

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

November 14, 2013

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

#4 CAPITOL MALL
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201

November 14, 2013

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell	Commissioner/Chairman
Dr. Megan Witonski	Asst. Commissioner-Learning Services and Asst. Chairman
Ms. Deborah Coffman	Chief of Staff
Mr. Mike Hernandez	Asst. Commissioner-Fiscal/Admin.
Mr. Jim Boardman	Asst. Commissioner-Research/Tech.
Dr. Karen Walters	Asst. Commissioner-HR/Licensure
Mr. John Hoy	Asst. Commissioner-P.S. Accountability

ALSO APPEARING:

Ms. Mary Perry	Director, Charter/Home Schools
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LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE PANEL:

Ms. Kendra Clay	ADE Attorney Specialist
Ms. Lori Freno	ADE Deputy General Counsel

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Exhibit One (1)
Desegregation Analysis

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'll call the meeting of the Charter Panel to order. I have a couple of housekeeping things I need to bring up. If you can't find a seat, we ask that you move out into the lobby where the overflow is. And particularly if you've got people who are involved in the particular charter that is being discussed we ask that those people be in the room. Those of you who are waiting for one of the others, if you could go and watch and observe in the lobby, we'll have sound and video; you can do that. But we will ask that people not stand around the walls or stand next to the door. If you can't find a seat, a chair, we do have fire codes and we would ask that you move out into the lobby and have a seat in one of the chairs there, and then move in and out as the different charters come up. Also, those that will be speaking on behalf of the charters or school districts, if you would leave your cell phone either in the chair or with another individual or turn it off because when you come to that microphone, if your cell phone is on it creates a humming as this is broadcast through our Webcast and creates some, I guess, noise problems for people who are trying to watch this online. So please leave your cell phone

1 either off or at your place or with someone else as
2 you come to speak before the Board. So please help
3 us with the issue of having a seat or watching from
4 in the lobby until it's your opportunity to present
5 your charter or your district's position on the
6 charter.

7 So we'll begin. We have four action items for
8 today and we'll be beginning with Quest Middle School
9 of West Little Rock. Ms. Kendra Clay, would you mind
10 coming and reminding us of the process in which we
11 will be moving through each of these applications?

12 MS. CLAY: Good morning. The process for the
13 hearings will be the same that you all followed
14 yesterday. I know that some people were not here
15 yesterday. So all persons, with the exception of
16 attorneys, that are going to give testimony on the
17 applications will need to be sworn by the court
18 reporter. Then the applicant will have 20 minutes to
19 present its case. After the applicant presents its
20 case, the parties opposed to the application will
21 have 20 minutes. And then the applicant will have an
22 additional 5 minutes at the end to address any
23 arguments that were brought up by the parties
24 opposed. You all can make a decision today; you can
25 defer to a later meeting and allow the applicant to

1 get technical assistance. And also I'd like to
2 remind you that if anyone votes to deny an
3 application we'll need to do a roll-call vote and you
4 all will need to state your reasons for denial.

5 A-1: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
6 APPLICATION: QUEST MIDDLE SCHOOL OF WEST LITTLE ROCK, LITTLE
7 ROCK, ARKANSAS

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Clay. Ms.
9 Perry, we will ask you to come bring forth Action
10 Item A-1.

11 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Commissioner. Action
12 Item A-1 is a request from Quest Middle School of
13 West Little Rock to open an open-enrollment charter.
14 This school is sponsored by Responsive Education
15 Solutions. They are requesting grades 6-12, 6-8 in
16 the first year, adding a grade per year, with a
17 maximum student enrollment cap of 490, again
18 beginning with only 220 in year one. And the address
19 for the proposed school is 1815 Rahling Road in
20 Little Rock. To begin the presentation today, on
21 behalf of Responsive Education Solutions is Dr. Edwin
22 Strickland and also there is someone here from Little
23 Rock, Dr. Glasgow, who will want to speak after the
24 initial presentation.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Perry. May I

1 ask those that will be speaking on behalf of Action
2 Item 1, Quest Middle School's request for
3 application, please stand to be sworn in. Okay.
4 Please raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell
5 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

6 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Hold on. Have I got
8 everybody?

9 MS. PERRY: There are people on the outside
10 also.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. There are people who
12 will be speaking on the Quest Middle School outside?
13 Okay. If you're outside, raise your hand. Do you
14 swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
15 but the truth?

16 (ALL WITNESSED ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. I will also
18 remind each side that there is 20 minutes. So if the
19 charter applicant has theirs prepared -- understand
20 that at 20 minutes we will stop. If there are a
21 couple of things I have some authority to grant
22 another couple of minutes. Those that are opposed,
23 be sure that you're working together because if the
24 first individual up takes all 20 minutes then there
25 won't be opportunities for others. I'll try to make

1 sure everybody gets an opportunity but if there are
2 opposition -- there are multiple people with
3 opposition to this, please work out your arrangements
4 for the use of the 20 minutes. Okay. So we will
5 begin. Please state your name for the record.

6 DR. STRICKLAND: Yes. Dr. Edwin Strickland.
7 Good morning, Members of the Review Panel. Again, my
8 name is Dr. Edwin Strickland and I serve as the
9 Arkansas statewide director for Responsive Education
10 Solutions. In that role I have the opportunity to
11 have local oversight responsibilities for the three
12 charters that we currently have in Arkansas, schools
13 in Bentonville, Little Rock and Pine Bluff. And it
14 is an absolute honor for us to have the opportunity
15 to serve the parents, the children and the families
16 of those communities. I can't tell you how excited
17 we are to be here this morning with the opportunity
18 to continue that tradition of service at our school
19 in West Little Rock.

20 I want to just take a moment to introduce a few
21 people who are with us today, who will be speaking
22 during our presentation. First, I will begin with
23 Dr. Allen Wimberley. Dr. Allen Wimberley is our
24 Chief Learning Officer with Responsive Education
25 Solutions. And then we have Mr. Charles Cook, and

1 Mr. Cook is our Chief Executive Officer with
2 ResponsivEd. I also have with us today Mr. Gary
3 Newton, and Mr. Gary Newton is one of our parent
4 initiators. He and several others are responsible
5 for ResponsivEd having the opportunity -- to have an
6 opportunity to come and to have a high-quality school
7 in this area. And so with that being said this
8 morning I want to yield my time and ask Mr. Newton to
9 come to the podium and to share with you this
10 morning.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Dr. Strickland.

12 MR. NEWTON: Thank you, Dr. Strickland.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Newton, you're
14 recognized.

15 MR. NEWTON: Good morning, Chairman Kimbrell,
16 Members of the Charter School Authorizing Panel. I'm
17 honored to be here this morning as a parent of two
18 students who are in their eighth year of public
19 education, seven years in three Little Rock School
20 District schools and now four months at eSTEM Public
21 Charter Middle School. On behalf of the 306 parents
22 and citizens who signed petitions, the 222 who joined
23 our action group, the 18 civic business and parent
24 leaders who submitted letters of support, and those
25 who are with us today, I stand before you seeking

1 approval of the parent-initiated Responsive Education
2 Solutions open-enrollment public charter application
3 of Quest Middle School of West Little Rock. Unlike
4 perhaps any charter application in our state's
5 history, ours was necessitated by a decades long void
6 of public secondary education in our community.
7 Simply put, our parents seek to provide public
8 education where none exists. In November of 2012,
9 seven traditional school district parents met to
10 discuss initial steps in creating a charter middle
11 and high school in West Little Rock. The group
12 adjourned highly motivated to mobilize parents in
13 support of the effort and attract a world-class
14 charter management organization. The following
15 month, 78 parents convened at a church to hear from
16 the parent initiators of the newly approved
17 Responsive Education Solutions Northwest Arkansas
18 Classical Academy in Bentonville. By June of 2013,
19 our group had grown to over 220 parents, when we too
20 chose Responsive Education Solutions to create Quest
21 Middle School. In ResponsivEd, we have found that
22 proven world-class partner to provide immediate,
23 accessible and excellent public secondary education
24 for our children. While every family's experience is
25 different, allow me to share ours so you may better

1 understand why we and our fellow parents have acted.

2 In 2005, we moved to Little Rock from Los
3 Angeles for a better life for our children and our
4 family. When lack of capacity at our zoned
5 elementary school denied our twins access to pre-K in
6 our community, we were blessed to find space and
7 excellence at Fair Park Early Childhood Center in
8 Midtown. There, we also found the economic and
9 cultural diversity our family so values. Fair Park
10 truly reflected our city. When it came time for
11 kindergarten we were guaranteed space at our zoned
12 school, though capacity had been supplemented for
13 years with temporary buildings. For third grade ours
14 were among the first students at Roberts Elementary
15 School. On the day it opened Roberts' 900 students
16 made it the largest elementary school in the Little
17 Rock School District. Based on last year's benchmark
18 exams, it is also the fifth highest performing
19 elementary school in the state of Arkansas. This
20 school year, because demand exceeded desks, pre-K was
21 canceled at Roberts. Just as capacity had denied our
22 children access to their zoned school for pre-K, now
23 all Roberts' parents would have to send their four-
24 year olds out of their attendance zone for their
25 first public school experience. This year, when it

1 came time for middle school our only public choices
2 were to bus our children east of University to our
3 zoned middle school or to Mann Arts and Science
4 Magnet east of I-30 on Roosevelt. Based on last
5 year's benchmark exams, out of 871 schools reporting
6 in Arkansas, our zoned middle school ranked 849th in
7 math and 845th in literacy, the lowest 3% of schools
8 in Arkansas. Mann, which is a stipulation magnet,
9 ranked 624th and 591st, respectively, among the
10 lowest third in Arkansas. In other words, we were
11 expecting to leave Arkansas' fifth best elementary
12 school and bus across town in order to attend one of
13 the lowest performing schools in the state.
14 Meanwhile, we were also denied entry into the public
15 middle school closest to our home, Joe T. Robinson,
16 in the Pulaski County Special School District,
17 because both Pulaski County and Little Rock exempted
18 their districts for the Public School Choice Act of
19 2013. So when we were finally successful in our
20 third charter school lottery, we acted as we did in
21 moving from Los Angeles and chose to do what was best
22 for our children and family and enrolled our students
23 downtown, without transportation, at eSTEM Public
24 Charter Middle School. Now, as with Fair Park seven
25 years earlier, at eSTEM we found both excellence and

1 the valued cultural and economic diversity truly
2 reflective of our city. For three years, like waves
3 of parents before us, we begged our school board to
4 provide excellent, accessible public secondary
5 education for our students, but it didn't. Only when
6 we stopped begging and started acting upon the option
7 afforded us by the General Assembly and the Governor,
8 resulting in the application before you today, did
9 the board move to acquire property for a middle
10 school in West Little Rock. If land purchased to
11 construction follows Roberts' timeline, a middle
12 school will be ready in West Little Rock in time for
13 our children's senior year. That said, the board has
14 indicated that any new construction is contingent
15 upon the results of a yet to begin facilities study
16 and a millage increase, which has no election date
17 set nor a guarantee of success. Just as our
18 perceived competition prompted our board to act, it
19 is our intention that the quality of Quest Middle
20 School will accelerate construction of new
21 traditional middle and high schools in the community.
22 Just last week Dr. Guess stood right here before the
23 State Board of Education to recommend that Robinson
24 Middle School and High School be refurbished as all
25 middle school and a new high school be built,

1 contingent, of course, upon a millage increase. If
2 approved by voters, Little Rock's and Pulaski
3 County's three new traditional schools would be just
4 3.3 miles apart. After generations of inaction we
5 don't think it a coincidence that Dr. Guess's
6 proposal, Little Rock's land purchase, and our
7 hearing today all came within the past three weeks.
8 Over a recent two-year period our district lost 588
9 students; 504 of those left between the 5th and the
10 6th grades. Over a four-year period the middle
11 school increased 460%. As a result, the vast
12 majority of last year's Roberts Elementary 5th
13 graders are no longer in traditional public
14 education. Friendships which have been forged over
15 the years have been scattered among private schools,
16 home schools, charter schools and school districts
17 outside of Pulaski County, not because of choice but
18 because of movement, all because the board chose not
19 to act upon public readily accessible census and
20 demographic data. Three of the five parents who are
21 most involved in the historic selection of Dr. Dexter
22 Suggs as the new Little Rock School District
23 superintendent are leaders of our charter effort.
24 One of those parents has led us and other former
25 Roberts' parents in joining and supporting our zoned

1 middle school PTA, even though none of us have
2 children there. Already, that partnership has more
3 than tripled PTA membership and fundraising over last
4 year. As evidenced by our actions, our parent
5 initiators of Quest Middle School believe public
6 education is not either/or; it's all. We are keenly
7 aware that the success or failure of our entire
8 community is contingent upon the success or failure
9 of our school district. That is why we have and we
10 will continue to strongly support our district's new
11 leadership in putting children first. As our new
12 superintendent has said, "Parents should have the
13 right to send their child to any school they deem
14 best for their child." As we continue to support his
15 and our district's work to become a viable choice, we
16 respectfully ask that you approve our complimentary
17 efforts to become an immediate choice. We thank you
18 for your time, consideration and service. My fellow
19 parents and I look forward to answering any of your
20 questions and/or addressing any of your concerns. It
21 is now my privilege to introduce a person who will
22 share more about our proposed academic program, Dr.
23 Allen Wimberley, the Chief Learning Officer of
24 Responsive Education Solutions.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Newton.

1 MR. NEWTON: Thank you, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Wimberley. You're at
3 about 11 minutes.

4 DR. WIMBERLEY: Okay. Good morning. I am Allen
5 Wimberley, Chief Learning Officer for Responsive
6 Education Solutions. One of the most enjoyable
7 things that I do is just to speak with other
8 educators. I like doing that. I like being around
9 those kinds of people who have given themselves to
10 educating children. Quest Middle School in West
11 Little Rock is a place that we're excited about.
12 Responsive Education Solutions calls itself
13 "responsive" because that's what we're doing. We're
14 here today because we're responsive. One of the
15 things that I think is important for us is that when
16 we listen to community members, we listen to parents,
17 and we listen to students and we do focus groups and
18 all these different ways that we try to get
19 information about what the needs are in a community.
20 I don't -- in my role as leadership of our division,
21 26 people in our central administrative division work
22 under my leadership with our schools. And my role, I
23 think, is not to dictate to a community or anyone,
24 "Well, this is our program and all the students who
25 come through the door are going to fit in that

1 program." I think my role is not to believe that
2 this is the best way or that's the best way or this
3 is the only way that a child is going to learn,
4 because all of us as educators kind of build our tool
5 kits as we go along. We just kind of put those
6 together and this is what happened and this is what
7 worked. I think my role is to be an architect
8 because there are so many ways that children learn.
9 And so Quest Little Rock is an opportunity for us to
10 come in and with the proven practice and methods that
11 we've used we're going to set it up to diagnose,
12 using the data from the diagnostics, to choose the
13 delivery systems. You will see a structure for that
14 school that we think is best. It will be set up and
15 it will look like middle schools should look
16 structurally, but what happens in the classroom is
17 going to be much different. We're definitely about
18 trying to take disengagement out of the equation in
19 education. So many times we find that its not just
20 things like drop-ins; it's mostly disengagement, and
21 there's two types of disengaged student: those who
22 have realized that they just have to learn the
23 teacher or learn the classroom or learn the system
24 and navigate it and they disengage from the
25 excitement and the passion for learning, but they

1 belong to families that are not going to allow them
2 to stop attending school, and those who have
3 disengaged and their families really allow them to go
4 ahead and leave. They're all over our campuses. And
5 so we're about engagement. That is going to at Quest
6 look like a blend. It's very easy for people to
7 always talk about education reform and how we're
8 going to be innovative. You know, the truth is is
9 that it's hard to define and describe that.
10 Everybody likes to call themselves innovative. What
11 we do though is we take those proven practices with
12 emergent technology and with engaged teachers who
13 really want to do what they wanted to do when they
14 decided to become a teacher. We put them back in
15 those classrooms. In a classroom you will find a
16 blend of technology and teachers, where the teachers
17 are able to focus on the students who really need
18 that teacher. But those students who -- in a lot of
19 ways they don't really need me. They're going to be
20 allowed to be in a curriculum program that allows
21 them to go not at their own pace but under their own
22 direction. They'll be able to actually accelerate
23 within the structural classroom. So it's not a
24 technology program; it's not a strict regimented
25 teacher-directed instruction program; it's a program

1 -- it's not really even -- well, you know, you can't
2 even call it a program because it may look different
3 for different children, may look different on
4 different campuses. But it certainly is a list of
5 things that we're going to bring in. Two of the
6 subjects during the day will be delivered primarily
7 through technology, the content will. Because what
8 happens a lot of times is those delivery systems are
9 given a backseat and say, "Well, those are
10 supplemental to a teacher preparing the lesson plan
11 and delivering it every day." We flip that. We
12 allow them to get their content learning through that
13 system but then the teacher focuses on putting
14 together labs and putting together the creative part
15 of supporting and reinforcing what they are learning
16 through those systems. Now we do that in two subject
17 areas. Yeah, the subject areas look -- they're going
18 to look -- they're going to have the look of
19 traditional. But as we diagnose and as we look at
20 the data, to use it for those delivery systems, we're
21 going to respond to that student. What I try to
22 drive home with our people is this: in current
23 systems it's very easy for teachers to show up -- and
24 I love teachers; I married one, I am one, a lot of my
25 family members are teachers -- but it's very easy to

1 be a teacher and to show up and do our jobs and go
2 home and ask ourselves, "Did I do my job? Did I
3 teach everything I was supposed to teach today?" The
4 honest truth is, as I tell our people, that's the
5 wrong question. The question is at the end of the
6 day for those people who have given themselves to the
7 children -- the question we should be asking at the
8 end of the day is, "Did every child that I'm
9 responsible for learn everything they were supposed
10 to learn today?" And if we consistently drive that
11 home every single day it helps us stay out of a lot
12 of the things that distract from that. We build a
13 system that's about learning rather than focusing on
14 teaching. We focus on middle school kids at Quest
15 because a lot of people say, "Well, they're in
16 elementary school, they're moving to high school,"
17 and they kind of see it as a parenthesis time. We
18 focus on it being a time of passage, an exciting
19 journey. At Quest Middle School in Little Rock we're
20 going to come in, we're going to bring in the
21 curriculum systems; we're going to bring in the
22 learning systems; we're going to respond to every
23 child that's there. You heard the numbers for the
24 campus size. Those things are going to be done that
25 way so that we can focus on every single individual

1 child. I appreciate you allowing me just to speak
2 for just a couple of minutes this morning. I want to
3 introduce our Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Charles
4 Cook.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Cook, we're at about
6 three minutes.

7 MR. COOK: Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you,
8 Committee Members. I appreciate you having us here
9 today. Just want to tell you -- my name is Charles
10 Cook and I'm CEO of Responsive Education Solutions.
11 I just wanted to talk for a second about, you know,
12 who we really are as an organization. We've been in
13 business 15 years; we're a nonprofit organization,
14 501(c)(3). We started those 15 years ago with
15 collaboration. We were formed with experienced
16 superintendents. Linus Wright from Dallas ISD was on
17 our board, that initial board. Forrest Watson from
18 Bedford's in the mid-cities, between Dallas and Fort
19 Worth, another gentleman. And so our, you know,
20 relationships really just started as how do we go in
21 and help districts; how do we go in and serve
22 students that are needed in those -- that have the
23 most needs in those districts. Well, we are proud to
24 continue that heritage and today some of the recent
25 relationships we're excited about is our partnership

1 with Austin ISD, in Austin, Texas. We have two
2 schools on-site, campuses within campuses, and that
3 relationship is going very well. And then we have a
4 relationship with Lone Star College in the Houston
5 area, the second largest community college in the
6 state of Texas. And that relationship is for a hi-
7 tech high and high school high format on two of their
8 campuses. And so we're excited. We're excited that
9 this parent group from West Little Rock approached us
10 and we love their passion. They have a need, a real
11 need, and we're ready to help. We're ready to make a
12 difference in their lives and in their kids' lives.
13 So we appreciate you having us here; we appreciate
14 you considering our application; and we ask that you
15 approve and allow us to serve these kids. Thank you,
16 guys.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, sir. Dr.
18 Strickland, anyone else or -- you have about a minute
19 left.

20 DR. STRICKLAND: No.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Then we'll move to
22 the -- any organization -- is it just Little Rock?
23 Is anyone besides Little Rock here to speak in
24 opposition of this middle school? If not, Dr.
25 Glasgow, we'll recognize you for 20 minutes.

1 DR. GLASGOW: Chairman Kimbrell and Members of
2 the Panel, good morning. I want to start off by
3 saying that I appreciate Gary Newton; I appreciate
4 the efforts that he has undertaken. We're happy with
5 the parents in West Little Rock that want a school
6 there to serve the students. We agree that we need a
7 school in West Little Rock. Our school board, a
8 little over a year ago, one of their five goals was
9 to build a middle school in West Little Rock. That
10 then was reaffirmed by our school board as a goal for
11 this year. We've already purchased land. I
12 understand that it takes a little while to get that
13 done and we will be seeking a millage and we need the
14 support of the parents in West Little Rock to get
15 that done. When that happens, we're going to build a
16 state-of-the-art middle school in West Little Rock on
17 the land that we've already purchased. It's going to
18 be something else. It's going to be similar to
19 Roberts Elementary in that it's going to have all the
20 bells and whistles and will serve the students in
21 that part of town, which needs service. Meanwhile,
22 what we've done pending that is Dr. Suggs has a plan
23 where Forrest Heights Middle School, which is a -- if
24 you've been there recently, a new facility. It's
25 been redone. It's going to be a K-8 STEM school and

1 it will be available for students in West Little Rock
2 to attend in the meantime. I'd also like to say that
3 -- I'd also like to say that, contrary to Mr.
4 Newton's statement, Mann Middle School, which he
5 listed -- I don't doubt where it was on the list, but
6 the Office of Education Policy recognized Mann and
7 Mabelvale Middle Schools as two of the schools in the
8 state in the top 10 among schools that have achieved
9 over the last year or two. So that is certainly a
10 good option. I feel that the primary reason that
11 you, the Charter Panel, should not approve the Quest
12 Middle School in West Little Rock is because you have
13 three ResponsivEd charter schools in the state
14 already that are new. You have the one in
15 Bentonville; you have one in Little Rock, Premier
16 High School; and you also have one in Pine Bluff.
17 They haven't been in operation long enough for you to
18 get any results from them. I have some and our board
19 has some serious doubts about the -- as Mr. Newton
20 labeled it -- the proven world-class partner that
21 they have, which is ResponsivEd. Texas has the same
22 public school report card system that Arkansas has.
23 In other words, you can go on their website and you
24 can look at all their schools and you can see how
25 they're achieving. I decided to go on and look, so I

1 looked through their list and I found schools that
2 were labeled Premier High Schools. I found schools
3 that were labeled Quest. And I looked to see how
4 they were achieving in relationship to the
5 traditional public schools in the state of Texas. I
6 picked out 13. There were others I didn't pick. It
7 was kind of a random selection process that included
8 some big schools, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Abilene,
9 and so-forth. Out of the 13, of course, they had
10 schools from -- they had scores for math and they had
11 scores for literacy. So 13 times math and literacy
12 is 26 different scores to look at. Out of those 26
13 scores, in 19 instances out of 26 the state average
14 was higher than the charter school in those
15 locations. Recently, in fact, on January 30th of
16 this year, an organization called the Center for
17 Research on Educational Outcomes, CREDO -- C-r-e-d-o
18 -- if you haven't looked at their report, you should.
19 It's located at Stanford University. I'd ask all the
20 parents from West Little Rock to look it up. CREDO,
21 C-r-e-d-o -- not Stanford; not EDU -- and you will
22 find the report that's on large charter networks that
23 they studied to see how -- what their achievement
24 was. Amy Churchill, who was writing about the report
25 that CREDO published in January, said, and I quote,

1 "First, CREDO found significant variation in the
2 quality of charter school management networks" -- or
3 CMO's, such as -- a CMO would be like KIPP and
4 ResponsivEd. "Authorizers must be persnickety in the
5 educational organizations with whom they contract.
6 There are sour lemons as well as delicious apples in
7 the CMO barrel." CREDO's analysis discovered that,
8 "The finest CMO networks, e.g., KIPP and Uncommon
9 Schools, have large positive effects on students'
10 learning growth while the lowest performing networks,
11 e.g., Quiet Hat and Responsive Education Solutions,
12 have far less favorable effects on student learning."
13 The summary -- and I read the CREDO report -- the
14 summary part of it on ResponsivEd taken directly from
15 the report reads, and I quote, "The subpopulation
16 analyses showed that ResponsivEd has had some success
17 in helping ELL and especially special education
18 students. But ResponsivEd students in other
19 subpopulations generally had significantly lower
20 growth, or weaker growth, rather, than their
21 traditional public school counterparts." So we feel
22 that this caused our board to take pause with the
23 organization that would be operating the school and
24 you have three charters already that are ResponsivEd
25 managed and we have no results at this point. So I

1 think our school board would like to see, pending our
2 school district's effort to build a state-of-the-art
3 middle school in West Little Rock, and considering
4 the data -- in fairness, I'll say that ResponsivEd --
5 I'm sure when they get their five minutes they're
6 going to say they disagree with the findings of the
7 CREDO report. Stanford University has some
8 intellectual clout. They took the reply that
9 ResponsivEd gave back to them and they stuck by their
10 guns on their initial report. I'm sure you'll hear
11 some more about that momentarily.

12 We are worried about any waiver to the length of
13 the school day, and I appreciate the panel yesterday
14 on a ResponsivEd charter saying that at least for the
15 middle school you didn't want a change in the length
16 of the school day. We had at least one report from a
17 parent at the Premier High School that's located on
18 the Arkansas Baptist campus that said the kids were
19 getting out of school at about noon and they were
20 sitting, waiting for parents to come pick them up.
21 I'm worried that because of the individual growth or
22 the individual plan that students have when they're
23 on the computer -- as a representative said
24 yesterday, they move sort of at their own pace --
25 that that waiver request to change the length of the

1 school day causes some concern that kids may progress
2 through the system quickly and then be done. And, of
3 course, we certainly wouldn't like to see that
4 happen.

5 We feel that much of the instruction -- the
6 self-directed computer-based instruction, similar to
7 what used to be called PLATO system where you go on
8 your -- you take an initial assessment and it
9 determines what your needs are and you go through
10 mostly a computer-based software system. And as the
11 gentleman from ResponsivEd said, at least two of the
12 curriculum areas will be delivered at least largely
13 through the use of technology.

14 So, in summary, we agree that there's a need for
15 a school in West Little Rock, a middle school. We've
16 already undertaken an effort to purchase the land and
17 hope to have that done if we can pass a millage,
18 which with the support of the many parents in the
19 West Little Rock area will be successful. And can
20 not only build a new middle school in West Little
21 Rock, near Roberts, by the way, but can also build a
22 new high school in Southwest Little Rock. So we
23 understand you have a difficult decision but if we
24 had the choice, we'd like to see them wait at least a
25 year. And I know Mr. Newton, as he said, is trying

1 to put pressure on us to get with it. We understand
2 that pressure and don't doubt the validity of it.
3 They should put pressure on us. So if we can't get
4 the millage passed and get ready to build schools say
5 a year from now, maybe you'd say, "Come back, Little
6 Rock didn't follow through on what they planned to
7 do." So that's what we'd ask you to consider. Thank
8 you very much.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Dr. Glasgow.
10 Anyone else speaking in regards to opposition?
11 Seeing none, then, Dr. Strickland, you'll have an
12 additional five minutes -- or whoever you would like
13 to -- Mr. Newton, I assume.

14 MR. NEWTON: Yes. Thank you. I'll speak just
15 briefly. Mr. Glasgow, if you noticed his argument
16 was the same that we have been getting for the past
17 three years and for generations before us. The
18 opposition for district is all about what they're
19 going to do, what they will do, what they plan to do,
20 not what they are doing or have done. He intimated
21 that our data on the performance of Little Rock
22 School District middle schools didn't coincide with
23 his assertion about being some of the top schools. I
24 would ask you to turn to your own data. That's what
25 we use. All of those rankings are available on your

1 website. That's where we pulled them. We simply
2 sorted the sheet and looked at where those schools
3 ranked. The only question raised by the Little Rock
4 School Board when this came before them -- and,
5 again, we had a chance to make our case but only in a
6 three-minute segment with citizen comments. We
7 offered to answer any questions the board may have.
8 The only question that was presented at the Little
9 Rock School Board was when our own zone
10 representative, Greg Adams, said, "Mr. Glasgow, is
11 ResponsivEd a for-profit or nonprofit?" And Mr.
12 Glasgow said, "I don't know. I assume they're for-
13 profit." And then, the board voted. It's
14 disingenuous to come in and speak only in anecdotes.
15 You have to look at the data. You have to look at
16 generations of inaction. LRSD focuses on the
17 performance of ResponsivEd but turns a blind eye to
18 its own performance. Arkansas is one of the leaders
19 in data. I urge you to look at your own data about
20 this situation and make that determination based on
21 that.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Cook. A little over
23 three minutes left.

24 MR. COOK: All right. Thank you. I wanted to
25 address a couple of things real quick on -- from

1 comments from Little Rock District. The first one is
2 on the issue of taking a random, you know, look at
3 schools. Mr. Glasgow actually mentioned the schools
4 he looked at. He looked at -- he mentioned Fort
5 Worth, San Antonio, and I think he mentioned one
6 other. Those schools are all Premier High Schools
7 and I think he would have known that if he was
8 looking at the system they're in. We do have Quest
9 Middle Schools in Texas. They're all exemplary.
10 They're doing a first-class job. All of our standard
11 accountability schools, which are college prep
12 schools, are meeting the standards of the state. And
13 the Premier High Schools, which are dropout recovery,
14 like we have here in Little Rock, are doing well
15 also. But when you compare to the state average,
16 obviously, dropout recovery schools are not going to
17 have the same kind of comparison you would have with
18 the general population in the state. Just to kind of
19 give you a little insight into the students
20 themselves as they walk into a Premier High School,
21 using data from our school here in Little Rock, 9th
22 grade students came in taking the MAP test the first
23 couple of weeks of school. Their language
24 performance was a 5.5 grade level. Their math
25 performance was a 5.5 grade level. And their reading

1 was 6.5. The 11th graders, it's 7.5 in language, 6.5
2 in math, and 9.0 in reading. So these kids are
3 served in the district and we have challenges when
4 they come to our school, but we're up for the
5 challenge, which is why we perform very highly when
6 you compare us to dropout recovery schools in that
7 genre of schools. But, again, like I said, when you
8 compare and you start looking at over 60% of the
9 students we serve are not in dropout recovery,
10 they're in college prep schools, and we hit the mark
11 and we're exemplary in those schools. The CREDO
12 report, which is out there on the website, you also
13 see our response and you do see a response from
14 CREDO. CREDO did not really respond to our
15 statements. And if you go through there and look at
16 that you'll notice that they didn't respond to the
17 question we raised regarding the report. The biggest
18 thing, really it summed up with this, when they ran
19 the analysis several years ago, even though the
20 report is just now coming out, 80% of the students
21 were in our at-risk schools at that time. So the
22 last several years we've had a lot of parent groups
23 come to us, a lot of districts working with us,
24 community colleges, and we've started more college
25 prep campuses. But when the report -- when they ran

1 the data 80% were in at-risk schools. So CREDO
2 report -- and they'll admit this as well -- did not
3 take into account age at all. So they look at a 9th
4 grader in a traditional high school and they compare
5 -- call it a virtual twin -- they compare our dropout
6 recovery 9th grader who's 18 years old instead of 14
7 and they say, "Okay, here's a match." Well, it's not
8 a match. When you look at the CREDO report itself
9 and you consider 80% of our kids are in dropout
10 recovery we beat every other dropout recovery in the
11 report. So we're actually happy about that. As far
12 as the school day, that issue, we have three schools
13 in Arkansas -- Bentonville and Pine Bluff -- which
14 serve younger populations up through middle school.
15 They have a traditional school day. And the Little
16 Rock Premier, the high school, we're serving the
17 needs of those students and where they're coming in
18 at. These kids are disengaged, as you can see with
19 these results of the service they had at the district
20 for several years. They were failed and it would
21 have been potentially the district, but also
22 sometimes kids fail themselves, you know. But
23 they're coming back, they're ready to re-engage, and
24 so we're excited to have them. But you've got to
25 have programs in place to serve their needs. You've

1 got parents, you've got people with jobs, and so we
2 work to make sure we're serving the needs of those
3 students. The final thing is this Quest Middle
4 School is not a self-paced program. We do have many
5 different innovative programs that we're proud of and
6 this Quest Middle School, this college prep program,
7 will, as Allen, Dr. Wimberley, was saying, will take
8 three different components and the majority of it is
9 going to be self-directed instruction, like you would
10 traditionally see, with teachers who are engaged and
11 making sure the kids stay engaged. And then, as
12 well, we're bringing in technology to where the
13 students are not lock-stepped into everybody's in 6th
14 grade, we're going to teach everything the same. So
15 using technology the students can advance or if kids
16 are behind they can get the help they need. And then
17 the last part is just team work and we build that
18 into our system where students are working together
19 and learning how to collaborate. So we appreciate
20 you guys. Thank you for your time.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. And that
22 concludes our testimonies and presentations and we'll
23 move to the question and answer session by the Panel.
24 So eeny-meeny, I don't know, let's see. Okay.
25 Doctor -- or Ms. Coffman, you'll get to start with

1 the first question and please identify who you'd like
2 to ask the question of. Well, I'll tell you what.
3 While you're looking where you want to start, Mr.
4 Cook, I'd like to ask a question. I know you just
5 kind of talked a little bit about Premier High
6 School, the dropout recovery school that you have
7 here in Little Rock. Now this Quest Middle School is
8 not actually located in the Little Rock School
9 District or within the Pulaski County School
10 District. Is that correct?

11 MR. COOK: The location we submitted in the
12 application is in Pulaski County.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. The original
14 application though was in Little Rock?

15 MR. COOK: Right. We have another form we can
16 turn in that's for another location that's in Little
17 Rock, and then we have another alternative location
18 we're investigating.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

20 MR. COOK: But, again, it will be in Little
21 Rock.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Some of the others may get
23 into that later. But my question wasn't about
24 necessarily the location as it is about -- we're
25 calling this a middle school but yet, you want to

1 grow it grade-by-grade to serve 6-12. So how does
2 that transition occur and what is the programmatic
3 transition that would --

4 MR. COOK: So where we have Premier High Schools
5 that advance and go into the additions in the high
6 school grades, which we do -- they go high school
7 high; it's a name thing.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: To Quest though?

9 MR. COOK: The Quest would have high school
10 students as they go into 9th through 12th grade. But
11 it's the same format, same program.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. It's the same program
13 as Quest?

14 MR. COOK: The same as Quest Middle School.
15 Right.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So will you end up
17 with a school within a school, two schools? How will
18 that --

19 MR. COOK: The schools are located on the same
20 site, same location.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So as you do this
22 you'll be looking at this site having both middle
23 school students and high school students, same
24 program approach or different program approach?
25 That's where I'm confused.

1 MR. COOK: Very similar program. As they get
2 older, as they get into high school then they have
3 more self-efficacy we're looking for with these
4 students where they're actually learning more as an
5 individual going into college. So as they're in
6 middle school you're going to have a lot more time on
7 task. About 70% of the time is going to be engaged
8 with teachers. But as you get into high school it's
9 going to become more project-based. So, still
10 teachers are engaged and involved but they're doing
11 more in a project-based environment like you would
12 see in a STEM academy.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But it's not the dropout
14 recovery --

15 MR. COOK: Absolutely.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- approach that you --

17 MR. COOK: Absolutely not. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do you have any just high
19 schools that are just 8-12, 9-12 that are -- you call
20 them college preparatory schools?

21 MR. COOK: We do. Yes, sir. We --

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And so this -- that's the
23 approach that this one --

24 MR. COOK: Right.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

1 MR. COOK: The school we have at Lone Star
2 College, the two campuses, those are college prep
3 high schools.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

5 MR. COOK: And then we have several in the
6 Metroplex.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

8 DR. WITONSKI: Can I ask a follow-up?

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes. Dr. Witonski has a
10 follow-up to that.

11 DR. WITONSKI: And so for the group that you'll
12 be serving, the 6-12, your plans are to start with
13 6th and 7th?

14 MR. COOK: I think we have 6th, 7th and 8th.
15 Dr. Strickland, is that right? 6th, 7th and 8th.

16 DR. WITONSKI: And what are the demographics
17 that you anticipate serving?

18 MR. COOK: Demographics grade-level or --

19 DR. WITONSKI: Demographics in terms of students
20 that you think will be coming?

21 MR. COOK: What's exciting about open-enrollment
22 is anyone can come.

23 DR. WITONSKI: Sure.

24 MR. COOK: So population -- Gary, do you want to
25 address that? Gary, do you want to address what you

1 think the demographics would be for that location?

2 MR. NEWTON: Yes. In fact, it goes back to Dr.
3 Kimbrell's question about location. The location,
4 even though it's physically in the Pulaski County
5 School District, if you know how Little Rock is
6 configured, Roberts is on the western edge. This
7 location is actually east of Roberts. So if you get
8 the correlation between the feeder schools in both
9 the Pulaski County and the Little Rock School
10 Districts, this district, save for the elementary
11 school on the Robinson campus, is as close or closer,
12 this middle school, to all the feeder elementaries of
13 both the County and Little Rock. It is optimally
14 located, even though it is technically in the Pulaski
15 County District, just a few feet to the district. As
16 Mr. Cook said, with an open-enrollment you don't know
17 your demographic. We obviously know where it's
18 located --

19 DR. WITONSKI: Sure.

20 MR. NEWTON: -- and obviously that's a draw for
21 community neighborhood schools. But my own family is
22 an example: we're in eSTEM but we live way out
23 because we won the lottery.

24 DR. WITONSKI: And I asked that question, Mr.
25 Cook, to go back to Dr. Glasgow's comment concerning

1 the CREDO report. When you look on that report they
2 have a Table 1 summary on page 17 that talks about
3 what that influence is in terms of the student groups
4 that you serve, in terms of demographics and what
5 those outcomes can be for those students. And
6 there's a mixed bag on both of those. So in your
7 experience, have you had a chance to look at that
8 table summary --

9 MR. COOK: I have.

10 DR. WITONSKI: -- in terms of --

11 MR. COOK: Yes, ma'am.

12 DR. WITONSKI: And do you find that to be
13 correct?

14 MR. COOK: It's -- again, it's 80% of the
15 students are dropout recovery when they ran this data
16 from several years ago. So using that data is not a
17 comparison really of our college prep schools. So it
18 is not accurate with our college prep schools; it's
19 not accurate with our Premier High Schools because,
20 again, the age -- you know -- they're looking at 14
21 year olds instead of 18 year olds.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Right. Right. And it's broken
23 down more for if it -- if the child is African
24 American, if the child is Caucasian, what the
25 benefits are.

1 MR. COOK: Correct.

2 DR. WITONSKI: If that's seen as positive or
3 negative in --

4 MR. COOK: So, again, these kids come in when
5 they're 18 years old in the Premier High School,
6 where 80% of the kids were coming from at the time.
7 They're 18 years old; they are behind, like here in
8 Little Rock at the Premier High School. And so she's
9 -- when they're running the report, when Mackey is
10 running that data and her staff, they're just looking
11 at 14-year olds. And 14-year olds, even though they
12 may have failed the assessment, which is what they're
13 comparing the kids to, the virtual twin, they're not
14 looking at any other factors. The kids come in --
15 and, again, we've done the research and we've looked
16 at other dropout recovery schools and we're doing a
17 lot better than any of them. So we're excited about
18 that. And I'm sorry I spent a lot on the Premier but
19 that's what the report is about.

20 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

21 MR. COOK: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman.

23 MS. COFFMAN: As I look at the list of waivers
24 that are being requested, in consideration of
25 yesterday, will you be still seeking all of the

1 waivers listed in this application?

2 MR. COOK: No, ma'am. I would like to withdraw
3 -- I've got a list here. I'd like to withdraw those
4 waivers. Would you like me to read through that
5 list?

6 MR. BOARDMAN: That was one of my --

7 MS. COFFMAN: Yes, please.

8 MR. COOK: So 6-11-129 is about data being
9 accessible on the website, that will definitely be on
10 the website, all the data; 6-16-1204, which is
11 implementation of pre-AP courses being offered, that
12 requirement; 6-21-304, purchases; 6-17-2802, teacher
13 excellence and support system. And then Standards
14 for Accreditation 9.0, curriculum; 9.03.4, 38 units.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. This seems to be the
16 similar ones that we discussed yesterday in some of
17 the other requests, so --

18 MR. COOK: I think that should be all the ones
19 from yesterday.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry, did we get a
21 written list or were you able to get those as
22 announced by Mr. Cook?

23 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir, I was. I had a chart that
24 I created, color-coded, with all the ones that were
25 denied yesterday.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Mr. Boardman.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: A couple of things, I guess. One
3 that I just didn't notice and I guess I'm a little
4 concerned because some of the testimony had to do
5 with the school day. It seems like there was a
6 request -- that one wasn't withdrawn that -- I know
7 the school day in the list that you gave us, an
8 example, complied without a waiver. But then you're
9 asking for the possibility of reduction of the school
10 day and I think we --

11 MR. COOK: We're actually not --

12 MR. BOARDMAN: -- middle schools, especially.

13 MR. COOK: We're absolutely not asking to reduce
14 the day and --

15 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay.

16 MR. COOK: -- if we need to remove that, we
17 will. The day will be traditional, a traditional
18 school day. It will not be reduced at all.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. I didn't hear that one but
20 I may have missed it on the ones that were just
21 listed. But I may have missed that. Another thin
22 and then I'll pass on -- I've got a couple but I
23 think we'll go around. For some reason the location
24 information you told me, when you look at need I
25 think in the review that was given here it was

1 definitely agreed that there was a need based on the
2 data. But now I'm not certain where -- you're
3 talking about moving to a different location.
4 Wouldn't that have to be determined before we can
5 approve, know the location?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry, would you like to
7 address that as far as the ability of the Panel to
8 authorize a charter without having a final --

9 MS. PERRY: I'd like to defer that to legal
10 counsel.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That will be fine too.

12 MS. CLAY: I know in the past the Authorizer has
13 given us some of conditional approval, conditioned on
14 the applicant bringing back an executed facilities
15 lease agreement for a location within the Little Rock
16 School District. So that is something that you would
17 have the discretion to do, if you so choose.

18 MR. BOARDMAN: If I can ask another one, I think
19 in all the ones I remember anyway it wasn't changing
20 from one district to another as far as location; it
21 was just an address and a facility and a building
22 that they did. But I may be wrong on that but --

23 MS. CLAY: Right. I don't think we've had a
24 situation come up exactly like this one, you know,
25 that -- but I don't think that it's fatal to the

1 application, you know, if there's -- the application
2 does indicate that it will be located in Little Rock
3 School District and that is some of the --

4 MR. BOARDMAN: It's in Pulaski County.

5 MS. CLAY: Right. But the application itself --
6 for instance, an educational need indicates the need
7 in the Little Rock School District and that's a lot
8 of what the parents and applicant have brought forth
9 today. But you can take into consideration that it
10 is actually in the Pulaski County School District in
11 making your decision and either require them to find
12 a location in Pulaski County or even come back with
13 some technical assistance and re-work that part of
14 their application.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, to follow-up with
16 that, Mr. Cook, where is it -- I'll address the
17 question to you. You may need someone else to answer
18 it. But where is it that you want to locate the
19 school? Have you found a site that you want? I
20 mean, all schools were -- all schools that are
21 involved were notified of the place.

22 MR. COOK: And the County was, as well, Pulaski
23 County.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right.

25 MR. COOK: So the location that's in the

1 application --

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right.

3 MR. COOK: -- is 1815 Rahling Road.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

5 MR. COOK: Another location that we can -- we
6 will look at going to if we're -- if you guys tell us
7 to stay in Little Rock proper, there's one on Kanis
8 Road and there's another one on Bowman Road and
9 they're all in that general vicinity, that area of
10 Little Rock or Pulaski County.

11 DR. WITONSKI: So the lease that is included in
12 our packet, is that correct?

13 MR. COOK: That's the one for Rahling Road.
14 That's the one we like the most. But we found out
15 that's in Pulaski County, not in Little Rock.

16 DR. WITONSKI: Would that be an issue for moving
17 forward with that lease or is there some question --
18 I know you mentioned several sites as options. Would
19 that be --

20 MR. COOK: If your preference is for us to stay
21 in Little Rock proper, we would, you know, look at
22 this Kanis Road.

23 DR. WITONSKI: We just are curious where it
24 would be located.

25 MR. NEWTON: It is the ideal -- excuse me --

1 location because of proximity.

2 DR. WITONSKI: The one that's on the lease --

3 MR. NEWTON: Exactly. It is existing space that
4 has never been occupied and it's brand-new. It's
5 proximate to -- it's closer to those Little Rock
6 School District elementary feeder schools than the
7 current zoned middle school. It's also closer to the
8 Pulaski County schools. But as you know, the Little
9 Rock boundaries --

10 DR. WITONSKI: Yes.

11 MR. NEWTON: -- it's land-locked. Roberts is on
12 the exact western edge. You can live in the
13 neighborhood in Roberts and not attend Roberts.

14 DR. WITONSKI: Right.

15 MR. NEWTON: The Little Rock School District
16 itself has looked for property for a middle school
17 and considered property that is outside the district.
18 It's problematic when it comes to traditional
19 districts but the beauty about open-enrollment is its
20 open-enrollment.

21 DR. WITONSKI: Sure.

22 MR. NEWTON: We're not confined by attendance or
23 district zones or boundaries.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Sure. And I think that's why we
25 don't have a concern about that. We were just trying

1 to make sure what we're looking at, that your plans
2 are to actually follow through with versus the other
3 sites that were mentioned.

4 MR. NEWTON: Exactly.

5 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Thank you.

6 MR. NEWTON: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski, do you have
8 additional questions?

9 DR. WITONSKI: No.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Hernandez?

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is for any of the parents
12 or -- what I was wondering is with this being a
13 middle school and being college prep, what are the
14 plans as far as extra-curricular for these middle
15 school students in sports and moving on to the future
16 when this becomes a high school? I know in that area
17 there's a lot of private schools with a lot of
18 athletic participation and those kinds of things.
19 How do you see about meeting those kinds of needs?

20 MR. COOK: So currently we have basketball
21 teams, we have volleyball teams. We do not, sorry to
22 say, have football; there aren't any football teams
23 yet. But we're being responsive to the needs of the
24 individual school and the individual parents; you
25 know, what would they like to see in the school. But

1 at this point there is extracurricular around the
2 things I just listed and a couple of other areas, but
3 not your, you know, big football type programs.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Is there like band, music,
5 choir, those kinds of things?

6 MR. COOK: There's music, choir, yes.

7 MR. NEWTON: Can I speak to that?

8 MR. COOK: Sure.

9 MR. NEWTON: We also made it very clear when we
10 recruited ResponsivEd that our parents are interested
11 in the holistic education of our children,
12 understanding that extracurricular is of vital
13 importance. To give you an example, at Roberts there
14 was no athletic program in the elementary school. So
15 our parents initiated a basketball program, 3rd
16 through 5th, and ran it and those parents are still
17 engaged today. These parents that are here in this
18 room want to throw their energies into providing
19 those very things and look at untraditional
20 partnerships and do that, as far as facilities and
21 fields and all of those things. My own life was
22 enhanced by extracurricular activities. We want a
23 positive public education experience for our kids
24 that is not limited.

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: As far as the facilities that

1 we're talking about here, is there -- for instance,
2 if there's going to be a middle school basketball
3 team or anything like that, is there facilities --
4 those facilities able to accommodate that or do you
5 have go outside?

6 MR. NEWTON: We would need to go outside for
7 that. It's proximate to many churches in the area.
8 It's adjacent to Fellowship there, who has fields
9 that they use for Life Champs football and other
10 things. So like I said, we understand that partners
11 in education is important and it's something that we
12 will actively pursue as parents to provide our kids
13 all of those offerings that they would have in a
14 traditional environment.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

16 DR. WALTERS: Mr. Cook, Dr. Glasgow stated in
17 his comments that the curriculum would mostly be
18 delivered through some type of online system. Is
19 that accurate as far as the -- is that your current
20 plan or do you intend for most of your courses as you
21 increase this through high school -- and I did not
22 see a waiver for the minimum 38. Do you plan for
23 this to be face-to-face or do you intend to use
24 online learning?

25 MR. COOK: We'll let Allen come up. It will not

1 be online; it will be teacher directed the majority
2 of the time but then we will use technology on-site,
3 on a server. It won't be internet-based for the most
4 part. There will be some products, like any school
5 district, that are internet-based but it's not going
6 to be what you traditionally look at as an online
7 program for even that small component. It will be
8 hosted on the server. Allen, do you want to add to
9 that?

10 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure. If you use the last
11 century definitions of technology and teachers, you
12 would say, "Oh, well, technology is always supposed
13 to supplement the direct instruction given by
14 teachers." But what's the role of teachers in the
15 21st Century with technology being what it is? We
16 don't ever -- we have no schools that just say,
17 "Okay, technology is going to do the job that a
18 teacher should be doing." Teachers should be making
19 sure that students learn. So the five elements of
20 direct instruction that's traditionally defined that
21 teachers should be involved in, all of those are
22 involved -- but all of those deal with teachers
23 actually being engaged and making sure students are
24 learning. So the simple answer is no, there is no --
25 there's no scenario where, okay, technology replaces

1 the teacher. What we're going to do is really try to
2 educate teachers on what their role is in the
3 classroom today. Technology is basically there to
4 make sure that we get over to students -- that we
5 deliver to students what's needed. In one of the
6 schools that we did a pilot project in last year we
7 found that when we took the brightest math students
8 in this classroom, the 10 brightest, and we put them
9 -- that didn't need that teacher, over in the
10 technology and had their content delivered that way,
11 by the end of the year, because they did not have to
12 keep pace with the other learners in the classroom,
13 now the teacher is focusing on all of her energy and
14 her ability to motivate students -- she's now able to
15 focus on these students, but these students will have
16 to stay behind. They learned, literally learned six
17 months additional content in that grade level than
18 they would have had they had to stay with the class.
19 And yet, they still knocked the top off of any tests
20 and any assessments. In fact, I had someone who
21 mistakenly said, "So they learned six months more
22 than they were supposed to?" And we came back and
23 go, "Well, it's sad that it's that way." So what we
24 try to do, we try to do what we call an intelligent
25 blend of emergent technology in everything that's out

1 there with engaged teachers. So there is no time
2 limit; "Okay, this is going to replace something."
3 Nothing replaces anything. It's all done to try to
4 prescribe that child what that child needs.

5 DR. WALTERS: Okay. I appreciate that. I just
6 wanted to make sure that it was blended because it
7 would seem if it was not --

8 DR. WIMBERLEY: Yeah.

9 DR. WALTERS: -- then the students would be
10 better served in the virtual academy, if it was --

11 DR. WIMBERLEY: No. You're right. You're
12 right. We blend. Right.

13 DR. WALTERS: And, Mr. Cook, I have a follow-up
14 from what Mr. Boardman said. I understand you said
15 that the day is not going to be shortened, but that
16 was not one of the waivers that you officially said
17 you want to withdraw. So would you be willing to
18 state that? Because what we have in front of us is
19 that waiver is requested.

20 MR. COOK: I'm going to, if you don't mind, ask
21 our legal counsel. Is there any other piece to that
22 waiver that's needed, other than the school day?

23 MR. BOWMAN: Well, I'll look through the list
24 here. But to the extent that it is, we can withdraw.
25 Is that okay?

1 DR. WALTERS: What you've submitted, that is a
2 waiver. And so -- because we are talking about a 6th
3 through 8th grade campus and I would just feel better
4 if you would officially withdraw. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy.

6 MR. HOY: Good morning. If you don't mind, I
7 would like to ask the first question of our legal
8 counsel. Ms. Clay, I believe a number of the legal
9 concerns that I would've had with the standards were
10 already addressed early on in this particular
11 hearing. However, I would like to know if Legal has
12 any other concerns that were still remaining in the
13 particular request that we might be made aware of?

14 MS. CLAY: The outstanding concerns we have --
15 and I'll try to remove those that were removed from
16 the list earlier. The waiver of 6-10-106, Uniform
17 Dates for Beginning and End of School Year -- that
18 waiver I don't believe would actually be needed if
19 the applicant follows the Little Rock School
20 District's schedule. They may want to address their
21 school year and whether or not they're going to in
22 fact follow the Little Rock School District.

23 6-13-622, Budget Publication, there's an issue
24 there because Arkansas Constitution Article 14,
25 Section 3 requires that each district make its budget

1 public. So you as the Panel could waiver that
2 requirement of the statute to public the budget in
3 the newspaper, but the applicant would still be
4 required to make the budget public because that's a
5 constitutional requirement. We do have the issue of
6 school day hours, which I believe they're looking at,
7 and whether that is needed. It appears that their
8 day is going to be longer and so they wouldn't need
9 the school day hour waiver.

10 6-18-211 deals with Mandatory Attendance for
11 Students in Grades 9-12. This application will
12 eventually expand to a 12th grade, so if a waiver is
13 granted -- well, two things. First, it appears that
14 they are going to not need the waiver, that they're
15 going to have a long enough school day. If a waiver
16 was granted for the mandatory attendance for 9th
17 through 12th grade, they would also need a waiver of
18 the AEE rules governing mandatory attendance for 9th
19 through 12th grade.

20 Two more things. Standards for Accreditation,
21 14.03, Clock Hours for Units of Credit, you as a
22 panel are not allowed to weigh graduation
23 requirements. In the past, the Authorizer has
24 granted a waiver of the 120 clock hours when the
25 applicant has satisfied that they're going to meet

1 the full curricular alignment, similar to what the
2 process is for concurrent credit. So that's also a
3 concern that you all need to be aware of. And, last,
4 similar to the -- I guess it was an amendment request
5 yesterday, based on the waivers that they have
6 requested we believe they also need a waiver of
7 Sections 4 through 8 of the Rules Governing Personnel
8 Policy, Salary Schedules and Documents Posted to the
9 District Website. And one other issue, which you all
10 addressed yesterday, you may want to handle it
11 similarly. They have asked for a request of the
12 requirement for grading scale and you may want to
13 talk to them about how that grading scale is going to
14 work. But I assume it's probably similar to what
15 they talked to you about yesterday. Does that answer
16 your question or lead to many more?

17 MR. HOY: Yes, and yes. But I'll hold off on
18 that 'cause I think that they may be discussed in a
19 response to that. And so my next question is for
20 someone from Quest that could maybe answer a
21 financial question for me.

22 MR. TAYLOR: I can probably do that.

23 MR. COOK: And before he does, can I withdraw
24 the -- you know the number we're drawing on the
25 waivers, the 6-16 --

1 MR. HOY: Ms. Clay, are you ready? 'Cause he's
2 getting ready to withdraw some.

3 MS. CLAY: Okay. I'm ready.

4 MR. COOK: So the school day hours, that waiver
5 6-16-102 we're withdrawing.

6 MR. HOY: On the money question, I'm trying to
7 get a better feel for this whole idea of funding this
8 particular school. And what I'm looking at is when I
9 look at your balance sheet it seems like you're going
10 to maybe provide a 3% balance at the end of the year
11 in the first-year budget. Are you comfortable with
12 that percentage?

13 MR. TAYLOR: Typically, what we look to do is we
14 look to establish 5% over the running of the school
15 on an annual basis and what we would consider to be
16 essential in case there are unforeseen issues that
17 come up. The 3% at this point, that's because we are
18 in the first year and that if we did run into -- we
19 get into some true unforeseen issue the ResponsivEd
20 organization would insure that we have funding to
21 cover anything that went beyond that. But we are
22 comfortable with the 3% at this point. Our budgets
23 are built based off of formula, which means that as
24 the actual students come and we identify the
25 particular makeup of those students, what the actual

1 needs are, our formula is adjusted to the actual
2 needs of the students, the students who are showing
3 up, along with the funding that we're receiving. So
4 we function dynamically in obviously working with our
5 board to make adjustments to insure that we are
6 covering the needs of the actual students we have as
7 well as staying within our financial means.

8 MR. HOY: Then as a follow-up, can I ask about
9 two potential unseens? One, I think Dr. Witonski
10 might have brought up when she was asking about
11 demographics. Do you anticipate that you will have
12 at least 70% of your students that qualify for Free
13 and Reduced Lunch?

14 MR. TAYLOR: That is an excellent question. We
15 had originally worked with the budget and identified
16 it with a particular middle school that was in the
17 mid-70's and economically disadvantaged. We
18 recognize that given where we are located we could
19 very well be more around 50%, in that range, which we
20 do understand reduces the overall revenue and reduces
21 the revenue rate. So we do understand that. I did
22 actually provide -- I had my staff put together a
23 different budget with that in mind. I have it here
24 today if you'd like to see that. But we do
25 understand that. So we insure -- again, based on our

1 student population that comes in we adjust our budget
2 based on the actual students who are showing up, as
3 well as the revenue we're receiving.

4 MR. HOY: Okay. I would like to see that. But
5 before I do, I would like to ask one additional
6 question along this line. And I'll need to verify
7 the answer with Dr. Kimbrell because I'm not totally
8 sure but I think I'm correct on this. In your budget
9 you've also got budgeted \$44 for professional
10 development revenue per student. Dr. Kimbrell, if
11 I'm not correct, was that not reduced just recently
12 to like \$32.40 per student?

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It's actually \$27.73, I
14 believe -- \$26.67.

15 MR. HOY: And I say that because I think all of
16 the applicants today also have that \$44 in there, so
17 that's an adjustment that probably all will need to
18 make.

19 MR. COOK: Thank you.

20 MR. TAYLOR: You will see the \$44 still. That
21 has not been changed in this particular budget and we
22 would make that adjustment based on the actual
23 revenue.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy, any follow-up
25 questions as you review that?

1 MR. HOY: I'll review it.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You'll review that. Very
3 good. Back to you, Ms. Coffman.

4 MS. COFFMAN: As I look through the application
5 and I've listened very carefully today, I'm trying to
6 get a feel -- and maybe you can help me with this --
7 I'm trying to understand what's going to be unique or
8 innovative about this charter school? And I
9 appreciate what you've said about schools and feeder
10 patterns; I appreciate that. But I really -- I need
11 to feel comfortable that there's going to be some
12 amazing learning opportunities for all students that
13 come to this school. So would you kind of describe
14 that to me a little better?

15 MR. COOK: That's what's exciting about our
16 programs is being responsive, listening to parents
17 and giving parents real control of -- as they see how
18 the student is doing with the program. It is
19 individualized; it is built around the kids. We're
20 having conversations with parents and finding out
21 "how is it going at home, how's it going outside the
22 school." But the most important part of this is the
23 individualized focus. It's a small school, so the
24 principal knows every kid by name, which is huge.
25 The teachers know each kid. And as we diagnose kids

1 as they come in we diagnose, we find out where their
2 needs are. It's not just lumping them together,
3 throwing them in a classroom and saying, "Now we're
4 going to teach everybody together." Teachers get
5 frustrated by that, as you guys know, with "how do I
6 serve, best case scenario, 10% of the kids? I can't
7 meet their needs." Well, we know typically it's, you
8 know, more like 30%, 35% and we just feel like we're
9 not being able to appropriately serve their needs.
10 So individually focusing, as they come in diagnose,
11 find out what their learning styles are, how do they
12 learn best, diagnosing their math and their
13 language/arts, their reading, finding out as they
14 start that school year off and doing testing
15 throughout the year, finding out what do we need to
16 be changing. We're data-driven. And then the
17 delivery system -- a delivery system Dr. Wimberley
18 has talked about where it's just different; it's not
19 a traditional environment where we only have a
20 certain amount of time in the day and we're going to
21 teach the group and hopefully everybody gets it.
22 Again, teachers hate that. So this environment by
23 using some technology, by using some -- we don't do a
24 whole lot of project-based but we do some group
25 learning with some projects built in there. As they

1 go into high school that ramps up more. There's more
2 opportunities to learn from technology, learn from
3 team members, learn from the teacher.

4 MS. COFFMAN: So as a follow-up to that, would
5 you kind of expound on how you will support teachers
6 that may not be certified teachers so that they're
7 reactive to the needs of students?

8 MR. NEWTON: With your permission, may I add to
9 what he'd said before?

10 MS. COFFMAN: Sure.

11 MR. NEWTON: The most innovative thing about
12 this school is that it will exist. There is a --

13 [Audience hand-clapping]

14 MR. NEWTON: Innovative is one of those
15 comparative words and, unfortunately, in this debate
16 charters get labeled as the laboratories or
17 innovative. The reality is, a provision of public
18 education where none exists our challenge in this
19 market is that four of the seven middle schools are
20 among the lowest 44 schools in the state in math;
21 four of the seven middle schools are among the lowest
22 31 schools in the state in literacy. No middle
23 school, even the one that's considered the best, is
24 among the top 50% in the state. It doesn't get
25 better when you go to high school. Three of the five

1 Little Rock high schools remain Priority schools. So
2 the simple fact of being an ends-over-means school is
3 our goal. We have nothing; we have nowhere to turn
4 with public education, so that is -- that's the
5 innovation that we're bringing to you today in this
6 application.

7 MR. COOK: I'll have Dr. Wimberley follow-up
8 here on professional development. One of the
9 exciting things of a charter is that you do have the
10 opportunity to ask for some of these waivers we're
11 asking for. It gives us flexibility in some of these
12 areas to take models from across the country and be
13 able to implement some of these things. And having
14 15 -- almost 16,000 kids that we're serving, 1500
15 staff, almost 200 that are a part of different
16 aspects of serving those staff -- you know, Allen is
17 going to talk a little about what we have done in
18 Pine Bluff and how that will look as we see needs
19 with noncertified teachers, if we hire any
20 noncertified teachers. If you approve this, we have
21 that flexibility but it doesn't mean we're not hiring
22 all certified teachers. We'll see. But as we bring
23 people in, even certified, it's a different approach
24 so we've got to do professional development obviously
25 around that and make sure we're serving them. Allen,

1 do you want to address what we're doing in Pine
2 Bluff?

3 DR. WIMBERLEY: Sure. So many times if you go
4 by past definitions of -- when you start talking
5 about technology and things like this, people always
6 move towards, "Oh, we're going to get a situation
7 that's going to replace educators and somehow we're
8 minimizing the role of the educator and the
9 teachers." The honest truth is that adult that's in
10 that classroom is the single greatest element for
11 that child learning. But we have got to teach
12 teachers how to engage every single child in that
13 classroom, and so that's what we put ourselves to.
14 In Pine Bluff what happened was we had teachers who
15 were dealing with a population -- we got the MAP
16 results and we realized, "Man, this is something
17 we're going to have to really put our hands to the
18 wheel on this." It is going to be a battle. We're
19 ready for that, but how are we going to make that
20 happen? Well, what we found is is that -- we found
21 that we had a slate of teachers who were so
22 passionate about what they wanted to do but they
23 needed help. And so a lot of our years and years and
24 years of experienced people, geographically they were
25 a little dislocated. So I immediately ordered -- I

1 said, you know, "Let's -- I'm going to personally
2 ride herd on making sure that we get the video-
3 conferencing units set in Pine Bluff immediately," so
4 that we have two staff meetings per week, besides the
5 ones they're having on the campus for professional
6 development. Besides those meetings that they're
7 having we ourselves -- I'm devoting my entire staff
8 of 26 people to devoting two meetings a week with
9 those middle school teachers. The first meeting of
10 the week is to sit there and collaborate, vide-
11 conferencing, and my people came back and said, "But
12 do you know that we could -- it would be a little bit
13 better for us financially to just use this software
14 here for the computers?" And I said, "Yeah, but are
15 they going to see the room? Are they going to see
16 the teachers? Are they going to see the whiteboards?
17 Are they going to see the manipulatives? Are they
18 going to see the things as if they're in the room?
19 They will not. So we're going to get this." So we
20 put them in there; we personally delivered them up
21 there, our team did last week; they're ready to
22 launch. And our people were involved in training all
23 day yesterday back in Dallas and then also in Pine
24 Bluff because what will happen is in that first
25 meeting they're going to collaborate with these

1 teachers to say, "What's going on right now? What's
2 happening? And what do you feel like are the
3 greatest needs there?" The second meeting of the
4 week is basically to respond to all the things those
5 educators said, "Here's what's happening, here." In
6 other words, our people are going to devote their
7 time to that to be responsive in professional
8 development. Also, I have had -- and I've devoted
9 one of my lieutenants to basically spend every single
10 week up there to make sure that everything is going
11 on that we need to go on. We are giving the help
12 that they need. We're not here to ever try to prove
13 a point. When someone says, "This is the only way
14 the child is going to learn" or "This is the best way
15 the child is going to learn," always look who's
16 saying it; it's an adult. We're here to make sure
17 that we understand that these learners are unique,
18 they're different. And as we've looked at the data
19 we've realized we've got an uphill battle. We're
20 ready for that battle but it's going to be investing
21 our self in the research department that we've
22 created that connects what we do to actual -- it's
23 really nice to talk about innovation, but
24 implementation is absolutely the only thing that
25 matters. Our theme in our academic division of this

1 year is "Make Things Happen." Don't talk about what
2 we're going to do; go do it. Don't get a nod of the
3 head and a yes; go see it. Put your hands on it.
4 That's how we make things happen right now in Pine
5 Bluff, and that's how we're going to make it happen
6 at Quest Little Rock. Thank you.

7 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. I have two or three and
10 some of them involve finance and some of them I may
11 ask later. They usually don't ask me to talk much
12 about finance here, but I'm going to ask a couple.
13 One is, you know, as I look you're going to start out
14 with 6th through 8th grade and then the next year
15 you're going to add 9th grade. And just looking at
16 the budget you're going to have to add six or seven
17 courses for 60 kids. Financially, I just didn't see
18 -- we'll see how it goes the first year when you're
19 doing 6-8, and you have expenses that I'm sure you
20 can explain to somebody else. But I just think
21 that's strange that you're going to have to add all
22 those courses that a 9th grader would need with the
23 kind of budget.

24 The other thing that I looked at -- and I guess
25 that's a double-edged sword, I guess, because I know

1 you need to get approval now for all these grades
2 because I know you're going to add the 12th grade the
3 fifth year of the thing and we won't have much
4 information about how well it's doing, but I
5 understand needing the approval to do all that. The
6 other one though, as I looked through the budget,
7 just looked at some things, you have zero down for
8 Media Services. I need more information about that.
9 And also, I think yesterday we dealt quite a bit with
10 Health Services; you've got some contractual services
11 but you'd asked for a waiver for some of that. And I
12 know that yesterday when some people asked for that
13 we asked for kind of an expenditure report or
14 something when we didn't have nurses and that kind of
15 stuff on staff. So the last thing, and then I'll be
16 through with mine, is that I want to make sure that
17 we know towards the end when we vote exactly the
18 waivers that we're voting on. I got a little
19 confused. I think I know them, but maybe somebody
20 from Legal or Mary or somebody can tell us exactly at
21 the very end of this which waivers we're approving.
22 That's all. But anyway, those are mine; last
23 comment.

24 MR. COOK: So the high school piece, we're
25 planning on opening 9th grade next year. It may be a

1 situation where we want to open 9th and 10th -- and
2 we'll come back to you and give you an update on that
3 if we do have both -- as we look at the data and look
4 at the need in the community. Media Services, we
5 integrate more than traditionally is done. We
6 integrate a lot of that into the classroom itself.
7 So instead of having a library set-up with someone
8 running the library on the Media Service side, a lot
9 of that is going on through the professional
10 development Dr. Wimberley was just talking about with
11 the teachers themselves on how you integrate the
12 Media Service piece into the actual classroom. And
13 then the health piece, it's really just asking for
14 flexibility as we see what the needs are. And as you
15 know, it costs a lot of money and it's a small
16 school. So it's just the flexibility of being able
17 to find out what the needs of those students are and
18 then be able to contract people -- contract with
19 people potentially based on that need or have someone
20 full-time on staff. Do you want to add something to
21 that, James?

22 MR. TAYLOR: No.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Hernandez.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Back on the adding the high
25 school, I know y'all pulled the waiver for the 38

1 credits. If y'all do add 9th grade, will they need
2 to come back and ask for the waiver to stair-step
3 that back up? 'Cause otherwise, I assume if they
4 don't ask for some kind of waiver like that that as
5 soon as they start 9th grade they're going to have to
6 teach or have all 38 courses. Is that correct, Ms.
7 Clay?

8 MS. CLAY: That is correct. If they do not have
9 any sort of waiver, then they would be required to
10 abide by the 38 requirement.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: So do they really need to pull
12 that one or do they need to modify it?

13 MS. CLAY: That would be up to the applicant in
14 how they wanted to proceed with that waiver request.
15 And they certainly could --

16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Do they -- do you understand
17 what I'm asking? Otherwise, if you pull that then
18 you're going to have to --

19 MR. COOK: Have all 38. Right.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: -- all 38 classes, even though
21 you have 8th grade.

22 MR. COOK: We prefer to have it but if you want
23 us to wait and come back, we can do that.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Cook, maybe having the waiver
25 in place but having it with a stipulation that

1 servicing students -- that 9th through 12th would be
2 the inclusive pieces there where you would be having
3 assurances for 6th through 8th students. And we
4 can't tell you what to ask for waivers for; you need
5 to make that determination on your own.

6 MR. COOK: Right.

7 DR. WITONSKI: But I think that Mr. Hernandez is
8 forecasting in the future in terms of budgetary
9 allowances and the concern of would you be able to do
10 that with the first group of 9th graders?

11 MR. COOK: We would not. We would not be able
12 to offer all 38 courses that first year.

13 DR. WITONSKI: So then you might want to think
14 or consider that.

15 MR. COOK: Yes. Thank you.

16 DR. WITONSKI: Did he have some more questions?

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No. He's done.

18 DR. WITONSKI: So on the -- I'm not sure what
19 page it is for you guys; for us I believe it's page
20 54 in our packet -- I'm sorry, 53. For Health
21 Services you have listed that you will offer a Health
22 Services program that will serve -- this is the
23 respondent's piece. So initially you had the
24 application, we had the questions, and then you
25 followed up with the response. So the response

1 that's listed is that Quest will offer a Health
2 Services program that will serve students and provide
3 immediate attention involving minor sicknesses or
4 injuries and aid in creation of campus health and
5 safety regulations. So in terms of that program I
6 know that Mr. Boardman has talked about the
7 stipulations we've been asking for in terms of
8 expenditures to be due September of 2014, to show us
9 a reflection of where those services have been met.
10 What would that program look like? Can you describe
11 that for us?

12 MR. COOK: You know the greatest thing we can do
13 -- I'm not saying this is going to happen. The
14 greatest thing we can do is hire a teacher who is a
15 nurse, you know, who has -- an LPN or an RN. That's
16 a goal. I mean, that's something we were looking at
17 doing. And, you know, you've got people that had two
18 careers that have an interest. The head of our HR
19 department for our entire organization is a
20 Registered Nurse. So people are out there, they have
21 an interest in changing professions. So again it's a
22 smaller school so there's not 700 kids on the campus,
23 or more. It's 200 kids. So we've got to be creative
24 to be able to serve the needs of the community and
25 make sure it works. The other thing we're looking at

1 -- and we're looking at the legalities of this, but
2 using the video-conferencing system. And we're using
3 a product called Zoom, which is one of the latest,
4 greatest video-conferencing softwares that's out
5 there, latest technology. And there are some systems
6 out there, healthcare providers that are starting to
7 use video-conferencing to have nurses, you know,
8 remotely. So that's something else we're looking at
9 as we again open smaller schools that meet the needs
10 of the community, how do we continue meeting all the
11 needs of the students. And so that's one piece that
12 we're looking at, as well is being able to still meet
13 the needs and give a teacher comfort on having a
14 Registered Nurse tell them what to do and how to help
15 students when it comes to administering anything the
16 student needs.

17 DR. WITONSKI: And I completely appreciate that
18 and understand definitely the scope and sequence of a
19 small school -- and having lived and worked in a
20 small school it will amaze you as many energies as
21 209 students can bring to you --

22 MR. COOK: Right.

23 DR. WITONSKI: -- within the scope and sequence
24 of a day. So when I'm looking at the budget that is
25 proposed in year one and year two, year one is

1 stating, you know, \$12,540 and year two going up to
2 \$15,675. My question or concern is finding that
3 teacher/LPN person that can serve in that role, is
4 that going to be enough to be able to sustain those
5 209 students in year one? And that's just a
6 question.

7 MR. COOK: Good point. The other exciting thing
8 is having multiple schools that -- and having another
9 school in Little Rock is going to be helpful to be
10 able to split the difference. So those are all the
11 different things we're looking at. But in the end
12 we're going to meet the needs of the child. So if
13 the need of the child is to have someone -- have a
14 part-timer, basically, who is working the two schools
15 to where now you're serving 400 kids between the two
16 locations, that's what we'll do.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

18 MR. COOK: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. This is a question just
21 about some of your other districts that y'all
22 operate. I assume that -- and this may be with our
23 Premier High School here with these being recovery
24 students. I know the focus probably isn't college
25 prep. Is there some kind of career piece that's with

1 a school like Premier as far as vocational, trying to
2 help these students enter the workforce when they
3 graduate? And as a follow-up to that, before
4 thinking about this, Quest becoming a high school,
5 will it all just be focused on college prep or will
6 there be some kind of, you know, career-minded vo-
7 tech type programs available for these students
8 moving forward and what kind of programs would those
9 be?

10 MR. COOK: Most definitely. With the dropout
11 recovery we have to label -- and I hate that we have
12 to label it as dropout recovery. Does that mean
13 they're not going to college? Absolutely not. We're
14 on the campus of Arkansas Baptist and they're getting
15 a vision for college. Will every kid go to college?
16 Absolutely not -- but some will. And so we create a
17 vision around the seven habits; we're using Stephen
18 Covey's product where we're talking about "begin with
19 the end in mind, where do you want to end up in
20 life." And so we're doing that with dropout recovery
21 students; we're also doing that with middle school
22 students who -- you know what -- they have more time
23 to get caught up if they're behind. And if they're
24 already coming in ahead then, you know, sharing a
25 vision and getting them excited about where they can

1 go in life. But you've got to offer both and that's
2 what we believe, is being responsive to the needs of
3 that student and parents. You know, is it college or
4 is it career, or is it both? Our preference is it's
5 both. You learn a trade and we do that through
6 partnerships. We're still working on partnerships in
7 Little Rock because, again, you're opening a school
8 with these kids coming in at these levels -- okay? --
9 on reading and math. That's going to be the focus
10 day-one. So this first year it's focusing on the
11 academics and building the relationships -- Dr.
12 Strickland building with each community we're in and
13 finding out what's the need of Little Rock and making
14 sure we get the student those trades so when they
15 walk out they can get a job and then go to college.
16 That's what excites us is get them a trade to where
17 they're not sacking groceries trying to go to
18 college, but they're actually make \$20, \$25 an hour
19 going to college.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters. Oh, follow-up?

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. This may be for Ms. Perry.
22 I just started thinking while Mr. Cook was talking --
23 I know in one of my former districts we had a vo-tech
24 center where several districts got to work together.
25 Do you know if any of the vo-tech centers around

1 here, are they open to charter school students?

2 MS. PERRY: I do not know the answer to that
3 question.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Glasgow, do you know if
5 Metro has any partnership with any of the charters
6 that have high school students?

7 DR. GLASGOW: I know we work with other school
8 districts, like Bryant and Benton. I don't know
9 about charter schools.

10 MR. COOK: We will look at a relationship with
11 community colleges, junior colleges. As I've
12 mentioned a couple of times, we have relationships --
13 Lone Star is a college prep school, a high school
14 high. And then Dallas Community School is partnering
15 with a Premier High School that's on their campus and
16 they actually have -- in that building they have some
17 of the trades around electrical, plumbing, those kind
18 of things.

19 MR. SCOTT SMITH: Just for the Panel's
20 attention, SIATech and some other charters are
21 working with Metro and some other organizations. And
22 you'll see some applications coming to you for this
23 organization that's working with other districts and
24 community colleges in various ways on vo-tech and
25 career programs.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

2 DR. WALTERS: I have a couple of questions about
3 budget. Kind of going back to what Dr. Witonski was
4 talking about with the Health Services, if you look
5 at your Guidance Services I see that you're not --
6 you have a waiver for counselors. But the Purchase
7 Services in your budget for Guidance Services is
8 \$1,000 for both years. And I guess my concern is
9 that \$1,000 for a school year with that many students
10 doesn't seem like it's going to be sufficient. Can
11 you explain to me your thinking on budgeting that
12 amount?

13 MR. COOK: It's going to be -- it's going to
14 fall under Purchase Services, around software, things
15 that we buy for the campus. So we're doing some
16 training with teachers on part of that guidance piece
17 and then having the product software that they can
18 use around guidance.

19 DR. WALTERS: Okay. I'm talking about
20 counseling services for students that need it.

21 MR. COOK: About guidance counseling itself?

22 DR. WALTERS: Or -- I'm talking about mental
23 health. In Purchase Service you may use an outside
24 company --

25 MR. COOK: Right.

1 DR. WALTERS: We've seen some other charter
2 applications that have had that in their application
3 and have asked for the waiver for a counselor being
4 on campus. But they have -- they're contracting with
5 an outside vendor to come in and provide those mental
6 health services to students that need it, and I don't
7 see that anywhere.

8 MR. COOK: And so the 65, almost 66 schools that
9 we have across the state of Texas, the three we have
10 here in Arkansas, the one we're opening in Indiana,
11 we face these same challenges every day of, you know,
12 you build out a budget, things happen. So we made
13 sure there's enough money in the budget to where we
14 can, you know, again, serve the needs of the students
15 as we see it. So I apologize if it's not in the
16 budget in a format that you can see. This thousand
17 is related to that guidance counseling piece, around
18 software. You want to add anything else, James?

19 MR. TAYLOR: Just -- I just wanted to follow-up
20 with something Mr. Cook was just saying, which is
21 that we do monitor those very closely over the course
22 of the year. If we do need to shift into a specific
23 need, we do that. That's part of what I believe
24 makes us more unique in the industry is that as we do
25 -- as we insure that we do have enough money and that

1 as we go forward we're monitoring very closely and
2 make adjustments based on what our actual needs are.
3 And so we don't try to identify right at the
4 beginning "this is going to be the dollar amount," so
5 much as we try to insure we have enough dollars and
6 to make sure that as we go through we make those
7 adjustments actively over the course of the year as
8 need to.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy.

10 DR. WALTERS: Oh, I have another question.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh, I'm sorry.

12 DR. WALTERS: I have one more question, sir. We
13 have several sheets of paper and so this may be --
14 maybe I just missed it. But I thought I read in your
15 waivers that you asked for a waiver for ALE.
16 However, when I look at your budget you have \$47,000
17 budgeted in salaries and benefits for alternative
18 education programs and then \$88,000 for the second
19 year. So could you explain that?

20 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. What I want to -- you're
21 looking at -- if you're looking at the waiver, the
22 dollars there, what we're looking to do is we are
23 looking at this from our budgeting perspective, from
24 the perspective of when we have economically
25 disadvantaged kids, we have individuals coming in,

1 typically they are all slower and also they're a
2 little bit -- they don't necessarily have the full
3 support that some of the other kids do at home. And
4 so what we do is we specifically identify some of
5 those -- some dollars that will help in those
6 particular instances. So we're talking about the ALE
7 -- sorry, I'm trying to make sure to get in the
8 acronym because I'm looking at it here -- sorry --
9 the alternative learning environment. We won't have
10 an alternative learning environment program
11 specifically; what we'll do is identify to insure
12 that we are meeting the very specific needs of those
13 kids who have specific learning needs.

14 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Did you -- I didn't see any
15 revenue in your budget for ALE categorical funds.
16 You didn't have any?

17 MR. TAYLOR: Right. That's correct. There's no
18 revenue in there.

19 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Great. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy.

21 MR. HOY: Unfortunately, I have maybe a couple
22 more financial questions and then one question
23 completely unrelated to finance. In reviewing the
24 budget that was just handed to us, it appears now
25 that we're down to an ending balance at the end of

1 the first year of \$22,742.11, which is now at 1.3% of
2 the budget. And I know at first it was 3 and you
3 were comfortable with 5, so I was wondering -- two
4 questions on that: can you tell me something that
5 makes me comfortable about the 1.3%? And the follow-
6 up question: being a charter organization with a
7 history I know you probably have a track record. So
8 have you ever had to close a school for financial
9 considerations?

10 MR. COOK: We have not. No, sir. We -- as a
11 nonprofit that's our whole focus is kids and so as an
12 organization we have done very well financially just
13 the way we run our programs. And so as we open a new
14 school we're going to have additional costs
15 obviously. Things that aren't included in here that
16 are not supposed to be included are federal grants,
17 things like that that should be out there but you
18 never know. So it's not -- that's why it's not in
19 the budget. But as an organization, a strong
20 organization financially -- and our audits are all
21 out on our website -- you can see that we have the
22 means to be able to meet any of those kind of needs
23 that come up. Obviously, we can't lose money every
24 year, you know, but starting off there's going to be
25 things that may come up where we need to make sure

1 we're infusing some capital into it from our
2 501(c)(3) organization.

3 MR. HOY: The unrelated question, it may be for
4 a parent. When -- Dr. Glasgow, when you were talking
5 about the school that you might retrofit and make it
6 a K-8 school out in the area, I heard what seemed to
7 be a collective gasp from the parents that seem to be
8 sitting there. And I was wondering if one wanted to
9 address that particular issue? And I see one that
10 would like --

11 MR. NEWTON: One of our parent leaders.

12 UNKNOWN LADY: I'd be glad to.

13 MR. NEWTON: One of our parent leaders --

14 MR. HOY: I know they were all sworn in, so --

15 MR. NEWTON: They were.

16 MR. HOY: If you don't mind, I'd like to hear
17 from their perspective.

18 MS. KELLYANN THORNTON: Mr. Glasgow paints a
19 very different picture than what is the reality for
20 West Little Rock and for that STEM conversion school.
21 The superintendent, his own words to me were that
22 that school really would not serve West Little Rock
23 kids. As a K-8 school, what parent is going to take
24 their child out of Roberts with no -- you know -- and
25 go halfway across town? When those Roberts kids

1 graduate from 5th grade, that STEM school will be
2 filled up. Even adding a classroom only adds about
3 30 spots. There's hundreds of kids graduating 5th
4 grade in West Little Rock with nowhere to go. That
5 school is not a guarantee. They're still in the
6 talking and planning stages. They haven't even
7 presented it to their school board to vote on. I've
8 been to those planning meetings; I've sat through and
9 I've listened to what they're doing. That's not
10 going to have an effect on West Little Rock. All
11 they do is talk about things; they never actually do
12 anything. There's nowhere for our kids to go to
13 school. I'm a volunteer parent at Forest Heights
14 Middle School. I do not have a child there. I've
15 donated over 200 hours this school year alone. They
16 don't have the room for our kids at that school.
17 They want my child to be put on a bus and be driven
18 45 minutes one way to a magnet school, if I get in.
19 When Mr. Newton said, "The most innovative thing
20 about this school is that it even exists" -- what
21 Little Rock School District is selling me is fairy
22 dust and promises.

23 MR. HOY: Okay. Then if you don't mind I would
24 like to have Dr. Glasgow respond to that, especially
25 in the light of the past statement, Mr. Glasgow, of

1 the school building itself.

2 DR. GLASGOW: Forest Heights, it's true that our
3 board has approved the administration planning for
4 the school. The final design of the school has not
5 been presented to the board yet for final approval.
6 The planning is for the school to open next year. It
7 would be K-8. It's not an attendance zone school, so
8 parents from all over could apply to go there if they
9 meet the eligibility criteria. There will be
10 criteria for school -- for students to enroll. I'll
11 just relate a personal experience. I have lived in
12 West Little Rock much of my life. My child rode the
13 bus from West Little Rock all the way to Carver
14 Magnet School when it was in the old Carver across
15 town. It was an exceptional experience. Most
16 parents, to my knowledge, don't mind a bus ride if
17 they're getting a quality education when they get
18 there.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Glasgow, one -- before
20 you leave I have a couple of questions about the
21 planning. You also talked about the possibility of
22 maybe building an additional school out there,
23 passing a millage, et cetera. Do you have a
24 timeframe? Has there been any conversation about a
25 timeframe in those plans?

1 DR. GLASGOW: Dr. Suggs -- of course, this is
2 all contingent upon the board approving this, but I
3 think the board is in line with this. Dealing with
4 this is one of their goals for the year. It will
5 probably go for a millage the next time, which would
6 be early next school year. And if the millage is
7 passed then we would immediately begin construction
8 of the school.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Thank you. We'll go
10 back to --

11 MR. NEWTON: Chairman Kimbrell, I just wanted to
12 say we applaud the efforts of the district to become
13 innovative and to do that. But I think my colleague
14 Kellyann was trying to stress that it actually
15 exacerbates the issue because the next closest middle
16 school is Pulaski Heights, which is always at
17 capacity. And so if you're actually narrowing the
18 seats at Forest Heights to this anticipated STEM
19 school, then where do those kids go?

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's an unknown. I think
21 we understood that.

22 MS. THORNTON: Can I say one more thing?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No. We're going to move on
24 with questions. We have three more applications.
25 Ms. Coffman.

1 MS. COFFMAN: This may be a question for Legal.
2 Would you walk me through the lottery process?
3 Because I see that we have very many impassioned
4 parents here but the limited number of seats. So
5 what is that process going to be and how will it
6 affect a family that has a number of children that
7 would cycle through that process?

8 MS. PERRY: If it's all right, Ms. Coffman, I'm
9 going to address it rather than legal counsel.

10 MS. COFFMAN: Okay.

11 MS. PERRY: There is not only -- there is not
12 just one way to do a lottery and have it meet the
13 federal and state definition which is required to be
14 a charter school. But what typically happens is that
15 there are waivers for a sibling. In other words, if
16 a child is drawn -- their number is drawn to be
17 placed in the 5th grade, then when you see that you
18 also know -- and have not yet drawn for 3rd grade --
19 that that child's sibling in the 3rd grade can
20 automatically be placed without having that name
21 actually be drawn. Now some may not do it that way.
22 Charters do not have to take advantage of those
23 preferences that they may take advantage of in that
24 capacity. I have been told by many that they were
25 able to get one student in and not another. There

1 may not be capacity some years at the particular
2 grade level that a sibling is waiting on or there may
3 be multiple siblings from students waiting there.
4 Did that --

5 MS. COFFMAN: Let me be a little more narrow in
6 my scope of that question. Because we're starting
7 with 6-8 grades, so we'll only have three grades, if
8 a child from a family gets in one of those grades but
9 then you have a child that's in 4th or 5th grade do
10 they have an automatic advantage when they become a
11 6th grader?

12 MS. PERRY: They can if the charter is set up
13 that way.

14 MR. COOK: That's how we're -- we'll set it up
15 for the sibling the next year.

16 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman, do you have
18 any questions?

19 MR. BOARDMAN: I'm fine.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Witonski.

21 DR. WITONSKI: I'd like to make a motion to
22 approve.

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any additional questions?

25 MR. HOY: I do have one.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy, go ahead.

2 MR. HOY: Well, it may be more than just one
3 because I want to make certain, as Mr. Boardman
4 stated earlier, that we're straight on all the
5 waivers that we're talking about. But my question is
6 specific to the goal and that's item number 6 in the
7 narrative response. The goals for this particular
8 school are to be specific goals in terms of the
9 targets that were in here. In the goals what I see
10 for Quest, in reading, is that Quest will achieve
11 measurable growth for students. That is not tied
12 specifically to the growth metric set by the State of
13 Arkansas, and I was wondering if for the record we're
14 talking about the growth stated by Arkansas?

15 MR. COOK: Yes, sir.

16 MR. HOY: And the same for mathematics, for the
17 record?

18 MR. COOK: Yes, sir.

19 MR. HOY: Okay. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Let me ask Ms. Clay
21 to come, or Ms. Perry, either, and answer the
22 question that Mr. Boardman brought up and I think
23 it's been reiterated by Mr. Hoy. Do we have straight
24 what waivers are now in the application, which ones
25 are, which ones need to be modified, et cetera?

1 MS. CLAY: Possibly. What I can do for you --
2 and I'll ask both Ms. Perry and Mr. Bowman to kind of
3 double-check me as I go through here. I have a list
4 of waivers divided by basically subject matter that I
5 can go through and tell you what waivers have been
6 requested and tell you if there are any outstanding
7 issues that have either been brought up today in the
8 hearing or that were brought up before with our legal
9 comments, if that is the pleasure of the Panel.
10 Okay. I'll start -- they've asked for waivers of
11 school board requirements generally. Those statutes
12 are 6-13-619, governing Meetings; 6-13-620, Powers
13 and Duties of School Boards; 6-13-634, School
14 District Board of Directors Size; Chapter 14, School
15 Elections; the ADE Rules Governing School Board Zone
16 and Re-Zoning; and ADE Rules Governing School
17 Election Reimbursement. And we do not have any
18 outstanding issues with those waivers.

19 They have asked for a waiver of 6-13-622, Budget
20 Publication. As I mentioned to you earlier, there is
21 a constitutional requirement (Arkansas Constitution
22 Article 14, Section 3) that requires a school to make
23 its budget public. So while you can waive the
24 publication in the newspaper section, the school
25 would still be required to make its budget public in

1 some manner to comply with the Constitution.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It's required under our
3 website requirements, is it not?

4 MS. CLAY: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So they pulled that waiver
6 so --

7 MS. CLAY: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

9 MS. CLAY: So let me make sure we're on the same
10 page, and this may be a question for Mr. Bowman.
11 Whether the applicant still wants a waiver of the
12 newspaper publication requirement of that statute or
13 if they want to withdraw that waiver?

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: 6-13-622.

15 MR. BOWMAN: Yes. We'd like to -- we will
16 publish it on the website, of course, and we'll get a
17 waiver for the newspaper publication.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

19 MS. CLAY: Okay. The next section is Licensure
20 and there's quite a few on this one: 6-13-109, School
21 Superintendent; 6-15-1004, Qualified Teachers in
22 Every Public School Classroom; 6-17-301, Employment
23 of Certified Personnel; 6-17-302, Public School
24 Principal Qualifications and Responsibilities; 6-17-
25 309, Certification Waiver; 6-17-401, Teacher License

1 Requirement; 6-17-427, Superintendent License,
2 Superintendent Mentoring Program Required; Chapter
3 17, Subchapter 4, Certification Generally; 6-17-902,
4 Definitions; 6-17-919, Warrants Void Without Valid
5 Certificate and Contract; the ADE Rules Governing
6 Educator Licensure; ADE Rules Governing the
7 Superintendent Mentoring Program; Standards for
8 Accreditation 15.01, 15.02, 15.03, which all have to
9 do with licensure; the ADE Rules Governing Parental
10 Notification of Assignment -- actually, that one
11 would just be in the licensure rules; they're all
12 combined now. That is all on the licensure waivers
13 and we do not have any outstanding issues from the
14 legal staff for those.

15 Next up is Personnel -- this is Personnel
16 Policies and some other personnel issues that I've
17 grouped all into one. We have 6-17 --

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You want to just -- these
19 are the typical ones under --

20 MS. CLAY: Yes. On --

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And --

22 MS. CLAY: One outstanding issue on the
23 personnel policies, we do believe they need a waiver
24 of the ADE Rules Governing Personnel Policies, Salary
25 Schedules and Documents Posted to the District

1 Website, but just Sections 4 through 8 of those.

2 MR. HOY: But they are not requested?

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No.

4 MS. CLAY: They have not requested that.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We had the same issue
6 yesterday?

7 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

9 MS. CLAY: They have requested a waiver of 6-15-
10 902(a) regarding Grading Scale, which typically the
11 Panel has granted when the grading scale is more
12 rigorous. And I believe that's how you chose to
13 handle it yesterday. If they do get that waiver,
14 they need a waiver of the ADE Rules Governing Uniform
15 Grading Scale as well and that's not been requested
16 on this one.

17 They've requested a waiver of ALE and the
18 typical statutes and rules that go along with that
19 waiver. We do not have any outstanding issues.

20 They withdrew their waiver of School Day Hours,
21 from what I understand, and also they withdrew the
22 waiver of the pre-AP course offering. They've asked
23 for a waiver of Mandatory Attendance for grades 9-12,
24 6-18-211. We talked about this briefly earlier. It
25 appears their schedule is going to be longer and this

1 waiver would not be necessary, but they may want to
2 address how they're going to handle scheduling when
3 they get to those 9-12 grades. If this waiver is
4 granted, they also need a waiver of the Rules
5 Governing Mandatory Attendance for Students in grades
6 9-12. They've requested a waiver of Gifted and
7 Talented and those statutes and rules relating to
8 Gifted and Talented. We don't have any outstanding
9 issues with those waiver requests. They withdrew the
10 waiver of Standards for Accreditation 9.0,
11 Curriculum. With regards to Standards of
12 Accreditation 9.03.4, regarding the 38 units, the
13 applicant may want to address how they will handle
14 that going forward, whether they want to request a
15 phase-in. Typically, the language that goes in with
16 that waiver request is that the charter will offer
17 all 38 units by the time the first 12th grade class
18 -- they have the first 12th grade class.

19 They have requested a waiver of class size and
20 teaching load, which is Standards for Accreditation
21 10.02. This waiver is not uncommon. Usually, the
22 Authorizer likes to hear exactly what the class sizes
23 will be before they grant that waiver. They've asked
24 for a waiver of the 120 clock hours, Standards for
25 Accreditation 14.03. As I mentioned to you earlier,

1 the Panel lacks the authority to grant the waiver of
2 graduation requirements but you do have some latitude
3 in being able to grant the waiver as long as they
4 satisfy the curriculum frameworks requirements.

5 They've asked for a waiver of Standards for
6 Accreditation 19.04 relating to Summer School and
7 Adult Education Programs. They've asked for a waiver
8 of Student Services, and this includes 6-18(10),
9 Public Schools Student Services Act, the Library
10 Media Technology Act, and the relating rules in
11 Standards for Accreditation that goes along with this
12 set of waivers. They requested a waiver of 6-10-106,
13 School Year Dates. This is the uniform dates for
14 beginning and end of school year. We still need them
15 to address whether that waiver is necessary. If they
16 follow the schedule of the Little Rock School
17 District, then that waiver would not be necessary
18 because the Little Rock School District is already
19 complying with that statute. They've withdrawn the
20 waiver of data to be posted on the website. They've
21 asked for waivers of Displaying the United States and
22 Arkansas Flag; that's 6-16-105 and 106. They do say
23 that they will seek alternative methods for
24 prominently displaying those flags. They've
25 withdrawn the waiver of Tests and they have asked for

1 a waiver of Chapter 19 as it relates to
2 Transportation. They've asked for a waiver of 6-21-
3 117 as it relates to Leased Academic Facilities.
4 They've withdrawn the waiver relating to Manner of
5 Making Purchases and they had asked for a waiver of
6 Standards for Accreditation 21.0, Auxiliary Services.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Clay. Let me
8 ask then, Mr. Bowman, do you want to answer questions
9 as to any additional changes or discussion about the
10 waiver requests?

11 MR. BOWMAN: So to the extent that I can,
12 absolutely. To try to put this a little bit into
13 context, I realize this is a new panel but the
14 waivers that you have in the current application
15 involve a few categories. They're ones that we have
16 sought and already have approval for in our prior
17 Quest application for our current functioning school,
18 ones that were approved yesterday with the
19 stipulations from this panel. And the only thing
20 that's different from that is trying to figure out
21 the 38 units, to make sure that we get that included
22 in here with the proper phase-in to where the Panel
23 is comfortable with it but then we can still have our
24 9th grade start next year and still fit within the
25 budget. So I think we need to address that. The

1 only other thing I'd like to put forth for the
2 Panel's consideration as was brought up yesterday by
3 I think the first two presentations is this idea that
4 the board members have to be present physically. So
5 we'd like to seek a waiver on the record of 6-13-619
6 -- 6-13-619, which requires -- to the extent that it
7 requires board members to be physically present.
8 Other than that, any questions that you might have
9 we'd welcome, sir.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy.

11 MR. HOY: Ms. Clay, correct me if I'm wrong but
12 I think what Ms. Clay was also saying is that there's
13 some additional waivers of certain rules that you
14 will need to request or else the waivers of the
15 specific law will still not be applicable --

16 MR. BOWMAN: Thank you, sir.

17 MR. HOY: -- because of the rule.

18 MR. BOWMAN: Yes, sir. So what Counsel has
19 mentioned, those rules that are required to
20 completely effectuate our statutory request we'd like
21 to also include those into the waivers, the ones that
22 she mentioned on the record. Yes, sir.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Do you want to go
24 ahead and address the 38 units now or do you want to
25 bring an amendment to this panel at a later date?

1 MR. BOWMAN: If it's all right, sir, we'd like
2 to do that now. If you can explain how we need that
3 to be phased in -- just starting next year we just
4 need that phased in.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

6 MR. BOARDMAN: I think what was mentioned in the
7 past is that you would agree to have the 38 units
8 when you have a 12th grade class.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: The senior class, first
10 senior class.

11 MR. BOWMAN: Once we have the senior class, once
12 we're serving all 9-12 --

13 MR. BOARDMAN: You will have the 38 units?

14 MR. BOWMAN: Yes, sir. All right.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I asked the question, I
16 mean, and I know that Ms. Clay brought this up about
17 the school year calendar, you asked for a waiver;
18 although you're going to next year match the Little
19 Rock calendar, do you still seek that waiver for
20 flexibility or for the purpose of maybe changing your
21 calendar in the future?

22 MR. BOWMAN: Right. Typically what we do is we
23 do try to match up with the local school district.
24 Sometimes if you have siblings that are in the
25 traditional school district and also in charter

1 school, they have friends there, it makes things very
2 nice. So we typically do match up but just like you
3 said, in case we get into it and the reality is that
4 we want flexibility to do something different we go
5 ahead and ask for that up-front.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Other questions?
7 Ms. Coffman.

8 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. We mentioned yesterday about
9 the grading scale with the stipulation that it be
10 more rigorous than the state scale. And is that
11 acceptable to you, as well?

12 MR. COOK: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Can you give us a quick idea
14 what that would be?

15 MR. BOWMAN: I apologize. That was what we
16 covered yesterday. So what it is, in essence, is
17 it's when you have -- in the code currently, except
18 there's no "D" grade. I think it's 69% and below --
19 it's 59% and below that's an "F" grade, so it's A, B,
20 C, then F. So that's our current grading scale but
21 the waiver is only requested to the extent that what
22 we are providing is more rigorous.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions?

24 DR. WALTERS: A friendly amendment to Dr.
25 Witonski's motion, if she's amenable?

1 DR. WITONSKI: Uh-huh.

2 DR. WALTERS: As we did yesterday, since they
3 are not employing a school counselor or a school
4 nurse, same requirement that an expenditure report be
5 provided by September 1, 2014 for the fiscal year --
6 well, no, this would be next year, so it would be
7 '15. It would actually be '15.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's just an expenditure
9 report of Student Services and Health Services
10 showing that the services were provided. Okay. So I
11 have a motion and a second motion by Dr. Witonski and
12 a second by Mr. Hernandez. Any further discussion or
13 questions? Are you -- yes, she said she was. Y'all
14 can fight it out later. All those in favor say aye.

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
17 Unanimous vote. Your application has been approved.
18 Thank you.

19 No breaks today, sorry. We will be taking a 10-
20 minute break. If you'll look at the clock back there
21 -- well, we'll take a 12-minute break and at 10-till
22 we'll be back.

23 (OFF THE RECORD - 10:38 A.M.)

24 (BACK ON THE RECORD - 10:52 A.M.)

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

1 APPLICATION: REDFIELD TRI-COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL, REDFIELD,
2 ARKANSAS

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We'll reconvene our
4 Charter Authorizing Panel work, and Ms. Perry.

5 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. Now you're about to hear
6 from the applicant for the Redfield Tri-County
7 Charter School. This would be a school to serve
8 grades 5-12 beginning in year one with grades 5-8 and
9 adding a grade level per year. The maximum
10 enrollment requested is 375, 175 in year one. The
11 address would be 116 River Road in Redfield. When
12 the packet was put forth the entity, also called
13 Redfield Tri-County Charter School as the sponsoring
14 entity, had applied for their 501(c)(3) nonprofit
15 status from the IRS. They have the packet that I put
16 there for you at their request this morning. You'll
17 see that the determination letter from the Internal
18 Revenue Service granting this entity 501(c)(3)
19 nonprofit status is there. With that, I will turn
20 this over to Ms. Amanda Kight who will give you some
21 time with her presentation.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Let me ask, are there
23 -- Ms. Perry, are you aware of any of the school
24 districts that were notified that are in attendance?

25 MS. PERRY: I am not.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Are you aware of any that
2 are in opposition to speak?

3 MS. PERRY: I am not.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. All those that will
5 be giving testimony or answering questions please
6 stand and be sworn in. Raise your hand, right hand.
7 It could just be everybody, huh? Do you swear to
8 tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
9 truth?

10 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. I'm sorry. Will
12 you again state your name for the record and begin?

13 MS. KIGHT: My name is Amanda Kight, and I'm a
14 little vertically challenged so is the microphone
15 okay where it is? All right.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And I'll start the clock
17 from now, 20 minutes.

18 MS. KIGHT: Good morning. My name is Amanda
19 Kight. I will be speaking today on behalf of the
20 Redfield Tri-County Charter School board of
21 directors. Our board members have over 120 years of
22 experience in education. Our members have a variety
23 of experience in various areas, such as serving as
24 superintendents and principals, working with Gifted
25 and Talented, classroom instruction, and counseling.

1 Our members have strong ties to the communities of
2 the Tri-County area and have embarked on this mission
3 to establish a school because we care about the
4 children and families that have chosen to call the
5 Tri-County area where Grant, Pulaski and Jefferson
6 Counties meet home. We are very excited to share
7 with you that Mr. Shollmier has joined in our effort
8 to get authorization for an open-enrollment charter
9 school. Mr. Shollmier will be providing consulting
10 services to our board. He earned his Bachelor of
11 Science in Business Administration in 1963, from the
12 University of Arkansas and has served as a Chief
13 Executive Officer for Shollmier Distributing,
14 Incorporated in Little Rock. He was lauded as
15 Entrepreneur of the Year by the Sam M. Walton College
16 of Business in 2010. He has experience in
17 establishing charter schools, as well as close ties
18 to the University of Arkansas.

19 Jefferson County has experienced a population
20 decline. The 2010 census puts its population at
21 approximately 77,000. Estimates in 2012 indicate the
22 population has since dropped below 75,000. As of
23 2012, the White Hall School District had a poverty
24 rate of 41.63%, while the Redfield Middle School had
25 a poverty rate of 52.46% the same year. Also based

1 on the 2010 census, Redfield was one of only two
2 growing cities in the Jefferson County area. There
3 are currently two major housing developments active
4 inside its city limits. The Tri-County area's
5 proximity to Little Rock attracts families. There is
6 a strong community support for having an open-
7 enrollment charter school. Almost 800 signatures
8 were gathered on petitions in support of pursuing a
9 charter. These signatures were from people from
10 Redfield, Hensley, East End, Landmark, Woodson, White
11 Hall, Sheridan, Hardin, Jefferson, and Pine Bluff.
12 The middle school in Redfield was an achieving school
13 and had never been in academic distress when the
14 White Hall school board voted to close it. Based on
15 information posted on the ADE website related to Dr.
16 Kimbrell's press conference on the 2013 Arkansas
17 School ESEA Accountability Reports, held on 05
18 November 2013, White Hall Middle School and Sheridan
19 Middle School are both listed in the Needs
20 Improvement spreadsheet and Fuller Middle School is
21 listed in the Needs Improvement Focus spreadsheet.
22 Families are looking for an opportunity for their
23 children to attend a school closer to home. They
24 want a school that will provide a quality education
25 and prepare their children for life after high

1 school, whether it is attending college, technical
2 school or directly entering the workforce. We
3 believe RTCCS can be the school they are looking for.

4 Education plays a critical role in providing the
5 opportunity for children to realize their full
6 potential. This is especially true when more than
7 half of the students are considered to be a poverty
8 category as they were in the middle school in
9 Redfield. The RTCCS curriculum will be based on
10 inquiry-based instruction complimented with a variety
11 of instructional strategies. We will emphasize
12 college and career readiness, core character values,
13 and expose students to the joys of community service.
14 Technology will be used to augment the students'
15 educational experience and to prepare them to enter
16 the workforce or college with confidence in their
17 ability to use technology to their advantage. Our
18 goal is to work towards developing partnerships with
19 area businesses and community members to enrich our
20 students' exposure to the multitude of career choices
21 available to them after high school and college.

22 RTCCS will be student-focused. Information will
23 be presented in a variety of ways because students
24 learn differently. RTCCS is intentionally keeping
25 the grades limited to 50 students. Why are we doing

1 this? This structure enables one English teacher to
2 teach all of the 6th, 7th and 8th graders. This will
3 give the teacher the ability to build relationships
4 with the students over a three-year period. The
5 teacher will get to know each student and know how
6 each learns best. This will empower the teacher to
7 customize the instructional strategies used for
8 students which will allow them to teach more
9 effectively. Our goal is to create an environment
10 where the students have a sense of belonging. They
11 will build relationships with their teachers and
12 their peers. It is difficult to leave a child behind
13 when you know each one by name. It is harder for a
14 child to disappear or be overlooked when the school
15 is small.

16 We have designed our school day to include an
17 additional 50 minutes of instructional time. Our
18 teachers will be available for non-mandatory tutoring
19 from 7:45 to 8:05 a.m. The first seven periods of
20 the day will be 50 minutes in length. The 8th period
21 will be 30 minutes long. This period can be utilized
22 in a variety of ways, such as offering students
23 additional instruction, allowing students to complete
24 their homework, or inviting guest speakers to enrich
25 their learning experience.

1 Now to the section where you have your handout
2 and there were some important areas and changes since
3 we last had communication back and forth, so we
4 wanted to bring those to your attention.

5 RTCCS wanted to address how RTCCS will meet the
6 needs of our Gifted and Talented students. RTCCS
7 staff will work with the ADE office for the Gifted
8 and Talented and Advanced Placement to insure Gifted
9 and Talented students' needs are met. A Gifted and
10 Talented consultant will mentor the teachers at
11 RTCCS. Field trips, guest speakers, quiz bowls, a
12 stock market game, and chess are examples of
13 activities that may be offered for Gifted and
14 Talented students. A chess club will be initiated
15 where Gifted students can teach chess to other
16 students not in the Gifted program. The social and
17 emotional needs of the Gifted child will be met
18 through peer interaction on projects and other
19 planned activities, as well as through content
20 satisfying to the intellectual needs of the student.
21 Additionally, a Gifted and Talented consultant will
22 be available to guide and assist teachers on the
23 social and emotional needs of the Gifted students.
24 The Gifted and Talented consultant will utilize a
25 pull-out program to deliver instructional services to

1 identify Gifted students. The services will be
2 delivered in an instructional space proportionately
3 sized based on the number of identified Gifted
4 students served at any one time.

5 We also have some updates for our request for
6 waivers. Based on the information received from the
7 ADE legal staff, RTCCS needs to make a few changes to
8 our requested waivers. We would like to change our
9 request for Arkansas Code 6-15-1005, related to Safe
10 and Equitable Schools to be -- that Arkansas Code 6-
11 15-1005 be waived, which is specifically related to
12 the ALE. RTCCS asks for a request for waiver for
13 Arkansas Code 6-16-102 pertaining to School Day
14 Hours; that Standards for Accreditation Section 10.4
15 and 14.0 be disregarded because it is not needed due
16 to our school day including 400 minutes of
17 instruction. RTCCS would like to add a request for a
18 waiver for Sections 6 and 7 of the ADE Rules
19 Governing School District Requirements for Personnel
20 Policies, Salary Schedules, Minimum Salaries, and
21 Documents Posted to District Websites. This waiver
22 request was not included in our previous waiver
23 request and should have been. As Mary Perry told you
24 when she got up and introduced me, we received our
25 approval for our 501(c)(3) application on 30

1 September 2013, but due to the government shutdown
2 our official notification of the approval was not
3 received until late October.

4 Also, in your package you will see two
5 additional MOI's. Mr. Ken Shollmier submitted a
6 letter of intent for a donation to RTCCS upon receipt
7 of authorization for an open-enrollment charter
8 school in the amount of \$85,000. This generous
9 donation will allow RTCCS to have approximately
10 \$100,000 in our bank account as we get approved for
11 this charter. Mr. Shollmier also contacted the
12 University of Arkansas and has submitted a letter of
13 intent indicating University of Arkansas will donate
14 all the books necessary needed for our media center
15 once our charter is authorized.

16 RTCCS board of directors, Redfield and the
17 surrounding Tri-County communities look forward to
18 having an open-enrollment charter school authorized.
19 Members of the RTCCS board of directors have the
20 experience in education to be successful in the
21 establishment and sustainment of the charter school.
22 RTCCS will be working with the Arkansas Department of
23 Education, the Arkansas Public School Resource
24 Center, and utilizing consultant services such as
25 those of Mr. Shollmier and his continued support of

1 the Tri-County area's effort to establish an open-
2 enrollment charter school. We are determined and
3 committed to create a school focused on college and
4 career readiness, utilizing inquiry-based teaching
5 methods augmented with the use of technology. We
6 will strive to build an environment where students
7 feel like they are a part of a school family. Our
8 school will offer families, especially those living
9 in the rural areas of eastern Grant County, southern
10 Pulaski County, and northern Jefferson County, a
11 choice closer to home where their child attends
12 school. The remaining middle schools in the Tri-
13 County area are in Needs Improvement. The achieving
14 middle school in the area was closed. The outcry for
15 an open-enrollment charter school was loud and
16 evidenced by the signatures on the petitions and the
17 donations, all that were collected before we had our
18 501(c)(3) approval and with no authorization for a
19 charter; the family support of the pursuit of a
20 charter school just on the hope of getting it
21 authorized. We implore the Panel to give us an
22 opportunity to establish the open-enrollment charter
23 school. Hear the voice of the communities in the
24 Tri-County area and authorize our application. The
25 communities, students and the RTCCS board of

1 directors will do everything in our power to meet, if
2 not exceed, the requirements. Thank you. That's my
3 presentation.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, ma'am. There's
5 still nine minutes left. Is there others that are
6 prepared to present?

7 MS. KIGHT: We had -- the RTCCS board of
8 directors has not scheduled anybody else.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Very good. Are there
10 any audience members or representatives wanting to
11 speak then against?

12 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

13 MS. KIGHT: As far as we know, we have no
14 opposition.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. If not, then we will
16 open up for the Panel to begin its question phase and
17 we'll begin with Mr. Hoy.

18 MR. HOY: Thank you for your presentation. I
19 will begin I guess with Ms. Freno. I don't see --
20 oh, I don't see Ms. Clay in the back of the room. I
21 was wondering, Ms. Freno, if with the waivers and the
22 issues that you guys brought forth where we were on
23 that. I know in particular I would probably have
24 some issues with one of the new ones requested today
25 wherein they do not wish to publish certain

1 information on the website. But I was wondering
2 about what our position was on the rest of the
3 waivers legally.

4 MS. FRENO: Mr. Hoy, you are correct that Ms.
5 Clay is not here right now. She will be back very
6 shortly. She kind of had an emergency situation. So
7 I would respectfully request, if it's okay with you,
8 that you would keep your question for her because she
9 would do a much better job answering that.

10 MR. HOY: Okay. That's fine. I imagine she did
11 prepare for it. So -- and she's back now. But let
12 me move on to my second question. She'll need to get
13 settled in. My second question deals with finance.
14 I spoke with the previous charter applicant and they
15 initially had a projected budget of about 3%, went
16 down 1%. Where are you? Where's your comfort level
17 in terms of a percentage of ending balance at the end
18 of each year?

19 MS. KIGHT: Ideally, we'd like to have at least
20 5%. The first year of the charter is going to be
21 tight because you have a lot of start-up costs. Once
22 we get established, we feel comfortable that the
23 budget will not be a problem because we are going to
24 be fiscally sound and monitor expenditures very
25 closely.

1 MR. HOY: Okay. Because it seems like right now
2 you're looking at a projected ending balance of about
3 1.7% of your budget. Now I know that if you get the
4 \$85,000 that will have a huge impact on that.
5 However, I would also like to point out that on your
6 professional development funds you set a projected
7 revenue of \$44 per student and it's not going to be
8 that \$44 per student.

9 MS. KIGHT: I heard that in the first
10 discussion. And also we do plan on having future
11 fundraisers now that we do have our 501(c)(3)
12 approval and hopefully authorization for a charter
13 school. We will definitely hit fundraising very hard
14 and our community strongly supports us. I did listen
15 to the Quest presentation earlier and if I heard
16 correctly, they had approximately 500 to 600
17 signatures on petitions. In our rural area we had
18 almost 800 in support of our school.

19 MR. HOY: Right. The one thing I caution you
20 though in terms of the prior applicant, they had
21 resources beyond this particular one charter they
22 were looking for and I'm not certain besides the
23 contributions and fundraisers that you will have an
24 outside source.

25 MS. KIGHT: Correct. We will also be pursuing

1 grants to try to offset some of the costs that we
2 have in there for automation needs, so there's always
3 a possibility of getting grants and freeing up some
4 money as well.

5 MR. HOY: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

7 DR. WALTERS: I have a question about some of
8 the comments made after the internal board, you know,
9 sent you some comments and concerns and your
10 responses back. It's about curriculum. And you were
11 asked to provide the timeline for curriculum in the
12 Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core State
13 Standards and your reply was, "We are estimating it
14 will take approximately four to six weeks for the
15 principal to completely align it, but the process
16 will continue after the initial alignment." So do I
17 understand that the principal is going to align the
18 curriculum for all grades and all content areas?

19 MS. KIGHT: Yes, ma'am. The first year we will
20 hire a director/principal. The first year that
21 person will be the same individual and their top
22 priority will be to get the curriculum aligned with
23 the Common Core Standards.

24 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
25 exited the room at 11:10 a.m.)

1 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And the principal, what is
2 their content background?

3 MS. KIGHT: Well, it's actually going to be the
4 director. I may have mistyped and put principal, but
5 it is the director/principal that first year.

6 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And their background was?

7 MS. KIGHT: We don't have one yet. As soon as
8 we get authorization, we will start the hiring
9 process to hire a highly qualified director/principal
10 for the charter.

11 DR. WALTERS: Do you not think it would be
12 better to have teachers to align the curriculum in
13 those content areas, that are the experts in those
14 content areas?

15 MS. KIGHT: Well, we will be working with the
16 teachers as they are hired. What we have -- what our
17 current plan is, as soon as we get authorization we
18 will start the hiring process and get a director
19 hired. Hopefully, that person is highly qualified
20 and comes with experience and can get that well under
21 way and pretty much done. And then as the teachers
22 are hired the director will work with the teachers to
23 insure the content of their instruction time
24 coincides with the framework that has been mapped
25 out.

1 DR. WALTERS: Thank you.

2 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Hernandez, you're recognized
3 for questions.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Going back to the director/
5 principal, also, can you give me a little background
6 about the -- just how the leadership structure of all
7 this is going to work? I understand you'll have a
8 board in place. But how will the day-to-day
9 operation and guidance and things like that work with
10 the district -- or the school?

11 MS. KIGHT: The director will be very similar to
12 what a superintendent is in a regular public high
13 school or public school system. They would be more
14 administrative over the fiscal and policies, where
15 the principal would be more of a school
16 administrator; they would be on-hands with the
17 students on a daily basis. And like I said, the
18 first year of operation this individual will actually
19 be the same person so it will be a definitely
20 involved atmosphere in our charter.

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: So some of the others, there's
22 no like outside -- I think this kind of hits home to
23 his question. There isn't any kind of contingency
24 part as far as if you don't get the number of
25 students or, you know, financial -- if there's some

1 financial issues that arise there isn't any kind of
2 contingency plan or back-up funding or anything like
3 that right now?

4 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
5 returned to the room at 11:12 a.m.)

6 MS. KIGHT: No, sir. Not at this point. But we
7 do believe that we will be able to get grants of some
8 kind and allocate some of that money that we already
9 have allocated to like IT purchases or anything like
10 that. So we would have a fund to fall back on.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski.

13 DR. WITONSKI: So in this same vein of
14 questioning -- when I'm looking at the application
15 and I'm looking at the budget I see underneath
16 Administrative Positions you've got a .25 state
17 director allocated at \$90,000; there is a 1.0 FTE
18 campus director/principal for \$65,000. So when you
19 were talking to Mr. Hernandez, this state director is
20 classically known in our terms as -- that would be
21 the superintendent you were discussing?

22 MS. KIGHT: My numbers aren't matching yours.
23 I'm a little confused at what we're looking at.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. I'm looking at -- we don't
25 have the same pages, so --

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You're looking at the budget
2 though. Right?

3 DR. WITONSKI: Yes. I'm looking at the budget.
4 Budget aside, you're going to have a superintendent
5 that will be the director; you will have a principal
6 that will be in the school. Will the principal be
7 on-site in the school every day?

8 MS. KIGHT: Yes, ma'am.

9 DR. WITONSKI: And then what about the director?

10 MS. KIGHT: The director will be probably on-
11 site or somewhere close-by. I don't know the
12 physical location. We have tentatively talked with
13 an entity that's leasing us the land for a school.
14 They have property there close-by that we are going
15 to lease that as an administrative office type
16 situation. So it would be co-located with the
17 school.

18 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Okay.

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: I got a little bit confused
20 there. So is it -- I heard you say director/
21 principal. So is there going to be -- there's an
22 overall director, then there's a director/principal
23 or --

24 MS. KIGHT: The first year the director/
25 principal is the same individual.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Same person.

2 MS. KIGHT: The second year we do hire a
3 principal.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. And in going back on the
5 budget part, so is that -- is the .25 on the budget
6 -- it says \$90,000. So is that -- I guess what I'm
7 asking is if they're full-time will they be paid four
8 times that amount?

9 MS. KIGHT: Well, see, I'm seeing -- I don't
10 understand where you're seeing .25. I don't have
11 that on mine.

12 DR. WITONSKI: Let me clarify. I think what
13 we're asking, you have plans to have two --

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Microphone.

15 DR. WITONSKI: I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. You
16 have plans to have two that are in place. So you'll
17 have a director and then you'll have a principal. Is
18 that correct?

19 MS. KIGHT: No, ma'am. The first year they're
20 one in the same person.

21 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

22 MS. KIGHT: The director will share -- do both
23 job duties.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Got it. And then year two
25 is --

1 MS. KIGHT: We hire a principal and then the
2 director becomes just a director.

3 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman.

5 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes. I guess I'm having a little
6 computer trouble right now but I think -- same
7 question I asked a while ago: you're going to move up
8 after the first year and add grade 9. Was there a
9 waiver request on the 38 units or do you need to
10 phase that in? We'll start with that. Because if
11 not, you have to do the second year the 38 units.

12 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir. I don't believe we have
13 that waiver in our package but we would need that the
14 year 9th grade comes on to get in place and then we
15 plan on offering those 38 units before they graduate,
16 seniors.

17 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. And I'm going to pass and
18 come back.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman.

20 MS. COFFMAN: Would you talk to me about your
21 curriculum plans? I know you talked about alignment
22 but what will your curriculum be based upon?

23 MS. KIGHT: Our curriculum is going to be based
24 on career and college readiness. We are also going
25 to use inquiry-based instructional methods as our

1 primary source of instruction. We will have
2 projects, hands-on, to keep everybody engaged. We
3 have set aside monies for aids to be available as
4 well. We have funds allocated to augment all that
5 with technology. We don't want our children to go
6 through school and come out and be intimidated by
7 technology. A lot of people have a fear of that.
8 But we're not going to be technology based. You know
9 what I'm saying? We are going to have community
10 involvement; we've got heavily involved parents. As
11 you can tell, our whole entity is from community
12 support. So our community is interested and our
13 parents are interested, our grandparents are
14 interested. We're going to have a good working
15 relationship. We will be a community service. We
16 will get people involved and helping others actually
17 help achieve as well. When we hire a director the
18 actual text and all that stuff will come then. We
19 just have a vision for what we want to stress and we
20 want to prepare those children for life after high
21 school, for life after college if they go on to that
22 level.

23 MS. COFFMAN: May I follow-up?

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. COFFMAN: So I think where I heard you going

1 is in your curriculum it was going to be textbook
2 based?

3 MS. KIGHT: Mostly textbook based with some use
4 of technology. And our second year we have a bigger
5 IT budget where we hope to get iPads or Tablets or
6 something available to the students because you
7 really need to get everybody where they're
8 comfortable with technology. The world is moving too
9 much to the IT based living that they cannot -- they
10 have to be able to use technology.

11 MS. COFFMAN: And so in your application it said
12 that you would start with a computer lab of eight
13 computers?

14 MS. KIGHT: Yes, ma'am.

15 MS. COFFMAN: And then would there be technology
16 available to teachers in addition to that?

17 MS. KIGHT: We are going to have at least one to
18 two computers available for our students possibly in
19 a student lounge area -- not students, our teachers
20 in a teachers' lounge area so they can do research if
21 they need to and have accessible. As we become more
22 fiscally stable, the third and fourth years are money
23 opens up without the costs of start-up and we will
24 invest more heavily in having automation available
25 for that.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Mr. Hoy.

2 MR. HOY: At this point I'd like to go back to
3 my initial question in terms of a review of the
4 waivers requested by Ms. Clay to make certain we're
5 on good legal grounds with what we're looking at.

6 MS. CLAY: Sure. And I apologize for being out
7 of the room. Based on the additional responses that
8 the applicant provided to you today, the legal office
9 does not have any concerns with the waivers that are
10 requested. They appear to all be fairly standard
11 waivers that are requested by most applicants. I
12 would mention to you all that they have asked to add
13 the waiver of the 38 units and the phase-in
14 stipulation that you've added to the previous
15 applications.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Didn't -- Ms. Kight, didn't
17 you also ask for additional waivers while Ms. Clay
18 was out, Section 6 and 7?

19 MS. KIGHT: Yes. That was based on the
20 recommendations here.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

22 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir. I considered those in what
23 I said to you.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

25 MR. HOY: Okay. Then my next question has a

1 little bit to do about your board structure
2 governance. Looking through your document it appears
3 as if every member of the board is going to be up for
4 election every year?

5 MS. KIGHT: Well, we have no term limits. So if
6 somebody wanted to -- you know -- if someone has
7 served several years and they're ready for a break,
8 they could go out at the end of the year. But once
9 you're on there you can be removed. There is a
10 procedure in our -- what's the word I'm looking for
11 -- bylaws -- sorry, my mind just went blank --
12 there's a procedure in our bylaws to actually remove
13 a member, you know, for different situations. But
14 the current board members have all made commitments
15 to stay through us getting through the 12th grade
16 because they think that would provide stability. And
17 if after that time people do want to go off, we will
18 go off staggering. We won't all leave at the same
19 time, just so we can continue with stability in the
20 governing structure.

21 MR. HOY: Okay. I hear what you're saying but
22 let me look at it. In the package, page 8 of 40,
23 it's the second paragraph down, second sentence,
24 "Each director's term shall be for a term of one
25 year, beginning on the date designated by the board

1 of directors on electing such director and shall
2 continue until such term ends."

3 MS. KIGHT: In our bylaws, annually we'll review
4 that. And so every year they will have the
5 opportunity in October to say, "Hey, I want off," and
6 at that time we will replace them. We were trying to
7 do a more managed exodus so we wouldn't have people
8 leaving throughout the year. So in our annual
9 meeting, at the end of that term, if they want to
10 leave they can leave at that time. But there is no
11 term limit.

12 MR. HOY: Okay. So you could possibly lose all
13 at the same time?

14 MS. KIGHT: No, sir. We would not let that
15 happen.

16 MR. HOY: Okay.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

18 DR. WALTERS: I have some questions about
19 budget. When you look at transportation you have
20 \$5,000 budgeted for two used buses. You have \$4,000
21 budgeted for bus maintenance. I'm concerned that
22 those figures are somewhat low because if you're
23 buying buses that are \$2,500 apiece I'm afraid
24 maintenance of \$4,000 for a school year is not going
25 to be enough. Have you -- can you give me your

1 thought process --

2 MS. KIGHT: Yes, ma'am.

3 DR. WALTERS: -- on those dollar figures?

4 MS. KIGHT: We have talked to community members.
5 Several parents, grandparents are mechanics and they
6 have volunteered their services. So we will be
7 augmenting the actual budgeted items with services
8 from community members that are saying, "I will --
9 I'm a certified mechanic; I will service the
10 equipment; I will change the tires; I will change the
11 oil, provide maintenance," that kind of thing, so
12 that they will meet state requirements.

13 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Along the same lines, when
14 I look at your maintenance and operations, your
15 utilities, the electricity for the year you've got
16 \$14,000 budgeted and \$4,000 for water. Can you tell
17 me how you arrived at those figures?

18 MS. KIGHT: We mostly modeled those after what
19 the middle school in Redfield had cost incurred in
20 their history, is what we based that on.

21 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez.

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Two questions. I understand
24 this will be in the White Hall School District. Is
25 that correct?

1 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir.

2 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Do you -- on your budget
3 you had budgeted about it looked like \$43,000 roughly
4 -- I'm sorry -- \$34,000 roughly for teacher salary,
5 for a teacher. And I notice the minimum salary
6 schedule for White Hall is around \$37,000 starting.
7 Do you think that it might be difficult to attract
8 quality teachers to your school?

9 MS. KIGHT: Well, I see -- I understand that you
10 think that might be a concern but we are probably
11 going to use resources for teachers that the White
12 Hall School District doesn't use, entities like Teach
13 America [sic], looking at some of the -- maybe the
14 retired community members that had jobs, that had
15 degrees involved that they may want to come teach;
16 try to get some people that will be willing to come
17 work and be in it for the children, to be motivated
18 for that. So it may concern you a little bit but
19 we've already had three individuals approach us about
20 wanting to apply for jobs, two of which live in our
21 community. Right now, they're commuting to Pine
22 Bluff and further to teach and they are very
23 interested in trying to work closer to home.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Second question?

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Go ahead.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: This thing automatically goes
2 off on me sometimes. My other question: I recollect
3 -- I kind of remember when the school was being
4 talked about being shut down and I kind of remember
5 some of the news that was on and it seems like I
6 remember there being a story about the last middle
7 school basketball ball being played in the gym. So I
8 guess my question is related to what are some of the
9 plans -- are there plans, being a middle school,
10 having those middle school teams and going back
11 having some of those athletic and extracurriculars?
12 And if so, is that -- I don't know if that's really
13 reflected in the budget. What's the plans for that?

14 MS. KIGHT: There are small amounts in the
15 budget for that. We're going to have to start off
16 small, obviously, because we are going to be tight on
17 our budget the first year. But as we grow the
18 extracurricular activities will grow. We would love
19 to get back to basketball but we don't think that
20 we'll be able to start off with basketball. We
21 might; it just depends on what kind of agreements we
22 can work out with entities in Redfield that have a
23 gym that we could use. One of the sports that we're
24 looking at is soccer because soccer is fairly
25 inexpensive to field and have a team sport. So we

1 are looking at soccer, maybe some long-distance
2 running. A lot of the Christian schools around the
3 area have deals with different high schools so they
4 can go to track meets and use their facilities for
5 track meets, so we could work out some partnerships
6 that way. So we do have plans for that because we do
7 understand that extracurricular activities are very
8 important. A lot of students, that's how you hook
9 them in to being interested and staying in school.
10 And we're all about controlling that dropout rate
11 because White Hall School District actually is a
12 Needs Improvement for dropouts. So we understand
13 that we do need to have that for our children. And
14 that's one reason the community was concerned when
15 they closed our middle school, because our children
16 are now being bussed to White Hall to attend school.
17 And kind of what's happened is a lot of our families,
18 they work north of Redfield. Okay? So when they go
19 to work their kids go south toward Pine Bluff to
20 attend school; they're not able to get from work to
21 that school to pick them up from practice. And a lot
22 of them are not being able to participate in sports
23 and activities down there because they don't have a
24 ride home from the afterschool meetings.

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski.

2 DR. WITONSKI: Hello. And I appreciate the
3 packet that you provided us with the additional
4 information and definitely the work that you
5 mentioned and the commitment from Mr. Shollmier who's
6 willing to up-front provide some funding, which is
7 great. The concern I'm sure you're hearing from us
8 is sustainability; how can you sustain this. And
9 although that is an extremely generous donation some
10 of us who have lived in the world of running a school
11 and having to pay for those things, even when things
12 are tight -- in going back to Mr. Hoy's comment, when
13 it is such a narrow margin it causes us pause.

14 MS. KIGHT: Yes. And I totally understand that
15 because we too are concerned. But our relationship
16 that we have developed with Mr. Shollmier, he has
17 indicated that once we get authorization more help
18 will be there. So we feel very comfortable. He was
19 willing to give us an LOI for the \$85,000; I believe
20 he's more than willing to give us more money once we
21 get authorization and support us in whatever way he
22 can. He has recently bought land. He has bought the
23 Charles River Lab in Redfield and there was
24 automation for that left behind, their PC's, still in
25 usable condition. He's already told us we can have

1 all 26 of those. He is very supportive of us. I
2 believe he will work with us and he has contacts in
3 the business world that we can use to try to get
4 funds available, as well as, you know, his company
5 and himself donating his time and resources.

6 DR. WITONSKI: Which in terms of planning and in
7 terms of a smaller district, which many of us have
8 worked for, those are critical pieces that you need,
9 whether you're running a larger district or a smaller
10 district. It's a big component of the job, which is
11 great. In terms of how that relates and translates
12 to curriculum, curriculum planning, professional
13 development and all of those critical pieces that are
14 at the essence of what students are learning in
15 class, can you tell us a little about what curriculum
16 would look like? I know Ms. Coffman specifically
17 asked about textbooks --

18 MS. KIGHT: Correct.

19 DR. WITONSKI: -- and that you would be
20 primarily textbook driven. But not knowing who your
21 leadership is -- I know Dr. Walters also asked your
22 teachers and who you would have in place, the concern
23 of being able to be competitive against other
24 salaries. Do you have a scope and sequence for your
25 salary schedule to attract that talent, is one

1 question. Do you have a plan in terms of how will
2 you secure those textbooks? What will your
3 curriculum encompass as a whole?

4 MS. KIGHT: We've had a couple of offers from
5 individuals, one affiliated with the University of
6 Arkansas-Pine Bluff, and Mr. Shollmier with the
7 University of Arkansas, to help us in getting the
8 textbooks. And that is a big cost in our budget that
9 even if they provide half the textbooks that would
10 save us a lot of money. So we've had two different
11 offers from two different individuals. We were not
12 able to get an LOI before this meeting, but both of
13 these individuals -- one of them is Mr. Shollmier and
14 the other one is Mr. Larry O'Briant, our president of
15 the board. Since he works with UAPB he had contacts
16 that he was saying that he could get some textbooks
17 for us as well.

18 As far as our curriculum, I'm very excited about
19 it because I think a lot of students today don't
20 really think about what they're going to do when they
21 grow up. I mean, they just know the life that they
22 have. And our students are going to be able to be
23 exposed to different options, you know, things that
24 they may never have thought of. You know, our
25 community has police officers, nurses, doctors,

1 veterinarians -- Mr. Byrd over here is a veterinarian
2 -- more than willing to come interact with our
3 students. What I'm hoping that we can also work
4 towards is NCTR, which is right down the road from
5 us. We could get a partnership with them. There's
6 different areas -- we're close enough -- we're
7 centrally located between Pine Bluff and Little Rock
8 that we can really draw from either direction and try
9 to get these partnerships going and possibly on some
10 of the projects that we'll do in our classroom
11 actually have an engineer come in and work with our
12 children, an engineering project. Come in with a
13 chemist and work on something in chemistry. So the
14 opportunity for that to happen is very real for us
15 because we are centrally located and do have access
16 to those kind of jobs around. So I'm hoping that our
17 students will really benefit from that because I have
18 an 18-year old and a 15-year old. And I was talking
19 to one of my 15-year old's friends when they were in
20 7th grade and he had a rough home life. He really --
21 you know -- he did; he struggled. And I asked him,
22 "Well, what are you going to do when you grow up?"
23 He didn't even have -- he'd never thought of it. And
24 to me that just broke my heart that he was in 7th
25 grade and had never had anyone, you know, a parent or

1 family support sit there and talk to him about what
2 he could do. You know, he only knows what he knows
3 in his home, what's going on there. The world has
4 endless opportunities if they only are given the
5 chance.

6 DR. WITONSKI: So my second question was salary
7 schedule --

8 MS. KIGHT: Oh, I'm sorry.

9 DR. WITONSKI: -- as far as have you thought
10 about what that might look like in your school?

11 MS. KIGHT: Well, we plan on having an increase
12 in salary every year. Now it's not going to be a lot
13 but it also will be dependent on how much other
14 outside financial support we can get. Salary is very
15 important and we understand that. If we can get
16 quality teachers, you want to give them motivation to
17 stay. Yes, a lot of people do it for the love of
18 teaching because to me teachers are very under-valued
19 in society as a whole. I come from a teaching
20 family. I understand a lot of it is self-sacrifice
21 to a lot of teachers. I mean, they're the ones going
22 out and buying these things that maybe the district
23 can't provide them. So I do know we do have people
24 that are committed that way. I cannot tell you at
25 this time exactly what the percent increase would be

1 but any money that we can allocate to increasing that
2 teacher's base salary will be definitely given to
3 that first because it is important to reward people
4 that are doing a good job. If our scores are high
5 and they continue to achieve, we definitely want to
6 keep those teachers there and that will be one of our
7 top priorities to allocate that money as we can to
8 them.

9 DR. WITONSKI: So you said that you have had
10 some outreach from retirees and from the community as
11 a whole of support. Has there been any -- have there
12 been any plans in terms of curriculum planning or
13 knowing what these students would be walking into in
14 terms of learning standards?

15 MS. KIGHT: Learning standards pertaining to --

16 DR. WITONSKI: What they would be -- what would
17 be your plan in terms of curriculum, in terms of
18 mapping out what that would look like?

19 MS. KIGHT: Well, and I may not answer your
20 question technically. But what we're ideally going
21 for is to have -- to cover the educational
22 requirements, cover all the requirements of the
23 Common Core, but do it in such a way that we have
24 different instructional strategies being used for
25 those children, hands-on, journal writing, different

1 projects, so that it would be fluid in a lot of ways.
2 But we're still going to have the common requirements
3 that you have to get. They're going to still have to
4 be able to pass and achieve on whatever state-
5 mandated tests that there will be. But we are
6 definitely looking at -- we know that in 2014 the ADE
7 is planning on PARCC coming into being and we were
8 very excited when we found that on the website
9 because that kind of plays right into where we're
10 going with the college and career readiness. So
11 mostly, we're going to be book-oriented. We'll use
12 other resources, websites, the (unintelligible)
13 Institute website -- we hope to use it for a lot of
14 professional development to either re-expose the
15 teachers that are coming into project-based
16 strategies and that teaching method or to teach it to
17 them new and give them the opportunity. We will be
18 diligent in researching every available option we can
19 to increase our achievement for our teachers and
20 their comfort level of what we're asking them to do,
21 because we are asking them to do a lot. We do
22 understand that our salaries are going to be lower
23 than the school districts around. But we would
24 hopefully be able to pay our teachers comparable to
25 the teachers in other schools that are about the same

1 size so that -- you know -- White Hall is a much
2 larger school district than we ever plan on being, so
3 hopefully we can look at some schools that are about
4 the same size we are and kind of mirror their
5 salaries as well or come close.

6 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman.

8 MR. BOARDMAN: I guess mine is more of just --
9 again, I listened and I've been listening to more of
10 concerns than exact questions. So I'll just tell you
11 as you answer other questions maybe what my concerns
12 are and basically it still goes back to the
13 curriculum. I think you really are enthused and I
14 think you're looking at some very good instructional
15 strategies in the way you're going to get at the
16 curriculum. But beyond what the required -- I don't
17 see that much planning and preparation for what is
18 the required curriculum. And I may just not be
19 hearing it right there. And then I think the other
20 one is still again the size of small and the finances
21 and just -- and I feel better about that because, I
22 think, with the support that you're getting but I
23 still have that concern. And one of the things we
24 don't want to happen here, because we've been there
25 before, is for a school to start and close down and

1 not be able to make it financially.

2 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir.

3 MR. BOARDMAN: So those -- I don't have a
4 specific question but just as other people and I look
5 at this and at the curriculum itself, the textbooks
6 that you're going to use are even -- that's not all
7 the curriculum. But I still hear more about
8 instructional strategies and what you're going to do
9 and things above the required curriculum. But we
10 have to have the required curriculum in place.

11 MS. KIGHT: Right. And we will -- the first
12 thing -- if we get authorization today, the first
13 thing we're going to do is get that director hired
14 and get consultant contracts in place. We have money
15 allocated in the budget for a curriculum specialist
16 so that we can have that expertise. Because you have
17 to remember that we are a community-based action
18 coming forth. So, yes, we do have educators but
19 curriculum development we don't necessarily have that
20 much expertise. So we are going to have to reach out
21 and when we join the APSRC and we work with the ADE
22 and we get our director on board, we will have
23 several months to get that all in place and so that
24 we can then have a curriculum designated, a director
25 hired, so that the teachers can then start being

1 interviewed and being hired and put in place. But we
2 too had the concerns over money and we understand
3 that. And what I also want you to realize is a lot
4 of people that have put in applications with you are
5 businesses that at some point started out just like
6 we are. Okay? They were someplace in a building
7 just like this, going before a board, asking for a
8 chance. So that's all we're asking for, is give us a
9 chance. We believe we have done a professional
10 application. We have the passion, we have the
11 commitment. With Mr. Shollmier coming on board we
12 believe we have the financial backing that was
13 actually lacking from our original proposal. But we
14 would just like a chance to have a school. We have
15 developed from Arkansans for Arkansans in our little
16 area of the state.

17 DR. WITONSKI: And I will say -- and not to jump
18 in on your question, Mr. Boardman, but I think that
19 we all appreciate that and understand the importance
20 of having -- we live by that mantra at the Department
21 of Education to make sure that we involve Arkansans
22 in the process as we develop different things. I
23 think where our concern is, first, is applications
24 we've looked at versus the business industry versus
25 people who have started from places; we don't have

1 additional contents to review here.

2 MS. KIGHT: Right.

3 DR. WITONSKI: We don't have sample curriculums
4 to review. So we are -- that's why we keep asking
5 these questions, to probe, to find out where you are
6 and the level of implementation so that we can make
7 an informed decision.

8 MS. KIGHT: Right. And I will admit we are weak
9 on curriculum because that's not one of the areas of
10 expertise that any of our board members were able to
11 bring to the table.

12 DR. WITONSKI: Sure. Sure.

13 MS. KIGHT: But we did allocate budget for that
14 and we do have Mr. Shollmier who has experience and
15 probably has resources available, resources that will
16 be beneficial to us.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Along that line -- and I may
19 have the original budget. I'm looking at what's on
20 our NOVUS agenda. But I don't -- I could not find
21 anywhere where there was a curriculum specialist
22 budgeted.

23 MS. KIGHT: I probably listed it in the wrong
24 place, but it is in here.

25 DR. WITONSKI: They mentioned the curriculum --

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, I know they've
2 mentioned it but are there budget funds for it? I
3 didn't see any -- I know administratively you had in
4 your budget for the -- yeah, the principal-director/
5 first year, administrative assistant, and then
6 teachers and aids, special education, guidance
7 counseling, bookkeeper. So I didn't see -- I did see
8 where you had money budgeted to join APSRC and there
9 are curriculum supports there.

10 MS. KIGHT: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But I did see in your
12 response to one of the questions of the Internal
13 Review that you would -- on getting authorization to
14 become a charter would hire a curriculum specialist,
15 but I didn't see that in there. Also, as I look at
16 the budget you're going to contract out the
17 maintenance and operation of the building but there's
18 still no funds budgeted there for that contracting.
19 So I have concerns about how that's going to work, as
20 well as I know you've got a bookkeeper. You also
21 don't have any substitute personnel budgeted, any
22 funds for substitutes when teachers are out of the --

23 MS. KIGHT: I believe I do have substitutes in
24 there.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Well, I may be

1 looking at an old one. I may be looking -- instead
2 of --

3 DR. WITONSKI: It's on down.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. All right.

5 MS. KIGHT: Did you find that in there?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: (Nodding head up and down.)

7 MS. KIGHT: Okay. Because I've just seen the
8 substitutes but can't find the curriculum specialist.
9 But I believe we had allocated \$4,000 for a
10 curriculum specialist consultant.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So you're talking
12 about hiring a consultant. What I read in the thing
13 would be hiring a specialist I assumed that you were
14 going to have on staff.

15 MS. KIGHT: No. No, sir. It was contract.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Boardman?

17 MR. BOARDMAN: No, I'm fine.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy -- or Ms. Coffman?
19 I'm sorry.

20 MS. COFFMAN: As I think about the students I
21 want to really applaud your community in coming
22 together. It certainly starts there. I just need to
23 be sure that these students will have a better
24 academic opportunity by leaving White Hall or any
25 other district and coming into this school. So what

1 can you say to me to assure that the academics will
2 be more rigorous than what they're already receiving?

3 MS. KIGHT: I believe our biggest advantage over
4 White Hall will be the size of our school, because if
5 a child starts falling behind they can't just
6 disappear into a sea of 900 kids at a high school.
7 They are going to be one of the 50 students in their
8 grade. The teachers will know them personally. Like
9 I said, the way we're structured with 50 students in
10 a classroom they'll have the same science teacher,
11 the same math teacher, the same English teacher for
12 three grades, in 6th, 7th and 8th. So they will be
13 known to the staff. Their family situation will be
14 known to the staff. They will get personalized --
15 and we won't just be worried about their academic
16 progress. We will be worried about their family
17 support, the emotional needs that they have, and
18 being less -- oh, what am I trying to say -- in the
19 classroom they will be given the individualized
20 instruction that they need. We have a longer school
21 day so that we can build in time for them to get more
22 one-on-one time that they need. We have a history of
23 having a strong education in Redfield. Our parents
24 and our families that are lifetime Redfieldiens
25 [sic], as we sometimes are called, are used to that

1 standard. You know, they're not going to expect
2 anything less than what they're used to. We have
3 been an achieving school; we have a history of
4 achieving schools. Our students -- even though they
5 come from poverty level where over 52% are at poverty
6 level, our students are achieving and we are going to
7 continue that tradition of having a strong academic
8 school there. And we also try to make it where
9 parents can be more involved with a school that's
10 closer to your home. After you've worked an eight-
11 or nine- or ten-hour day, you know, you go home and
12 you just don't want to get back out again. It's much
13 easier to make yourself go to a school that's five
14 minutes away from your house instead of having to
15 drive 20, 25 minutes south to get to a school there
16 and then drive 20, 25 minutes back when you get home.
17 It seems like a small amount of time, but I know all
18 of you have probably had long days and gotten home
19 and just didn't feel like getting out again. So what
20 we're trying to do is give those families an
21 opportunity so that if they're working in Little
22 Rock, when they come down 530 to get home, that the
23 school is right there. They can swing by, watch the
24 game, go to the quiz bowl, you know, go to the drama
25 skit that's being put on, whatever we're having.

1 They will be right there and available to participate
2 with their child. And we firmly believe that if the
3 parent is involved, the teacher is involved, the
4 students are able to build that relationship and have
5 a family feel about going to school and believe that
6 they're part of a school family, they're going to
7 thrive. They're going to get all the emotional and
8 academic support that they need, and we are
9 passionate about that. We feel very strong about
10 that.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman, any --

12 MR. BOARDMAN: No.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

14 MR. HOY: Just one last question. It's for Ms.
15 Perry, if you don't mind.

16 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir.

17 MR. HOY: In the evaluation that was done by the
18 committee before we received this, you noted that
19 even after the district's -- even after the charter
20 response to the notification part of it that it was
21 "partially meets standard." Is there a reason why it
22 was "partially meets?"

23 MS. PERRY: I'm sorry. I'm not sure what
24 section --

25 MR. HOY: In terms of notice to superintendents

1 from surrounding schools.

2 MS. PERRY: Oh, oh. It shouldn't have still
3 been indicated as "partially meets the standard."

4 MR. HOY: Okay. Because I saw the email in the
5 attachment.

6 MS. PERRY: That's right. I'm sorry. We did
7 not correct that. That really shouldn't have been
8 done. And we knew that that had been submitted
9 originally because we were copied on it but it needed
10 to be in the application for them.

11 MR. HOY: Thank you, ma'am.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

13 DR. WALTERS: I have one more -- I have one last
14 question I want to ask about the budget. I notice
15 that you have \$35,000 budgeted for textbooks and you
16 said that you're going to be a textbook-driven
17 curriculum. If you divide that out by 175 students,
18 which you say you're going to have for the first
19 year, that's \$200 per student for textbooks.

20 MS. KIGHT: Yes, ma'am.

21 DR. WALTERS: I'm looking online right now at
22 Houghton-Mifflin and a science textbook is \$96 for
23 one -- that's one area. So if you take into account
24 just the four content areas and don't think about
25 career orientation, keyboarding, music, art, all of

1 the other things, you can see that your \$35,000 is
2 not going to go very far.

3 MS. KIGHT: Right. And we realize that that's
4 going to be a challenge but we are up to the
5 challenges. Like I said, we've had two individuals
6 already approach us, offering to provide us with
7 textbooks. They're just wanting us to let them know
8 which textbooks. So that will be offset by those
9 individuals, those entities trying to help us get our
10 charter school on the way. We will do worksheets off
11 the web. We'll use different methods to be
12 innovative, to try to get through our stand-up and
13 get stable time. But we really do believe that given
14 the support that we're getting now that we are going
15 to be able to make this happen.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez.

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: My question deals around
18 facilities. Tell me -- give me an overview of what
19 the facilities are going to be like, and I saw some
20 costs in the budget for portable buildings and just
21 stuff like that. So just kind of an overview of what
22 the campus is going to be like.

23 MS. KIGHT: Our campus the first several years
24 will be modular buildings that we will be leasing.
25 We have approached a church in Redfield that has some

1 land available behind it and they have been very
2 generous in trying to work with us and are going to
3 give us a very good deal to use that land because
4 they too support our efforts to get a school in our
5 community. The modular buildings we are looking at,
6 we had done -- gotten cost estimates from three
7 different vendors, I believe, and the ones that we
8 kind of liked the best and seemed to be the best
9 value for us had two school rooms in one building so
10 that we would have like a 6th grade in one building
11 and -- you know -- so we would have it all worked out
12 and have enough classroom space for all three grades.
13 We were going to get enough to have an area for the
14 IT lab and for the library. So we had all that
15 figured into that and that's our short-term plan is
16 to have the modular buildings. Long-term we are
17 going to get a permanent structure. We will get to
18 the point where we buy land and we build the
19 structure and we become a permanent physical building
20 instead of the portables. So the portables is just a
21 stop-gap to get us started. When my children
22 attended Redfield Middle School they went to KIPP
23 Delta, so we're very -- it's going to be along those
24 lines of KIPP Delta and Helena-West Helena. When we
25 went to their school the first two years that we

1 played basketball against them we played in the
2 college there because they did not have a physical
3 place for a gym on their campus. But before my son
4 got out of junior high school they had built a gym, a
5 very nice gym. So we know it's doable, funds are out
6 there; we've just got to work to get the money, get
7 the backing, and we will get there from here.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: So did you say you have -- maybe
9 I misunderstood -- three portable buildings?

10 MS. KIGHT: No, sir. We had -- I can't remember
11 the total number, maybe six.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Six. Okay. So as far as the
13 other classes that go along with middle school, like
14 the art, music, will that be all -- will they be in
15 the same class, like the teachers move around to
16 different buildings or --

17 MS. KIGHT: Kind of what we're going to do
18 starting off is the area where we provide lunch will
19 be used as a general area to augment like PE classes,
20 art, music. It will become a general use area and
21 we'll have to work that out with our schedule.

22 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. And the space that we're
23 talking about behind the church is that large enough
24 to --

25 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: -- accommodate all this?

2 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir. At least for the first
3 three years. We'll get that far in the future and at
4 least the first three years we have enough space
5 there, and probably up to five years.

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: And when you say portable
7 buildings, I'm picturing kind of like a mobile home
8 type structure. Is that what we're talking about?

9 MS. KIGHT: Similar but it's -- the underpin --
10 you know -- it looks nice, very nice portable
11 buildings.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: And PE classes are going to be
13 held inside those?

14 MS. KIGHT: Well, it depends on the weather. A
15 lot of things you can go outside and do and there's
16 going to be open space available so you can do --

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: There's free space out there?

18 MS. KIGHT: Yes. We do have space available.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So you'll be serving lunch?

20 MS. KIGHT: (Nodding head up and down.)

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Is it going to be contracted
22 out?

23 MS. KIGHT: Yes, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So you'll use one of those
25 modular spaces to do that, and then you'll alternate

1 -- and you said you'll have to fit that in your
2 schedule. Can I talk a little bit about your
3 schedule? As I look at your schedule, you talk about
4 400 minutes of total instructional time. We define
5 instructional time pretty stringently and it's time
6 that is required. So when I look at what's required
7 we're looking at 350 minutes of required time.
8 Correct? I mean, every student has to come with
9 beginning first period and stay through 8th period?

10 MS. KIGHT: Well, the first seven periods are 50
11 minutes, I believe, so that's 350. That last 8th
12 period is 30 minutes, and that adds another 30.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. That was my
14 question. So what is 8th period? What will be going
15 on there? Because you -- as you move into high
16 school there's also -- you know -- and I'm not sure I
17 saw a waiver on the 120 hours. How does that work?
18 I mean, if my child has math 8th period he's only
19 getting 30 minutes of math?

20 MS. KIGHT: No, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

22 MS. KIGHT: The first seven periods will be used
23 to get the core requirements in. Our 8th period is
24 going to be for any students that need additional
25 tutoring and for becoming proficient on tests or we

1 may use it to have guest speakers come in to talk
2 about their careers; we may use it to offer services
3 to the Gifted and Talented so that we're not pulling
4 them out of their regular classroom day; we can use
5 it a multitude of different ways. It was kind of
6 like an overall opportunity to use it as best as we
7 see fit based on our student population.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But it will be a required --

9 MS. KIGHT: It is --

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It is required; it's not
11 optional?

12 MS. KIGHT: It is required. It would not be an
13 English, Science, Math period. It would be used for
14 additional enrichment to their academic or to their
15 career choices, you know, that kind of activity.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Who leads those activities
17 then?

18 MS. KIGHT: It will probably be a variety of
19 teachers. It will depend on, you know, who gets
20 hired and what their strengths are, what people's
21 passions fall in. It could be a community member
22 that wants to come up and do it. I know Dr. Byrd has
23 offered to come up, you know, so he's involved; he
24 wants to do it. We have several community members
25 that -- I will gladly come up there and talk to them

1 about this or that. You know, we have a variety of
2 people available in the community that have a lot of
3 different skills and will expose the children to a
4 lot of different potential activities or pursuits
5 that they can have for goals for themselves.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Talk to me a little
7 bit about what you're looking for in leadership. So
8 apparently now you don't have anyone that you've
9 talked to about leading this school, beginning with
10 -- authorization begins today in this hearing, and
11 then of course there's always the opportunity for
12 someone to ask for a full hearing before the Board in
13 January. So it could be January before a final
14 decision is made. Everybody understands that. So
15 then you begin that process of looking for that
16 school leader. That school leader in your
17 organization would have then from January to get
18 ready. That's a short period of time to put a school
19 together because you've got to get the modular
20 buildings ordered, you've got to get textbooks, all
21 those things. What are you looking for -- and I
22 guess my question you've answered; you don't have
23 anybody yet in mind, you haven't talked to anybody?

24 MS. KIGHT: We actually have talked to a couple
25 of people.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. All right.

2 MS. KIGHT: What we're looking for is someone
3 that's highly motivated, interested in the grassroots
4 effort that we're founded from, very focused on small
5 school environment, very energetic, has ideas and
6 experience that will be beneficial to our
7 environment. We have had a couple of individuals --

8 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: A child in the audience
9 sighs loudly.)

10 MS. KIGHT: Tripp says he's tired. Maybe he's
11 saying what y'all are thinking. But --

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We were talking about what
13 you were looking for in leadership.

14 MS. KIGHT: Correct.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So you've got a waiver from
16 having to have the traditional licensed principal or
17 "superintendent" as the director. So I just --
18 having been doing this work and spending a tremendous
19 amount of time around charters -- and we probably
20 close more charters --

21 MS. KIGHT: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- than we've opened in the
23 last couple of years. And it's difficult, very, very
24 difficult to close charter schools. It's difficult
25 to close other schools. People have said, "Well, we

1 don't close other schools." We've closed other
2 schools. We've closed an entire school district
3 since I've been here. So those are difficult things
4 to do. And that's what draws concern for me is all
5 the unknowns. And I understand people have to have
6 an opportunity and have to have a chance, you know,
7 whether its ResponsivEd, whether it was KIPP,
8 somebody started with an idea, somebody had faith and
9 somebody built upon it. We've seen people just like
10 you and community members just like you who are
11 passionate, just tremendously passionate about trying
12 to educate kids. My concern will be and continue to
13 be is that selection of that school leader, giving
14 that school leader the opportunity to be able to lead
15 and make decisions, tough decisions about what you
16 can and can't do money-wise. Money will get you in
17 trouble faster probably than anything. That's why we
18 have to typically close schools. So I just -- you
19 know -- again, moving forward, thinking about that, I
20 hope that as that board sits down they're able to
21 find someone who is not only motivated and passionate
22 about it but has the skill set to manage not only the
23 money but manage the educational system because you
24 have to take all those things into account too. So I
25 just wanted to get your feel and thoughts.

1 MS. KIGHT: Right. And like I said, we have
2 been talking to these two individuals that we feel
3 are, you know, highly qualified and would probably be
4 a good fit for our position. But it's one of those
5 chicken-and-egg things. I can't really hire a
6 director until I get authorization, and I can't get
7 authorization until I have a director, you know. So
8 --

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No, and I'm not saying that.

10 MS. KIGHT: Right. But I'm just saying it's
11 kind of -- it kind of has that feel to it. But, no,
12 we understand that because we've been involved in
13 this for probably a little bit over a year from the
14 time we started within the community to keep Redfield
15 Middle School, grouped and then we morphed into
16 "well, we really need to try to get a charter
17 school." And the public is wanting that option here.
18 And so the individuals on this board, I know you guys
19 know how hard we have worked because we started off,
20 a lot of us -- there's about half of us that were in
21 education, but the other half we were just people
22 that felt passionate about us having the opportunity
23 for our children, for the children around us with
24 this. We really think, being rural Arkansans, having
25 to bus children for such a long distances just isn't

1 ideal. And sometimes it's necessary but it's not
2 necessarily ideal. And we're looking to help with
3 that, help with the -- you know -- Jefferson County
4 is very -- you know -- is struggling. Its population
5 is declining; industry and companies don't want to
6 come in because we don't have educated, you know,
7 workers. You know, we're trying to also address some
8 of those issues in what we're doing. We really feel
9 that we have come a long way in the last 12 months.
10 I know more about ADE and regulations than I ever
11 wanted to.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You and me both.

13 MS. KIGHT: More than I ever thought I could put
14 in my brain. But I have learned a lot; we have
15 learned a lot. We care enough that we're still here.
16 We also know that we all have jobs, paying jobs.
17 This is a nonpaying job. The product that you're
18 looking at is from volunteer hours and hours of
19 effort, reading online, talking to vendors, talking
20 to other educators. You know, we have put the time
21 in. We will continue to put that time in. We are
22 committed, we're passionate, and all we're asking for
23 is a chance.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy, do you have
25 questions?

1 MR. HOY: Just a quick yes/no for Ms. Perry.
2 Also going back to the evaluation item C-7,
3 Curriculum Development and Alignment, are we still at
4 Did Not Meet Standard?

5 MS. PERRY: No, sir. I don't feel they weren't.

6 MR. HOY: Okay.

7 MS. KIGHT: As far as I know, sir, all --
8 everything has been addressed that was pointed out as
9 a possible issue for us. So we should be compliant.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski, question.

11 DR. WITONSKI: How do you plan to -- or is there
12 a plan in place to progress monitor students through
13 the years?

14 MS. KIGHT: Come up there?

15 DR. WITONSKI: Yes, ma'am. Please do.

16 MS. KIGHT: We will use teachers' evaluations
17 just from observations in the class, how the student
18 is doing, state-mandated exams; if there's any of
19 those that we need to do, we'll do those; different
20 exams the teacher may give just to see how the kids
21 are doing, we can use those. And being small that
22 plays to our advantage because we will know if a kid
23 starts falling behind.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you. And I think you've
25 got Dr. Byrd over here, right?

1 MS. KIGHT: Yes.

2 DR. WITONSKI: And Dr. Byrd has -- is there a
3 partner with you, Dr. Byrd?

4 MS. KIGHT: That's Tripp.

5 DR. BYRD: Tripp Byrd.

6 DR. WITONSKI: Tripp. Say hi to Tripp. We
7 can't see Tripp from over here but we love to -- we
8 get to hear him. Hey, Tripp. You're being so
9 patient.

10 MS. KIGHT: That's Doc's assistant when I take
11 my animal down to Dr. Byrd's.

12 DR. WITONSKI: Dr. Byrd, you have a good --

13 MS. KIGHT: He is a great assistant. He knows
14 exactly what he's doing.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Kight, why do you
16 believe with all of the work that y'all have done and
17 all the communications that have gone back and forth
18 that -- and you're going to be looking at students
19 coming from Pulaski County and White Hall and maybe
20 even Dollarway and other places -- that there's not
21 any opposition?

22 MS. KIGHT: I'm not exactly sure. We were
23 really planning that there would be opposition and I
24 don't know if we'd just got that much community
25 support, because people know that maybe this crazy

1 group of folks this past 12 months, "They're there,
2 they're real; you know, they're doing everything they
3 can to make it happen," and they just can't oppose
4 us. I don't know, you know.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I just wondered if you had
6 any idea.

7 MS. KIGHT: I don't know but I'm really happy
8 that -- to me it says that people believe in what
9 we're trying to do. They see value in what we are
10 presenting before you today.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Other questions?

12 DR. WITONSKI: I have a motion.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You do?

14 DR. WITONSKI: Before we move forward I just
15 want you to know how much each of us, coming from
16 small communities, being raised in Arkansas from a
17 small community, appreciate so much the efforts that
18 you and all the community members have done. I have
19 to say though I have a lot of reservations in terms
20 of the curriculum, in terms of assessment, progress
21 monitoring, and I think one of our duties as a panel
22 is to insure that we are authorizing a group who is
23 ready to move forward to offer that education to our
24 students. And we think every child, Tripp included,
25 deserves that opportunity.

1 MS. KIGHT: Yes.

2 DR. WITONSKI: So I respectfully need to make a
3 motion to deny at this time but hope that you will
4 consider coming back to us with an application with
5 some information in terms of curriculum and
6 assessment that we can actually review. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Panel, you've heard a
8 motion to deny. Is there a second?

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a second for denial
11 of the application. So there will be a roll-call
12 vote and for each vote -- if you agree with the -- or
13 if you support the motion, please state your reason
14 for the support of denial. And we'll begin with Mr.
15 Hoy.

16 MR. HOY: I vote yes to the motion. My concerns
17 are with the curriculum and with the financial
18 balances projected at the end of the first year. I
19 just see those as potential red flags for myself.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

21 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes on the motion but
22 before I give my reasons I'd like to add to what Dr.
23 Witonski said about how much we appreciate this
24 group. I can tell you as a former superintendent of
25 a district that was consolidated back when the law

1 was passed, in 2003, it wasn't just a job to me; it
2 was where I had graduated, gone to school
3 kindergarten through 12th grade; my parents had
4 graduated from there; my grandma had graduated from
5 there. So I know what it feels like. It was like
6 losing a member of the family. I know what the
7 school means to your community and I just want you to
8 know that I appreciate your grassroots effort, the
9 time that you've put into it. It says a lot for how
10 you feel about your community and I do appreciate it.
11 But I'm having to vote yes on the motion because, as
12 Mr. Hoy said, I have concerns that there are some
13 issues with the budget and also that I think there
14 are some details missing from, you know, what your
15 curriculum is going to look like and your
16 assessments. But as Dr. Witonski said, I hope maybe
17 y'all can work out some details and hope to see you
18 back again.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes to the motion. Some
21 of my reasons are the same as far as sustainability.
22 And also, you know, some level of -- needing some
23 level of comfortability with the benefit or the
24 advantage other than, you know, proximity, being a
25 close school. But that the benefit that the kids

1 would receive in attending this school as an
2 alternative to the district that they are currently
3 enrolled in.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

5 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes to the motion and for
6 the reasons that I shared with you earlier, the
7 concerns over finance and the capacity. But I
8 strongly encourage you, from -- being from that world
9 and understanding the grassroots efforts that you've
10 started, to regroup and plan and come back and see us
11 with some information included in your application
12 that will put us all at ease in terms of being able
13 to approve this charter. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

15 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes also but don't enjoy
16 that vote at all. And I know, I really do, I know
17 it's been -- I know you've had to work a long time
18 and work very hard, and I hope you won't give up
19 because I think it's still possible. It will just be
20 a delay but I think you need to keep working at it
21 because I do think you've got a lot of good ideas and
22 I think you've got a lot of good support.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So your vote to deny --

24 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes for what reasons though?

1 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote for the same reasons. I
2 think mostly its curriculum and finance and
3 sustainability that I'm concerned about.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

5 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes to the motion for the
6 same reasons, curriculum being my first concern. And
7 I do agree with the other panel members that I
8 believe you do have the opportunity to come back with
9 more detail to support those questions that we've
10 asked today, and hopefully those questions have been
11 a guide to you. Also, I'm concerned about the
12 budget, making sure that that budget allows for all
13 of those components to be in place. And when those
14 two questions are answered I think we will have
15 answered the third question to sustainability.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: With that vote, the
17 application is denied. And thank you for your
18 passion in bringing forth your application.

19 Panel, we'll break for lunch. We will be back
20 in here to begin Item 3 at let's say 12:50.

21 (LUNCH BREAK - 12:10-12:55 P.M.)

22 A-3: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

23 APPLICATION: YOUNG ADULT MAGIC JOHNSON BRIDGESCAPE ACADEMY OF
24 CRITTENDEN COUNTY, SUNSET, ARKANSAS

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Action Item 3 is the

1 Young Adult Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy, and
2 the first one is listed in -- help me out, Jim, which
3 one?

4 MR. BOARDMAN: Crittenden County.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Crittenden County. Okay.

6 Ms. Perry.

7 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. Young Adult Magic Johnson
8 Bridgescape Academy of Crittenden County Charter
9 School is presented to you with a sponsoring entity
10 of Osceola Communication Business and Arts,
11 Incorporated. They propose to offer grades 9-12 with
12 a student enrollment cap of 250 students. The
13 address for the Crittenden County location will be
14 383 Highway 77 North in Sunset. The applications are
15 very similar, as you probably have determined already
16 on your own. And I will tell you that the
17 Mississippi County application, that one is proposed
18 to be on Highway 140 at I-55 in Osceola. And with
19 that I will turn it over to Ms. Sally Wilson, who is
20 ready to be sworn in, I'm sure, and perhaps others
21 with her. She'll introduce anyone else. And at last
22 check, which was just a moment ago, I did not see
23 that anyone has signed up requested to speak to you
24 in opposition.

25 SUPT. MASTERS: I didn't know we were supposed

1 to sign up. I'm sorry.

2 MS. PERRY: Oh, that's fine. So there is
3 someone.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So all those that
5 will be giving testimony and answering questions in
6 regards to the application for the open-enrollment
7 public charter school application for Young Adult
8 Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy of Crittenden
9 County please stand, raise your right hand, and
10 please -- do you swear to tell the truth, the whole
11 truth and nothing but the truth?

12 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Ms. Wilson,
14 you're ready to go and I'll begin the timer. You'll
15 have 20 minutes for your presentation.

16 MS. WILSON: Thank you very much, Dr. Kimbrell.
17 I appreciate this opportunity. Yes, my name is Sally
18 Wilson and I am here representing our nonprofit
19 organization as its president. I am -- like I said,
20 my name is Sally Wilson. And the Osceola
21 Communication, Arts and Business -- Communication,
22 Business and Arts, Incorporated, we are applying to
23 ADE to establish the Young Adult Magic Johnson
24 Bridgescape Academy of Crittenden County. OCABS has
25 -- we'll call it OCABS -- we have experience with

1 charter schools and is dedicated to working with
2 youth in the community. If we are approved, we will
3 be entering into a partnership with Edison Learning.
4 Then we will be providing to at-risk young in your
5 local community an alternative path to obtain a high
6 school diploma. There's a question, you know, do we
7 have a need? Is there a problem with dropouts in the
8 community? And I'll draw your attention to the
9 dropout crisis chart that we have available. This
10 data came from the Arkansas Department of Education
11 data center and in particular I draw your attention
12 to one example, the classes of 2011, and that class,
13 when they were in the 10th grade together there were
14 902 of them. When they walked across the stage two-
15 and-a-half years later there were 595 of them. You
16 know, that's a shrinkage of 307 students in the
17 public schools in Crittenden County. But if you look
18 at the year 2012, then that shrinkage is 241
19 students. Now the numbers -- the population has
20 changed slightly but as you all can see from the
21 shape of that curve, it doesn't change. So the issue
22 is there. Our school will particularly be targeting
23 those students, that 307 students or that 241
24 students who have already left the school.

25 So does the shrinkage really matter to us? And

1 what does it really mean? In order to find out more
2 about this our organization became involved with the
3 America's Promise Alliance. We went to some of their
4 national meetings, in particular their GradNation
5 summits. America's Promise, it says here, "Under the
6 leadership of the founding chairman, General Colin
7 Powell, and the current chair, Alma Powell, the
8 America's Promise Alliance has become the nation's
9 largest partnership dedicated to improving the lives
10 of young people." So this helped us to find answers
11 -- and particularly, the GradNation which is our next
12 slide here. Okay. America's Promise Alliance, they
13 launched the GradNation campaign in 2010 and that was
14 to raise the awareness and inspire action.
15 GradNation is now a large and growing movement of
16 dedicated individuals and organizations, like ours,
17 OCBA, and communities working together to end
18 America's dropout process. And OCBA is a member of
19 the GradNation community. We are a GradNation
20 community and we're the only one in Arkansas that is
21 a GradNation community. Like I said, we attended
22 some of their summits and they're the ones who
23 provided us with this information, the data that
24 we're showing you on those -- on some of the
25 dropouts. But what's the economic impact? They also

1 pointed this out in the GradNation summits also.
2 Their data shows that -- and I'll just get right
3 through the slide because it's long -- the laws of
4 economic gain for a non-graduate in Arkansas comes
5 out to be \$2,780 per year, per non-graduate. So if
6 you do the math and apply it to that class of 2011,
7 the 305 non-graduates, that was an economic loss for
8 one year along for that group of non-graduates alone
9 in Crittenden County of \$3.3 million. If you go on
10 and look at the class of 2012, that loss is about
11 \$2.6 million. Y'all, it's annually. That's an
12 annual loss of economic gain in Crittenden County for
13 that one graduate -- non-graduate class in one year.
14 So with that, at the GradNation summit, at that point
15 they actually paired us up; they knew what our
16 interest was and that's where they brought in the
17 Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy/Edison Learning
18 group and they paired us up there. And with that,
19 I'll have to tell you that I'm very, very proud that
20 an organization like Edison Learning/Magic Johnson
21 Bridgescape Academy is interested in bringing their
22 concept to Arkansas to provide an education to these
23 young people who otherwise wouldn't have a choice,
24 wouldn't have a chance. So with that, it was a great
25 pleasure that our nonprofit will -- we'd like to

1 introduce you to Mike Malone and Mike is the regional
2 vice president of business development for Edison
3 Learning. Mike?

4 MR. MALONE: Thank you. If any of you know
5 Sally very well and people from the community, they
6 were really compelling in their approach to us and
7 describing to us what the needs were and what they
8 intended to do. And after I spent several days going
9 through the various communities, meeting with large
10 numbers of people, it was clear that we have a
11 community partner who really would do the sorts of
12 things that are necessary for us to be successful in
13 this sort of partnership. So we are delighted with
14 the partnership. Edison has nearly 20 years of
15 experience. We provide a number of services that
16 I'll go over very briefly on the following slide. We
17 partner with states, with school districts, schools,
18 charter schools, have for many years. The Magic
19 Johnson Enterprise Program is relatively new. We've
20 been at it going on four years now. We are delighted
21 with the partnership with Magic Johnson; it gives us
22 a collaboration that really helps facilitate the work
23 that we're trying to do.

24 I'll go through the fact sheet quickly. We
25 currently serve a half-million students under our

1 various programs. Those programs range from school
2 improvement services, some of the more traditional
3 things like Alliance, which is school improvement
4 partnerships with districts and with schools. We
5 manage 15 independent charter schools and, by the
6 way, two public schools also. We have 55 extended
7 learning clients and that includes a very large
8 summer school program in Missouri. And we have 43
9 eEvaluate assessment customers. eEvaluate is an online
10 formal assessment that we've had for about 11 years.
11 The Virtual Alternative Solutions, the other half of
12 our business, includes today 17 Magic Johnson
13 Bridgescape Centers. In a later slide I'll show
14 where they are scattered. Four, it says three but as
15 of now there are four statewide virtual charter
16 schools that we operate and we have 16 eCourse
17 clients. eCourse is a high school/middle school
18 curriculum we've developed. There are a number of
19 districts and schools that purchase it directly, so-
20 forth and so-on.

21 In terms of student demographics, our
22 population, that half-million kids that we serve in
23 the United States, 64% of them are African American,
24 13% Hispanic, 8% African American [sic], 15% Other;
25 80% are Free and Reduced Lunch. What that tells you

1 is the places where there are the most needs for our
2 sorts of services are in those areas where there is
3 high poverty and, unfortunately, generally also high
4 minority populations. That's what we tend to work
5 with. Magic Johnson Bridgescape is an alternative
6 graduation path for students. Those students, as
7 Sally mentioned, are at-risk or have dropped out and
8 need intervention services. The program we certainly
9 feel is unique and we'll describe that to you. It's
10 self-paced, very high quality, heavily personalized.
11 We believe the students are desperately in need of
12 that kind of attention. And it's focused on
13 successful post-secondary transitions. The end-gain
14 of the program is a high school diploma. Key
15 features of the program -- it has flexible
16 scheduling. We offer two four-hour sessions during
17 the week -- during the day, a double-shifting of
18 sorts. There is an individual graduation plan. I
19 have been involved in education a long time; let's
20 just leave it at that. And particularly in the
21 charter school arena, I can't tell you how many
22 proposals I've seen, particularly in the early days,
23 that said, "We're going to do an individual
24 educational plan for all students, much like it's
25 done for special education," and rarely did that ever

1 happen. Believe me, in this case we do individual
2 graduation plans. That is one of the biggest
3 measures of the program's success: kids graduate. It
4 uses a blended instructional model. In our
5 definition, that means in a brick-and-mortar
6 environment virtually all the time. The teachers'
7 roles really in these sorts of environments are
8 revolving into what I describe as something different
9 than when I first got involved in education; there is
10 much less direct stand-up and delivery instruction
11 that occurs, much more coaching, counseling, at-
12 shoulder sorts of assistance, but with the student
13 much more responsible for their own learning. In
14 terms of post-graduation preparation, that's one of
15 the significant advantages the Magic Johnson
16 arrangement gives to us because of the network that
17 he has that he makes available to us. And I don't
18 know if you had the opportunity but on National
19 Public Radio three weeks ago they had a long
20 interview with him that was just really very
21 powerful. The students who come to the program --
22 there is no slide on this but sometimes you develop
23 preconceived notions that the sorts of kids we're
24 targeting that have dropped out of school are
25 students who are not motivated. That in our

1 experience is generally not true. Those students
2 have dropped out for a variety of reasons, but the
3 reasons tend to be reasons that have presented major
4 problems in their lives. Perhaps they were bullied;
5 perhaps they were in a large comprehensive high
6 school and gotten lost; perhaps they have parenting
7 issues with maybe a parent who is incarcerated, drug
8 and alcohol use in the family; they need to have a
9 job to help support the family, perhaps having a
10 child or children of their own. It's those sorts of
11 issues -- and as you'll see as we go through the
12 data, many of these kids who drop out reach a point
13 where they recognize what a mistake that is and what
14 an obstacle it is to their later life and career.

15 In the Magic Johnson program it has three
16 essential parts. There's a student diagnostic that's
17 done, and I think we've provided a fair amount of
18 information on that. If you have questions, we'll
19 deal with that in the questions. We have an
20 individual graduation plan that is then prepared, and
21 the purpose of that is really to say, "Sally, here's
22 where you are in your high school career, here is
23 where you need to be to graduate, and here's the plan
24 we're going to put in place, the courses you need to
25 take and the help that we're going to give you."

1 That's really what it amounts to and it's done in a
2 blended instructional model. Most of the instruction
3 is delivered as content through online eCourses in
4 the brick-and-mortar environment, so the classroom is
5 going to look different than most classrooms perhaps
6 that you've seen. With upwards to 50 students at
7 individual workstations, with five to seven teachers
8 and paraprofessionals paired with them, moving around
9 helping them as they move through their coursework.
10 Each student has their own schedule.

11 I've described most of this slide. The things
12 that I would emphasize there, the last two bullets,
13 that it's modular. The courses are very tightly
14 structured, very uniform, really create lots of focus
15 on achievement for the students, and the platform is
16 dynamic. That's an understatement. Earlier today, I
17 heard mentions of PLATO. PLATO compared to the state
18 of eCourses today is like a Model-T to a Ferrari.
19 What can be done with eCourses today is truly
20 amazing. I hope at some point in time we can show
21 you the courses we've developed. They're just really
22 interesting. I remember the first time, just three
23 years ago, I saw a biology laboratory in an eCourse,
24 the entire laboratory, and I just couldn't imagine
25 how you could do that. Believe me, you can do it.

1 How effective is the curriculum? This slide speaks
2 to that. We took a group of 221 at-risk students,
3 measured them pre and post; those students who were
4 previously -- anyone characterized as highly
5 successful gained 13.8 points in mathematics, 23.5
6 points in reading/language/arts in one year. Our
7 usual experience -- again, we have substantial
8 experiences; those numbers would just keep repeating
9 for usually three years and then about the three-year
10 level there are still gains but they are not as
11 dramatic as in the first three years.

12 Why Magic Johnson? I think that probably speaks
13 for itself. He is certainly the number one urban
14 brand in America. He brings to the table not only
15 that branding and his name and his support, but he
16 has developed with his resources a career development
17 rubric and career exploration job readiness eCourses
18 to help students think about and deal with those
19 sorts of challenges in their life. He is involved
20 directly and in partnership with all sorts of
21 businesses across the country. He offers to the
22 Magic Johnson Bridgescape school attendees
23 scholarships annually. Not every student, I want to
24 clarify, gets a scholarship but I think he has
25 awarded --

1 UNKNOWN MALE: Three last year.

2 MR. MALONE: How many in the last three years?
3 Do you know? I think it's like around 150, but he's
4 provided a lot of scholarships. And he has a network
5 called the Friends With Magic network that is proving
6 in places like Minneapolis to be invaluable to us in
7 getting started.

8 Locations, I think it would be fair to say that
9 virtually every major urban area in the country
10 really could use dropout recovery programs that are
11 successful. The problem is pervasive; that's what
12 GradNation has been telling. We currently operate in
13 Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland, Ohio,
14 which is where we started the first set of centers;
15 Princeton, New Jersey, Warren County, North Carolina,
16 Durham, Columbia, Augusta, Savannah, Macon, and
17 Atlanta, Georgia. And we are -- because there's such
18 a need and because we think this is an excellent
19 program we have some fairly significant negotiations
20 going on now to add a number of centers in the next
21 cycle.

22 Demographics, I talked about this earlier but
23 one thing that I want to -- two things I should point
24 out: the special ed. population runs -- from my
25 experience the state-to-state is a fairly average

1 number, just under 17%. The average age of the
2 students is something I want to particularly draw
3 your attention, that students average about 18 years
4 old. Different states have different end-of-the-K12
5 experience ages established; usually, that's 21 or
6 22. Interestingly, the student population tends to
7 skew towards the upper end because most dropouts tend
8 to occur 9th grade, 10th grade. What you're seeing
9 is that dropout, a year or two of experience on the
10 street, finding out that wasn't such a good decision
11 and this gives them an alternative to getting back
12 and getting their high school diploma.

13 Graduation rates -- our combined graduation rate
14 was 69%, which we are pleased with and know that it
15 needs to get higher over time, but we are pleased
16 with that graduation rate. It increased 5% last year
17 from the previous year. In Durham and in Bridgeton,
18 they graduated not only all of their eligible seniors
19 in graduation but graduated early three and four
20 underclassmen. Retention rates -- and by the way,
21 that's always a challenge in these sorts of programs
22 in New Jersey and North Carolina -- they ran 76% and
23 89%, respectively. In Ohio, we had significant
24 increases in the retention rate but that also points
25 to a problem. Three years ago, those retentions were

1 problematic. They're getting better and better and
2 better, but high retention rates in terms of
3 increases also indicate a problem.

4 Again, something we're very proud of, in Ohio,
5 eight of the ten centers met AYP in the 2011-2012
6 year. With that, I have concluded a very quick
7 overview of the program itself and I will turn it
8 back to Sally.

9 MS. WILSON: I don't know if we have much time
10 left, but I do --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You have three minutes.

12 MS. WILSON: I do want to bring to your
13 attention our community letter of support. We did
14 want to let you know that there is substantial
15 community support. Even as of this week, we wanted
16 to let our community -- folks interested in our
17 community know that we're coming here and that what
18 you have before you, I think, is a good list of
19 community leaders who want to see this happen. And
20 with that, I thank you very much. And by the way,
21 our nonprofit organization, we're all volunteers.
22 I'm here as a volunteer; we have our volunteers back
23 here. And we thank you for allowing us this time.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Now I guess, Mr.
25 Masters, you're to speak in opposition. We'll

1 welcome you to the podium then. You'll also have 20
2 minutes to speak. Please recognize yourself so we
3 have it on the record.

4 SUPT. MASTERS: Gary Masters, superintendent at
5 South Mississippi County School District. I'll only
6 speak briefly. Having visited with the
7 superintendents of this particular area we're talking
8 about, about a week ago at the co-op meeting just
9 briefly -- I don't intend to speak in opposition but
10 just only to express concern. This program is
11 intended, as stated, for dropouts, students who have
12 been unsuccessful in the traditional program and I,
13 nor the other superintendents, are in opposition to
14 that. Our concern would be if it became a charter to
15 attract students who were currently being successful
16 in the school districts; then, that would be a
17 different case and would raise concerns. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Masters. You
19 still have a little over 19-1/2 minutes. I've known
20 Gary for awhile; he's always had a lot to say.

21 SUPT. MASTERS: I'll speak in more detail at the
22 next hearing.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Ms. Wilson, you have
24 an additional five minutes if you would like to speak
25 on anything that was brought forth by Mr. Masters or

1 any other additional information you'd like to bring
2 forward.

3 MS. WILSON: Mike Malone.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

5 MR. MALONE: Thank you. Very briefly, we're not
6 aware under charter laws how it would be possible to
7 restrict the population other than through grade
8 levels and age. I will say that we strongly would
9 have a preference to work out partnerships with the
10 districts, do everything we can in terms of full
11 disclosure, and in the best circumstances -- on that
12 list that I showed you where the centers are, some of
13 those are district partnerships and we would
14 certainly envision and consider any options of that
15 sort. Anyone who has spent any time in high school
16 knows that the principal, the counselor and the
17 teachers know students for having a lot of problems.
18 And many times, the best thing that can happen to
19 those students is an alternative like this. And if
20 we can get some way to contrive that sort of a win-
21 win we're completely open to that and would in fact
22 prefer it. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Malone.

24 Okay. Panel, now is an opportunity to ask questions
25 about the application or other questions concerning

1 this request to open the charter school. So we'll
2 begin with Mr. Hoy.

3 MR. HOY: Okay. Good afternoon and thank you
4 for bringing this concept. I have a couple of
5 questions that I would like to have clarification, if
6 you don't mind. I appreciate you pointing out your
7 graduation rate at your charters and other schools
8 around the nation. I think you said right now it's
9 69%, with your 5% increase, which confirms what I saw
10 on the website at 64% -- but I imagine that has been
11 updated. In the State of Arkansas currently, right
12 now, for last year, 2012, the graduation rate was
13 84.1% for all students. It was 79.3% for the group
14 of students that we consider at-risk, which we call
15 the TAG. For African Americans it was 78.1. Now
16 your contingent is that you're satisfied with the
17 69%. I was wondering if you looked at the graduation
18 rates of the districts that you are trying to impact?

19 MR. MALONE: That information was made available
20 to us. The data that we saw were the slides that
21 Sally showed, that showed from the four-year cohort.
22 For Crittenden County, it's not four years; it's
23 three years. For South Mississippi, it's four years.
24 But that data shows entering freshmen and graduating
25 seniors in the Delta, between those. So that's

1 essentially the data we had available.

2 MR. HOY: Okay. Now that's the grad rate? Is
3 that what you're saying?

4 MR. MALONE: The last column is the graduation
5 rate, correct, graduated seniors.

6 MR. HOY: Okay. That's a little hard for me to
7 see.

8 MR. MALONE: I think I have the solution. Is it
9 appropriate, may I --

10 MR. HOY: Well, I understand it's online on my
11 little deal here. Thank you.

12 MR. MALONE: You're welcome.

13 DR. WALTERS: I have a question and I'm not sure
14 who the best person is to answer it. It's about the
15 administrative positions, about -- there's a program
16 director, there's one FTE enrollment coordinator, 1.0
17 FTE, and then there's some regional support
18 positions. One is a .12 and the other is a .1 FTE.
19 Can you explain to me what type of support you're
20 going to get from this Regional Director of
21 Achievement and the Regional School Operations
22 Manager? Is it one that will be on an as-needed
23 basis? Please tell me what that looks like.

24 MR. MALONE: Sure. I think you started your
25 question by saying you're not sure who to address it

1 to. I'm sure who you shouldn't, so I'm going to ask
2 Chris Wilberding if he would answer. Thank you.

3 MR. WILBERDING: My name is Chris Wilberding.
4 I'm the vice president of operations for Magic
5 Johnson Bridgescape Academies. The positions you're
6 requesting information about are our Directors of
7 Achievement and our Program Director. So we do --
8 the point .12 and .1 come from stats that we utilize
9 across the region or across the country that would
10 spend typically in the start-up mode -- would be here
11 two weeks at a clip to get the school open. And then
12 that number would be cut once every two weeks and
13 once a month. So they're not here every week;
14 they're here on a monthly basis and then they're also
15 available for quality assurance visits, as our myself
16 and our Executive Director of Professional
17 Development and Training. We come on a quarterly
18 basis to do quality assurance visits, to make sure
19 we're following our academic and programmatic model.
20 So those are shared resources we utilize across the
21 company or the organization across the country.

22 DR. WALTERS: Can you tell me about how many
23 different sites these two positions would serve?

24 MR. WILBERDING: I'll give you a couple of
25 examples. Is that fair? So in Ohio, we've got eight

1 programs. We have one Director of Achievement and
2 then one Senior Director of Achievement overseeing
3 that person. So that's a little bit -- about a 12%
4 to 15% FTE there. In North Carolina, we have one
5 person oversees two sites, depending on the size of
6 the locations and as far as availability. But the
7 typical person, Director of Achievement, sees between
8 eight and ten sites.

9 DR. WALTERS: Follow-up. Okay. So if the
10 Project -- excuse me -- the Program Director, so is
11 that person going to serve as what we might call the
12 superintendent and the principal of the school?

13 MR. WILBERDING: The Program Director, with each
14 school being their own LEA, often works as a
15 superintendent. Yes. So they would be responsible
16 for day-to-day operations in the building?

17 MR. WILBERDING: (Nodding head up and down.)

18 DR. WALTERS: And I'd have to take a look at the
19 exact budget, if we've got a half -- if we've got one
20 person overseeing both sites. Often, with 200
21 students we will give 100 -- I'm sorry -- 100% of a
22 person's time so that Program Director would be one
23 of the ones there on a daily basis and would
24 represent us on the board.

25 DR. WALTERS: Okay. So they're going to -- the

1 Program Director would be in charge of the fiscal --
2 you know -- all the fiscal responsibilities and the
3 day-to-day operations, academic day-to-day --

4 MR. WILBERDING: Yes.

5 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And so what would the
6 Enrollment Coordinator do?

7 MR. WILBERDING: So the Enrollment Coordinator
8 is charged with assisting students through the
9 enrollment process when we acknowledge and find the
10 dropouts from around the area. We work with them
11 through the enrollment process, gathering information
12 such as what hurdles do they have to overcome, what
13 other social services might they need to be
14 successful, and walk them through the enrollment
15 process and build relationships within the community
16 for us to be a referral for students that might want
17 to come back and get a diploma.

18 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Thank you.

19 MR. WILBERDING: You're welcome.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I've got two questions.
21 The first one was -- I guess I'm a little bit -- I
22 want to make sure I understand. Are there two groups
23 that are managing this? I know there's the OCABS
24 group and then there's the Edison part of it. How
25 does that structure work?

1 MR. WILBERDING: I would describe it as a fairly
2 traditional K-12 educational arrangement where the
3 nonprofit is the governance body. It is the
4 equivalent to the school board in terms of its duties
5 and responsibilities. We will work hopefully under
6 contract with that board to provide the educational
7 services in the centers themselves. So we are
8 staffed through the board.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. My second question may be
10 for Ms. Wilson. Just on some past history here,
11 there was a charter school of this nature in this
12 area previously. Is that correct?

13 MS. WILSON: Yes. And let me -- I'm going to --
14 I want to say this correctly; I tend to get mixed up
15 on it, so let me get to my note here, if I can. I
16 want to -- I tend to get my acronyms turned around
17 too. And what we -- the OCBA is the nonprofit
18 organization and we're the sponsoring entity for this
19 application. And if approved, then our OCBA board
20 members that are elected by our membership will be
21 the school board and will stay the school board for
22 this school. Now, in 2007, we did sponsor a charter
23 school then and I would like to say that we were very
24 successful governing that in 2008, 2009, and 2010.
25 Now part of that particular charter, we were to turn

1 over the governance of the school to a school board
2 to be elected by the families and that is what we
3 did. The problem with that is that that board did
4 not follow the charter; there were some standards
5 that they didn't follow. And, unfortunately -- well,
6 and probably rightfully, the school was closed.

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

8 MS. WILSON: Our nonprofit was not the governing
9 board.

10 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Is there any concern, in
11 looking at your budget, that you budgeted for 200
12 students -- and just looking at kind of some -- where
13 that school was, there was about 75 students that
14 were enrolled, grades 7-12 -- and this being a 9-12
15 and expecting to get 200 students, is that a
16 realistic number to be -- to have?

17 MS. WILSON: I'm sorry. Would you ask me that
18 one again?

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

20 MS. WILSON: I'm nervous. I'm sorry.

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: I was looking at some things
22 online here where it said 7-12 before that that
23 school was closed or when it was closed there were 75
24 students, grades 7-12. And if I'm looking at your
25 budget correctly, you have budgeted to get funding on

1 200 students. So I guess what I'm asking, is it
2 realistic to anticipate getting 200 students in your
3 first year in grades 9-12?

4 MS. WILSON: We have right now actually, from
5 looking just at the data here, about 250 students per
6 grade level in Crittenden County that are non-
7 graduates. That gives us a pool of students of about
8 1,000 students to choose from. So I do think in the
9 first year that we can attract 200 out of that 1,000
10 that's available.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski.

12 DR. WITONSKI: Hi, Ms. Wilson. So for the
13 sponsoring entity, not to beat a dead horse but it is
14 the Osceola Communication Business and Arts,
15 Incorporated?

16 MS. WILSON: Correct.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Now are you the leader of that?

18 MS. WILSON: They did elect me as the president.

19 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

20 MS. WILSON: We have another board member here
21 with us.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

23 MS. WILSON: Tracy Adams is here. Our elections
24 were in the middle of September. Our vice president
25 is Terri Coburn; our secretary is B.J. Bowles; our

1 treasurer is Dr. Sharon Nesbitt. Dr. Nesbitt is on a
2 plane on the way to Germany for a mission trip and
3 could not be here today. And the other two ladies
4 work; they're volunteers and they had to work today.

5 DR. WITONSKI: Sure. And so in this -- in the
6 last application were you the one who brought forth
7 that charter application also?

8 MS. WILSON: In 2007, yes.

9 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. And something that you
10 mentioned, sir, as you were talking about
11 partnerships, Mr. Masters, I know you're a man of
12 several words so you can just hold up a sign, a hi-
13 sign for yes or no. But he mentioned wanting or
14 having a desire, a strong desire to seek out
15 partnerships with local school districts. Would your
16 school district be interested in one of those
17 partnerships?

18 SUPT. MASTERS: The discussion with that
19 previously concerned a possible alternative school
20 and we currently have an alternative school and would
21 not be interested in that particular option.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

24 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes. I don't know, either one of
25 you probably mentioned this, but I'm not real

1 familiar with the online learning you talked about.
2 Evidently, those are courses that are available. And
3 I understand something about blended learning and
4 all, but I'm not actually familiar with that software
5 or those courses and just wanted to reaffirm -- I
6 think it's in your thing here -- that any of the
7 courses that are offered has to be approved by the
8 Department of Education and has to go through that
9 process?

10 MR. MALONE: Correct. That's accurate.

11 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. That's it for this time.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

13 MS. COFFMAN: I noticed in your application you
14 did not plan to offer a summer program. Is that
15 correct?

16 MR. MALONE: Correct.

17 MS. COFFMAN: And could you elaborate on why?

18 MR. MALONE: Because the school year that we
19 will offer is 210 days, so it is an extended year
20 program and we think that for lots of reasons that
21 small period of time off in the summer is
22 appropriate.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do you want to follow-up?

24 . COFFMAN: Yes. So I'm assuming through here
25 that you're offering credit recovery, that you're

1 trying to get students that have dropped out back on
2 track to graduate within a certain period of time.
3 What is your -- are you trying to get them to
4 graduate -- I realize you have some students who are
5 older than 18 --

6 MR. MALONE: Correct.

7 MS. COFFMAN: -- but are you trying to get them
8 back on track within the four-year plan of high
9 school?

10 MR. MALONE: Not really, no. And the courses
11 that we offer are not credit recovery, per se. Those
12 do -- last summer, we offered a statewide virtual
13 program in Missouri for high school students and that
14 did have a significant credit recovery aspect to it.
15 Those courses are a little bit different. They're
16 accelerated; the content -- children really do get
17 through it real quickly, et cetera, et cetera, et
18 cetera. These courses are the same courses that we
19 sell to the Pennsylvania Central Intermediate Area
20 Unit that they distribute to all of their districts
21 in Pennsylvania. They're not in any way watered
22 down, dumbed-down; they're demanding courses.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

24 MR. HOY: Yes. I do have a question about your
25 goals but before I ask that, I just want to make a

1 couple of clarifications. In the records that you've
2 got on the board, it seems to be declining enrollment
3 rather than graduation rates, which is a different
4 metric. And in this particular part of the state,
5 where I'm from, there has been the issue of declining
6 enrollment but not necessarily because of people
7 dropping out of school; it's been because of people
8 moving to where jobs are. I imagine Crittenden
9 County, 'cause this is what you've given me, there's
10 probably been some declining enrollment because of
11 people moving from that area over to Memphis because
12 a lot of them work there. I know my daughter just
13 did that; she just left Marion and moved to Memphis,
14 because that's where she works. So what I did was I
15 took a quick look on the website of some of the
16 districts. I didn't get to all of them in this
17 particular proposal, but I looked at South
18 Mississippi County. Their graduation rate last year
19 was 84.5 for all students; 87.76 for the TAG. And I
20 said last year, the 2012 graduating class. For
21 Osceola, 81.65; 82.24 for their Targeted Achievement
22 Gap group or their at-risk group. Blytheville, 72.0
23 and 72.64 for their Targeted Achievement Gap group or
24 their at-risk group. Which, again, all of those
25 exceed what you feel to be a pretty good metric for

1 the overall schools that you have nationwide. So,
2 again, now that we've kind of gotten on the same
3 plane with the same metric, do you feel still -- do
4 you still feel pretty good with those particular
5 metrics, 69%, going into these districts that seem to
6 have higher graduation rates than that?

7 MR. MALONE: I do because the population we're
8 talking about with the Bridgescape Centers have
9 dropped out or are likely to drop out. So they're a
10 group of students who I don't believe, in terms of
11 their ability to take advantage of public school
12 education, are able to do that effectively. That's
13 the populations that we deal with. And their
14 graduation rates, if you look at dropout recovery
15 programs across the country, the 69%, 70% would be
16 very much on the high end of what we're able to
17 achieve. More commonly, it's around 50%. And,
18 again, this population has had serious struggles in
19 the traditional system.

20 MR. HOY: Okay. Well, the other thing -- I
21 didn't have time to run it all down.

22 MR. MALONE: Sure.

23 MR. HOY: But if you're looking at those
24 particular graduation rates -- and this is 9-12
25 graduation rates with your adjusted cohort, which

1 means they arrive in 9th grade and they stay till
2 their finished. But when you look at the actual
3 numbers of expected graduates, and then you calculate
4 in the graduation rate, I'm not certain that you're
5 going to be able to get to your 250 students that
6 you're looking at as your cap. Now that's just a
7 question in my mind because if you've got every
8 student that dropped out that did not graduate in
9 those four years, maybe. But the question is: some
10 of those kids may have dropped out for some reasons
11 that maybe you can affect and maybe you cannot. But
12 I think it goes back to Mr. Masters' questions of if
13 you're going to sustain your building, if you're
14 going to get those 250 students, will it not
15 crossover into students that are actually in school?
16 And I know when you talk about who you're attracting,
17 you're talking about students at risk of dropping
18 out. If you're at risk of dropping out, that means
19 you're actually still in school. And so --

20 MR. MALONE: Correct.

21 MR. HOY: -- I can see why Mr. Masters would
22 have a concern on that. So would you address that to
23 make me feel a little bit more comfortable with that?

24 MR. MALONE: I will try to. If a student is in
25 the traditional system and the traditional system

1 graduates students in the 80%, 80-some percent range
2 and they have an alternative to go to a school that's
3 focused on dropout recovery, for students who are
4 highly at risk of not graduating, and there are -- I
5 don't know if she put this out to you but I need to
6 -- there are no extracurriculars, there are no
7 supports, there isn't the comprehensive nature of the
8 program that you have in a traditional high school.
9 I just find it difficult to believe and its not been
10 our experience that students who can function just
11 fine in a traditional school leave to attend a
12 Bridgescape Center. It's students who really are
13 viewing this as their last resort and want a chance
14 to get a high school diploma. That is the focus of
15 the program.

16 MR. HOY: Yes, sir. And as a follow-up, having
17 worked in a school that was designed to prevent those
18 types of issues, kids dropping out, in an alternative
19 school that was there in Forrest City, Arkansas, we
20 provided a lot of services for the students, like
21 daycare, things like that. Do you have those
22 components at your school that would offer services
23 to deal with the issues of them dropping out in the
24 first place? And if so, could you be a little bit
25 clearer on those for me, please? And then I'll go to

1 my goals question, Dr. Kimbrell, and I promise I'll
2 be brief on that.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

4 MR. MALONE: I will defer to Chris on the --
5 given the centers that we operate are there childcare
6 facilities, et cetera there or a partnership?

7 MR. WILBERDING: Thank you. So we don't offer
8 that per se within our program itself but we do --
9 over the course of setting up the program, we partner
10 with a local daycare, childcare facility. Just to
11 give you some perspective, when we open these
12 facilities we're looking for something in more urban
13 markets where they'd be on a major bus line, major
14 transportation line so it's easily accessible for
15 students. We also look for opportunities for daycare
16 centers close-by. So we build these programs and
17 we're looking for opportunities to partner with local
18 folks to have -- so the hurdles that students have to
19 deal with are easily overcome with a daycare center
20 nearby. You're going to go to the transportation
21 piece in Crittenden and South Mississippi, that's
22 understood. And Sally, wherever she went, has -- can
23 voice the plan of what we're going to do with
24 providing transportation. So I don't know if you
25 want to talk about the transportation component for

1 the students?

2 MS. WILSON: Correct. We asked for the waiver
3 on the transportation, I guess. We have had
4 community groups who are going to help us with some
5 of the students who have some specific transportation
6 needs.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Can you go a little bit more
8 in-depth? That intrigued me because we have --

9 MS. WILSON: Yes. We are having --

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Charter schools in Arkansas
11 have to be very careful how they transport kids.

12 MS. WILSON: That's exactly -- that would be the
13 nonprofit, the nonprofit corporation. We'll work
14 with some community groups. It would not be part of
15 the -- it would not be part of the school.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: How does that work?

17 MS. WILSON: Well, let me back-up. In
18 Crittenden County, there's a bus system. There's a
19 free public bus system, public transportation. So
20 with that pretty much the students will be able to
21 get around and it is free, so --

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

23 MS. WILSON: -- that's an example there.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: When I lived in Crittenden
25 County I don't remember any buses coming through

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there.

MR. HOY: Well, I understand what you're saying. But specifically, when you go to Crittenden County one of the concerns I had there is one of the schools you look to draw from is Marked Tree and that's quite a ways from Sunset. And I was thinking, Okay, a child at risk is going to travel 27 miles one way every morning and travel 27 miles one way back every afternoon and they're at risk of dropping out or they've got some issues that keeps them from going to school in Marked Tree. And that troubles me a little bit. But I'm going to leave that point now because I really want to talk about the goals. In looking at your goals in the original application it looks like when you actually get to the goals that we set in Arkansas because we're trying to -- I know you have numbers of things that you have set your goals around and you need those internally, internal structure. I understand that. But in the State of Arkansas, in order to be able to have comparability among all schools, in order to have some idea of how well you're doing with our students, we kind of go to our state-mandated tests, which you do address our state-mandated tests, benchmarks, which will transition into PARCC. And in your particular application

1 you're looking for growth of 2% per year. When I saw
2 that it troubled me and when I looked at how our
3 evaluation committee responded to that it also
4 troubled them a little bit and you're still at
5 Partially Meets Standard on that, I believe. Because
6 in your determination of 2% growth per year, if
7 you're looking for an at-risk population, especially
8 in secondary right now with 11th -- with next year
9 being your baseline year, you're going to be looking
10 at end-of-course -- well, you're going to be looking
11 at 11th literacy tests, end-of-course algebra, end-
12 of-course geometry. So, and then you're going to be
13 looking at trying to meet the state rate on that.
14 The state rates are pretty decent when you're trying
15 to look at them with an at-risk population. So I
16 won't say that you will miss that, but it will be a
17 challenge to meet the state rate because you're
18 talking about a specialized population. And then
19 you're talking about if you don't meet the state
20 rate, a 2% gain per year -- if you don't make the
21 state rate you're probably going to have to make more
22 than a 2% gain per year in order to meet your target
23 from that point on and that will be established by
24 the state. So in terms of meeting your goals on our
25 state-mandated assessments that concerns me a little

1 bit. I'm wondering if it concerns you and how you
2 intend to address that, if you have any thoughts
3 along those lines?

4 MS. WILSON: Thank you. With that, Mike, who is
5 our person to --

6 MR. MALONE: First, we intend to meet the
7 mandates with 2%, and if the school wouldn't meet
8 mandate -- I think we provided a response to a
9 question that was asked on the application: did we
10 understand that if you don't meet the goal you have
11 to meet the goal and the 2% the next year. And, yes,
12 we understand that. Are we concerned? Probably not
13 as concerned as we would be about getting 250
14 students in the first year of operation. In all
15 honesty, most of the centers do not start at
16 capacity. And in a suburban to rural area with small
17 pockets of urban populations we know that recruiting
18 will be a major challenge and we are prepared,
19 certainly. We have internally done contingencies on
20 smaller student populations, if we have the belief
21 after some practice that in fact we're going to get
22 to that number over two or three years. So we've
23 thought all of that through in terms of getting a
24 population in the school, believing that this model
25 has the ability to give them the sort of achievement

1 that they need to be successful. We are confident of
2 that. We've got four years of experience; over 2,000
3 kids have gone through it.

4 MR. HOY: Dr. Kimbrell, last one. This is not a
5 question, just an observation. Mr. Masters, just an
6 observation: if this charter is allowed to open and
7 it does culminate with a regular high school diploma,
8 as they intend to do, and the students that leave
9 your program actually go to this program instead of
10 dropping out, it would actually improve the
11 graduation rate; it would up your AMO's. It's just
12 an observation.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

14 DR. WALTERS: I have a question for Ms. Clay
15 first. I'm sorry, for Ms. Clay, our legal attorney.

16 MR. MALONE: Oh, I'm sorry.

17 DR. WALTERS: Can a charter ask for a waiver for
18 grades and use ages instead of grades for the charter
19 school? So instead of saying, you know, we want the
20 charter school to be a 9-12, could a charter ask for
21 the charter school to serve students ages 16 to 18 or
22 16 to 21?

23 MS. CLAY: Yes. I actually believe we have a
24 conversion charter that's not a high school level but
25 that they may do different grade acceleration than is

1 traditionally done in the charter school. I'd have
2 to look -- or in a traditional school. I'd have to
3 look at exactly how those waivers were set up. Ms.
4 Perry, do you remember?

5 MS. PERRY: I know who you're talking about.

6 MS. CLAY: It was --

7 MS. PERRY: It was two campuses.

8 MS. CLAY: Yes.

9 MS. PERRY: Two different --

10 MS. CLAY: It was Warren --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Are you talking about
12 Warren?

13 MS. CLAY: It's Warren.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Warren's got standards-
15 based. Yeah.

16 MS. CLAY: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It's standards-based and not
18 necessarily age-based.

19 MS. CLAY: Right. So, I mean, it wouldn't be
20 prohibited. Your question though is -- I'm not sure
21 I'm answering it.

22 DR. WALTERS: I just -- I have a concern -- oh,
23 I'm sorry. I have a concern that goes kind of back
24 to what Mr. Masters was saying, that because this is
25 open-enrollment and, you know, they would have to

1 take anyone, even though they may be marketing that
2 "this is our group that we're targeting, the students
3 who have dropped out or are at-risk," you know, there
4 could be someone that decides, you know, to go to
5 this charter school, "We're going to try this," and
6 enroll their 9th grader -- I have a big concern with
7 14-year olds being in a school with 20, 21 year olds.
8 I would have a better feeling -- and I think that --
9 targeting that group of students that have dropped
10 out or are probably going to drop out I think is
11 great. I would love for us to have a way to get them
12 back in. I don't know if I like this way of doing it
13 and I just didn't know if it was a possibility to use
14 ages instead of grades.

15 MS. CLAY: I see what you're saying. And the
16 way you're saying it, no, the charter would have to
17 be open-enrollment. So as long as they -- a student
18 met the grade requirement, which in this case would
19 be beginning 9th grade, regardless of their age, as
20 long as they're within the, you know, 5 through age
21 21 they would be allowed to enroll. There's not a
22 way to limit to a particular age group.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, we can limit them to
24 grade?

25 MS. CLAY: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Is that federal statute,
2 state statute?

3 MS. CLAY: Well, that's just the authorization
4 on what they're seeking. They're going to have 9th
5 grade students through --

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I understand. The question
7 though is can you have 15 year olds or 16-year olds
8 through 21 year olds instead of 9th grade through
9 12th grade? Because we do limit it. And instead of
10 limiting it by grade level is there some federal rule
11 or regulation, statute, or some state rule or -- I
12 understand where Dr. Cushman -- Walters, excuse me --
13 is coming from. Because that's one of the things
14 that we've run into time and time again with dropout
15 charters is how do you limit that to those students
16 that you're targeting and not getting into those
17 others?

18 MS. PERRY: The federal statute simply says it
19 has to be a -- offer an elementary, secondary, or
20 both elementary and secondary program. And it
21 doesn't define that as by particular grade levels.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Hmmm.

23 MR. HOY: Dr. Kimbrell, can't our children
24 graduate early, which we don't limit them necessarily
25 to a grade level per the state anyway?

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Just by the number of
2 credits.

3 MR. HOY: So we don't have an age thing in the
4 state, do we?

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, to start.

6 MR. HOY: Yeah, to start --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But not to finish. Well,
8 21. Yeah.

9 MR. HOY: Yeah.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's an interesting
11 question. I don't know. Mr. Morgan, to follow-up on
12 that -- or Mr. Malone, I'm sorry -- I should have put
13 my glasses on when I tried to read that. Can't read
14 my own writing, much less --

15 MR. MALONE: You do that and I'll turn on my
16 hearing aids.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: In your experiences with
18 these schools have you found that that is what
19 occurs, that typically it is, as you said, the age is
20 -- the average age is much older?

21 MR. MALONE: If you remember the slide, the
22 average age is almost 18, 17.9.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right.

24 MR. MALONE: So, yes, that occurs. There is
25 kind of a -- when you've got a table full of bumps

1 and you push down this bump that's a problem, some
2 other ones start to pop up. The first one that would
3 occur pretty quickly is are you more concerned about
4 a 14-year old, 15-year old being in a small school
5 with lots of individualization with a 21-year old or
6 more concerned about that 14- or 15-year old being on
7 the street? Because those are grades where kids drop
8 out at disproportionately high numbers. And by the
9 way, our experiences in the schools where we have 21-
10 year olds, they tend to be our school leaders. They
11 do a wonderful job with orientation, acclamation with
12 other students, and you have lots of close student-
13 to-teacher ratios. The second point that would crop
14 up is the point that we've been talking back and
15 forth on, and that's a viable student population
16 number for the school. If we start to take out ages,
17 then I get more and more concerned about the ability
18 to attract the number of students where in fact the
19 school is sustainable.

20 DR. WALTERS: Mr. Malone, I have a question for
21 you. I'm sorry. Have you talked to any vocational
22 schools in the area about partnerships? Because this
23 group that you're targeting I think it's real
24 important that, yes, we need to get them a high
25 school diploma but also help them with career path.

1 So can you talk to me about that?

2 MR. MALONE: Yes. I think we have -- what we're
3 trying to be very careful of in this discussion is
4 not to talk much about what we think we can do over
5 time. We've got some great ideas about in year-two,
6 year-three some wonderful can-do sorts of options but
7 what I'd like to talk about -- I'd like Sally to talk
8 about, by the way, is with the steel industry and
9 anything else you want to talk about. You're in
10 charge.

11 MS. WILSON: I would like to say that we
12 specifically named the school Young Adult Magic
13 Johnson. That was the reason we put Young Adult in
14 front of there is we want this to be known that that
15 is the target group that we're going for, are the 18
16 and older. Our initial letter of intent did specify
17 an age group within there and in our training session
18 that we had back in July that's when we were informed
19 that we could not put that in there. But initially
20 that was our plan, was to put an age range in our
21 application, but we found out that wouldn't be
22 allowed. But we call it Young Adult because that is
23 the target. To answer the question about the skills
24 training, yes, between Mid-South Community College
25 and the Arkansas Northeastern Community College,

1 their secondary centers, absolutely. And we do have
2 experience with working with those. And the comment
3 that they will make is that they work with all
4 schools in the area. So, absolutely, they would work
5 with our students. And I think that's an important
6 key. I think especially for this targeted group of
7 students the skills training and the workforce
8 opportunity is critical.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Question, Mr. Hernandez?

10 MR. HERNANDEZ: Talk to me a little bit about
11 the facilities, Ms. Wilson, or anybody -- a little
12 bit about the facilities and where this school is
13 going to be located.

14 MR. MALONE: Sure. In Crittenden County, there
15 is a former public school that is available. There
16 have been initial conversations with the owners. I
17 believe, if I remember correctly, it's a 30-classroom
18 facility. The Bridgescape Centers don't need and
19 don't utilize that kind of space; probably four to
20 six classrooms would be a lot and they're configured
21 differently than traditional classrooms typically
22 are. But that's the space that we're looking at for
23 Crittenden. And the point that I wanted to make,
24 being a visitor, is that there appears to be, if any
25 of you are really familiar with that area, this

1 particular school seems to have a fair amount of
2 symbolism to the community and the prospect of it
3 being reopened as a school, serving this student
4 population, was met with a lot of enthusiasm -- a lot
5 of enthusiasm.

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: My next question is about the
7 budget. I noticed in the budget here that as far as
8 the -- there's a couple of things on your revenue
9 side, the first one being that you're anticipating
10 getting the full amount for NSLA funding, the \$1549
11 per kid. And I noticed the district that y'all are
12 going to be in is Marion School District. Is that
13 correct? Or what school district is it?

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: This is Marion.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Marion. The Free and Reduced
16 Lunch population there is around 60-some odd percent
17 and so to get that high rate of funding you're
18 anticipating getting over 90% Free and Reduced Lunch
19 population. Is that a pretty good safe estimate or
20 --

21 MR. MALONE: It is. And we base that on
22 experience.

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: What's that? I'm sorry.

24 MR. MALONE: It is, and we base that on
25 experience. In the Centers that we operate it's

1 children from Free and Reduced Lunch environments
2 that tend to come to the school in large numbers.

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Also on the budget one thing I
4 want to point out is that there's funding in there
5 right now in your revised budget for PD and it's at
6 \$44.45, and that's no longer going to be the funding
7 rate for PD. I just wanted to point that out.

8 MR. MALONE: Thank you. Is that number
9 available like on the website or -- it doesn't have a
10 dramatic impact on the budget.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No.

12 MR. MALONE: We heard it this morning.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You heard it this morning
14 it's going to be around \$24.00 and something. It's
15 just -- it's a little process in special session we
16 had a couple of weeks ago.

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: And then the other part was
18 there's a line item there for revenue from ALE
19 students. Can you explain how you expect to get that
20 revenue?

21 MS. WILSON: As you all -- and this is our
22 understanding that the ALE funding, of course, comes
23 in the second year. You have the students in the
24 first year and then it comes in the second. That's
25 why there would not be any ALE funding in the first

1 year under Revenue. We would offer ALE also.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, in your application I
3 don't remember seeing an ALE program described. I
4 mean, I would assume this is really an alternative
5 learning --

6 MS. WILSON: It is.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- environment in itself.
8 So typically we don't have ALE within charters -- do
9 we, Ms. Perry? -- unless they're some of our larger
10 charters with specific ALE programs? I'm trying to
11 remember one.

12 MS. PERRY: I think you may see that more in the
13 district conversion charters where they have an ALE
14 component than in an open-enrollment charter.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: I guess the question is: would
16 they -- I don't know that they really would be
17 eligible for that ALE funding if they're -- the
18 school itself is --

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, unless there's an ALE
20 -- a school within the charter with a specific
21 alternative program --

22 MS. PERRY: This particular -- these particular
23 applications, they indicated at some point they might
24 like to actually be an ALE for an entire area. And
25 our ALE staff took a look at the applications and did

1 express some concern about the way that the ALE
2 program would have to be redesigned, specifically for
3 the program that's proposed here.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: One last question for Ms.
6 Wilson. I want to make sure, I'm trying to get this
7 clear. So this school that was in this area before
8 was Osceola Communication Arts and Business?

9 MS. WILSON: That's correct.

10 MR. HERNANDEZ: And now the group that you have
11 is called Osceola Communication Business and Arts?

12 MS. WILSON: Business and Arts. It's just the
13 name that we have for our nonprofit since 2007.

14 MR. HERNANDEZ: I noted -- I also noted that
15 there was some issues there with audit in the past
16 resolving around this school and your organization
17 and stuff. And so my question is: there -- well,
18 there were some issues with recordkeeping and making
19 sure there was accurate documentation for things that
20 went on with the business of the school. How can you
21 insure that that won't be the case moving forward in
22 this new venture?

23 MS. WILSON: Thank you very much. In this
24 particular charter application, the nonprofit
25 corporation will remain as the -- we'll remain as the

1 governing organization and will not be turning it
2 over to another group. So we're aware of this and we
3 -- believe me, I wouldn't be going down this road
4 again if we thought that would happen.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: Can you give us a little bit of
6 background on what -- was it the audit happened after
7 y'all had stopped --

8 MS. WILSON: That's exactly right. Yes, sir.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: The audit issues, okay. So,
10 ultimately, with this group you will be the
11 responsible party for any issues?

12 MS. WILSON: Absolutely.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

14 DR. WITONSKI: I don't have any.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

16 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes. Just a couple of questions.
17 What is -- I notice you track your graduation. Do
18 you do anything to track students after graduation or
19 have you tried that or any indication of what happens
20 after they graduate?

21 MR. WILBERDING: So we -- if we were just to ask
22 students for a diploma that would not be a successful
23 program. So we partner with America's Promise
24 Alliance, who you've heard of, we discussed earlier.
25 They do conduct a survey with all of our students

1 across the country and track them, whether they are
2 employed, enrolled or enlisted. So those are three
3 options that we look for our students to help them in
4 their desires and their abilities, do those --
5 complete those three "E's." That survey is in its
6 first full year of implementation and results are
7 coming in now. That will be something that we track
8 with our partner here to make sure we can track the
9 students for the next three to four years. Post-
10 secondary success is ultimately what we're going to
11 be judged on in the long-run.

12 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. A couple of other quick
13 ones. One is -- of course, you're not asking that
14 our graduation requirements remain the same as far as
15 our 22 units and all that. That's not negotiable, I
16 think, anyway. And then the last thing is -- I'm
17 pretty sure I know the answer to this, but let me
18 make sure. You don't have a limit on how many years
19 a student can stay in the school unless they reach
20 their age 21 or something, I guess. In other words,
21 if they came in at 16 or whatever they could stay
22 five years and try to get out or whatever, or you
23 don't tell them that or that kind of thing?

24 MR. WILBERDING: So in theory that answer is
25 correct. What truly happens, a student comes to us,

1 whether they're 17 or 20. We're going to sit down
2 and have a very candid and open conversation with
3 them about where they are from a credit earning
4 potential. If you're 20 and you've got one credit,
5 "We're going to have to work with you on other
6 options." If you're 17 and you have six, that gives
7 you four years to finish. We've seen students who
8 come to us -- Durham, North Carolina, for example, I
9 have a young lady who was 20 years old and needed
10 four credits in six months. She walked last July at
11 graduation. Because they're the most motivated
12 students you'll see are the 18- to 21-year old
13 students who have experienced life as a young adult.
14 But truthfully, they're more of an adult than I was
15 at 18 to 21. Many of them have jobs; many of them
16 have their own children, their own responsibilities.
17 They're back in school because they want to get that
18 diploma to better their life versus a GED or no
19 education at all. So they come to us and we'll have
20 students stay a full eight hours each day, if there
21 are seats available in the second session, so they
22 can continue working. Not in lieu of attendance,
23 students with great attendance records can work from
24 home on a web-based curriculum if they have access to
25 that. So we've seen students make great strides. So

1 if we've got a 17-year old who takes four years to
2 get out, or a 16-year old who's just not getting
3 their work done, we're not going to -- we don't want
4 to fail kids or young adults. We're going to sit
5 down and talk to them about our Statement of
6 Understanding that each of them goes through in their
7 student orientation and make sure they're living up
8 to the expectations that we set forth in our program.
9 If they're not doing that -- and this goes to Mr.
10 Hoy's point -- we're graduating 69% of the students,
11 but that 31% that doesn't graduate some of them have
12 dropped out again because they just don't see that
13 light at the end of the tunnel. But what I'll say is
14 that 69% is versus zero for most of these students.
15 They weren't in school the day before they came to
16 us. So their graduation rate of that population of
17 2,500 students across the United States who are going
18 to enroll in Magic Johnson Bridgescape is zero right
19 now. They enroll with us and that number jumps to
20 almost 70%.

21 MR. BOARDMAN: And I think I remember about your
22 four items you covered the second one, but I may be
23 wrong on the numbers. But the one where we sit down
24 and work out that plan, that graduation plan, and so
25 that's very important that you do that so there's a

1 full understanding of what they're going to need in
2 order to get out.

3 MR. WILBERDING: So one of the personnel in the
4 program is a Guidance Counselor. We're going to sit
5 down with each student, evaluate transcripts and make
6 sure they're not repeating programs that they've
7 incurred, credits that might have already gained, and
8 we're going to try to get them to the finish line
9 more effectively and efficiently than they have in
10 the past.

11 MR. BOARDMAN: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

13 MS. COFFMAN: A couple of quick questions. One,
14 have you ever opened the school in a rural area
15 similar to this before?

16 MR. MALONE: I think the answer is yes.

17 MR. WILBERDING: So we've opened 17 schools in
18 two years. I was 155 pounds before this process
19 started and I tend to stress eat, so I'm now
20 apparently 600 pounds on that TV screen. Yes, we
21 have. We've got programs in Warren County, North
22 Carolina, population of 18,000, town-size of 1,500.
23 I'll be in Bridgeton, New Jersey tomorrow morning, a
24 town of about 18,000, successful program there,
25 graduating 100% of their kids. So where we have a

1 lot of success in these rural communities has become
2 word of mouth and they see their friend, their
3 neighbor, their partner down the street is getting
4 this opportunity. But, yes, we have been successful
5 with opening programs in rural areas.

6 MS. COFFMAN: Have you ever closed a school?

7 MR. WILBERDING: Yes.

8 MS. COFFMAN: Elaborate?

9 MR. WILBERDING: So there's a couple of things
10 taking place, Mike reminded me. We've yet to close a
11 charter school. So we've been in business just --
12 I've been in charge of Operations for just under
13 three years and we've yet to close a charter school.
14 What we've had to do on two occasions was close
15 district partnerships where the school district
16 didn't live up to the expectations that were set
17 forth in the contract. So those are technically
18 programs but I wouldn't be able to sit honestly with
19 myself if I didn't tell you we've had some issues
20 somewhere along the way. It wasn't due to our work;
21 we had a couple of programs that, like I said, the
22 district decided to change their mind last-minute and
23 look for another opportunity that we couldn't
24 necessarily deliver on. So meeting different
25 populations, different type of curriculum, and we had

1 to make a decision and walk away after year-one.

2 MS. COFFMAN: And because you would be starting
3 the program here, if you did not reach those
4 enrollment numbers that you're anticipating in the
5 first year, are there funds to fall back on, if
6 needed?

7 MR. WILBERDING: He jumped up awful excited, so
8 I'll let him answer that question and follow-up if I
9 can.

10 MS. COFFMAN: Can you write a check?

11 MR. MALONE: I was being intentionally obtuse
12 earlier. What I don't want Sally and the board
13 members to hear is anything other than 250 students.
14 That's what we want to go after.

15 MS. COFFMAN: Sure.

16 MR. MALONE: But realistically, in our
17 experience rarely does a center open with that
18 initial number. Too often, it's like half of that.
19 But we're used to doing that. We do things like
20 reduce the management fee or forego it for a year.
21 Again, that's assuming that after we do that for a
22 year or two then the program reaches the sort of
23 levels that both partners expect. But we're prepared
24 for that, yes.

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: Just to follow-up on your other

1 schools, what's kind of the smallest enrollment in
2 one of your other similar type schools?

3 MR. WILBERDING: So it depends on -- with our
4 charter school programs right now we currently have
5 no less than 150 students, as high as 350. In our
6 non-charter program it's a district contract. So,
7 for example, in Southern New Jersey they're only
8 looking to have a program of 25 students. But our
9 charter programs, they're all over, from 150 students
10 who are serving -- the charter programs are
11 specifically in Ohio; we're serving almost 1,600 kids
12 across state locations.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: And are those primarily in non-
14 rural settings?

15 MR. WILBERDING: Having grown up in Ohio, where
16 the majority of Ohio is rural settings, yes; they're
17 more urban areas than they are rural.

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: All right. Thank you.

19 MR. WILBERDING: You're welcome.

20 MR. MALONE: If you've ever been to downtown
21 Cleveland --

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: In regards to the budget,
23 Ms. Wilson, can I ask you a question please?

24 MS. WILSON: Yes.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Back in regards to concerns

1 brought up by audit and some past history with
2 operations of the charter school through your
3 organization, I see there's a \$10,000 budget item for
4 having a private audit?

5 MS. WILSON: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Why -- I guess help me
7 understand why the entity would want to spend \$10,000
8 when Legislative Audit will do the audit for free?

9 MS. WILSON: That's the experience that we've
10 had in the past when we were being successful. We
11 used that particular audit group in the first two
12 years and they did a good job.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But still, why would you
14 spend -- I mean, are you saying Legislative Audit
15 wouldn't do a good job?

16 MS. WILSON: No.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Because, I mean, 90-
18 something percent of our school districts use
19 Legislative Audit and there is no cost.

20 MR. MALONE: We probably did it to her because
21 we have budget templates from all different states
22 and generally there's a requirement to do a private
23 audit. And I suspect our budget office just put in a
24 placeholder number for this preliminary budget to
25 fund an audit. If the state does one for free, that

1 money will have to go to serve kids.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Thank you. And then
3 whomever, Food Services budgeted \$170,000. I think
4 I'm looking at the right budget. How will the food
5 service program work? I mean, it looks like you're
6 just going to be -- are you -- you're going to spend
7 \$170,000; you're not going to provide through the
8 school lunch program?

9 MS. WILSON: That's right. That's just a
10 budgeted item to allow for the expenses of it.
11 Hopefully, it will break even for the lunch program.
12 There will be lunch provided on-campus through the
13 requirements of the NSLA. Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: National -- the Child
15 Nutrition?

16 MS. WILSON: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's a lot of money. I
18 mean, I've run school districts a lot larger than
19 that and been able to make it with a lot less than
20 that. So I didn't know if maybe you were just going
21 to provide lunch for every student and not
22 participate in that --

23 MS. WILSON: No.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But you wouldn't be able to
25 get NSLA money then, so -- okay. And it may just be

1 a budgeting issue.

2 MR. WILBERDING: I can speak to some of that
3 based on experience. And who asked the question?

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I did.

5 MR. WILBERDING: Thank you. Some of that is
6 based on experience in our eight charter schools in
7 Ohio, where, a couple of things -- one, students --
8 making sure the first year they would fill out their
9 Free and Reduced Lunch forms. We have to absorb some
10 of those costs. And then the second piece is you
11 can't really buy a decent lunch or meal for a student
12 for \$2.17. Right? So there's numbers built into
13 that. The first year we're assuming we're not going
14 to get fully funded from a Free and Reduced Lunch
15 perspective, so that's probably more conservative
16 than we need to be. But we're being ultra-
17 conservative in that fashion from a budgetary
18 perspective.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Which would have an impact
20 on your NSLA money --

21 MR. WILBERDING: Absolutely.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- because you've got to
23 have those applications in order to qualify, so --

24 MR. WILBERDING: And we do everything we can
25 within legal opportunities to make sure --

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure. And hopefully you can
2 run a food service program feeding 200 kids for a lot
3 less than that. I don't even know what the federal
4 reimbursement rate -- I mean, I know school districts
5 that feed 100% who break even and have good lunches,
6 so that was one of the concerns. And what's all
7 included in the management fee? What services and
8 options?

9 MR. MALONE: Sure. The management fee covers
10 non-school specific stuff from Edison who are
11 assigned to provide services to the school. Some of
12 those people are assigned work to the school on a
13 regular basis. For example, the Director of Special
14 Education will review that program. The centralized
15 student recruitment area puts together all the
16 enrollment packets, those sorts of things. So
17 there's kind of a hierarchy of staff services that
18 are provided outside of the school's budget that are
19 contained either in the regional or the national
20 staff. They cover all areas, human resources,
21 teacher recruitment, all of that occurs outside of
22 the school's budget. There is -- well, Edison takes
23 a fair amount of pride in having spent a lot of money
24 over the years in research and development and that's
25 both in the things like eCourses, which are expensive

1 to develop, but also the formative assessments, those
2 sorts of things. So we have intellectual property
3 that really is being funded through some of that
4 management fee. And I think I said earlier, and I
5 hope the budget describes this, that \$100,000 flat
6 fee, normally that would be a \$250,000 fee. But
7 because of the thinness of that budget we reduced
8 \$150,000 of it with the understanding when we
9 renegotiate the management agreement we'd expect to
10 get to that level as the school gets successful.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Let me ask then the
12 question because I know we only budget for two years
13 because we only have two years. So as you move
14 towards your cap -- and I believe your cap was in
15 this school 250?

16 MR. MALONE: I believe 250. Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So moving from
18 \$100,000 to \$250,000 in the next two to five years,
19 because you've built your budget on 200, I think
20 would put quite a strain on it. Is the management --
21 so the management fee doesn't include -- it does
22 include the intellectual property and the research
23 and development of the eCourses but there's another
24 charge for the eCourses?

25 MR. MALONE: That's correct. That's a

1 curriculum charge.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, that's the curriculum
3 charge. Thank you.

4 MR. MALONE: And I don't mean to volunteer
5 answers where a question wasn't asked, but I've
6 worked for different management companies over the
7 years and I don't know what your experience is with
8 management fees; I think I know what all the major
9 providers do in terms of establishing those fees.
10 There are interesting and different sorts of
11 calculations, but straight fees that are for
12 educational service to the school I think range
13 between 15% and 20%. So if you take a look at the
14 per-pupil on 200 kids you see that that will fall in
15 or below that range.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes. We've seen them range
17 --

18 MR. MALONE: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- quite differently. Yes.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I've got a question for Ms.
21 Wilson or whoever wants to answer this one is fine.
22 So I'm just trying to make sure I have this straight.
23 So Edison is the management company that will be
24 managing, but the sponsoring entity will be the
25 Osceola group. Is that correct?

1 MS. WILSON: That is correct.

2 MR. HERNANDEZ: So in some of our other charters
3 I think this question was kind of asked. I don't
4 know if it was answered; I might've missed it. But
5 if there were some financial issues is Edison going
6 to be prepared to step in or the Osceola group with
7 extra funds to float the school until -- to the end
8 of the year or things like that? I think that may be
9 the thing that was asked earlier and I didn't know if
10 it was clear.

11 MR. WILBERDING: So the key driver of revenue
12 obviously is enrollment and we're not going to staff
13 our school fully until we hit the enrollment targets.
14 So let's say we open the year with 100 students.
15 We're going to staff it for 100 students versus 250.
16 So the budget is going to be very dependent on the
17 number of students enrolled. We have a strong desire
18 for students to graduate and our commitment is to do
19 so. Do we have an open checkbook to bail out
20 underperforming schools or underperforming students?
21 Not necessarily. But what we're going to do is we're
22 going to make a commitment to do everything we can to
23 help graduate students in Crittenden County.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: So the answer is if there's some
25 unforeseen budget expenses and issues then you won't

1 be there to support it?

2 MR. WILBERDING: I didn't say that. I said we
3 didn't have a wide open checkbook. So we have
4 assisted schools with financing in the past to get
5 them off their feet and then over time we've looked
6 to recoup our losses, or investments, we prefer to
7 call them, over time.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, you know, Mr. Malone
9 even mentioned I think earlier --

10 MR. MALONE: If you look at the draft management
11 agreement, you'll see that there's language in there
12 that has two different provisions for Edison Learning
13 to provide funding to the school. The first of those
14 is start-up funds that are generally costs associated
15 with the acquisition of property, classroom
16 furnishings, curriculum, et cetera, et cetera, that
17 gets the school right out of the shoot and they have
18 sufficient revenue to pay for it. We will up-front
19 that money and if it's paid back by the end of that
20 fiscal year that isn't a loan nor promissory note.
21 We will provide cash flow assistance in that regard.
22 If, on the other hand, a school has expenses that are
23 beyond revenue numbers and needs assistance of that
24 sort, we reserve the right to assist; we generally
25 will, as Chris mentioned, but that is a note; it's a

1 financial obligation of the school. But again, as we
2 all know, it's a nonprofit governing board and the
3 school has no ability to pay it, then we have no
4 ability to recover it.

5 DR. WALTERS: Can I ask a question?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski, yes.

7 DR. WITONSKI: No.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh, I'm sorry, Walters.

9 DR. WALTERS: A follow-up question to that,
10 please. And this may be more for our legal
11 department or Ms. Perry, I'm not sure. So the
12 management company is not going to continue if this
13 is not profitable and if the numbers are not what
14 they need to be. So if this management company is no
15 longer managing, would the Osceola group have to come
16 back to us for an amendment or does that come into
17 play?

18 MS. CLAY: Yes. If that were the case, they
19 would need to come back for an amendment.

20 MS. PERRY: Many amendments.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: 'Cause they're actually
22 managing the school operations.

23 MS. CLAY: That's correct.

24 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Many amendments. Did you
25 say that?

1 MS. PERRY: Yes.

2 MS. CLAY: Yes, amendments. Yes. It wouldn't
3 be just a one deal fix. You'd have to re-evaluate
4 the school itself.

5 MR. WILBERDING: I do want to leave that on a
6 more positive note though. We are committed to the
7 school. We wouldn't have come this far if we didn't
8 think we could make this work. So, and I know we
9 need to talk about all the eventualities but we are
10 committed to this school.

11 DR. WITONSKI: And I think we all appreciate
12 that. I think what our concern is, understanding
13 what the previous enrollment was and what the hoped
14 enrollment is, there's a large discrepancy between
15 those two. With the factors of the previous audit
16 that we discussed with Ms. Wilson, I think we've
17 clarified that but there's still that large
18 discrepancy there. So the hopes of -- if you have
19 most of your charters that are operating at that 150
20 mark, that's -- 75 is not near even your normal
21 operating mark.

22 MR. WILBERDING: Correct.

23 DR. WITONSKI: So that operation that we're
24 trying to understand if you've got some backing for
25 that -- and I'm so sorry, I do not remember his name

1 but he's been at the microphone and I apologize.

2 Yes, yes.

3 MR. WILBERDING: Chris.

4 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Chris, I'm so sorry.

5 MR. WILBERDING: That's okay.

6 DR. WITONSKI: So we began some of our questions
7 and Dr. Walters asked a question about specifically
8 in staffing, how that would work. And you gave
9 reference to a point where you said that typically
10 that person starts out the school year as the school
11 is trying to get them selves up and running, that
12 they are there for a clip. Can you define a "clip"
13 for me? How long is that?

14 MR. WILBERDING: So having just opened two
15 programs in Chicago, which are what we call turnkey,
16 which are almost everything a charter is except we
17 partner with Chicago public schools, our Executive
18 Director for Professional Development and Training
19 spent three weeks on the ground.

20 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

21 MR. WILBERDING: Two weeks of training, one week
22 of review, and has been back every week for a Q.A.
23 visit.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

25 MR. WILBERDING: Our Director of Achievement,

1 who is the -- in charge of making sure students
2 succeed, has spent just shy of three weeks on the
3 ground and is going back on a weekly basis until
4 we've got our feet firmly planted. And then I have
5 the great fortune of residing in the Chicagoland
6 area, so I've been in the facilities almost three
7 times a week, just making sure from an operational
8 perspective things are moving effectively. But we're
9 always committed to doing two weeks of full training
10 prior to opening and then typically we'll do another
11 week of observation to get the program off the ground
12 and early on, heavy Q.A. visits. And as the program
13 is falling to the fidelity of the model we move off
14 of -- if we have to stay, we'll stay, but we try to
15 get moved on once they get it running smoothly.

16 DR. WITONSKI: And so in reviewing the
17 curriculum documents that are placed online, who is
18 the leadership in terms of that is in the school, the
19 permanent fixture that's there?

20 MR. WILBERDING: The Program Director.

21 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

22 MR. WILBERDING: We call him the Program
23 Director instead of a principal because we try to
24 create a business atmosphere where these students are
25 coming to work on their high school diploma and we

1 try to set that tone from the top. So that Program
2 Director is certified as a principal in the statement
3 with which we're doing business. They are there on a
4 day-to-day basis in charge of managing the teachers
5 and the staff in the building, but then also the
6 fiscal, academic and any other responsibilities of
7 the physical running.

8 DR. WITONSKI: And have you already secured who
9 that will be for this proposed charter?

10 MR. WILBERDING: We have not. We have not.
11 We're -- it's November 14th and we're proposing a
12 start-up next August. That gives us a fair starting
13 time to get moving forward.

14 DR. WITONSKI: And what about in terms of
15 assessments, progress monitoring of students? Can
16 you talk a little to us a little bit about that?

17 MR. WILBERDING: I can from a very high level.
18 So with our students our eCourses -- let me back-up.
19 So every student will come into the program and take
20 with our Chief 3000 software that we utilize, our
21 web-based, we'll find out what reading Lexile they're
22 on. Students utilize the Chief 3000 on a daily basis
23 in our program looking to enhance Lexile because
24 often our students come in with -- even though
25 they're 19 years old, with a 4th or 5th grade reading

1 level. So Chief 3000 does a great job. If you're
2 not familiar with it, please make yourself familiar
3 with it. It's a fantastic product. It helps
4 students read at the appropriate level the same story
5 as somebody who's reading at a higher level. It's
6 all non-fiction, goes right to the Common Core, which
7 is great. So Lexile is measured on an almost daily
8 basis so we can check those gains on a monthly basis.
9 And now the assessment perspective, our eCourses are
10 great. We can find out with pretests for each of our
11 courses where a student's baseline is in that subject
12 and we can monitor that assessment on a weekly --
13 almost minute-to-minute or day-to-day basis. So it's
14 built into our eCourses which allows us to make sure
15 that as we sit down with students on a day-to-day or
16 week-to-week basis they can find out how much they're
17 succeeding, given the effort they are, or where they
18 might need to pick up to be successful.

19 MR. MALONE: And I would just add to that,
20 students have access to that assessment date on each
21 lesson also, which provides for really good student
22 ownership of the content, what they're learning, what
23 they're not learning. And the system also has the
24 ability to intervene in the three-tiered
25 intervention, resulting at the end, if a student

1 still isn't getting it, a teacher tutoring session.
2 So they are heavily assessed.

3 DR. WITONSKI: And in that three-tiered
4 intervention are you referring to RTI?

5 MR. MALONE: Yes.

6 DR. WITONSKI: The RTI process?

7 MR. MALONE: Yes.

8 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. And as far as the students
9 as they're taking their assessments and their
10 progress monitoring, how is that involving parents in
11 that process? And an additional question would be
12 how are teachers then going to be professionally
13 developed to be aware of what the software
14 capabilities are?

15 MR. MALONE: Sure. Let me yield to Chris
16 because this is more in his field.

17 MR. WILBERDING: So from a teacher perspective
18 there's professional development on eCourses. That's
19 that big chunk of the two weeks that we spent on
20 learning eCourses, understanding the intervention
21 component. But then also understanding that -- they
22 can sit at what I would call a Command Center and
23 watch the students they're working on. As students
24 work on English they can see how each of them are
25 progressing, how each of them is tracking, which one

1 might need help, which one has been stuck on this
2 question for X-amount of time. So the teachers are
3 trained in it. They've got an opportunity to monitor
4 that on a minute-by-minute basis. From a parental
5 involvement perspective, you know, with our average
6 age being 18 many of our students are emancipated.
7 But the ones that do have somebody in their life,
8 whether it's a parent or a guardian, we involve them
9 in open houses or parent night at the beginning of
10 the year and then we traditionally do a quarterly
11 meeting with parents, an open house type event. If
12 we have student concerns, we're going to call them on
13 an as-needed basis. One of the biggest factors for
14 these students dropping out is they don't have a role
15 model that's been successful. What we've witnessed
16 in just over three years is that our students come
17 from multi-generational dropouts. So finding
18 somebody to help motivate them, whether it's one
19 person inside the building that can help them see
20 what lies ahead, letting them know it's okay to leave
21 Crittenden County, get a better education, a better
22 job and come back and lift your county up -- but we
23 have to do a really good job in making sure parents
24 are in tune and quite frankly, that's our biggest
25 challenge for this population. But we do have open

1 houses and meetings as needed with students who are
2 struggling. Oh, and the other thing I forgot to tell
3 you -- this is the fun part.

4 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. I'm ready.

5 MR. WILBERDING: We call -- we actually require
6 our program administrators to make positive phone
7 calls home. Right? So we actually track that on a
8 monthly dashboard. If you've got 100 students in
9 your program, you have to make 150 positive phone
10 calls a month back home because, you know, if the
11 phone rings at home -- even for my eight-year old
12 daughter, if somebody is calling from the school I
13 go, "Oh, gosh, what's going on?" We try to give
14 positive news going home. Many of these students
15 haven't had that positive reinforcement before.
16 Sorry.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

18 MR. WILBERDING: You're welcome.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy has a question and
20 then we'll come to Ms. Coffman.

21 MR. HOY: In order to not necessarily entangle
22 what I have done with each of the charters, I'm going
23 to say to Ms. Clay in the back -- before we get to
24 the point that we're ready to make a motion, I would
25 like for you, if you -- not right now -- not right

1 now 'cause it will entangle you, I suspect. I
2 noticed that you have some issues -- that Legal has
3 some issues with some of the waivers. I've looked
4 them over and I think we might be able to deal with
5 them today. However, I don't want to deal with that
6 but before we get -- if we make a motion and we
7 haven't got there yet, I'd like for you to motion us
8 or something and let us know we need to go back and
9 address the waivers. The other thing that I want to
10 say, and this is a little bit more general, as I was
11 preparing for this meeting I noticed that these two
12 waivers look an awful lot alike. That's because it's
13 the same company; I got that. As a matter of fact,
14 there's multiple times you will refer to the
15 Crittenden County and we're actually in the first
16 one, which is the Mississippi County, I believe.

17 MS. CLAY: No.

18 MR. HOY: No. Well, then I've got them wrong,
19 in the wrong order in my book then. Okay. Now, Mr.
20 Masters. Okay. Mr. Masters, what I was wondering,
21 because this is a part of the state that I'm from and
22 so I do have some passion about this particular area
23 of the state. And I know that the number of students
24 that have dropped out can be an issue and I know that
25 that's why you said you don't necessarily oppose it

1 on the surface, because if we've got children who are
2 not being served they're walking the street. They
3 need something. And if you can drive that, we
4 appreciate that. However, we also understand that we
5 are a population of already declining enrollment and
6 with declining enrollment comes declining resources
7 in already small schools that are struggling to keep
8 their finances in order. Mr. Masters, I don't know
9 if you've called and did any research in terms of
10 areas where they've opened before to see if they drew
11 from the public schools at all or if it was
12 significant -- and it's probably too late at this
13 point to do that, if you have not. Could I ask if
14 any of the superintendents that you met with at the
15 co-op have done that?

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Masters, could we ask
17 you to come to the microphone because we are live-
18 streaming this and there are three people out there
19 in the state listening. No, I think there's a bunch.

20 SUPT. MASTERS: As to your concern for the
21 graduation rate and dropout rate for South
22 Mississippi County, we're well above the state
23 accepted level. And we pursue students who attempt
24 to drop out in our district, so we're very willing
25 for this group to pursue students above that age who

1 have dropped out in the past. I know that Osceola
2 has a program serving that group of students. We
3 currently do not in our school.

4 MR. HOY: Okay. And I'll say this to that.
5 Right now, with the way we have restructured our
6 graduation rate and how important it is in terms of
7 our current accountability system, it really is an
8 incentive to make -- for districts to get students to
9 graduation. With that said, I still know that there
10 are some students that are not in school in these
11 areas because I travel through them quite a bit and I
12 still have relatives in these areas. So I know this.
13 And I guess what I'm saying, and it's probably too
14 early to say this, but to be quite honest I would
15 like to see something that goes after kids that have
16 said, "I'm not going back to public school and I
17 would like to get my diploma." At the same time I
18 don't want to see the drama and right now, with us
19 not having had time to go back and do as much
20 research as I'd like, I don't know if I'm comfortable
21 with opening two of these because it would be right
22 now an experiment in Arkansas, which I haven't
23 thoroughly researched. I'm looking at the facilities
24 at each one and I'm looking at a building in Marion
25 and I'm looking at portables in Mississippi County,

1 and I'm thinking about the wiring and the structures
2 that have to go in place to get us in tune with
3 networks and preparing for the PARCC examination and
4 the technology. And I'm looking at the start-up
5 costs and I'm wondering about it, but I'm wondering
6 -- and this is probably not fair to ask but I'll ask
7 it -- for somebody from the charter, if you're
8 looking at them both with a dollar per year being the
9 rent up in Osceola and then you've got several --
10 30,000 I think supposedly in Marion, if you had to
11 choose which one would you, for the record?

12 MS. WILSON: Are you asking for --

13 MR. HOY: I'm asking from the perspective of the
14 charter organization.

15 MS. WILSON: We're not the full board.

16 MR. TRACY ADAMS: I probably would have to say
17 Marion. In a perfect world, I would like to have
18 both but --

19 MR. HOY: Fair enough. Keep in mind, I haven't
20 made up my mind whether one or two or either, and I
21 am only one voice.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman, I believe
23 you're up next.

24 MS. COFFMAN: This question is for Ms. Perry or
25 Ms. Clay. Historically, have we ever asked for a

1 yearly audit report from a charter?

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: When you say "audit," are
3 you talking about scholastic type audit or --

4 MS. COFFMAN: No, no, no.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- curriculum audit or
6 financial?

7 MS. COFFMAN: Financial audit.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. We get them annually.

9 MS. COFFMAN: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I could answer that.

11 MS. COFFMAN: That question was for Dr.
12 Kimbrell.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions? No
14 more questions?

15 DR. WALTERS: I'll make a motion.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Comment or motion?
17 The comments scare me.

18 DR. WALTERS: I just want to make a comment
19 about the teachers' salaries. It is unusual --
20 normally, the salaries of teachers we're talking to
21 applicants about how do you intend to get quality
22 candidates because it is lower than the districts
23 surrounding you. I notice that the beginning teacher
24 salary at Marion is a little under \$40,000 and I
25 believe theirs was \$45,000. Also, I see that you're

1 paying -- you have budgeted for your special ed.
2 teacher a salary of \$55,000, which I'm sure you know
3 how hard it is to get special ed. teachers. So I
4 just want to commend you for that. Also, I have a
5 motion to approve.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
7 approve -- whoa. Mr. Hoy, we've got to talk waivers
8 real quick.

9 MS. CLAY: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Legal Counsel.

11 MS. CLAY: Just a few things that we may need
12 some additional clarification from the applicant.
13 They asked for a waiver of 6-15-213 that deals with
14 Arkansas Smart Core Incentive Funding and the request
15 had to do with offering the required 38 but this
16 statute does not have anything to do with the 38. So
17 we just need clarification from them that they are
18 not seeking waiver of that statute -- or if they are,
19 why.

20 Along the lines of the 38 units of credit, you
21 all have dealt with that previously in applications.
22 This one may be a little bit different for you in
23 that they -- it doesn't appear that it would be a
24 phase-in of the 38. They've actually said that the
25 Edison curriculum does not offer particular courses.

1 So that's probably something that you want to have
2 the applicant address.

3 Class size and teaching load -- this may just be
4 me not being clear on it. In the explanation, they
5 say that the overall teacher/student ratio will be 1-
6 to-13. But then at the same time it appeared that
7 they may have larger class sizes. If the ratio is
8 going to be 1-to-13 in all classes, they do not need
9 the waiver. If it's going to be more than what is
10 required in our standards, they do need a waiver and
11 we need to know what that ratio is going to be. So,
12 some clarification on the class size and teaching
13 load.

14 And they've asked for a waiver of the 120 clock
15 hours, which you also dealt with before and that you
16 can't grant a graduation requirement but you are
17 allowed to grant this waiver in the form of that the
18 charter will still meet the curricula Framework
19 requirement.

20 And one other thing that was not noted in this
21 particular section of your materials and Ms. Perry
22 brought it up a little bit before -- in their
23 response to legal comments about the ALE waiver, they
24 say that the rule seems to limit ALE funding to
25 courses taught only through direct instruction. If

1 so, they wish to be able to fund ALE students in our
2 blended learning environment. I'm not entirely clear
3 on what they're asking for there, but if they are not
4 seeking the ALE waiver, which it does not appear that
5 they are, then they will be required to abide by all
6 the ALE statutes and rules.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And, Ms. Wilson, I
8 don't know who wants to address the issue of the 38
9 required units. Right now, we've not -- with the
10 exception of one, with the understanding that the 38
11 would be offered each and every year and we ask each
12 year for evidence of that offering -- and I
13 understand that y'all may not have those courses;
14 that's a problem.

15 MR. MALONE: Well, on the 38 credits -- I should
16 have the notes in front of me, but I think two of the
17 courses are communication and journalism.
18 Communication we've been assured by our education
19 people that course has been designed -- aligned to
20 standards and deliver. I suspect probably the answer
21 is similar on journalism but we'll need to ask. And
22 the balance of the courses -- I think there's like 9
23 hours or so that appear to be alternative work, those
24 sorts of things. That we'd just need to take a look
25 at and fix --

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Career technical, I think
2 that was one of the questions that was asked is what
3 opportunities would be available for these career
4 technical. I think Ms. Wilson mentioned that there
5 have been communications with Mid-South Community
6 College. I don't know if there's -- Ms. Wilson, is
7 there a deal worked out with Mid-South Community
8 College and Career Technical Center there to provide
9 some of those courses for these students so that the
10 school could meet those requirements of --

11 MS. WILSON: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- the nine offerings?

13 MS. WILSON: Yes, sir. The college makes the
14 statement that they do offer to all public schools,
15 so we are -- we would be included in that. Yes, sir.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. But, I mean, you
17 don't have anything specifically in your -- I didn't
18 see anything -- of course, there's just thousands of
19 pages that we've had the last couple of days. I
20 didn't see anything specifically from Mid-South
21 Community College in stating that there would be any
22 type of partnership.

23 MS. WILSON: No, sir. And it wouldn't be a
24 partnership. They just offer courses to all public
25 schools. We have to pay for it.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So is there money in
2 the budget to pay for those? Because I think that's
3 one of the questions that would be generated then
4 with the conversation about the nine required courses
5 in career tech, is they would have to also be taught
6 in order to meet this standard.

7 MS. WILSON: That is correct. We would have to
8 pay the first year and would be reimbursed in the
9 second year through Arkansas Career Technical
10 Education.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

12 MR. MALONE: So I think I understand this
13 discussion. I just want to run through it again. We
14 requested a waiver from the 38 hours credits. You
15 said, "That's a problem; you can't do that."

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, it is for me.

17 MR. MALONE: Yeah.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: There are folks here that
19 can override that but it's not something typically
20 we've allowed in a secondary school, a charter, to
21 have.

22 MR. MALONE: I appreciate it. I don't believe
23 that that's a deal-breaker for us but we need some
24 time to figure out how to fill in the holes that we
25 admittedly have.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. And I think that's
2 what we did with SIATech, is -- and, Ms. Perry, you
3 weren't here. We asked -- what we did is we put the
4 decision off for a month while the organizations
5 worked on how they would fill those gaps. And then
6 SIATech worked with Pulaski Tech, I believe, and some
7 others -- some other high schools even and other
8 charter schools -- to make available the 38 each year
9 for any student that is enrolled. So if there is a
10 student enrolled that wants to take physics then
11 there's an opportunity for that student to take
12 physics, et cetera, the 38 required. So --

13 MS. WILSON: Dr. Kimbrell, may I ask for a
14 clarification? This is 38 units to be taught --

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. WILSON: -- not just 38 units to be offered?

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, the standard requires
18 that it be taught. In the other charter school,
19 SIATech, we -- the Board at that time, which was the
20 authorizing state board, was the authorizer, allowed
21 I guess a semi-waiver of that standard in that it had
22 to demonstrate that those courses would be available
23 to any student that sought those courses. So they
24 don't teach 38 every year but they have to make
25 available those 38 and they do that with partnerships

1 with other schools, as well as I believe Pulaski
2 Tech. But I understand there's some gaps here.

3 MS. PERRY: Yeah. I would like to tell you what
4 the Charter Internal Review Committee saw in
5 relationship to the units of study that were missing.
6 The lack of all the units of study from the proposed
7 course provider were oral communication, journalism,
8 art, instrumental music, vocal music, nine units of
9 career and technical courses, and advanced placement
10 courses.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So any discussion
12 here with the rest of the panel? I would suggest,
13 unless there's a -- you've got a motion -- right? --
14 on the table. I would highly suggest that we discuss
15 among ourselves whether we want to move forward,
16 knowing that there's some holes there, and either we
17 accept that waiver or we don't.

18 DR. WALTERS: I can withdraw my motion and give
19 them some time to try to look at that. They did ask
20 for a waiver for licensure. Correct? So there would
21 not have to be a licensed music teacher teaching
22 those courses or a licensed art teacher. Correct?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's correct. We also
24 have the issue of class size and teaching load as to
25 what that was going to be, as Ms. Clay mentioned --

1 well, a more solid, I guess, understanding of whether
2 that's actually the 13-to-1 or what that was going to
3 be, I believe, as I understood, Ms. Clay.

4 MR. MALONE: Do you want answers to that now?
5 Is that the process?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, we can do that or we
7 could -- we can --

8 MR. MALONE: I think this one we can take off
9 the table. We comply with the state requirement; we
10 would be under that.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So you would insure
12 that you meet the student-to-teacher ratio in the
13 standards?

14 MR. MALONE: Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Withdraw that waiver. Okay.
16 And the clock hours, actually, we can't authorize
17 less graduation requirements but we do have the
18 authority to waive the 120 clock hours for a credit
19 since you're using a standards-based approach of
20 mastery.

21 MS. LEAH MALLON: And we have all 22 units that
22 are required at a minimum for the Smart Core and the
23 core curriculum. The only one we have to custom
24 create is the World Communications. But the
25 graduation requirements, we have all those eCourses

1 covered and that will all be offered. For the
2 additional 38 units, we have hundreds of eCourses and
3 electives and other courses that these students could
4 take. We just need time to do a phase-in plan and
5 let you know which courses they are that we would be
6 offering.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, what we require under
8 our standards is a specific 38 courses to be taught.

9 MS. MALLON: Correct.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And so, you know, electives
11 outside of that -- so we would need those to match
12 up.

13 MS. MALLON: Absolutely.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: For instance, journalism, et
15 cetera.

16 MS. MALLON: Right. And instrumental music.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Instrumental music.

18 MS. MALLON: Yeah.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And, you know, there have
20 been creative ways that other charters have come up
21 with that. So the other issue was the clock hours
22 and I don't -- I have no problem with waiving the
23 clock hours since it's a standards-based approach to
24 mastery. So I think we still would require the 22
25 units to graduate but those units could be reached in

1 less than 120 hours per unit under the requested
2 waiver. Am I missing something, Ms. Clay?

3 MS. CLAY: The only two other things were
4 probably just going to be a confirmation from the
5 applicant that they are not seeking a waiver of the
6 6-15-213 related to Arkansas Smart Core Incentive
7 Funding and also that they will comply with the ALE
8 statutes and rules in their programs that they did
9 not seek a waiver.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do those one at a time and
11 we'll get their response.

12 MS. CLAY: Okay. The first one is the Arkansas
13 Code 6-15-213. In the application it related to the
14 38 units but that was actually I think probably just
15 a typo on that one.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

17 MR. MALONE: Yes.

18 MS. MALLON: Yes.

19 MS. CLAY: And then the second one is the
20 assurance that they will comply with the ALE statutes
21 and rules.

22 MR. MALONE: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. So, Mr.
24 Hoy, you have a question of who?

25 MR. HOY: I'm just wanting to make certain that

1 they understand that if they're going to comply with
2 the ALE statute and rules that means they have to
3 have an ALE program. Are you sure?

4 MR. WILBERDING: Could you repeat that
5 statement?

6 MR. HOY: Well, you know what, I would really
7 rather Legal repeat it. I just wanted to make
8 certain you're clear on what you're agreeing to.

9 MR. WILBERDING: I appreciate that.

10 MR. MALONE: Thank you.

11 MS. CLAY: Since the applicant did not seek a
12 waiver of ALE statutes and rules then they would be
13 required to comply with all statutes relating to ALE
14 mandated rules.

15 MR. HOY: So they would have an ALE program?

16 MS. CLAY: Yes.

17 MR. HOY: Are you sure --

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Which means that you can
19 only have up to a certain percentage -- isn't that
20 right? -- delivered electronically --

21 MR. HOY: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- in your courses, et
23 cetera?

24 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir. There are requirements
25 about how much can be delivered electronically.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. You might want to
2 think that one through.

3 MR. MOORE: Can we get a waiver of that?

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, you can get a waiver
5 of that.

6 MS. CLAY: Yes. Actually, the waiver of ALE is
7 fairly common in our open-enrollment charter schools.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. So you may want to
9 include the waiver for 6-15 -- or not --

10 MS. CLAY: That's --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, and there's no
12 funding.

13 MS. CLAY: Well, the original application
14 requested the waiver and in legal comments made at
15 the Internal Review Committee we suggested that they
16 request an additional statutes and rules to
17 effectuate the waiver. The applicant came back and
18 said that they did not want that waiver, so I guess
19 we need clarification at this point whether they do
20 or do not want the waiver. One thing that Ms. Perry
21 did mention that they need to be aware of is that
22 they would not get the ALE funding if they do not
23 have the ALE program. So that's an additional issue.

24 DR. WITONSKI: We just wanted to clarify that
25 you understand. I know we've kind of walked around

1 the mountain here. So you have -- if you offer an
2 ALE program, you receive ALE funding. If you ask for
3 a waiver of ALE, Alternative Learning Environment,
4 then you will not receive the additional ALE funding.
5 So in the responses, when you initially applied, you
6 wanted it. And then when you responded back some of
7 the comments that you -- and I'm sorry, I don't have
8 the same page numbers that you probably have on
9 yours. For us, it's page 324 in our packet. But you
10 discuss that the Academy is requesting a waiver to 6-
11 16-102, School Day Hours, School Day, "Along the same
12 rationality the Academy requests a waiver for the
13 part of 4.03.3 that gives the formula for the ALE day
14 as the number of hours taught in an eligible ALE each
15 day divided by six hours. We wish for the formula to
16 be divided by four hours." So we want to make sure
17 that if you're wanting to waive that, if we know you
18 need to waive it, we want to make sure you're
19 informed of what you're --

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, they also sought it in
21 the next bullet.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Yeah.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: They also asked that the ALE
24 seems to require direct instruction or --

25 DR. WITONSKI: Right.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- that instruction be
2 delivered there and not virtually. They're asking to
3 be able to fund those ALE's in their blended learning
4 environment.

5 DR. WITONSKI: Which is not eligible.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, under -- unless you
7 get a waiver. Right?

8 DR. WITONSKI: Right. Right.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: As the way I think, I mean, could
10 they not ask for a waiver but then if they met the
11 requirements, if they decide to go ahead and do it
12 they could rescind it as long as they met the type of
13 requirements. Just because they ask for a waiver
14 doesn't mean they have to -- they can't do it.

15 MR. MALONE: I will admit to not entirely
16 following this conversation. I apologize. ALE is
17 attractive to us because it is significantly more
18 money for pupil.

19 DR. WITONSKI: Absolutely.

20 MR. MALONE: Okay. So if there's a way that we
21 would qualify for it we would like to apply for it
22 and offer the necessary program. There were
23 discussions about, you know, "really by definition
24 your entire program is ALE." But for whatever
25 reason, that's not going to work in terms of funding

1 for that program. Then when I thought I got around
2 to the point where I guess what we want is to waive
3 ALE, which means we waive the money, because part of
4 ALE requires direct instruction, and 80% of the
5 instruction be delivered online -- but then the last
6 comment was, "But maybe you have the ability to waive
7 the direct instruction portion," which just almost
8 takes me full circle. If there's a way --

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It is, it's full circle.
10 And this discussion has occurred before in charter
11 applications and the State Board in their discussion,
12 which was a different group of people, chose not to
13 allow that to occur because then you would expand
14 probably each and every one of our charters. We're
15 serving, what, 15,000 students in charters -- no,
16 that's just in Pulaski County -- no.

17 DR. WITONSKI: No.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No, it's 15,000 total.
19 You'd be expanding possibly the State's -- yeah --
20 obligation for another \$4,000 and some-odd dollars
21 per student. So, yeah. So you're looking at then a
22 charter school ultimately could seek a waiver from
23 ALE's, other requirements, but be funded and each
24 student then be worth almost \$11,000 a student. So
25 currently the decision has been made by the State

1 Board not to fund it that -- you know -- a charter is
2 seen as an ALE in itself and it's funded in such a
3 way as charters are funded right now without the
4 additional ALE because it in itself is an alternative
5 choice for a student within that region of the state
6 to be able to take advantage of. That probably
7 didn't help you a whole lot except --

8 MR. MALONE: Well, here's --

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: My vote would be no, we're
10 not going to allow you --

11 MR. MALONE: Okay.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- to do both.

13 MR. MALONE: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's my vote.

15 MR. MALONE: Okay.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Now there are other votes on
17 the panel.

18 MR. MALONE: What I was tempted to ask is can we
19 split the question, can we request that you waive the
20 direct instruction, see how you respond to that. And
21 then if you don't waive the direct instruction then
22 we waive the ALE. Does that make sense?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure. Yes, sir. That would
24 be a process in which this group would make that
25 decision to do that.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have -- right now we have
2 a motion on the table, so I don't think it would --
3 it hasn't been seconded but Dr. Cushman said she
4 would --

5 DR. WALTERS: Yeah. I will withdraw my motion.
6 Mr. Malone, I think you can tell, you know, we have
7 some supports as far as wanting this to be
8 successful. I can tell you -- and this is nothing
9 against Mr. Masters or anyone else, any of the other
10 superintendents in that area -- when I was
11 superintendent, you know, we're not doing a good job
12 in the state of going after these kids that you're
13 going after. So I think that -- I think we all would
14 like to see this be successful but, yes, there are
15 some -- there's some gaps that you're going to have
16 to work on.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Questions? Yes.

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. It sounds like, as Dr.
19 Walters said, we do have a lot of questions. So what
20 are our options right now? Is it a possibility for
21 us to table this and let them answer and work on some
22 of these issues? And if so, what's the timeline on
23 them coming back and --

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, yes, that is possible.
25 I believe, Ms. Clay, we can direct the Charter School

1 Office to give technical assistance in working
2 through these items that have been mentioned, come
3 back. We would just have to set another date within
4 a pretty short period of time to be able to have
5 another panel hearing to hear how the holes have been
6 filled in. Ms. Clay, go ahead.

7 MR. BOARDMAN: Uh --

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No, Ms. Clay.

9 MS. CLAY: That's correct. There's not a
10 timeline on how quickly we have to come back but it
11 does need to be relatively quickly because of the
12 appeal process and how many State Board meetings it
13 could go into. In order to potentially have a school
14 open in the fall, it would have to happen relatively
15 quickly.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, that's the timing
17 issue. It's really to try to protect those that get
18 authorized to gear-up and get school started.

19 MS. PERRY: The district conversions, of course
20 they have districts behind them and they're coming to
21 you at your next scheduled meeting which is in
22 January.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. I wouldn't want to
24 wait till January to hear this and I'm sure they
25 wouldn't want to wait that late or that long either.

1 MR. BOARDMAN: Are we down -- I thought a while
2 ago when the motion was made it was simply that
3 mostly to could they come back with a plan on the 38
4 units. That was the issue of the time. We also had
5 the issue with the ALE. Those seem to be the two big
6 ones. So I guess my thoughts on that would be could
7 we do an approval on the -- I thought we had
8 investigated that and somebody gave conditional
9 approval. So in other words, if you approve that,
10 they could come back and show how they're going to
11 meet -- submit documentation on how they're going to
12 offer the 38 units, one. And the second one would be
13 -- my semi-other idea is could they not ask -- if
14 they ask for a waiver of the ALE, we could approve
15 it. I don't think any of us are going to approve it
16 if it has to have reconstruction. I don't see -- but
17 if they ask for a waiver and then later on they
18 decide to offer it and they saw that they could,
19 could they do it even though they had a waiver? We
20 have a lot of them that ask for waivers that they
21 never need. You know, every one of them asks for a
22 waiver of licensure. You know, sometimes they wind
23 up with licensed teachers. So I guess that's -- I
24 guess that would be my two suggestions.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You're right. There are two

1 issues. One on the 38 and one on the ALE. Now your
2 memory is better than mine, Jim. I just don't
3 remember conditional approvals -- and that may have
4 happened in the past.

5 MS. CLAY: I think the only time that has come
6 up -- and I can't pinpoint exactly which charter it
7 was -- is when there was a facility issue, that that
8 was the only thing -- the only issue outstanding. I
9 don't know that a conditional approval has ever been
10 made where there are outstanding issues like the 38
11 units or ALE. In that case the school I'm thinking
12 of, SIATech, is where the action was tabled till the
13 next meeting and the school got technical assistance
14 in the meantime.

15 MR. BOARDMAN: Then I would ask an interesting
16 question -- I just need to be quiet -- is we have a
17 lot of people that come before us and they tell us
18 what they're going to do, and we give them approval,
19 and what if they don't do it?

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, we review those. They
21 have to report and we've shut them down.

22 MS. CLAY: Yes. We do have that authority.

23 MR. BOARDMAN: Well, they start --
24 unfortunately, they start and then we shut them down
25 because they already had students enrolled.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's the difficult part.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez? You have to
4 turn your mike on though.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: I would just like to make a
6 motion to table this to a later date for the ability
7 for this group to seek technical assistance from our
8 Charter School Office.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion is to table until a
10 future date can be set while technical assistance is
11 provided to the applicant to work on the two issues
12 that have been brought forth, the issue of the 38 and
13 the issue of the determination of I guess seeking ALE
14 waivers.

15 DR. WALTERS: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We have a motion and
17 a second. Discussion?

18 MR. HOY: Question.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, sir.

20 MR. HOY: Could we amend the amendment -- I
21 mean, the motion to include both charters at the same
22 time? Is that possible?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I don't believe that that
24 would be in the best interest of --

25 MS. CLAY: No. We do need to have -- you all do

1 need to have hearing on the second charter.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes.

3 MS. CLAY: It may be an expedited process
4 because they are similar. But you do need to have a
5 separate hearing.

6 MR. HOY: Yes. Thank you.

7 MS. CLAY: Sorry.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We're at that point
9 where we've got a motion and a second on the table,
10 and it is within the Panel's work now. So, do you
11 have any discussion?

12 MR. BOARDMAN: Well, not just for discussion.
13 It sure would be nice if we could postpone this till
14 January.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Y'all don't know the joke.
16 Mr. Boardman's last day is in December, so -- he's
17 retiring after 12 years of work. No, no, 40 -- how
18 many years?

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Forty-three and a half of work.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And, Ms. Perry, I
21 would suggest that you work with both Ms. Wilson and
22 Mr. Malone and with our calendars, which is going to
23 be difficult, unless -- I know, we need to vote. But
24 it will be very difficult. Who's getting antsy, Ms.
25 Sharon? All right. We'll vote. All those in favor

1 say aye.

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed, like
4 sign? Okay. It is tabled and will have to be
5 brought back off the table at the next meeting. So,
6 yes, we will take a break. Let's make sure everybody
7 understands that everybody needs input on trying to
8 get this done as soon as possible. Okay. We'll take
9 a break and we'll bring up Action Item 4.

10 (BREAK: 3:00-3:15 P.M.)

11 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Walters left the
12 meeting during the break.)

13 A-4: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
14 APPLICATION: YOUNG ADULT MAGIC JOHNSON BRIDGESCAPE ACADEMY OF
15 MISSISSIPPI COUNTY, OSCEOLA, ARKANSAS

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Mary Perry, we'll
17 recognize you for Action Item A-4, please.

18 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. Thank you. This is the
19 last hearing of the day for the Young Adult Magic
20 Johnson Bridgescape Academy of Mississippi County.
21 It has the same sponsoring entity as the one that was
22 just discussed in the previous action item, the same
23 grade levels, the same student enrollment cap, and
24 this one would be located in Osceola on Highway 140
25 at I-55. Ms. Wilson will come. I believe that they

1 have a desire to expedite the conversation in their
2 presentation at least, the time. But Mr. Masters
3 does want to speak to this application as well.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So everybody that's
5 going to speak has already been sworn in. We won't
6 have to go through that. I'll put my cheat-sheet Ms.
7 Sharon gave me over here now. Anyone else on this
8 one, besides the individuals already recognized and
9 sworn in? I think after the last two days I
10 recognize everybody in here. Okay. So -- I saw your
11 hand go up. Ms. Sally, we're ready when you are.

12 MS. WILSON: Thank you. My name is Sally Wilson
13 and I appreciate this opportunity again. The
14 PowerPoint presentation that we have for this
15 application is the same as the previous one and
16 unless there's something in particular that we need
17 to show on the PowerPoint we are going to waive it at
18 this time. There is a different chart in this one on
19 the numbers. These numbers, of course, came from the
20 Arkansas Department of Education Data Center. When
21 you go to the Data Center and you pull down
22 Enrollment for a particular county, you can see that
23 year -- per year and you can see what the enrollment
24 was countywide. And that is where this information
25 has come from. All we did was simply put it into a

1 graph form but, of course, this is your own
2 information. But I would just point out again an
3 example of the Class of 2011. That class started out
4 with 747 ninth graders. Three-and-a-half years
5 later, when they graduated, 536 students walked
6 across the stage. That's a difference of 211
7 students. I know that's not a percentage -- I'm an
8 engineer, I can crunch statistics like everyone else,
9 but I think this raw data almost speaks for itself
10 for the shrinkage. That, I will concede. Thank you,
11 sir.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Malone, do you
13 have anything that you wanted to add at all?

14 MR. MALONE: No.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I know the program is the
16 same. Okay. All right. Mr. Masters, you are
17 recognized then.

18 SUPT. MASTERS: I would like to state for our
19 schools in South Mississippi County, our high school
20 Rivercrest, that we work very hard to serve our
21 students faithfully and effectively. We have been
22 very effective at increasing our ability to teach the
23 students effectively and our test scores have
24 indicated that we've made progress. We did stumble
25 slightly in math this year trying to address both

1 Common Core and Benchmark; we don't make any excuses
2 for that and we will make corrections for that. Some
3 of you may have heard some of our staff or students
4 speak concerning our working to close the achievement
5 gap, in particular our general material knowledge has
6 helped us to be very effective in reducing the
7 achievement gap. We love our students. We're
8 interested in our students. We don't just ignore our
9 students if they choose to attempt to drop out. So
10 we address that in our students under 18. If this
11 group could affectively address that in students that
12 have gone on past us, our board does not oppose that.
13 We do oppose any attempt to draw away our students,
14 which is not to say that we're objecting necessarily.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Masters. Do
16 you have questions of Mr. Masters? Okay. Then I
17 would like to point out that Dr. Walters did have to
18 leave. She had an issue with her family that she had
19 scheduled that we couldn't -- she couldn't change.
20 So we still have a quorum here, so we'll continue to
21 move on. So it is now -- I guess with an expedited
22 explanation of the charter application and you've
23 heard from Mr. Masters, I think we still have the
24 same issues before us. But I would like to hear
25 discussion from the Panel on how you'd like to move

1 forward.

2 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is just pertaining to this
3 specific site. I know there were some numbers that
4 were thrown out with the last discussion about the
5 amount of dropouts in the area. And in looking at
6 this application there's still this same 200 students
7 expected. Is there an expectation that those numbers
8 will be met in this area?

9 MS. WILSON: The Bridgescape Academy/Edison
10 Learning people will speak about the recruitment
11 efforts that they need.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

13 MR. MALONE: The answer is yes, we do expect
14 that we'd be able to recruit 200 students there. We
15 do have a well-organized and we believe effective
16 student recruitment department and mechanism process.
17 As Chris mentioned earlier, there will be persons on
18 site tasked with coordinating that sort of activity.
19 But equally or more importantly, there is a
20 department out of Knoxville, Tennessee, multiple
21 people, that do and have done marketing demographic
22 studies on eligible number of students and started
23 methodology for radio stations most likely to be
24 listened to, devised marketing materials. So believe
25 that if there were 200 students there, and we believe

1 there are, that would benefit from this program that
2 we can recruit them.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, we have a follow-up
4 question.

5 DR. WITONSKI: I'm sure in terms of planning and
6 in terms of your work in surveying and determining if
7 this is the best method, with those two sites being
8 located in such proximity do you feel like that in
9 terms of sustainability -- because we know from
10 history previously where there was a location, at the
11 other site we discussed, it was not able to sustain
12 itself. So with two being located within roughly 40
13 miles from each other can you tell us what those
14 conversations were that led to these two
15 applications?

16 MR. MALONE: Yes. I will admit that internally
17 when all we do is look at statistics for a region
18 that the available population in these locations, but
19 especially in South Mississippi, created some
20 questions internally. So the approach was to get
21 boots on the ground, which was me, go around with
22 Sally to the various community groups, see what sort
23 of interest and what sort of sense people there had
24 for the feasibility, and that was a pretty
25 overwhelming experience and it did override our

1 initial caution of this market. It is a small market
2 and we may not be able to generate the sorts of
3 numbers that we want to. We had those concerns. Our
4 on-the-ground visits dispelled that to the extent
5 they could be dispelled.

6 DR. WITONSKI: What about transportation options
7 between the two sites, if there were only one site
8 available in one location or another?

9 MR. MALONE: There must be some great lines and
10 jokes about not wanting to talk about that so that
11 you don't go down that road. I can't think of what
12 they are. So we have had discussions about if in
13 fact we open the two locations and the student
14 recruitment early enough on was indicative that our
15 worst fears were in fact real, it would make a whole
16 lot more sense -- it would create a sustainable
17 school if we -- and would be more effective if we
18 merged the two sites -- we've talked about that
19 possibility. Does that answer your question?

20 DR. WITONSKI: Yes. So was there also
21 conversation about starting one site and then
22 possibly growing to two, based on what the level of
23 interest was for enrollment?

24 MR. MALONE: There was. We had those
25 conversations and, again, I'm relying upon a couple

1 of days visit. I mean, I'm hardly an expert on that
2 particular part of Arkansas. But I will tell you my
3 sense was those are very different communities.
4 They're not the same. And our belief is both, for
5 different reasons and through different methods, are
6 equally committed to have a center within their
7 community.

8 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Wilson, do you want to
10 address some --

11 MS. WILSON: May I just quickly add to that?

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

13 MS. WILSON: And in South Mississippi County
14 also we do have the Big River Steel that is coming in
15 and I think that's also generated extra interest --
16 Tracy can also speak to this -- in the area to try to
17 -- and we're talking about re-engaging here,
18 recruitment of re-engaging of students and give these
19 young people that one more chance, maybe their last
20 chance to get that high school -- that full high
21 school diploma and to get some skills training with
22 it so that hopefully they'll be able to feed in as
23 employees for Big River Steel. Now they're going to
24 have to stagger it a bit. They probably will take
25 the positions in industry where those folks may be

1 leaving to go work in Big River Steel but still, we
2 believe that we're going to have the jobs available
3 for them but they've got to have the education; they
4 have to have the knowledge that they need in order to
5 be able to work those jobs. So because of Big River
6 Steel, that is the extra piece in this particular
7 application. Tracy?

8 MR. ADAMS: I would just like to comment on
9 that.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, sir.

11 MR. ADAMS: My name is Tracy Adams. I am a
12 former Nucor Steel employee. Mr. Hoy made mention to
13 his daughter moving away for employment. Right now
14 in northeast Arkansas we are the number one steel
15 producing region in North America, not just in the
16 state but the entire North America. You have two of
17 the biggest steel mills in the world, Nucor Hickman
18 and Nucor Yamato. Now we have another billion-dollar
19 industry coming, Big River Steel, which is already
20 supported by 17 other smaller steel mills there in
21 Mississippi County. Now mind you, these are jobs
22 where you don't typically need a college degree. You
23 come through the door earning \$65,000 to \$75,000,
24 given that you have a steel-related skill, such as
25 welding, pipe-fitting. These are hard labor jobs. I

1 myself possibly could have been one of these students
2 looking -- Lord knows I wish we had this Dreamscape
3 Academy when I was coming up. I was the eldest of
4 five children, had an opportunity to go to college,
5 did not take that opportunity because I couldn't let
6 my mom, who was making minimum wage, try to support
7 four others. Now I'm just one who actually made it
8 but you have thousands of others that have similar
9 situations, such as I did, if not worse. With these
10 type of jobs coming it gives these children, these
11 young adults the opportunity to earn a degree -- or,
12 excuse me -- to earn a diploma -- and not just a
13 diploma but because of other relationships that we've
14 made with the community college and the tech schools
15 it gives the average man, the small person who
16 essentially had no aspirations for college, it gives
17 them the opportunity to change their life. In my
18 situation I went from making \$15,000 or \$16,000 to
19 over \$100,000. Ultimately, it changed the destiny of
20 my two children. I have a son who just graduated
21 from Morehouse and now he's in the second year of med
22 school. I couldn't give that. So we have 5,000 to
23 10,000 other people in this region who are just like
24 me that need a second chance to go to school. Thank
25 you.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Adams. I
2 appreciate your speaking from your heart. Where did
3 you go to school? Where did you grow up?

4 MR. ADAMS: I grew up right in Osceola.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: In Osceola. Okay.

6 MR. ADAMS: Osceola, Arkansas.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

8 MR. HOY: My question is for Ms. Clay. I would
9 like just to -- simple yes or no answer, if you can
10 get there from the question that I ask you. Do we
11 have similar or even the same legal quagmire with
12 this particular application as we did with the prior
13 application?

14 MS. CLAY: Yes.

15 MR. HOY: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is for Mr. Masters. I'll
18 wait for you to get up there. In your district --
19 and this may just be an estimation -- how many
20 students do you believe that have dropped out that
21 are probably in the age -- 9th through 12th grader,
22 up to 21 that you think would go into this school?

23 SUPT. MASTERS: I would be surprised if there
24 were more than 20. I have no way to verify that.
25 And on top of that, I do know that Osceola also is

1 offering a program for their students 18 and over to
2 recoup their degrees. So the number from Osceola
3 might also be very low.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions? Well, we
6 have the same set of circumstances. We have two
7 different locations. I would entertain a discussion
8 or conversation about whether you want to address
9 that through additional work that's going to occur
10 and deal with both of these at the same time or do
11 you want to deal with this one separately than the
12 first one?

13 DR. WITONSKI: I understand that the
14 applications are the same and I understand that the
15 intent in terms of structure is the same. What my
16 concern is is the sustainability of two sites within
17 such close proximity. And in terms of looking at
18 maybe the best location, I don't know if one is
19 necessarily better than the other. My main question
20 is: could two be sustained in that area? And based
21 on the comments from Mr. Masters and just the area in
22 general that's my burning question.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Malone, I'll get to you
24 in just a second. Go ahead, Mr. Boardman.

25 MR. BOARDMAN: Just a comment on what was said.

1 I understand that concern and I think though that we
2 shouldn't make a decision here until we -- and I
3 don't see any reason why we can't listen to both of
4 them one more time and make a decision on whether
5 we're going to approve or not approve when we have
6 the next meeting. I mean, I don't -- right now I
7 don't see a reason to say yes or no to either one of
8 them because we may wind up saying no to both or yes
9 to both.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Malone, you wanted to
11 speak on I guess the issue of where we were with the
12 two issues?

13 MR. MALONE: That's correct. Thank you. We had
14 the chance during the break to caucus and talk "did
15 you hear what I heard" and "where are we" and where
16 we came out is that we probably can save a lot of
17 time by suggesting that first we'd like to waive the
18 ALE aspect. That seems to make infinite and
19 pragmatic sense. And, secondly, if we weren't clear
20 we are committed to comply with and provide the 38
21 hours.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And I guess my
23 question would be under the model that you currently
24 have in the application the question that we would
25 have, I guess, is how do you offer those 38? You're

1 just -- because I think in some of the responses that
2 we have in writing is that you can meet the 22
3 requirements except for the -- we don't have anything
4 in the application; the application becomes part of
5 the contract, I understand, but we would need some
6 verification. And, again, it would be the pleasure
7 of this group if they want to re-take that up but we
8 had a motion and we had a vote to table that one, the
9 first one, until we could get confirmation and some
10 kind of plan as to how you would do that. So, are
11 you asking then to re-evaluate the first application
12 at this point?

13 MR. MALONE: If you need -- and I understand
14 that you may very well -- if you need a written plan
15 for us with not just a commitment that we're going to
16 comply, but precisely how are we going to comply,
17 that would probably take us upwards to five to seven
18 days to get it to you right.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I would feel better with
20 that myself but -- yes, Mr. Hernandez?

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: One of the things that I just
22 want to comment, that the reason for suggesting the
23 technical assistance from our Charter Office, it may
24 be that you want to look at trying to model your
25 waiver request after SIATech because I don't think

1 that you would be so inclined as to offer all 38 or
2 teach all 38 courses, that you may want to have some
3 kind of way of offering but not actually teaching
4 those every year based on your size.

5 MR. MALONE: You are correct. That was implicit
6 in the --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, and I would suggest
8 maybe having some written partnership letters from
9 Mid-South Community College and -- what's the one in
10 Blytheville?

11 MS. WILSON: Arkansas Northeastern.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. Arkansas -- they
13 changed it on me -- Arkansas Northeast. Having those
14 kinds of things that they would be willing to
15 partner, to offer those nine course requirements
16 under career tech. Mr. Hoy, you had a comment?

17 MR. HOY: At the proper time I'm prepared to
18 give a motion.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional comments,
20 questions? If not, Mr. Hoy. Hang on. Ms. Clay is
21 coming to straighten us out again.

22 MS. CLAY: One thing that I'd just like to get
23 on the record is that if the applicant agrees that
24 they withdrawn that waiver of the 6-15-213 regarding
25 the Smart Core incentive funding and also that they

1 withdraw the waiver of the class size and teaching
2 load, as they did for the other application. So if
3 they would just agree to that or explain that this
4 application is different.

5 MR. MALONE: We agree.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: For that and the ALE issue.
7 Yes. Mr. Hoy.

8 MR. HOY: Motion to table this issue until they
9 are prepared to come back before us.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: With technical assistance?

11 MR. HOY: With technical assistance.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, sir. We have a
13 motion to table this application and suggest that our
14 staff provide technical assistance to complete the
15 application as described in the earlier application
16 process. Do I have a second?

17 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All right. I have a motion
19 and a second. Any discussion?

20 DR. WITONSKI: I'm still where I was before we
21 started this conversation about the two locations but
22 I think your point is well taken, Mr. Boardman.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'd also like to add that, you
25 know, I don't know that -- I'm kind of at the same

1 place Dr. Witonski is, that I -- I understand the
2 part about tabling it but I don't know that any new
3 information -- I don't know that I'd want to bring
4 these people back if there's a possibility that we
5 may want to make a different motion.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, again, we tabled the
7 first one so they're going to either come back
8 physically or, as we talked about, we can ask them to
9 phone in and we can maybe put you up through Webinar
10 or TIV or whatever we need to do to expedite this
11 process and keep you from having to travel back in
12 Arkansas. I think it would be a simple question on
13 the first one. So at this point we have a motion and
14 a second.

15 MR. MALONE: For the record, we like Arkansas.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we've got a motion
17 and a second to table and for staff to work with the
18 entity, the applicant, for technical assistance to
19 bring forward the second application in a clearer
20 fashion. All those in favor say aye.

21 MS. COFFMAN: Aye.

22 MR. BOARDMAN: Aye.

23 MR. HOY: Aye.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed?

25 DR. WITONSKI: Nay.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Nay.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So that's 3-to-2, the motion
3 is tabled until we can set --

4 DR. WITONSKI: Do we have to tell why?

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No, because we're not
6 denying the application. We're just -- okay. So as
7 we wrap up, we appreciate the application, appreciate
8 the patience with this organization. I want to
9 publicly say thank-you to the charter school staff,
10 all 27 of you -- no, I'm sorry -- but would Ms. Perry
11 -- would you please stand and introduce the rest of
12 your staff and recognize who's here? Because it's
13 just not yesterday and today; there's been a lot of
14 work that's gone on prior to that. So I want to say
15 thank-you but I want to recognize your staff.

16 MS. PERRY: Thank you. It's been our pleasure
17 to take care of this for you and work on this
18 project. Sky Bledsoe is the newest addition to our
19 staff; she joined as the Charter School Program
20 Officer in September. And Keisha Mattox is back
21 there; she is our Administrative Support for both
22 charter and home-schools.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. And then if I
24 can just -- Ms. Perry, who spent 20-something years
25 in the charter world in Texas before coming to a real

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state.

MS. PERRY: That's right.

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. Thank you to our legal staff. Ms. Clay, thank you. This is really the first time you've really got to take the lead on this and we've been impressed with your work. Thank you to our communications staff in the back, testing one, two, three. Kevin's got his pictures and everything, so -- and thank you, Sharon, for providing your services for us and transcribing --

COURT REPORTER: I'm happy to do it.

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- and doing the work. But it's a learning experience. And I know y'all travel across the country, apparently, with charter authorizers and they range from state boards to outside entities to groups like us who think we know what we're doing. Hopefully, we have some idea. But thank y'all for your patience and we'll look forward to scheduling as early as possible a follow-up on y'all's application. Thanks, Staff and Panel, for your work the last two days. We are adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.)

	125:20,24;126:16; 142:9;258:20	18:17,22;42:21; 50:4;52:14;61:9; 63:13;69:16,18;71:9, 11;72:24;73:12;74:4, 10;82:22;87:25;95:3; 117:7;122:10; 128:20;129:20,22; 131:23;132:12,22; 136:4,24;138:1; 140:10;145:4; 147:15;155:14,20; 163:12;194:12,16; 195:5;198:20; 199:20;219:18; 223:19,24;239:4; 246:1;257:3;259:6; 261:4;270:14; 271:11;272:2; 273:22;274:5	accessible (6) 10:23;13:4;14:19; 42:9;122:21;197:14	actions (1) 15:4
\$	\$40,000 (1) 243:24	above (3) 138:9;240:22,25	acclamation (1) 207:11	active (1) 104:3
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