barnes?

4 MS. BARNES: No.

5 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions? Ms.
6 Clay, are there any remaining issues?

7 MS. CLAY: Dr. Saunders almost took care of them
8 for me, but there is one issue. Since they withdrew
9 the request for the principal licensure, 6-17-302,
10 they would also need to withdraw the standards for
11 accreditation, 15.02. So if they'll agree to that, I
12 have no other issues.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: What so say you?

14 MR. WALTER: The district agrees to remove that
15 corresponding piece of standards.

16 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Any final
17 words? I'll accept a motion.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I move to accept the proposal.

19 MS. PFEFFER: And I second it. And I just want
20 to add too that this is a neighboring district from
21 where I grew up and -- you know -- so we know -- we
22 kind of keep up with each other. And I am impressed
23 with the progress they've made over the last few
24 years. When I was still at Pocahontas they really
25 took on LDC, some of those initiatives. And I would

1 say if I were back in that -- in the Pocahontas
2 district I'd be looking at Cave City right now,
3 looking to see maybe if I would want to emulate some
4 of the things they're doing. So I appreciate it.
5 And I'm willing to go out on a limb with the
6 licensure piece and we'll work together. You'll -- I
7 guess you'll hear from me quite a bit.

8 SUPT. GREEN: Yes, ma'am.

9 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or
10 comments? We have a motion by Dr. Saunders and a
11 second by Ms. Pfeffer to accept the request from Cave
12 City High School Career and Collegiate Preparatory
13 School. All those in favor of the motion?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion
16 is passed. If you'll wait patiently, they'll give
17 you a response to why they voted that way.

18 SUPT. GREEN: Thank you.

19 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Green, while they're
21 talking, I would just say how much we appreciate the
22 Cave City School District being willing to step out
23 and take on LDC/MDC in that pilot year. They did
24 amazing work. The teachers were just amazing to work
25 with and they did amazing work. And I think your

1 students have seen the fruits of that labor.

2 SUPT. GREEN: Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Barnes.

4 MS. BARNES: Yes, ma'am. I voted in favor of
5 the request. This concept demonstrates the type of
6 student responsive approaches to learning and
7 citizenry I expect to see in education.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

9 DR. GOTCHER: I voted for the proposal. I felt
10 the applicant demonstrated strong community
11 partnerships and further demonstrated that their
12 application would meet the needs of their students
13 for college and career readiness. And just added
14 that it's an exemplary model. Well done.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones.

16 DR. JONES: The applicant provided great detail
17 in their goals, measures, and supporting data. They
18 have developed multiple options for students which
19 allow them to create successful personal learning
20 plans.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

22 MR. LESTER: I believe the district has the
23 programs and the partnerships currently in place to
24 meet the goals as outlined in their application.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

1 MS. LIWO: I voted in favor. I think that they
2 have an innovative plan that caters to students that
3 want to attend college and don't want to attend
4 college. We have a climate of providing students
5 with hands-on experience through internships, job
6 shadowing, et cetera. There is strong community
7 support and involvement. And I'm not a big fan of
8 teacher licensure waivers, but I think that you've
9 provided a valid and convincing reason for a waiver
10 in this situation.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

12 MS. PFEFFER: I believe the district has done
13 much work to lay the foundation for the success of
14 this charter with their community partnerships and
15 support necessary to provide personalized learning
16 opportunities for students.

17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

18 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it because it's a
19 successful school district along with local community
20 and local institutional higher ed. support working to
21 give students additional learning opportunities.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: I believe this provides
24 flexibility to accommodate their students' needs and
25 prepare them for success.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Congratulations to Cave
2 City. And we'll expect to hear great things from you
3 and we look forward to those opportunities to share
4 your story across the state. Thank you.

5 SUPT. GREEN: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We'll take another seven-
7 minute break.

8 (BREAK: 11:05-11:17 A.M.)

9 A-4: HEARING OF DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
10 APPLICATION: FAYETTEVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We are ready to reconvene.
12 Ms. Boyd, you are recognized for action item four.

13 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Action item
14 four, Hearing of District Conversion Public Charter
15 School Application: Fayetteville Virtual Academy.
16 Fayetteville Virtual Academy is a proposed district
17 conversion virtual public charter school. The
18 applicant is requesting to serve grades K-12 with a
19 maximum enrollment of 500. ADE staff reviewed the
20 application, and concerns were shared with the
21 applicant for response. The application, the ADE
22 evaluation, and the applicant's response are included
23 for your review. On behalf of the Fayetteville
24 School District we have Holly Johnson, who is the
25 Director of Development, Grants and Community

1 Relations to begin their presentation.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: If all the representatives
3 from the Fayetteville Virtual Academy and anyone
4 speaking in opposition will please stand to receive
5 the oath and raise your right hand. Do you swear or
6 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall
7 be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
8 truth?

9 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Johnson, you are
11 recognized.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Good afternoon. As they
13 mentioned, I am Holly Johnson. I'm the Director of
14 Development, Grants and Community Relations for the
15 Fayetteville School District. I am pleased to be
16 with you today to present our plans for Fayetteville
17 Virtual Academy. And if we may, we have some
18 information that we would like to present to you
19 right now, if we have your permission.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay.

21 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. Please take a moment
22 to read about the types of students who will benefit
23 from Fayetteville Virtual Academy and even perhaps
24 select one of those students and imagine yourself the
25 parent or the guardian who is considering our new

1 virtual school. I will give you a few moments to
2 review and then we will begin our presentation.
3 Thank you very much.

4 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

5 SUPT. HEWITT: Good morning. I am Paul Hewitt;
6 I'm superintendent of Fayetteville Public School
7 District. And I am really excited to be here with
8 you today to present you with our virtual charter
9 school proposal. One of our underlying principles in
10 this is to insure that we're addressing the needs of
11 all of our students in the full spectrum. And we
12 believe this charter school reflects the commitment
13 of our district to innovate and create, to educate
14 every child and give them a great opportunity. We
15 currently have two schools of innovation in our
16 district. We will have more as we move forward.
17 This charter school is in keeping with our goal of
18 innovating and providing quality education for every
19 child in the district and reaching out to those who
20 may not already even be in our system. So I'm
21 excited to present that today. And I would like to
22 present to you the members of the team who will be
23 here today: Dr. Kim Garrett, who will be doing the
24 bulk of the presentation, she's Associate
25 Superintendent of Secondary Education; Mr. John L.

1 Colbert, who is the Associate Superintendent of
2 Elementary Education; Ms. Kay Jacoby, who is our
3 Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Accountability
4 and Assessment; Mr. Mark White, who's Assistant
5 Principal at Fayetteville High School; Ms. Holly
6 Johnson, whom you've met, is our Director of
7 Development, and her job description is "other duties
8 as assigned;" Kathy Hanlon is our Chief Financial
9 Officer. And, again, I'm excited and we'd like to
10 present -- begin this presentation with a short
11 video.

12 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: A video was shown, and
13 may be viewed on the ADE website.)

14 DR. GARRETT: Thank you, Members of the Charter
15 Authorizing Panel. I am Kim Garrett, Associate
16 Superintendent for Fayetteville Schools. This is a
17 great opportunity to present our proposal for our
18 Fayetteville Virtual Academy. While we have been
19 working collaboratively with students, teachers and
20 parents to develop this specific model for over a
21 year, many of us have been thinking about -- for many
22 years about how to take a bigger step into
23 personalized learner-focused structure that
24 technology will provide us. As a district leader, I
25 am the contact person for all K-12 home-schooled

1 students who live in our district. It is a rare week
2 when I do not get an email from the state granting
3 approval of yet another Fayetteville Public School
4 student to be home-schooled. And while we know that
5 some parents take that responsibility very seriously
6 and they purchase appropriate curriculum, they devote
7 the time needed to teach their children, we all know
8 that many parents simply lack the skills or knowledge
9 to find those appropriate resources to teach their
10 children. But every year, because of unique needs
11 and situations, many students and parents leave our
12 system for a more focused learner-centered education
13 than the one that we can provide in a traditional
14 education at this time. There are medical needs that
15 prevent some students from being able to function
16 academically for six hours in a row or in a typical
17 classroom environment. We have young athletes with
18 dreams of competing nationally or internationally who
19 have long practice schedules. We have students who
20 need to work more hour to support their families or
21 baby-sit young siblings. We have students who desire
22 to move through courses faster than their grade level
23 peers. And, of course, we have our at-risk students.
24 Because of how the internet has changed our lives,
25 many children lose interest in schools that move

1 through set curriculum at one pace. And while our
2 traditional teachers work very diligently to
3 differentiate instruction, connect lessons to their
4 children's lives, the structure of the traditional
5 public education system prevents a level of
6 personalization that can be achieved through the
7 virtual anywhere, any time type of learning
8 environment. We are excited that the Fayetteville
9 Virtual Academy will provide one of the highest
10 levels of personalization available at this time for
11 those parents and students who need or desire a more
12 personalized approach. Additionally, Fayetteville
13 Virtual Academy will impact the education of all
14 students in our learning system. We are excited to
15 embark on moving to a more learner-centered
16 instructional model in Fayetteville Public Schools
17 and we believe that our work in the Fayetteville
18 Virtual Academy will serve as an incubator to help
19 all teachers learn how to use more high quality
20 personalized teaching strategies in their classrooms.
21 Fayetteville Virtual Academy will not only affect the
22 500 students who eventually choose a fulltime virtual
23 environment, but we believe this school will serve as
24 a model for implementing learner-focused personalized
25 learning for all Fayetteville children and even those

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outside of our district and across the state.

At this time we have selected FuelEd as our curriculum provider because we believe that the quality of the curriculum and the flexibility within the curriculum will allow our teachers to add, delete and tailor the curriculum to the high expectations that we set for all Fayetteville Public School students. Under the umbrella of K-12, we will be using K-12's K-5 curriculum and FuelEd's 6-12 curriculum. Both of these packages take place on the platform of Peak, which is supposed by Blackboard. All courses that we use will be aligned to Arkansas standards and we will seek NCAA approval for our high school courses. We will use Fayetteville Public School teachers to deliver instruction in our core courses and we will use FuelEd teachers for our online electives. Over 65% of Fayetteville Public teachers have at least a master's degree, which makes our faculty one of the best educated staffs in the state. We believe this level of expertise will make a significant difference in the percent of students who are successful through a virtual curriculum package. Because one of the themes of virtual experience is to allow students more choices, we believe that we will always use some FuelEd teachers

1 for those unique electives. However, as we grow we
2 will hire more Fayetteville Public School teachers
3 for the popular electives. Our students will be
4 taking seven online courses. They will take the four
5 core courses, a semester of music and a semester of
6 art, fulltime of foreign language, and a PE course as
7 the foundation. If a student would like to take an
8 elective course at one of our junior highs or high
9 school, he or she will have that opportunity in
10 addition to the provided courses or to replace the
11 foreign language or PE course, if that's not required
12 as a graduation requirement. Additionally, as a Tier
13 3 intervention support our struggling 7th through
14 12th grade students will be able to take a core
15 course in one of our traditional schools to provide
16 that face-to-face support that may be required for
17 some students to be successful.

18 Each student will have a personalized learning
19 plan that supports the flexibility of that student to
20 be a successful learner. This will be based on data,
21 standardized assessments, grades, student
22 inventories, self-assessment, and goals. A plan is
23 then backward mapped to reach these goals, whether a
24 child chooses one course at a time or all seven at
25 once. A plan for field experiences is created to

1 support relationships, explore the community and
2 students' interest, and to specialize. While we know
3 that younger students will generally be doing more
4 exploration with the older students doing more
5 specialization, the flexibility of our model supports
6 each student doing field experiences that are
7 tailored to his or her needs. All of our teachers
8 will have office hours at the Fayetteville Virtual
9 Academy, onsite, so that they can schedule groups of
10 students for extended or remedial learning sessions
11 or students and parents can schedule time face-to-
12 face with our teachers. And we will have the broad
13 array of intervention support and expertise that are
14 available within the comprehensive Fayetteville
15 School District. We have an abundance of reading,
16 language, math supplemental programs. We have
17 district specialists in reading, math, behavior,
18 special education, CTE, 504, and we plan to continue
19 to expand in additional curriculum areas. Since
20 Fayetteville Virtual Academy will be one of our 15
21 schools and 3 programs, we have a response to
22 intervention structure that is designed to support
23 student success. One of the best parts of a learner-
24 centered instructional model is also the ability to
25 fill in gaps of knowledge, compared to just moving on

1 because the unit ended. Our goal is that with this
2 type of instruction fewer students will need
3 interventions, special education, and 504, because we
4 will be progressing through learning sequences
5 because the student is ready and not because the bell
6 rang.

7 Besides our students having personal contact
8 with our teachers through the design of their
9 personal learning plan, they will have these two
10 unique advantages that I have mentioned that many
11 online programs do not offer. They will have the
12 opportunity weekly to participate in field
13 experiences, again, that build those connections and
14 help them understand the larger picture of why a
15 quality education is important to their future.
16 Again, office hours, which is unique to our
17 structure, so that teachers can support small groups
18 and one-on-one extended and remedial learning.

19 The foundation of our model has been created to
20 support success. After reading multiple publications
21 about online learning, visiting with successful
22 online schools and even a district that stepped back
23 from their online program, we determined to begin
24 small and begin in the middle. First, we are only
25 going to accept 100 students the first year so that

1 we can insure the high quality of the program that
2 our community is used to. We will begin with a
3 smaller ratio of student/teacher assistance. Then we
4 will add 125 students in grades 9 and 10 the second
5 year. We'll add another 125 students the third year
6 in grades 11 and 12. And the final fourth year we
7 will go back, pick up K-3 and add an additional 150
8 students, which will put us reaching 500 students K-
9 12. We are starting with grades 4-8 because of our
10 research. Most students in the middle level have
11 built a foundation in reading to support their online
12 learning, but they're not building a high school
13 transcript yet. This will then allow us an extra
14 year to insure that our courses have NCAA approval
15 and work out the structure of those who may want to
16 take advantage of multiple Fayetteville High School
17 electives while still taking their core courses
18 through the virtual school. We're going to pick up
19 K-3 last because we've learned that this population
20 relies the heaviest on parental support and this
21 learning is so critical to all the sequences that go
22 after it. We want the most time to insure that this
23 is done extremely well.

24 While we have asked for a 40-to-1 student ratio
25 toward the end of our model, in Fayetteville Public

1 Schools we do what's best to insure success. For
2 example, we have the ability now in our regular
3 education classrooms with our secondary teachers to
4 have our teachers have up to 150 students. However,
5 you will frequently find across our secondary schools
6 teachers have much smaller numbers because their
7 students' unique needs require a smaller class size.
8 We may also do that same thing to provide the
9 support, if it's needed.

10 While we have written a grant to help us with
11 start-up costs, we have also set aside money in our
12 district that supports us to be able to provide the
13 support necessary to insure that our students are
14 successful. Because our charter school is part of
15 the comprehensive district, we are able to leverage
16 financial, instructional, special ed., ELL, CTE, and
17 many other supports to insure success. Our district
18 has the following district staff members that support
19 all of our schools: a director of English Language
20 Arts; a director of Career Education; director of
21 Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement; director
22 of Federal Programs and ESL; four math coaches; 15
23 instructional facilitators; a district behavioral
24 consultant who is board certified in behavioral
25 analysis; eight psychological examiners; and many

1 special ed. teachers. In addition, we have already
2 received a grant from the Fayetteville Public School
3 Foundation that will cover the first year of all of
4 our free and reduced lunch students' cost of internet
5 and will continue to work to provide this access for
6 families who need it. Once we reach 200 students,
7 this school will be financially solvent. And since
8 our goal is to support student success and not make
9 money, we will continue to focus resources on student
10 success.

11 You can see from our timeline that we understand
12 the importance of teacher training. What is not
13 shown on our timeline is that our district leadership
14 team and four additional teachers and instructional
15 facilitators in our district attended I-Nicole [ps]
16 last week to deepen our knowledge. We feel very
17 comfortable with the training and the support that
18 our staff members at our virtual program will
19 receive.

20 And, of course, we will be using the best
21 practices of multiple and frequent measures of
22 success. Part of the choice of choosing FuelEd this
23 year was the ease for which our teachers will be able
24 to frequently gauge how their students are doing,
25 both academically and frequency of use. The

1 flexibility of our structure will even allow for that
2 face-to-face support as it's needed. Our teachers
3 will monitor progress of their students daily. Our
4 teachers will connect with parents weekly. Their
5 personal learning plans will be reviewed monthly at
6 least. We know that whatever we do we have to be
7 financially solvent so that we can continue to
8 leverage our resources to provide support. We want
9 our students, families and teachers to be able to
10 achieve their goals and dreams, return each year,
11 tell their friends; in addition, our students
12 demonstrating the academic success of college and
13 career readiness through ACT, AP scores, grades in
14 concurrent courses, certificates for career
15 readiness. We really believe that our students will
16 be more focused so that by the time they reach
17 college they will have fewer changes in their majors
18 because they have had the opportunity to explore
19 their interests and to specialize and study deeply.
20 Each child is unique and each child has specific
21 needs and desires. Whether that student is Jack,
22 Kara, Kevin, Anne, as described in the handout that
23 was delivered to you at the beginning of our
24 presentation, or any child who enters our school, our
25 goal is that that child can reach his or her

1 potential. We are excited to be able to implement a
2 model of personalized student focused learning in
3 this state, and we look forward to sharing what we
4 learn and supporting more students to reach their
5 dreams and goals. We are available to answer your
6 questions.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Is there
8 anyone here to speak in opposition?

9 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You have five additional
11 minutes.

12 DR. GARRETT: We so appreciate this time to come
13 before you today. While I have represented the team,
14 please know that this has been a team effort and it
15 has been my privilege to work with each of them. We
16 also appreciate the guidance and the partnership of
17 ADE as we move forward in all of our efforts to
18 provide options that best meet the needs of our
19 students. Again, I would ask you to consider Jack,
20 Kara, Kevin, and Anne. Each of these students
21 described symbolizes real students in our community
22 who are waiting for an opportunity that we can give
23 them through the Fayetteville Virtual Academy. Jack
24 is an advanced student. He wants to work ahead but
25 he still wants to be able to participate in district

1 activities with his friends. On average within our
2 school district we have approximately 500 students in
3 our Gifted and Talented programs in the elementary,
4 but we see a gap at the high school level with
5 students who are not enrolling in the rigor that they
6 could be. Giving options to students, like Jack,
7 giving them that personalized learning plan to
8 support them will help keep them engaged. Kara --
9 she's an athlete, competing at a world class level.
10 Right now, we have students who fit this profile. We
11 have a medal winning water-skier, a champion golfer,
12 an equestrian. All these students struggle to
13 balance the sport, the love of what they have found
14 value in, but also their education. Again,
15 Fayetteville Virtual Academy makes this possible.
16 Kevin -- students like Kevin are waiting for relief,
17 a way to study that works for him or her. We have
18 approximately 20 homebound students who have found
19 that attending school on a regular basis is just not
20 possible for them. Learning for them is not
21 something that they look forward to. But, again,
22 Fayetteville Virtual Academy can provide that
23 support. Anne -- she represents those students who
24 are -- they're just now finding their path in life;
25 they're ready to get started, and she's ready for

1 that flexibility that we can give her so that she can
2 push forward and not feel that she's held back those
3 final years. Each and every student at Fayetteville
4 Virtual Academy will also become part of the
5 Fayetteville Public School family and all that that
6 entails, friendships with fellow students,
7 relationships with teachers, opportunities to become
8 an integral part of the local and national community,
9 but always having Fayetteville Public School District
10 behind them. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you. Panel, it's
12 time for questions. Dr. Saunders?

13 DR. SAUNDERS: Sure. Looking at the
14 application, I want to start off with one thing that
15 you referenced earlier concerning the -- let me just
16 read from what's on the application. This is coming
17 from some unresolved issues. It says, "The applicant
18 states that the charter will provide a computer and
19 needed accessories via a one year loan to low income
20 families," but low income is not defined. "The
21 charter will require the families to pay for
22 connectivity" -- and I know that you referenced that
23 in your presentation. Could you speak to that a
24 little bit?

25 DR. GARRETT: Yes, absolutely. First of all,

1 with the technology we have decided that we have the
2 ability so any student or family who says "we have a
3 need for a device," we are going to provide that
4 device. We do not want to set an income level. We
5 felt like that is important because we need the
6 student to be able to have full access. Some
7 families have one computer at home, but that doesn't
8 mean that it can be devoted to that student. And so
9 we didn't want to get into income levels and cause
10 any kind of access problems for students. We are
11 asking families to provide their own internet access;
12 however, as I said, we were just able to receive a
13 grant that will support students who qualify for free
14 or reduced lunches to receive a voucher that will
15 help and assist with that. We will work with every
16 other family specially to work with Cox to get the
17 cheaper internet access, if they need that.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Do you have an approximation of
19 what that grant -- how much that would be, say, for
20 example, per student per month?

21 DR. GARRETT: What we have done, right now it is
22 \$4,000. We estimated that if our population at the
23 Virtual Academy is representative of our district,
24 somewhere around 40%, then that money would pay for
25 that cheaper internet plan for nine months for the

1 first year. And we know that further -- reaching out
2 for further grants would be important for us to do.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: That's all for right now.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Barnes?

5 MS. BARNES: No.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester?

7 MR. LESTER: No.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones?

9 DR. JONES: Dr. Garrett, I know you're aware of
10 the Credo report --

11 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

12 DR. JONES: -- and the negative effects or
13 negative reports that they had for online schooling.
14 Tell me how your plan for your online educational
15 program differs from any of those in the report.

16 DR. GARRETT: And this is one that we feel we
17 are very strong on because we do have the face-to-
18 face built in. We have the ability for the student
19 and the parent to be able to come at least one day a
20 week and work face-to-face with teachers. We also
21 have the support of our district. One of the things
22 that we have worked on is really analyzing what --
23 especially as students come into our district, maybe
24 from home-school where we do not have a lot of data
25 on the student; we don't know what the predictor is

1 of future success. And so, you know, we really pull
2 together with our specialists and our directors in
3 the district to look at -- you know -- we use the
4 DRA, the Developmental Reading Assessment,
5 Developmental Spelling Assessment, we use Mondo, we
6 use Scholastic Reading Inventory, Flynt/Cooter
7 Reading Inventory, Ekwall-Shanker Reading Inventory.
8 We like to pull writing samples. In math we have
9 found great success with DreamBox. We have the Iowa
10 Algebra Aptitude Test, Orleans-Hanna. We use exams
11 from classrooms to just, again, help us pinpoint
12 problems. We have multiple online programs that will
13 then help us create a plan to fill in the gaps of
14 learning. Part of what we've learned through our
15 investigation is that many students who will seek out
16 education in a virtual environment will do so because
17 of lack of success in a traditional school. A lot of
18 times that means they're going to come to us with
19 gaps in learning. So we have a comprehensive list of
20 assessments so that we can understand where those
21 gaps are. And then we have additional supports that
22 we can use to build -- to fill in those gaps. We
23 have accelerated math and DreamBox, we have Lexia,
24 and we have a host of other interventions that we can
25 tailor to the specific students' needs. And then one

1 of the reasons -- you heard me mention the Tier 3
2 math support. One of the reasons we put that in is
3 that we do realize that math is an area -- number
4 one, it's a struggle for all of us, even in brick-
5 and-mortar buildings. And yet, when you really begin
6 with that virtual environment that can really be a
7 problem and I believe that's what we're seeing in
8 those reports. And so that's where we wanted to put
9 in that Tier 3 level where -- say we worked with a
10 student who was continuing to struggle through some
11 of the other courses in math, but we know with
12 Algebra 1, "Hey, this needs to be face-to-face; we
13 need to get you into a specific class." Maybe it's a
14 resource math class, special education class, or it's
15 just a double-blocked algebra class, but we need to
16 give additional assistance. We have the opportunity
17 to do that, and I don't believe that your other
18 online programs have that ability.

19 DR. JONES: That is a strong support, having the
20 ability to pull them back in where necessary. One
21 more question. What systematic controls do you have
22 in place to catch a student when they aren't
23 progressing as they should?

24 DR. GARRETT: And, again, the use of technology
25 will actually make that easier than for our teachers

1 in a regular traditional classroom because they will
2 daily be checking on student progress. Weekly they
3 are going to be meeting as a team to analyze how is
4 this student doing, is this student engaged, is this
5 student logging on; or, if they're on, are they not
6 able to access part of the curriculum or understand
7 instructions. We have instructional facilitators
8 that work with all of our buildings in literacy and
9 math. And so -- and they meet weekly within teams of
10 teachers in every one of our schools across our
11 district. This school will receive that same level
12 of support from our district.

13 DR. JONES: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

15 DR. GOTCHER: Good morning, Dr. Garrett.

16 DR. GARRETT: Good morning.

17 DR. GOTCHER: I'm very impressed with the
18 application, very impressed with your team. And the
19 piece regarding how you can reach home-school
20 students really struck a chord with me, and that was
21 a struggle I had as a former superintendent. It was
22 a real struggle and we were beginning to explore
23 these kinds of options. Frankly, I wish I'd thought
24 of this. But I have a concern, and maybe Dr. Hewitt
25 can address this as well, because I know that

1 considering the impact that it could have on other
2 districts -- I'm just thinking, because I think we
3 have to consider it's potential impact on neighboring
4 districts that may be in declining enrollment, may be
5 struggling to keep students, but they are legally
6 entitled -- meeting a school choice deadline or legal
7 transfer, a Texarkana student could be a student of
8 Fayetteville High School and I think that's really --
9 quite honestly, that's a pretty powerful thing. And
10 it also -- and I believe competition in education is
11 good. But I'm just curious of what feedback you've
12 had from neighboring districts and how that might
13 impact those neighboring districts that may be in a
14 declining environment?

15 DR. GARRETT: Well, I can't speak for
16 interactions with all of our neighboring districts,
17 but there are a team of us that meet regularly who
18 have similar positions that I do in central office.
19 And instead of looking at each other as competitors,
20 we look at each other as neighbors and resources and
21 so we share information. And what I've seen from
22 talking with other districts is that everyone -- you
23 know -- and this isn't just in our area; this is
24 across the state, across the nation. People are
25 understanding the value of technology, how it can

1 assist with real time feedback, how it improves
2 learning -- can improve learning through that anytime
3 structure. And so just like right now in Springdale
4 we see the School of Innovation, what they're doing
5 in order to support students; Rogers and Bentonville
6 are also having discussions. And so instead of
7 looking at us as a competitor I hope that other
8 districts will view us as a model. And we would love
9 nothing more than to share what we're learning and
10 also to learn from them about what they're doing.
11 Because as we know, as you said, it's not an easy
12 business; we need to all work together.

13 DR. GOTCHER: And I truly appreciate that
14 thinking because that's -- I think we could play
15 along a lot better with others if we had that, Dr.
16 Garrett. So, thank you very much.

17 DR. GARRETT: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo?

19 MS. LIWO: No.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers?

21 MR. ROGERS: No.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer?

23 MS. PFEFFER: Thank you for your presentation.
24 And I'll tell you, when I was reading through this
25 application I was really excited because -- and you

1 said it many times, you're capitalizing on the way
2 technology can enhance a personalized learning
3 experience but you're giving back human support. And
4 that was a concern that I expressed earlier because
5 without the human part behind it and that regular
6 support for students I would have concerns. So I
7 love the field experiences, the regular face-to-face;
8 many times, that can compliment the technology piece.
9 So I think your team has done an excellent job
10 bringing all that together. And also, as far as the
11 application, having these specific examples was so
12 helpful for me in reviewing this to have a better
13 understanding of your proposal. But to kind of go
14 along with what Dr. Gotcher was asking, if you did
15 have a student say from Texarkana or another part of
16 the state that was part of this charter, what would
17 their field experiences look like? How would that
18 piece be there so that they would have that human
19 support to go along?

20 DR. GARRETT: Right. And what we've learned
21 from other online schools is that because the field
22 experiences are tailored for the individual they're
23 not going to look the same. And so that student in
24 Texarkana, that field experience person is going to
25 have to figure out, "Okay, this student is interested

1 in engineering. What are the engineering firms
2 there? How" -- you know, make some phone calls; "How
3 can I get that student to be able to have that
4 experience?" You know, "What are" -- just that whole
5 sort of broadening their interests, exploration,
6 community service activities. It will be more
7 difficult for the field experience coordinator. But
8 our understanding from talking to some schools in
9 Texas who have done this is that it can be done and
10 it can be done well.

11 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So then as far as follow-up
12 and regular communication with their educators, that
13 would all just be done virtually just through the
14 video technology. But your field experience
15 coordinator then would work to insure that student
16 had those weekly opportunities?

17 DR. GARRETT: Exactly.

18 MS. PFEFFER: Is that correct?

19 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

20 MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions? Dr.
22 Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I have some questions I'll
24 start with, beginning -- I noticed that -- let me get
25 to a different part here. Asking for a waiver from

1 Personnel Policies, Teacher Fair Dismissal Act,
2 Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act -- I'm trying
3 to think logistically. For a waiver from these --
4 and I know you described a little bit about the
5 staffing. Would the online teachers be employees of
6 Fayetteville Schools?

7 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Would they then have a separate
9 policy book from the other employees?

10 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: And these teachers -- if I'm
12 correct, you've asked for a waiver from Licensure --

13 DR. GARRETT: That is --

14 DR. SAUNDERS: -- for all the teachers?

15 DR. GARRETT: That is correct.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

17 DR. GARRETT: And just to add on that, you know,
18 our goal is to hire the best people. We look at the
19 waivers as just giving us flexibility for those
20 unique situations that do come along. So that's
21 really the rationale there.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: So what percentage of your
23 teachers do you feel would be licensed in the State
24 of Arkansas?

25 DR. GARRETT: We feel that all of our teachers

1 will be licensed in Arkansas. We just feel like
2 there may be some situations -- for example, we are
3 starting with grades 4-8. It may be that a teacher
4 who we decide is the very best teacher in English
5 Language Arts is certified 6-12, but she has that
6 ability to teach 4th and 5th graders. We would just
7 like that flexibility that we could still use her in
8 that position. Because we know as we're growing with
9 low numbers of students that sometimes those unique
10 situations are what makes staffing very difficult.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: So it would be your intent that
12 perhaps possibly 100% of your teachers are licensed,
13 but they may not be in the specific level and/or area
14 because of those unique instances that you just
15 described?

16 DR. GARRETT: Exactly.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: An additional one was -- and this
18 may be for the charter unit. In looking at this
19 application, as I'm going through the waivers, on
20 page 225, roughly in that area -- but then there's
21 another section that has additional waivers that are
22 not included in that section. Do we need to look at
23 that additional section for the waivers?

24 MS. CLAY: The additional waivers that were
25 listed at the other place in the application were

1 added to the waiver sheet. So if you look at the end
2 of the waiver sheet, with the red and green, you'll
3 see additional waiver requests and those were
4 included there.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: At the very end?

6 MS. CLAY: Yes.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Page 223?

8 MS. CLAY: I don't have it.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: I know you don't have it. Sorry.

10 MS. CLAY: I went old-fashion and printed it.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: So I noticed that a lot of those
12 that were in the last one are not included in this.
13 Are we assuming that all those have been struck?
14 Well, I did notice one in particular; for example,
15 the waiver from the bidding requirement is not
16 included. I could be overlooking it.

17 MS. CLAY: If you can give me just a second --

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Sure.

19 MS. CLAY: Come back around and I'll look at
20 what you're talking about.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Let me just ask the
22 district. Are you requesting a waiver from the
23 bidding requirement?

24 DR. GARRETT: Okay. Which waiver was that?

25 DR. SAUNDERS: 6-21-301.

1 DR. GARRETT: Minimum requirement for --

2 DR. SAUNDERS: The acquisition of commodities.

3 DR. GARRETT: Oh, commodity bidding?

4 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes.

5 DR. GARRETT: Yes, we are.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Why is that?

7 DR. GARRETT: We felt like that the most
8 important thing we would be looking for is quality
9 and a fit for our program, something that really
10 supported what our teachers were -- felt like they
11 could be able to add to it, take away from it, but
12 make it the Fayetteville Public School curriculum
13 that's aligned to Arkansas standards. And so we just
14 felt like that waiver would support us. We also know
15 though it's really not a big deal and if it's a
16 waiver that we need to withdraw, we can do that.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Would you be willing to withdraw
18 that?

19 DR. GARRETT: Yes, I will.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: All right. I think if you look
21 at the laws in the bidding, you know, it's there to
22 be a safeguard with the public funds and to be a good
23 steward. And you do not always have to go with the
24 lowest price.

25 DR. GARRETT: Right.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: And so if there are ways where
2 you can -- you can make decisions based upon quality.

3 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any others, Dr. Saunders?

4 DR. SAUNDERS: If someone else does, I may just
5 need a few minutes.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Dr. Jones.

7 DR. JONES: Dr. Garrett, can you address your
8 process for seeking NCAA accreditation for your
9 courses when you get to the high school?

10 DR. GARRETT: At I-NICOLE [ps] we had one of our
11 staff members, Mr. Mark White, who attended that
12 session. We also go through that process at
13 Fayetteville High School as we add any new courses.
14 Our understanding is that the Fueled curriculum
15 package itself is fine. The problem is that we have
16 to use Fayetteville Public School District teachers
17 in order to get NCAA approval. So as we encounter
18 students who have any kind of inkling in athletics
19 that may lead to scholarships in the future we know
20 that we have to be very targeted in making sure that
21 their courses -- that every single course is NCAA
22 approved. We will -- we are planning to submit all
23 of our courses for approval but then we'll just be
24 very clear with knowing which ones are approved in
25 case there are any that are not.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer, did you have
2 a question?

3 MS. PFEFFER: I don't have any questions. I
4 guess I'm just sitting here -- a lot of times when we
5 go through this process and we're trying to think
6 about what the school is going to look like in the
7 future -you know -- I don't know what it's going to
8 look like, but I know it's going to be different.
9 And to me this application presents us with something
10 different and it's good for kids. So I don't think I
11 have any questions. I'm just --

12 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes, I have some. Are you
14 requesting also the waiver from the principal
15 licensure?

16 DR. GARRETT: Yes, we are.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: And why so?

18 DR. GARRETT: We feel that the -- and we've even
19 called that person a director. We've done that
20 purposefully because we see that person in a
21 different role than in the traditional school,
22 because the students are not onsite every single day.
23 Instead, we feel that a background in curriculum is
24 going to be very helpful as that person works with
25 teachers to really understand learning progressions

1 so that when students are struggling they have that
2 additional support to really understand what's the
3 gap and what are we going to have to do to fill the
4 gap.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: I think that's a novel idea. I
6 think it's a good idea there. So the person filling
7 that position would be certified?

8 DR. GARRETT: Absolutely. And we're even
9 looking for a master's degree.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I noticed one of your
11 waivers was from the mandatory attendance for
12 students grades 9-12. And as Dr. Jones alluded to
13 earlier, monitoring the students -- and you're able
14 to do that with technology now in ways that we've
15 never been able to, especially in this type of set-up
16 as you have described. What would be the length of
17 inactivity that a student would incur before they
18 would be dropped from the rolls?

19 DR. GARRETT: In our traditional schools it's 10
20 days. In this type of environment we would not want
21 to see 10 days. Again, that's where we have put in
22 place that we want our teachers checking daily with
23 students, at least weekly with parents. And we have
24 the structure, the flexibility of the structure built
25 in so that our parents -- I mean, our teachers with

1 other staff members would have the opportunity to
2 even make a home visit. We haven't put a set number
3 of days in there but we're not going to wait 10 days
4 and then just drop a student. We don't do that now
5 in our schools.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. And that was not what I
7 was implying --

8 DR. GARRETT: Okay.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: -- and I think I was going the
10 other direction. How long would a student still be
11 carried on the rolls without actively participating
12 in education?

13 DR. GARRETT: We will -- if a student refuses to
14 participate and has completely withdrawn, then we'll
15 -- I would say we can follow the standard of what
16 we've done in our other schools, and that is 10 days.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I think that's all I have.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo, any other
19 questions?

20 MS. LIWO: Really simple. I just want to make
21 sure that I understood you correctly, because I'm
22 reading some information that indicates that maybe
23 some of your online teachers will be certified in
24 other states?

25 DR. GARRETT: That is correct. And one of the

1 things I wasn't very clear in saying earlier, our
2 teachers who teach our core courses and then those
3 additional teachers that we hire to teach those
4 popular electives will be our Fayetteville Public
5 School District teachers. But we also know -- and
6 part of the beauty of the model is the flexibility
7 and the opportunity for students to take very unique
8 electives, and so in those situations we will be
9 contracting with FuelEd to use those teachers. And
10 what they have told us, and that we will make part of
11 our contract, is that they will be licensed in
12 Arkansas. They will not be part of our Fayetteville
13 Public School District staff members. But yet, they
14 will still follow our handbook and we will work with
15 them regarding the evaluation of those teachers just
16 like we would evaluate our teachers who are employed
17 by us.

18 MS. LIWO: So these out-of-state teachers will
19 also be licensed in Arkansas?

20 DR. GARRETT: That is correct.

21 MS. LIWO: All right. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I found one more that I had
24 there. I know you asked a waiver from eye and vision
25 screening. Is there a way that you could notify

1 these students when this may be available, if they
2 did want to go get screened it would be available for
3 them at no cost?

4 DR. GARRETT: Absolutely. And part of what
5 we've talked about with our special ed. director is
6 that, you know, when you start interventions you
7 always want to start at that level to make certain
8 that there are not just basic needs that need to be
9 identified. And so that would be part of our
10 intervention plan; we just didn't want to have to,
11 you know, do it at a set time for all of our
12 students.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or
14 comments?

15 Mr. Colbert, you had signed up to speak.

16 MR. COLBERT: I just want to say thank y'all for
17 listening to us. We appreciate it.

18 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you, sir. I'll just
19 offer a few comments. As I read through this
20 application, I think my words in my head were
21 "brilliant." It's a brilliant plan. I think it's a
22 game-changer for education. So as that first school
23 district to step out there, what I will encourage you
24 to do is seek feedback from your colleagues all
25 across the state and seek support. Everybody would

1 be pulling for you and everyone I think would be
2 willing to offer that kind of feedback and support.
3 But it's always upon you to ask. So don't let
4 problems occur when you have those opportunities for
5 a lot of people to reach out to.

6 DR. GARRETT: Thank you.

7 DR. JONES: I have one comment.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right.

9 DR. JONES: I do commend you for your plan and
10 we're cheering for you because we want to see an
11 online model of success, and I think that you have
12 many components that make it different. One of the
13 ones you mentioned is the curriculum you've chosen;
14 your teachers will have the ability to modify and add
15 to that, and I'm sure that you will want to do that
16 to make it of the quality that Fayetteville accepts.
17 But the most important part is that you own those
18 students and you're starting small. And I know that
19 you're well aware that they will have their own LEA
20 and in the end they're Fayetteville family. And so I
21 wish you great success.

22 DR. GARRETT: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Clay, are there any
24 remaining issues regarding this application?

25 MS. CLAY: Yes, there are a few issues regarding

1 the waivers that I need to go over with you. Two
2 pages that were in their application of waivers were
3 not included on the waiver sheet that was compiled by
4 Legal Services -- and it was me that did it, so I'll
5 take responsibility for it. But I can tell you that
6 there are just a few that would have remaining
7 issues. One of those is the commodity bidding. You
8 can certainly grant that waiver; it is allowed, but
9 it is one that you have had pause in granting before
10 and I don't know that it has been granted.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: She withdrew it.

12 MS. CLAY: It was withdrawn. Okay. Sorry; I
13 was trying to figure out what I had missed there. So
14 that takes care of that.

15 On the concurrent credit waiver they would need
16 a waiver of the concurrent credit rules, Section 3.01
17 and 3.02 of those rules, if that waiver is granted.

18 You have had some additional discussion on
19 allowing the AP courses to count as part of the 38.
20 I don't know if you want to have that discussion with
21 this group, but that has been something that has
22 caused the Panel to have some discussion in the past.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I just tell them -- I think
24 we're looking at page 268 on the agenda, if you're
25 trying to find it, 268 and 269, that area.

1 MS. CLAY: And I can -- if it would be helpful,
2 I can go through those -- I believe it's seven or
3 eight waivers that were not included on the waiver
4 sheet -- walk through those with you.

5 MS. PFEFFER: I'm not finding it, so I would --

6 MS. CLAY: Okay.

7 MS. PFEFFER: I need somebody to just clarify
8 what exactly they're asking, please.

9 MS. CLAY: Okay. The first one is flags,
10 display of the flags, period of silence, and Pledge
11 of Allegiance. They say that they're going to
12 display the flag, but not as prescribed by code. And
13 that a period of silence and reciting the Pledge of
14 Allegiance would be difficult in an online setting.
15 This is a waiver that has been granted relatively
16 routinely for charter schools and online schools.

17 The next is eye and vision screening, statutes
18 and rules around that, that it will be -- they will
19 not be physically present to participate in those, so
20 they're asking for flexibility there. And you've had
21 discussion on that. That one has also been granted
22 in the online setting with other charter schools.
23 One thing though, and I would imagine that the
24 district is aware of this, if the eye and vision
25 screening were part of a special ed. service they

1 would be required to provide that.

2 The next is offering instrumental and vocal
3 music. And I believe what they are trying to do is
4 they will not initially offer it, but it will then be
5 -- I may need some explanation -- it will be offered
6 once they phase in to the appropriate grades.

7 Commodity bidding, we've discussed that; it was
8 withdrawn.

9 Report cards -- the law requires report cards to
10 be mailed, given to a parent at a conference, or sent
11 home with the student. They're asking a waiver of
12 that section so that the parents -- because the
13 parents will have real-time access via an online
14 platform.

15 The next one is allowing AP courses taught to be
16 included as part of the 38 units.

17 And the last is concurrent credit that would
18 allow students below the 9th grade to take and
19 receive concurrent credits. And that's where they
20 would need the additional waiver of our ADE
21 concurrent credit rules, Section 3.01 and 3.02.

22 DR. JONES: On that issue, they will also have
23 to receive course approval from Curriculum
24 Instruction to be able to teach a high school course
25 at the middle level. That's not being waived, is it?

1 MS. CLAY: No, it is not.

2 DR. JONES: Okay.

3 MS. CLAY: And one other issue -- are we okay
4 with those additional ones that I've gone over? Do
5 we need more explanation on those?

6 DR. JONES: Can you give me two minutes just to
7 --

8 MS. PFEFFER: I would like to go ahead and get a
9 little clarification on using the AP courses as part
10 of the 38 units, just why that is being asked?

11 DR. GARRETT: And I believe that the reasoning
12 behind this one was so that our students, if they are
13 ready for AP biology without taking the biology, that
14 we could substitute that in its place. I'm trying to
15 remember. Were there any other circumstances? I
16 believe that was it.

17 MS. BARNES: Well, I mean, I'm trying to make
18 sure that -- I'm going over a couple of things in my
19 mind. Basically, since there is already a process to
20 do that by way of request I don't really see where
21 you would need to have a waiver for it, unless you
22 had some additional pieces. The other piece is as a
23 district, the district is meeting the requirements
24 under the 38. You're looking at a student receiving
25 credit. So I don't know that you actually need a

1 waiver because it's --

2 DR. GARRETT: We can withdraw that.

3 MS. BARNES: Yeah.

4 DR. GARRETT: We can withdraw that waiver.

5 DR. JONES: Question or clarification. Would
6 the student have the ability to take AP English or
7 regular English?

8 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

9 MS. BARNES: (inaudible)

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Speak into the microphone.

11 MS. BARNES: Students only receive credit --
12 again, like I said, in order for them to teach a
13 course in place of -- or teach an AP course in place
14 of the required course, there is a process already
15 outlined in the law to do that by way of going
16 through the procedures and making a request because
17 they have no students to sign up. But that's a
18 district requirement and that's why I'm saying we're
19 looking at students receiving instruction, if we have
20 students already that may be in an AP course as
21 opposed to a regular course.

22 DR. JONES: Are you withdrawing that request?

23 DR. GARRETT: Yes.

24 MS. BARNES: That's what I was saying; they
25 withdrew the request to waive it. They would have to

1 address it differently.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or
3 concerns? Ms. Clay.

4 MS. CLAY: One other issue and this was on the
5 waiver sheet that was provided to you all. I just
6 need confirmation that they do not seek a waiver of
7 6-20-701, et seq., and that has to do with school
8 lunches. But it's permissive and mostly has to do
9 with the State Board's obligations. So it is not
10 necessary for a school that's not going to provide
11 lunch to have a waiver of that section.

12 MR. WALTER: Ms. Coffman, may I make one comment
13 back on the AP issue?

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Yes.

15 MR. WALTER: Tripp Walter, staff attorney,
16 APSRC. I don't mean to muddy the waters here, but I
17 guess I saw it similar to what -- on the AP situation
18 coming before you with that. And, of course,
19 obviously, Ms. Barnes is exactly right on the
20 district level because it was particularized to the
21 school, much in the same way as we understand.
22 Obviously, there's a process through the Department
23 itself to request imbedding of courses. But it has
24 been brought before you because it's a matter
25 affecting the one particular school. So my

1 understanding is that they still wanted to have that
2 flexibility for AP in those very specific situations
3 that I believe were included in the text of the
4 waiver.

5 All right. Well, all right. They're indicating
6 now that they apparently can handle it in a different
7 direction. Thank you.

8 MS. CLAY: We got a little side-tracked there.
9 I do need them to confirm that they do not want a
10 waiver of 6-20-701 et seq., if somebody can state
11 into the microphone for us.

12 DR. GARRETT: We can withdraw that waiver. We
13 do withdraw.

14 MS. CLAY: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And you know we're always
16 open for amendments, so --

17 DR. SAUNDERS: I just have one more question, if
18 everybody is --

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Sure.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: Do you plan -- do you see this in
21 the future possibly of a student attending the
22 virtual school part-time and the other traditional
23 school part-time?

24 DR. GARRETT: We do. We're not wanting to start
25 out that way, but we do believe -- you know -- we

1 have students, as you saw on the video, taking online
2 courses at the high school already. And while this
3 will be a full-time virtual environment, we know that
4 there will still be exceptions to it. So we really
5 see that flexibility being able to transition into
6 some of our other buildings.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: You would think the
9 research on adolescence would add to that in that
10 some are morning people and some are night people,
11 and you might be able to have school when they're
12 ready.

13 DR. GARRETT: Exactly.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: On the college courses you have,
15 are you looking at going through Fayetteville there
16 or NWAC?

17 DR. GARRETT: On which courses?

18 DR. SAUNDERS: I don't know. But you had credit
19 for college courses, concurrent credit listed here on
20 one of the waiver things for the 9th grade.

21 DR. GARRETT: Right now, one of our partners is
22 NWAC but we are looking at expanding concurrent
23 options.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other additional

1 questions or comments?

2 Ms. Clay, are you satisfied?

3 MS. CLAY: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. And you're
5 really sure, he says?

6 MS. CLAY: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. With that,
8 I'll accept a motion regarding the request for
9 Fayetteville Virtual Academy.

10 MS. PFEFFER: I move to approve the Fayetteville
11 Virtual Academy charter.

12 DR. JONES: I'll second that.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: There has been a motion by
14 Ms. Pfeffer and a second by Dr. Jones to approve the
15 request for the Fayetteville Virtual Academy. Any
16 questions or comments? All those in favor of the
17 motion?

18 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

19 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion has
20 passed. If you'll wait patiently, we'll have
21 comments from the Panel.

22 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

24 MR. LESTER: I believe the applicant is offering
25 an excellent online option for an education

1 experience.

2 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

3 MS. LIWO: I voted for. They'll provide
4 additional flexible options and opportunities for
5 students.

6 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

7 MR. ROGERS: I voted for. I voted for because
8 there's not any -- I don't have any concerns for the
9 Fayetteville Virtual Academy at this time.

10 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I thought this was a well
12 established, careful plan with student success at its
13 core.

14 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Barnes.

15 MS. BARNES: I voted in favor of the motion.
16 And I believe that this presents opportunities to
17 embrace new approaches to learning and it has
18 resources that achieve definitive expectations and
19 outcomes for students where they have not existed
20 before.

21 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

22 MS. PFEFFER: I made the motion to approve
23 because I believe that this is an example of a school
24 for the future and it will provide a personalized
25 learning opportunity and a learner focused structure.

1 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Jones.

2 DR. JONES: I voted in favor of the motion.
3 Fayetteville has structured an online program that
4 has human components to take ownership of students
5 and have considered student needs and will have
6 structured assessments and interventions.

7 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

8 DR. GOTCHER: I voted for the motion. I feel
9 this is an excellent application; it's certainly a
10 model for the future. Furthermore, it provides an
11 opportunity for a true personalized learning plan for
12 the kids based upon their individual needs.

13 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Congratulations to the
14 Fayetteville Virtual Academy. As you see evidenced
15 here today, we believe in you. But you've given us a
16 reason to believe I you and that's because there was
17 quality planning, a great presentation, a very
18 thorough application. And so we feel confident that
19 there will be success for your students. We do
20 encourage you to remember that we love to share good
21 messages across the state. So as those stories are
22 developing over the next year or two, please remember
23 that it's important that we're sharing them with all
24 of the educators and the community at large in our
25 state. Thank you.

1 Are there any additional issues before the Panel
2 today?

3 DR. JONES: I do have a question for Legal. I
4 do want to put on the agenda to bring Quest Middle
5 School from Jacksonville [sic] back in. Do we need
6 to vote on that to put them on the agenda?

7 MS. CLAY: We do not need to vote. Quest Middle
8 School from Pine Bluff, correct?

9 DR. JONES: Pine Bluff.

10 MS. CLAY: That does not need to be a vote. It
11 could just be something that's put on the -- placed
12 on your next agenda.

13 DR. JONES: Thank you.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: The December agenda?

15 MS. CLAY: It will be the December agenda, if
16 you still have -- if you still want to have a
17 December meeting. I know there's an item tomorrow
18 about possibly delaying that. But it can be
19 December.

20 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: We can finalize that
21 tomorrow.

22 MS. CLAY: Okay.

23 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Well, thank
24 you to everyone. We will begin at 8:30 in the
25 morning.

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DR. JONES: Move that we adjourn.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Moved by Dr. Jones.

DR. GOTCHER: Second.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: And Dr. Gotcher. All in favor of the motion to adjourn?

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? We stand adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.)

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A-4: FAYETTEVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY

Exhibit One (1)

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A-4: FAYETTEVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY

Exhibit Two (2)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas State Department of Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on November 18, 2015, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

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

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

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: December 4, 2015.

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

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